

Chapter 360

Giya spoke gently.

Giya had been touched when Gerald had helped her and even given her something very precious to him.

She had then developed feelings for Gerald.

She had always thought about him whenever she was free. She found him really cute, but she knew that Gerald probably hated her.

She honestly wanted to be friends with him, but what Gerald had done to her made her truly disappointed. [For more novels and updates!](#)

“What’s so great about that poor peasant anyway?!” Yakob said angrily.

Everyone stopped talking about him after that, but Giya felt really upset. What was so bad about her? No guys had ever rejected Giya like that except Gerald.

When Gerald found out that Giya’s mother had recovered, he was instantly relieved, and his life continued as usual.

That same evening, Gerald brought some books over to return to the library. He saw a girl outside

the library who seemed to be waiting for somebody.

Gerald was stunned. That girl was Giya!

Giya raised her head and saw Gerald.

“Hey, Giya! You came to study?” Gerald asked her awkwardly.

“Nope. I came to return some books!” Giya said.

Gerald felt genuinely guilty about what had happened previously.

“Have you eaten? I could treat you to a meal at the canteen. I’ve just heard about what happened to Mrs. Quarrington today. How’s she doing?” Gerald asked

“She’s doing better now, thanks for asking. Also, I’ve already eaten. Thanks for the offer, but I’m meeting with my friends!” Giya nodded politely.

“By the way, Gerald, regarding the bracelet you gave me previously. I thought of keeping it for you, but I’m not good at keeping stuff, and it would not be nice if people knew. I should return it to you. As for my bracelet that you broke, it’s fine. You don’t have to pay!” Giya took a bracelet out from her bag and handed it to Gerald.

At the same time, a Porsche Seven series stopped next to them. 1

Yakob rolled down the window and peered out, a pair of sunglasses perched on his face. “Hey, Giya! Sorry for being three minutes late! Where should we go for dinner tonight? You should pick a place!”

“Any western restaurant will do, Yakob. I’m fine with anything. You’ve been accompanying me at the hospital for days and even saved my mom. I know I have already treated you to lunch this afternoon, but dinner is on me too! I have to treat you individually!” Giya walked toward the co-pilot seat smiling.

Giya continued, “There’s a nice movie showing at the theater tonight as well! Shall we go for a movie?” [For more novels and updates!](#)

“Sure!” Yakob said happily.

Then, Yakob glared at Gerald proudly and drove off.

Gerald was stunned. Even though he was not in love with Giya, he did not feel good. Especially when he knew that the credit for sending those specialists was stolen by Yakob.

Giya was very grateful for Yakob and hence, they had gotten closer. ①

Should he tell the truth?

But still, what was the point in telling the truth? So

that Giya would be grateful toward him and grow feelings for him again? The bracelet incident had ended, and Yakob had feelings for Giya, while Gerald already had Mila. Everything should stay that way.

Meanwhile, Giya left the school with Yakob.

“Giya, which restaurant would you like to go to? I know a place near the cinema, but the choice is still up to you...” Yakob was excited. He had been even more fired up when Giya had texted him to pick her up.

“Just stop in front...” Giya looked away from the back mirror and said disappointedly.

“Here? There’s no restaurant here, though?”

“I don’t want to go to a restaurant! Stop the car. I would like to go home!”

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Giya did not know what was wrong with herself either. It was strange seeing Gerald being like that.

'How could Gerald not be attracted to a girl like me?!

' Giya still couldn't accept the fact.

Giya had purposely texted Yakob to pick her up just to show Gerald she was not that easy to get!

Girls were like that. As long as they were interested in you, they would try their best to get your attention.

However, Gerald didn't understand things like that.

When Giya had given him back the bracelet, she was hoping that Gerald would stop her, but he hadn't. He had even taken back the bracelet, and when Giya was being picked up by another guy, he did not say anything either.

Giya was really pissed off by Gerald. How could she still possibly want to have dinner with Yakob?!

Hence, she really wanted to get out of the car.

Yakob was dumbfounded as he watched Giya get out of his car and call a taxi. He thought that it was something he said that had made her angry!

Meanwhile, Gerald had already gone back to his own hostel. He saw Harper smoking at the balcony as he scratched his head, seemingly rather upset, and Benjamin was accompanying him.

“What’s wrong, Harper?” Gerald walked toward them.

“Oh, you’re back! Look, the thing is, exams are coming, and Hayley’s mum is coming to Mayberry. They are even expecting me to go back with them! Hayley told her mum about us, and her mum insists on seeing me!”

Gerald smiled. “Isn’t it a good thing to see your girlfriend’s parents? You should celebrate!”

“How’s that a good thing?! I know what Hayley meant when she said her mum is coming over! She wants me to arrange a place for her mum, and if her mum is happy, she might still compliment me a little. But if her mum isn’t happy, we might just end up breaking up after graduation!” Harper was very troubled with this matter.

Nowadays, being in a relationship could be tough. People always said that mother-in-laws were the most troublesome creatures to please, and it could be very true.

Even though Harper’s family was quite wealthy, it

was quite tough to find anywhere good to go in Mayberry.

Gerald did not really know how to help him either since Mayberry Commercial Street had been sold, and Wayfair Mountain Entertainment was not his anymore!

Maybe he could help him just like how he helped Benjamin the last time he came to visit.

“What are your plans, Harper?” Gerald asked.

“I’ve thought about it with Benjamin just now. Both of you could come along with me to pick Hayley’s mum up. I’ve arranged a nice hotel, and I know that the Yorknorth Mountain is holding an event tomorrow night. I’ll be bringing them there!” Harper said.

Gerald nodded his head.

Gerald did not know about the event that would be going on tomorrow because after all, it was organized by the village themselves and Zack did not have to report to him about things like that.

“Alright, then. Let me know if you have any other requests, I’ll try my best!” Gerald said.

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Harper felt instantly relieved, and he gave a pat on Gerald's shoulder.

Hayley's mother would be arriving the next morning. Gerald, Benjamin, and Harper met up with Hayley and her roommates outside of the school early in the morning the next day.

Harper did mention that it would be weird and awkward if it was just him and Hayley that would be picking up Hayley's mother, but if there were a group of them, it would seem more exciting and fun.

Gerald was mildly shocked when he saw the other girls. One of them was Alice, the other one who was staring at him was Jacelyn, and there was another girl whom he had never seen before.

"Hey, Harper and Gerald! There's someone I would like to introduce to you guys. This is my high school classmate, May. May's mum is coming over with my mum, and May will be joining us!" Hayley said.

May was very pretty. She sure knew how to dress herself up even though she was not a natural beauty like Alice, but when compared to Jacelyn, she was definitely much prettier.

“Nice to meet you, May! I think we’ve met before once.” Harper said.

May gently nodded her head and asked. “How are we going to pick both Hayley and my mum up later?”

“We’ll call an Uber!” Harper replied.

“What? An Uber? You don’t have a car? I thought Hayley’s boyfriend would be like mine too. The minimum requirement is to have a car!” May said scornfully.

Even though May and Hayley were childhood friends, it was clear that they did not really interact much in school just by how Harper had mentioned that they had only met once before.

It was simply that they did not have a choice since their mothers were coming to town together, and they had to go pick them up together. It was normal for girls to compare what they had with each other especially when they came from a small city to study in a big city.

In fact, Hayley's roommates were really pretty, and that made May even more jealous. She became very harsh with her words.

“Harper hasn't bought a car yet. Your boyfriend already did?” Hayley was not very happy, but she

asked her anyway.

May and Hayley both came from a higher-class family, hence, there was nothing much for them to compare on the financial side, and Hayley had always been better in her studies as compared to May. But now that they were in university, there were more things to compare.

“Yeah, he did. Just an Audi A4L though. At first, he wanted to get a 7 Series Porsche because all of his friends were driving it, but I told him an A4L was good enough. He only compromised because he loves me very much!” May crossed her arms as she glanced toward Alice and the others, looking very satisfied. 1

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Jacelyn and the others did not really give a d*mn though. 1

Hayley nodded her head. “Wow! Your boyfriend’s friends are doing quite well!”

“Of course! Pretty different from Harper’s friends... let’s not discuss this any further!” May said.

Just as she finished talking, she looked into the school compound and was surprised!

“My boyfriend and his friends are here!”

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A white color Audi A4L stopped in front of them and rolled down the window, and a fashionable young man got out of the car.

“Jayce! You’re finally here! Where are your friends?”

“I asked them to go and book a hotel first. After picking up Mrs. Leny, we could bring her to the hotel to freshen up and have lunch there. After that, we’ll go out to play!”

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As Jayce was talking, he noticed Alice and Jacelyn standing behind Hayley.

“Hey, pretty! I bet you girls are Hayley’s friends, right? How are you guys going?” Jayce asked.

“We were just talking about it just now. Harper doesn’t have a car, so they were planning to pick up Hayley’s mum with an Uber.” May said.

“How about you girls follow me since my car can still fit in three more passengers. Care to join us, girls?” Jayce only asked because he found Alice and Jacelyn really pretty, and he wanted to please them.

However, before Hayley and the others could say

anything, May immediately rejected his offer. “Excuse me, but where will my mum be sitting if the car is full? And don’t forget that my other two roommates will be joining us as well!” May was jealous when she saw how Jayce looked at Alice and the others.

“It’s fine, May. We’ll take the Uber!” Hayley did not want to cause any trouble.

“Alright, then! We’ll head over first, so it’ll be fine if you guys are slightly late. Then, we’ll all head to the hotel that Jayce has booked, and we can have lunch over there. Since there are quite a number of us, I say we should split the bill. Is that okay?” May said.

“Sure!” Hayley nodded.

May waited for her two roommates to arrive before they left.

Meanwhile, Gerald and the rest waited until their Uber arrived and then headed to the station.

“Look at her! She’s so proud just because her boyfriend is driving an Audi A4L. She doesn’t know that all we need is a phone call from Alice and Silas would be here at any minute!” Jacelyn huffed.

“Jacelyn, what are you talking about?! I’ve not been in contact with Silas for so long!” Alice glanced at

Gerald as she replied.

“I heard that Mayberry Commercial Group was sold shortly after Silas’ father came. It’s such a shame that a big company like that is gone in no time! However, if Silas were here, I’m pretty sure it would shut this Jayce and May up!” Jacelyn said.

Whatever Jacelyn had said was one of the reasons why Alice was ignoring Gerald.

Everyone knew that Mayberry Commercial Group belonged to Mr. Crawford. Even though she was not sure if Gerald was truly Mr. Crawford, she really wanted him.

Except, after what had happened with Mayberry Commercial Group, Alice did not really believe that Gerald was Mr. Crawford, hence, she was never really committed to it.

Still, Alice cared about her impression a lot when she was around Gerald. She was never really in touch with Silas anymore, but after what Jacelyn had said, she was afraid that Gerald might get the wrong idea.

No matter what it was, Gerald was still rich. It was just that he did not really care much about anything, and he did not speak much either.

They all reached the station at about ten o’clock in

the morning.

“Hey, Mrs. Ians! I heard from May that Hayley has a boyfriend too, right? I’m sorry I didn’t get to ask this on the train just now. Anyway, what does his family do? Is he rich?”

Two good-looking housewives walked out of the train station. They were both in their early forties but still looked as though they were thirty years old.

“I’m not sure either. Hayley didn’t tell me much, and that is why I’m here! But I believe it can’t be too bad. After all, Hayley’s grades have been really good!” Hayley’s mother said.

May’s mother was not very happy. Even though May was as pretty as Hayley, Hayley was really good with her studies and had a great personality.

Hayley was, in fact, much more decent than her own daughter, which meant that her boyfriend must be as good as her too.

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May's mother knew that it was incomparable.

"You're right! Hayley's boyfriend must be better than May's! My daughter could never be compared with yours!" May's mother said.

May and Hayley had been waiting outside the exit.

"How was the trip, mum? Anyway, let me introduce you to my boyfriend, Jayce Warren!"

"Nice to meet you, Mrs. Leny. I'm Jayce Warren, you can call me Jayce. Please let me help you with your luggage!" Jayce immediately picked up the luggage.

"Is this your car, Jayce?" May's mother was surprised when she saw the car key in Jayce's hand.

"Yeah. I just bought it last month!" Jayce smiled.

May's mother glanced toward Hayley's mother.

"Mum, let's go. We're going to the hotel together!" Hayley smiled.

"There's a driver? Is this Harper's driver?" Hayley's mother had been quite amazed when she saw May's boyfriend pick her up in an Audi A4L.

Hayley's mother looked at her future son-in-law's ride. Even though it was just two Volkswagen Magotans, it looked as though he had a driver, and she thought that it was not that bad.

She truly thought that they were both Harper's drivers, but Harper did not look like a rich guy.

"Are you guys coming or not? Can you guys hurry up? I have two more drives!" One of the drivers became irritated.

"Um..." Hayley and May's mothers were both stunned.

"This is just an Uber, mum!" Hayley did not look very comfortable.

Harper was also slightly embarrassed, and he lowered his head.

"What? I thought it was Harper's family driver. I never thought it was just an Uber..."

May's mother looked rather happy as she looked outside the car window.

"Mum, just get in the car. Harper, get in the front, please!" Hayley knew that it would be even more awkward if they continued to stay there.

"Why let him sit in front. Ask him to get in the car at the back!" Hayley's mother glared at Harper.

They finally left the station.

“I screwed up so hard! This is all finished!” Harper scratched his head in despair as he got in the other car.

Gerald patted him on his shoulder and said, “Don’t be too upset. The one you’d be marrying is Hayley, not Hayley’s mum. Benjamin and I are always here for you, don’t worry!”

“Sigh, okay. No matter what is it, you have to help me today, Gerald!” Harper was all out of ideas.

Gerald did not say anything else, he merely nodded his head.

Soon, they had all reached the hotel. After knowing that it was Jayce who had booked the hotel, May’s mother was extremely happy.

Hayley’s mother, on the other hand, was extremely disappointed.

“Yakob! You guys must have been waiting for a while now. Mrs. Leny is here together with May’s roommates.” They went into a luxurious dining room, and Jayce began to introduce the people present.

“Mrs. Leny, these are all my friends. This is Yakob, our head of the dormitory. His family owns a

company, and he takes care of us really well!”

“Hi, nice to meet all of you!” May’s mother was very happy when she found out that he was in touch with so many wealthy people.

Yakob introduced himself to May’s mother first and then greeted Hayley and the others.

Yakob was shocked when he saw Gerald there. “Gerald?”

Gerald was surprised as well. This was such a coincidence. “We meet again, Yakob!”

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Gerald did not expect that the person Jayce kept bragging about was actually Yakob.

But then again, there were only a few students that drove a 7 Series Porsche in their school, and one of them was Yakob.

Yakob was not very happy when he saw Gerald.

At first, Gerald had embarrassed him in front of many girls at the breakfast place, and then, Yakob had found out that Gerald was quite close with his goddess, Giya.

Including the incident that had happened yesterday where Giya had said she was going to have dinner and a movie date with Yakob in front of Gerald, but after they had left him, Giya had gotten out of the car immediately like a different person.

Yakob did not feel right last night, and he had come to the conclusion that Giya might have been using him.

Yakob had not been feeling good about it ever since then, and he wanted to take this chance to relax, but he never thought that he would see Gerald here!

Yakob smiled faintly as he offered Gerald and the

others a seat.

“You should rest for a bit, Yakob. Let Jayce do all the work! We have given you enough trouble for the day. It’s quite embarrassing to make you work even more!”

“Am I right, Mrs. Ians? Look at Jayce’s friends. They are so well-put and humble. I believe they are very close to Jayce! Don’t you worry about the fees, okay? Jayce and May can do the deed!” May’s mother was complimenting Yakob and talking to Hayley’s mother at the same time.

However, Hayley’s mother had not spoken a single word. She was upset right from the start.

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Both Hayley and May’s family were doing equally fine back in their city. In fact, Hayley was doing even slightly better than May. Hence, Hayley’s mother had come here very proudly.

She thought that her future son-in-law would bring his own personal driver to pick her up, and May’s mother would be very jealous of her future son-in-law.

However, everything did not go as she had planned. Hayley’s mother really wanted to dig a hole and hide herself.

Harper could not even be compared to Jayce, and

even their social circle was completely different.

Yakob was already such a big deal, while Harper's friends on the other hand were Benjamin and Gerald. Benjamin looked decent with his glasses and all, but Gerald literally looked like a joke!

Hayley's mother was extremely disappointed.

Suddenly, Yakob spoke up, "Don't worry about the money, Mrs. Ians and Mrs. Leny. We'll handle it, and as long as both of you are happy, I don't mind paying for everything!"

Yakob had to act like a gentleman because after all, there were two pretty girls around.

"Oh no, this isn't right, Yakob! Even if Jayce were to pay for everything, Harper would not be happy about it. Am I right, Harper?" May's mother looked at Harper.

"Yeah. We should split the bill!" Harper nodded his head.

"Splitting the bill sounds good. I would love to try Mayberry's best dishes!" May's mother immediately ordered a few signature dishes and then asked Hayley's mother to order as well.

Hayley's mother ordered more dishes than May's mother.

Everything on the table was nearly 5000 dollars,

and Harper began to get worried about it.

Gerald knew about his situation and thus, he quietly transferred 2000 dollars into Harper's account and told him not to worry about it.

Just when he had transferred that money to Harper, he realized that Alice and Jacelyn had been watching him, and they were both looking at him in shock.

Alice and Jacelyn had been observing him quietly all this while. **3**

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Before they had seen the amount of money in his bank account, they kind of knew that he was not an ordinary person, and just as they had guessed it, he was indeed extremely rich!

They had never had evidence until now. They saw him transferring that money over to Harper, but they still could not tell how much money was left in his account because there were too many numbers!

“Girls, what would the both of you like to have? Would you like some wine? I ordered this just for the ladies, and don’t worry, I can send you girls back later!” Yakob looked at Alice and Jacelyn.

He believed that they knew he was great. However, Alice and Jacelyn immediately rejected his offer. “It’s fine. We’re good!”

Alice immediately looked at Gerald and said, “Gerald, what would you like to have? Let me get it for you!”

Yakob was confused and stunned.

Why were all his Goddess’ treating Gerald so nicely?!

Yakob had never seen Gerald as competition, but

now, it seemed as though Gerald would be his biggest enemy!

Yakob actually wanted to embarrass Gerald at the gathering, but Gerald did not talk much, and if he ever tried to push a conversation on him, he would just smile and shake his head.

It was almost like punching a bag of cotton.

After lunch was over, Hayley was planning to call an Uber to bring her mother to the place she would be staying at.

Yakob jumped up and said, “You don’t have to get an Uber. We all drove here, just let us know where Mrs. Leny is staying and we can drive you all there. Let’s go to the carpark together!”

“You girls can ride in my car! My car is big and comfortable!” Yakob invited Alice and Jacelyn.

The girls did not say a single word.

As they reached the car park, Yakob took out his car key and unlocked his car.

He then got into the car and started the engine.

Just as he was about to drive off, one of his friends said, “Yakob, you should be careful. The car beside you is too close!”

“So what? It’s just a Phideon!”

Yakob wanted to go slow at first, but after what his friend had said, he felt the need to go faster.

Bang!

Yakob felt the impact. The rear of his car collided with the car next to him, and it was quite a bad crash!

“F*ck!” Yakob hit his steering wheel in frustration and got out of his car.

“What do we do now, Yakob?” Jayce was nervous, but Yakob did not care.

“Why the f*ck are you scared? Just call the owner, and we’ll pay him a few thousand!”

“No, Yakob. Look at the car, I don’t think it’s a Phideon. I think it’s a Phaeton!” 2

“What?!” Yakob became nervous as well. A Phideon usually only cost around 4000 dollars, but a Phaeton could easily go up to 20000 dollars!

And that car was indeed a Phaeton that had been discontinued! 2

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“What now?!” Yakob was extremely scared.

He had taken a quick glance at the Volkswagen just now and had not taken too much notice of it since the better Volkswagens usually only cost around 5000 dollars. However, they had totally forgotten about the very underrated Phaeton!

“Oh, no! How much money would you even have to pay for compensation? The Phaeton has gone out of shape!” Even May’s mother was worried about it.

“Yakob, why don’t you call the owner immediately and talk things out? Otherwise, you could just ask Mr. Lincoln to settle it for you?” Yakob’s friend suggested.

“F*ck it, man. I did knock him, but so what? Who asked him to park so close to me? It is just a 20000 dollar Phaeton. Do you think I can’t afford it?! I only bought this 7 Series just to go with my internship!” Yakob was furious.

Still, he called the owner to settle this matter.

After a while, a man wearing glasses came out with a woman. They looked like a couple.

“You knocked my car!” The man said.

Deep down, Yakob was thinking that this guy did not look fierce at all. In fact, he looked like he had not seen much of the world, and Yakob felt rather relieved.

He believed that this man was from a small village and had gotten lucky, consequently buying a fancy car just to show off.

If the other party was an adult, he might have been slightly more respectful, but he was not.

“Are you f*cking blind or what?! Didn’t you see my car there?! Why did you park your car so close to mine? You tell me, how are we going to settle this?”

Yakob rolled up his sleeves and walked toward the man while Jayce and another friend went up to him as well.

The girl beside him immediately said, “You guys were clearly the ones that knocked into our car. You have to fix it!”

“That’s right! You guys have got to fix my car!”

The guy said.

“What do you mean? Your car was blocking mine, so why the f*ck should I fix your d*mn car?!”

Yakob kicked the man in his stomach and pointed right at his nose. “Don’t you know who I am? Give

me your f*cking address, little guy!” Yakob threatened them.

The man immediately held onto his stomach and did not say a single word anymore.

“Wow! Yakob, you’re so cool!” May’s mother was impressed.

“It’s normal. Yakob’s family is rich and powerful!” Jayce said proudly.

Yacob kicked the man again. “Now get the f*ck off. Don’t ever let me see you again, or I’ll beat you to death!”

The man’s girlfriend helped him back to the hotel.

“Very impressive, Yakob!” His friend was amazed.

“It’s only because his car was more expensive than mine, otherwise, I would have made him pay for my car!” Yakob was satisfied. He was ready to send Alice and the others to the hotel first and then bring his car to the service center.

Just then, a group of men suddenly came and surrounded Yakob.

The one standing in front looked at the man with the spectacles and asked. “Who beat you up, Four-Eyed?”

“That’s him!” Four-Eyed pointed at Yakob.

Yakob was not usually afraid of people like this, but when he took a closer look at the guy in front, he got scared.

Yakob swallowed as he asked, "Aren't you Timothy Shen? We've met before previously!"

Timothy Shen!

Everyone present was stunned when they heard the name.

Timothy Shen was the son of Weiner Shen, and they owned quite a number of entertainment facilities in Mayberry.

Weiner Shen was considered Mayberry's biggest mob.

The Weiner Group was definitely more fierce as compared to the Rye Group since the Rye Group had its own considerations, but Weiner Group had none.

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They would screw you up as long as they were not happy with you!

They really did not care who you were!

As for Timothy's name, everyone had heard about him. He studied at Mayberry University and was super fierce. Someone had gotten on his nerves a while ago, and he had brought a group of people to that person's house and messed him up.

Yakob was totally incomparable to Timothy, and he was scared.

“What the f*ck is wrong with you? You knocked Four-Eyed's car and you even beat him up?! You're really out of your f*cking mind, bro. Don't think you can get away just like that. Explain yourself or you're not going anywhere today!” Timothy sneered.

Yakob was trembling. He immediately slapped himself and explained, “It was just a misunderstanding, Timothy. Everything was just a misunderstanding!”

“Misunderstanding? Okay, since this is one of my uncle's hotels, follow me to one of the rooms, and

we can sort out this misunderstanding there!” After what Timothy had said, two strong men went over to Yakob and caught him by his shoulder.

“Four-Eyed, did anyone else touch you?” Timothy asked.

“No, just him!”

Timothy then left with Yakob, who was already very scared for his life.

“This Timothy doesn’t seem like a good person at all! Who is he?” May’s mother asked fearfully.

“Of course he isn’t a good person! His father is even more fierce. Two years ago, Timothy even forced an actress to go out with him!” Clearly, Jayce was aware of what kind of person Timothy was.

“Should we call the police then, Jayce?” Yakob’s friend was worried.

“Are you nuts? We can’t do anything about it now. I’m pretty sure Yakob’s father will find out in no time!” Jayce lit up a cigarette.

Gerald had watched the entire scene, and he thought that Yakob truly deserved it.

Gerald did not care to bother about saving him at all after what had happened. Thus, he said, “Mrs. Ians, Mrs. Leny, since it’s something that we are not able

to help with, let's just get you all settled down at the hotel first!"

"Alright!" May and Hayley's mothers agreed.

They all then left for the hotel.

There were not many plans on Harper's side for the afternoon except for the visit to Yorknoth Mountain.

Meanwhile, Jayce drove May's mother around Mayberry.

Hayley's mother was extremely jealous of it, and she felt rather dissatisfied with Harper! ①

Finally, it was five o'clock in the evening, and May's mother had gotten back.

There would be an event going on at Yorknorth Village, and many superstars would be there too.

May and her mother wanted to pay a visit, so Jayce had already gotten them the tickets. They had even gotten VIP tickets. The VIP tickets meant that they did not have to pay any extra money after getting inside.

Meanwhile, Harper had only gotten ordinary tickets.

"You're such a good boy, Jayce! Look at you, you got us the VIP tickets! Why didn't you get another VIP ticket for Mrs. Ians too! Now Harper has to pay

for everything inside!”

“Ah! I almost forgot about it. I thought Harper would have known to get the VIP tickets!” Jayce smiled as he shook his head.

“What’s so great about it anyway. Didn’t Yakob just get brought away by a bunch of gangsters and he didn’t even dare to say a single word!” Hayley’s mother was extremely upset, but she still fought back.

“Well, indeed, Jayce isn’t as good, but he’s still better than other people’s daughter’s boyfriend! Look at the friends he brought! They are just here for free food!” Clearly, those words were for Gerald and Benjamin.

Gerald merely smiled speechlessly. They had nothing else to say.

They were finally there at Yorknorth Mountain, and the place for selling entrance tickets had been set.

“Jayce, I thought you had friends waiting here? Are you sure he’s coming?” May asked.

“Of course! He’s my high school classmate. These tickets were given to me by him! He’s like the second owner of this place! Look, he’s right there!” Jayce pointed.

Gerald looked toward the direction and was shocked.

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Who was that person?

That person was Hayward.

He was still afraid that he might bump into Hayward on the way here. If he saw Hayward, Lilian and Sharon had to be around too.

Gerald did not really want to see either of them, but he saw him, and surprisingly enough, Hayward and Jayce were high school classmates.

“Hey, Jayce! I’ve been waiting!” Hayward greeted them proudly. He was very confident because after all, he was the host of the entire event for now.

“Yeah. There was a pretty bad jam outside. Anyhow, let me introduce you to my girlfriend, May, and that is May’s mother, Mrs. Leny. Those over there are May’s friends. We all came together!” Jayce said.

Together with Hayward were a few other young men and women which also included Sharon and Lilian. Hayward also introduced his friends to Jayce.

“This is Hayward, and his family owns three houses here!” Jayce said enviously.

After the introduction, May and her mother were

stunned. They knew that Yorknorth Mountain was going to be developed into a big recreational center. They were even planning to broaden the tourist area and build more properties here! This place would be a very popular spot in the future, and this Hayward owned three properties here! It was enough to keep him sustained his entire life.

May's mother was very impressed.

“That's quite exaggerated. After all, Mr. Crawford was the one who decided to invest in this land! He's the hero of this story.” Hayward said respectfully.

“Mr. Crawford? Who is this Mr. Crawford? I heard that he sold the entire company, and now, he's building a new recreational place?” May said.

Ever since she had gotten together with Jayce, she had been reading news about the rich and wealthy.

This topic successfully caught the attention of both Alice and Jacelyn.

They had both seen the news before, and there were all kinds of speculations on the internet.

“Who is this Mr. Crawford, May? Is he truly that great?” May's mother was excited.

“Well, he used to be. However, his company has been dismissed, so not so much anymore!” May said.

Hayward was slightly speechless at this. “Don’t listen to the rumors online. Just think about the money this guy, Mr. Crawford, has invested. He bought the entire mountain for about six million, and he will be putting in more money in the future!”

Everyone was surprised when they heard this.

“Hence, when people talked about Mr. Crawford’s rumor online, we could only shake our heads!”

Lilian folded her arms and smiled.

“That’s so cool!” May was shocked.

Alice looked at Gerald in surprise, and it made him feel slightly uncomfortable.

Alice was grateful that she had never gotten on Gerald’s nerves, otherwise, she would never stand a single chance.

“Wow, Jayce! I never thought you would know someone like Hayward! You have many connections!” May’s mother smiled.

“Alright! Let’s get in the sightseeing car for now. How many of us are here? I think we’ll need a bigger car!” Hayward said.

He then looked toward Harper’s side and was surprised to see Gerald. “D*mn, Gerald?!”

Lilian and Sharon were shocked to see him as well.

The last time they had seen him was when they had all gotten arrested because of the fight between Hayward and Murphy, and Gerald had been bailed out.

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Chapter 370

They were all very curious as to who this Gerald was.

Sharon and Lilian were really hoping that he was not some great person.

“Gerald, you’re here!” They both toned down a lot when greeting Gerald.

“Hayward, you know him?” Jayce asked.

“Yeah. But that’s a story for next time. Let me go get us a sightseeing car first!” Hayward said.

Harper was driving at first while Jayce was sitting right next to him.

“Harper is surprisingly good at driving this kind of car even though he has never driven before!” May’s mother taunted him.

“Just like his personality. Very dependable!” One of the girls said.

Jayce was not very happy when he heard those words.

“Are you stupid or what, dude! You should be turning to the left side. It’s way more fun on the left side!” Jayce scolded him out of jealousy, and

Harper just kept quiet.

“Drive faster, dude! Just let me do it if you can’t! F*cking stupid!” Jayce continued humiliating him.

Harper had had enough to take in for the day. He became really angry at this time and stepped on the accelerator really hard.

He almost knocked into a little girl holding onto a balloon as she chased her little dog!

“Harper! Watch out!” Hayley shouted.

Alas, it was too late for Harper to stop the car. He turned the car to the side, and the car went out of control.

The sightseeing car scratched a car that was parked right at the roadside, and the sightseeing car was knocked out of shape.

The car hit a big rock before finally screeching to a halt.

“Aah!” The passersby shouted, including the girls in the car.

Harper knew he was in big trouble.

One of the passersby shouted, “Look at this dude, man! He knocked into seven Ferraris in one shot!”

Harper and the group were shocked and scared.

They were all dumbfounded when they looked at the cars that had been knocked by Harper.

All of it was a Ferrari, and the average cost of each car was 400000 dollars. The worst part was that all of the cars had been heavily damaged, and some of the headlights were even falling off.

“Oh, my goodness! This young man is crazy! Seven Ferraris, dude! That’s going to cost at least a few hundred thousand!”

There were more and more people surrounding them.

Not only was Hayley and her mother shocked, but even May’s mother was also worried.

This was worse than the incident in the afternoon where Yakob had only knocked one car! Harper, on the other hand, had messed up seven cars!

“Move aside! Move aside now!” ①

Chapter 371

At this time, Hayward drove Lilian and the others in his more luxurious sightseeing car as he headed over.

He saw a lot of people surrounding the place. After that, he saw that it was Jayce and the others.

Therefore, he knew that something was wrong, and he hurriedly squeezed in through the crowd of people.

As soon as he saw what had happened, Hayward could not help but feel that his mind was completely blown!

D*mn it!

“Who did this?” Hayward’s face was pale as he asked them the question.

“Hayward! It’s him! He was the one who was driving the car!” Jayce hurriedly pointed at Harper.

At this time, after regaining their senses, May and the others also stood on Jayce’s side immediately.

That’s right. Who would not be afraid of getting involved and forced to share the responsibility instead?

After all, these damages would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

As for Harper, it was true that he had gotten into trouble in a fit of anger. However, it was Jayce who had provoked him. Still, there was nothing that he could do now except bear the consequences of his actions.

After all, he was the one who had hit those cars.

“Oh! You! You... you... I am truly convinced right now. How could my daughter possibly have a boyfriend like you?!” Hayley’s mother felt very aggrieved, and she immediately shed a few drops of tears.

Lilian spoke lightly at this time, “Don’t worry about it too much now. Well, do you have any contacts or connections? You should contact someone now. Perhaps you should call someone from your hometown to come here as soon as possible?”

May’s mother spoke up, “How could he possibly have any contacts or connections?! If Jayce was the one who caused the trouble, he might be able to alleviate and solve the problem, then. After all, Jayce has a wide network of contacts, and this is his buddy, Hayward’s territory! I don’t think Harper will be able to solve this problem. Moreover, Hayward is not familiar with him either. So,

Hayward can't possibly offend the owners of these luxury cars just because of him!"

Harper could not even say anything to refute that. May's mother was a mature person, and she was very sly.

This sentence alone naturally pushed the blame off Jayce and Hayward. She was clearly telling them not to poke their noses into this matter so that they would not be provoking anyone unnecessarily!

At this time, another girl asked, "Hey! Don't you have any friends in Mayberry City?"

Harper's face flushed red as he said, "Of course! Gerald and Benjamin are my friends!"

One of May's roommates asked speechlessly, "Oh! We are not talking about those kinds of friends. We meant if you have any rich or influential friends?"

Hayward frowned as he spoke up at this time. "Okay, don't talk about it anymore. It does not matter if he has any friends or not. After all, this kid has already gotten into a big disaster this time!"

"Huh? What big disaster?" Everyone asked in surprise.

Hayward he took a deep breath and asked, "Do you know who these cars belong to?"

"Who?"

Hayward replied, slightly frightened, “These are the cars of seven rich heirs, such as Aiden, Yoel, Zade, and the others!”

“Hayward, do you mean Aiden from the Baker family, Yoel from the Holden family, Zade from the Zavier family in Harbour City, and the others? Isn’t that just too much of a coincidence?” Sharon had been following Hayward around and had seen a lot of the world these days. Therefore, she could not help but ask in surprise.

Hayward closed his eyes as he nodded and said, “Yes, it’s them!”

“What should we do?” Benjamin was also panicking at this time.

These young masters were even more powerful compared to that Timothy.

May’s mother opened her eyes wide in panic and said, “Harper, I think you should just hurry up and kneel in front of these cars. Perhaps those young masters will spare you that way. You cannot possibly afford to offend them. After all, these young men are not as simple as the person Yacob offended just now!”

May’s mother continued, “Furthermore, Harper, since you were the one who drove and hit the car,

you should just confess by yourself later. Don't mention the fact that we were all also sitting in the sightseeing car with you! We cannot afford to offend them!"

At this time...

"Look! Aiden, Yoel, and the others are here!"

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Chapter 372

Someone yelled out loud. After that, the crowd of people opened their mouths in shock.

Yoel brought a group of people who looked like rich heirs over with him.

“D*mn it! Who did this?” Yoel asked coldly as he threw his sunglasses away.

Aiden and the others also gathered around the group of people at this time.

“Sorry! I was the one who hit your cars!” Harper bowed slightly because he was also frightened at this time.

“So tell me. What are we going to do about this? Men! Come and call the car shop to send someone over here to estimate the damage now! Also, none of you who were with him are allowed to leave today!”

Yoel barked out his instructions.

At this time, some bodyguards dressed in black were already making a phone call as soon as they heard his words. A group of men immediately came over to surround May and everyone else as well.

“Oh! It’s all over. This time, Harper not only hit someone else’s car, but he has obviously offended Yoel too! He has even implicated us in this matter and Yoel is not letting us go either!”

“Yes! He really does not know what is good for him! Why did he even try to stop the sightseeing car from crashing?! Perhaps the damage would not even cost that much! Now, he not only hit all the rich heirs’ cars, but he has also dragged us into this matter with him!”

“That’s right! The most important thing is that we are really wasting these rich heirs’ time now!”

May’s roommates chimed in immediately. When May and Jayce heard Yoel’s words, they realized that none of them would be able to leave. It seemed as though everyone who had been sitting in Harper’s car would also be in trouble.

They were extremely nervous, and they looked at Hayward to ask for his help.

Hayward immediately understood what they were trying to tell him. So, he immediately walked toward Yoel, Aiden, and the others before he said respectfully, “Sirs, I am Hayward from Yorknorth Mountain. I had a short encounter with Aiden before this.”

Yoel looked at Aiden, and Aiden whispered something to Yoel immediately.

Yoel nodded before he smiled and said, “Well, Hayward. What do you want to say?”

“Well, Yoel, some of my friends here were sitting in this car as well. Could you give me some face? This matter had nothing to do with them!”

“F*ck! What kind of face should I give you? Get lost! If you were in the car too, I might forgive you and let you off because you are from Yorknorth Mountain. However, if it is none of your business, don't try to be so pretentious in front of me!” Yoel was not giving face to anyone at all!

Hayward's face flushed red at this time after getting scolded so harshly.

Hayward did not even dare to take a deep breath, and he could only hide in anguish with Lilian and the others.

When Jayce and the others saw that even Hayward was not able to save them, they began to panic.

This was especially so for May's mother who wished that she could just slap Harper.

At this time, a sudden voice made the crowded scene fall silent immediately.

“I think we should stop wasting everyone’s time. Just forget it!”

Everyone cast their eyes in the direction of the boy who was the source of the sound.

D*mn it! Forget it?!

Was he sick of living?

That’s right! He was too full of himself, right? Who did he think he is?

Everyone was shocked.

Yes. The boy was naturally none other than Gerald.

As soon as he made this remark, even Lilian and Sharon, who thought highly of him, could not help but stare at Gerald as they shook their heads slightly.

May’s mother scolded him directly, “Gerald, what nonsense are you talking about?!”

As for Gerald, he was originally waiting for the owners of the cars to come so that he could offer to pay them for the damages himself.

But then, he had found out that the cars belonged to Yoel and the others.

Gerald felt entangled.

If he did not step up to help Harper when they came

over, Harper would definitely suffer miserably in their hands.

If he stepped up to help him, his identity would be exposed directly.

However, in the current situation, it seemed as though it would be impossible for him to keep a low profile and choose not to help Harper.

Alas, if his identity were to be exposed, so be it. There was no other way!

Thus, Gerald stepped forward...

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Chapter 373

”Mr. Craw... I mean, Gerald?!”

Yoel and Aiden were all taken aback.

No one thought that Mr. Crawford would also be here.

Yoel almost yelled out loud and revealed his identity.

Therefore, this group of rich heirs also moved toward Gerald excitedly.

What?!

The people who were all waiting to watch a good show were all startled.

“Um... this is not a big problem anyway. All of you originally came here to be happy and have fun. Besides, none of you are short of money to repair your cars anyway. So, just forget about it. Just continue having fun and enjoying yourselves, then.” Gerald could only smile helplessly. Since this matter had already come to this state, there was nothing else he could do.

“Yes! Yes! Gerald, you are right. We are all here to enjoy and have fun anyway. Why should we be so

angry over this small matter, then? Hahaha! Gerald, in that case, we will let this matter go! Let's go in and have a drink together later, okay?" Yoel touched his belly before he laughed.

"Okay! I will come and find you for a drink later!" Gerald also patted Aiden's and the other boys' shoulders with a smile on his face.

"Goodbye, Gerald!"

"Goodbye, Gerald!"

"..."

The rest of the rich heirs did not dare to joke around with Gerald, and they simply bowed respectfully to say goodbye. This made the people standing on the sidelines feel even more shocked.

F*ck! What was happening?!

Many people were still in shock, and they did not come to their senses even after Yoel and the other rich heirs had already left.

This was even more so for May, Jayce, May's mother, and the others.

To be honest, no one had taken Gerald to heart at all from the very beginning. They thought he was just a pathetic jerk who had come along on this trip

to eat and drink for free. However, they really did not expect him to actually be acquainted and connected to so many rich heirs!

He only had to say a few words, and those rich heirs had left immediately!

Moreover, those people seemed to be afraid of him.

May and the others were even more surprised.

At this time, even Hayley's mother was looking at Gerald with a look of admiration on her face. She was also subconsciously standing closer to Gerald at this time.

It seemed as though she was trying to tell everyone else that this young man was her daughter's boyfriend's good buddy! Hmph! He was not May nor anyone's good friend!

Sharon and Lilian were even more surprised at this time.

It seemed as though their speculations had been confirmed.

The two girls suddenly turned pale.

It seemed as though everything that had happened the last time was not purely accidental. It was true that Gerald was indeed extraordinary!

Moreover, it seemed as though he was even more

powerful as compared to Hayward.

Those rich heirs did not even bother to give Hayward any face at all, but they were all so respectful and polite toward Gerald.

Furthermore, these girls were very attentive and meticulous. They could clearly see that some of the rich heirs had even bowed to Gerald when they were saying goodbye to him!

D*mn!

The atmosphere became very awkward at this time.

Gerald smiled awkwardly before he said, "Okay! Everything is fine now! Let's continue playing then!"

After he was done speaking, Gerald continued walking forward with Harper and the others.

"F*ck! Who is this young man?"

"I don't know, but he looks pretty awesome!"

"So many rich heirs were giving him face too! I guess he must be a very powerful and influential person!"

A group of people started discussing this matter amongst themselves.

One of May's good friends suddenly came over and

asked Gerald shyly at this time, “Gerald, you... do you want to drink some milk tea? I will go and buy it for you...”

“Thank you, but I’m not thirsty!” Gerald replied.

Lilian glanced at the girl before she handed her cup of untouched milk tea over to Gerald. “Hehe! Who do you think you are? Did you think that Gerald will drink any milk tea that any random girls buy for him?”

“Gerald, look at you! Your lips are a little dry. How could you possibly not be thirsty? You are just too careless, and you don’t know how to love yourself at all!” Lilian continued hurriedly.

On the surface, she was snubbing the girl, but in actual fact, she was just putting on an act in front of Gerald.

Since she had had a misunderstanding with Gerald before this, Lilian felt that she had to resolve it!

Gerald did not know what else to say.

Fortunately, at this moment, his cell phone suddenly rang.

It was a phone call from Zack.

“Sorry! You guys can continue playing first. I have to answer a call. I will come and find you later!”

Chapter 374

Gerald found an excuse to slip away and went over to the lakeside.

“Mr. Crawford, I would like to ask for your instructions. I’ve already made an initial investment plan for the investment in your hometown, Serene County, that Mr. Harrison talked about. There is an investment plan for six billion dollars, and there is another plan for eight billion dollars. The investment plan for eight billion dollars will also drive a part of the township economy, and it will involve a wider range of areas. What is your decision, then?” Zack asked as soon as the call was connected.

“Then, let’s decide on the eight billion dollar plan. After all, the reason why I agreed to Mr. Harrison’s proposal was to drive the construction and growth of the entire urban and rural economy anyway!”

“Okay, I understand, Mr. Crawford! I will begin the layout of the plan immediately!”

After he was done speaking, Gerald hung up the phone immediately.

He turned around and prepared to go back.

Gerald was stunned as soon as he turned around.

This was because he did not know when Alice had come and stood behind him.

At this time, Alice was staring at him in a dumbfounded manner. It was obvious that she had already heard Gerald's conversation just now.

"Gerald... you!" Alice was breathing rapidly at this time.

When Gerald had been interacting with the group of rich heirs just now, Alice had already suspected that her guess might be right.

At that time, she did not say anything at all.

Instead, she had been paying close attention to Gerald.

After that, she saw Gerald acting suspiciously when he came here to answer the phone call.

So, Alice had followed him here quietly.

If Alice had not heard everything clearly because of the quiet surroundings, it would have been hard for her to believe that everything in front of her was real!

Gerald was a rich heir, and she was almost certain that he was Mr. Crawford!

He had spoken about eight billion dollars without even blinking his eyes!

Alice trembled uncontrollably.

The guy that Naomi had tried to matchmake her with from the very beginning so that they could become a couple, the person that she had despised and looked down on from the beginning, was actually an incredible God!

“You heard... everything?” Gerald asked awkwardly.

Alice blushed as she nodded. “Yes! I heard everything!”

“You are Mr. Crawford. The Mr. Crawford who owns countless properties and assets?!” Alice asked in shock.

“I... No, I’m not. I don’t have a lot of money. You’ve got it all wrong. Eh! Harper is calling me!”

Gerald quickly reacted. If he admitted it too readily, his effort to maintain a low profile during this period would all be wasted!

He wanted to leave as soon as he could!

Alice blocked Gerald’s way as she stood in front of him. “Gerald, I have already heard everything. Why are you so unwilling to admit it?”

“Why can’t you tell me the truth? Can you just tell

me the truth?” Alice asked as she grabbed Gerald’s shoulders with bloodshot eyes.

Gerald was speechless. “You’ve really got it wrong! I ’m just a pauper!”

After that, he broke free from Alice’s grasp as he tried to run back to the others.

However, after taking a few steps, Gerald was startled when he turned his head around.

Alice was actually walking toward the lake, step by step!

D*mn it!

“What are you doing?!” Gerald was really at a loss for words. This scene was exactly what had happened with Xavia!

He ran forward before he grabbed hold of Alice.

“Let go of me! Just let me die! I treated you so horribly in the past. You will never like me again. Just let me die!” Alice was really filled with regrets at this time, and she really did not want to live anymore. ①

Fortunately, Gerald had already brought her back to the shore.

Alice cried as she clung onto Gerald’s arm tightly. “Gerald, you still like me, right? I know that you

liked me from the very beginning when we first met. Isn't that right?"

Gerald could only tell her the truth. "Well, yes. Although you looked down on me from the very beginning, Xavia had just hurt me and broken my heart at that time. When I saw how beautiful you were, I really liked you. I felt that no matter how much you despised me and looked down on me, I was still very happy and excited to be able to see you. However, those feelings are already long gone. The only person in my heart right now is Mila. I really have to thank you!"

At that time, he had truly liked Alice for quite a while, and Gerald admitted it.

Alice did not feel good at all when she heard Gerald's words.

She had once had a very sincere relationship waiting right in front of her...

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Chapter 375

Gerald finally got rid of Alice. The crowd of people continued having fun and enjoying themselves.

As for Gerald, he could not tolerate everyone's questions and inquiries anymore. Hence, he could only come up with a reason to excuse himself in advance.

Anyway, he had already achieved his goal. Hayley's mother was staring at Harper as though he was a very precious person now.

Gerald then took a cab before he went back to the school directly.

“Sir, stop!” As soon as he arrived at the university gate, Gerald saw the scene before him, and he asked the driver to stop the car immediately.

It was almost night time now, and there were a few luxury cars parked at the roadside near the school gate.

They were several boys who looked like ruffians who were surrounding a girl who was trying to go back into the school. They were obviously trying to block her way, and they did not want to let her go.

The girl looked very angry, and she even slapped

one of the boys across his face.

They got more aggravated and violent at this time, and they looked as though they really wanted to hit her now.

The driver also looked at the situation over there, and he could not help but shake his head with a wry smile on his face. "Oh! Nowadays, some of the rich heirs only depend on the wealth and power of their families to do whatever they want. They are all lawless young people. Young man, if you know what is good for yourself, you should just stay out of this matter. There are some people that we simply cannot afford to offend!"

Gerald handed fifteen dollars over to the cab driver. After telling the cab driver that he did not need the change, he pushed the car door open before he stepped out of the car.

He started walking toward the girl who was being surrounded at this time.

The cab driver could not help but glance at Gerald's back with a little sympathy. "Oh, young lad! I wish you good luck!"

After that, the cab driver stepped on the accelerator and drove away immediately.

"Miss Giya, please do not make things difficult for

us. Our boss said that we have to invite you over there to have a drink with him today. There is nothing wrong with accompanying him for a drink, right?" Several young ruffians opened their arms as they surrounded Giya.

There were people passing by at this time, but no one dared to interfere in this matter.

Giya cursed coldly, "Go away! I do not know who your boss is! Why should I drink with him?"

"Haha! Miss Giya, our boss is Timothy Shen! You must have heard of him before. Speaking of it, Mr. Shen and you are really fated! Mr. Shen saw you once before at a business exchange meeting. He could not forget about you since then, but he did not manage to get your contact information. As a result, both of you really seem to be fated today. A young kid actually had your picture on his cell phone. When we asked him about you, we found out your whereabouts immediately. Mr. Shen has already set up a table for you. If you refuse to give him face, we will all be done for!" The ruffians said as they continued smiling.

Giya ground her teeth and said angrily, "Get lost! I already told you that I will not go with you! If you continue acting like this, I will call the police!"

"Cough! Cough! Since Miss Giya is being so

difficult, you are also putting us in a tough spot. We can only invite you to come with us by force, then. Don't worry. After you meet Mr. Shen, you will definitely fall in love with our capable boss! Hahaha!"

"Brothers! Drag Miss Giya into the car!"

After the leader of the ruffians was done speaking, two or three other men came up directly before they grabbed Giya's arms and started pulling her toward the car.

"What are you trying to do?! Let go of me! Help!" Giya shouted in panic.

She seemed to have heard of Timothy Shen before. It seemed as though he was related to some very powerful gang-related organization.

He was a hedonistic person who was always loafing around, and he had done things that were as disgusting as could be.

Giya did not know how or why he had set his sights on her, but she could already imagine what the consequences would be if she were to be dragged away!

She was struggling desperately at this time.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Suddenly, there were several loud and explosive

noises in succession!

After that, three of four ruffians were already bleeding from their heads.

The person who had rushed over was naturally none other than Gerald.

After he saw that the girl who was being harassed was Giya, he had gotten out of the car and searched for two thick and strong branches from the side of the road. He did not even care if someone would get hurt badly.

He started hitting them in their heads as soon as he came over.

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Chapter 376

There were about five ruffians in total.

In the blink of an eye, Gerald had already knocked four of them out.

“F*ck! Who are you?!” The leader of the pack panicked, and he immediately asked in surprise. “I’ll kill you!”

Gerald did not say anything, but he simply rushed forward to hit him.

It seemed as though the ruffian was already used to fighting. He picked up a brick from the side of the road as he fought with Gerald.

In the end, he could not defeat Gerald who was in a rage, and he could only flee in embarrassment.

“Gerald, you... you... are you alright?” Giya was also terrified at this time.

“I’m fine!” Gerald replied as he wiped the blood off from the corner of his mouth.

Giya suddenly burst out nervously, “Ah! Your head is bleeding!”

Gerald was bleeding slightly from his head because

he had been caught off guard just now, and the other party had launched a sneak attack on him.

“It’s just a small wound. Why did they come here to pester you?”

Gerald wiped the blood off his face. Today was the first time that he had ever fought like this.

Fortunately, he still had some strength in him. Moreover, Gerald was simply fighting without worrying about anything at all.

“I don’t know. I was just coming back to school today. They called me first to harass me, and then, they came to school to block my way. They were trying to force me to go and have dinner with that Timothy Shen, but I do not know him at all! I don’t know who gave him my contact information!”

When Giya looked at Gerald who had fought because of her, she could not help but feel very touched, and her eyes flushed red.

‘It must be that b*stard, Yacob!, Gerald cursed in his heart.

Of course Gerald knew about the cause of this matter today. Yacob had been taken away by Timothy earlier in the afternoon. Gerald did not know how the latter had taught the former a lesson, however, Gerald knew that since Timothy had set

his eyes on Giya, this must have something to do with Yacob!

Although Gerald had been avoiding Giya, he still regarded her as his friend.

This was especially so after finding out about what Giya had done for him but yet, he had stood her up so many times. Gerald had always felt a little guilty toward Giya. ①

This was the reason why Gerald did not hesitate to defend her and fight hard for her when he saw that she was in trouble today.

When Gerald saw that Giya was already fine, he wanted to go back to his dormitory to dress up his own wound.

However, Giya refused to let him go and insisted on going to the infirmary with him.

Along the way, Giya held onto Gerald's hand tightly.

He did not know what Giya was thinking about.

She had been very worried and nervous about Gerald a while ago, but before Gerald could say anything, Giya suddenly released Gerald's hand. She even asked him to go on his own.

Gerald was taken aback. "What's wrong?"

Giya replied, "It's okay. I was just thinking about

why I was so worried about you, and why I am still treating you so well now. After all, it does not seem like you treat me as your friend at all based on the way you treated me before this!”

Giya was suddenly very upset and filled with grievances. She then said, “You know, there were so many times when I personally prepared food for you at home and brought it to the library with me. I wanted us to be able to eat together at the cafeteria! I wanted to study with you too! However, it seems as though you have been avoiding me. Even when my mother fell ill, you did not even have a single word of concern! It was only then that I realized that I was overthinking it when I thought I was important to you. I thought that you would... treat me as a good friend, and I was even thinking... Forget it! It was all my own wishful thinking!”

“You should not have saved me today. I was already very sad because of you, but now, I have to feel grateful toward you again. What do you want from me?!” Giya asked as she stomped her feet in frustration.

Gerald replied, “I just don’t want you to get hurt. I truly regard you as my friend!”

Giya was also a very rare kind of girl. She was not materialistic and she was also very kind and beautiful. Moreover, she had always treated him

very well. Thus, of course Gerald regarded her as a friend.

“Okay, let me ask you something...” Giya said as she moved closer to Gerald, staring at him closely.

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Chapter 377

”What is it?”

“Tell me! Why were you avoiding me the other day? Tell me the truth! Is it possible that you already have a girlfriend?” Giya asked tentatively.

However, Giya already knew that Gerald came from a poor family background. It was just like what Tammy had said. This man was so boring, so how could he possibly have a girlfriend?!

“Well, yes! I have a girlfriend!” Gerald replied as he nodded.

It seemed as though Giya had also misunderstood them. Although Gerald was not narcissistic enough to think that someone like Giya would like him, he had indeed been avoiding her because of his own girlfriend!

Giya could not help but feel a little hurt for some reason. “What?! Are you lying to me?”

“I am not lying to you. I really do have a girlfriend. Her name is Mila, and she is from the Broadcasting and Hosting Department. We have already been a couple for more than two months now. She went to the Hong Kong Television Station to study two days

ago!” Gerald replied as he smiled. 3

“Oh! So, that’s it! That’s the reason why you have been avoiding me. It turns out that you actually have a girlfriend. Not bad. This shows that you really like your girlfriend a lot!” Giya replied.

“Yes. I like her very much, and she cares about me too!”

“Oh! Then you should go to the infirmary on your own! I will not accompany you anymore. Otherwise, your girlfriend will misunderstand us if she sees us together. Besides, I will also tell my dad about how you beat some people up for me. I will ask him to help settle this matter too. Goodbye!” Giya waved her hand before she turned around and left.

Gerald did not know why there was a sudden change in Giya’s attitude from the start to the end.

However, it did not matter to him. Anyway, since he was already almost at the infirmary, Gerald decided to go in and get his wound bandaged.

After his wounds had been dressed, he called Drake and Tyson and asked them to deal with the so-called Shen family.

Gerald had already become smarter after learning from his past mistakes. Now, as long as someone offended him, no matter how small things were,

Gerald liked to take the initiative to deal with the matter immediately.

This way, he would be able to save himself a lot of trouble.

After his wound had been bandaged, Gerald prepared to go back to his dormitory to lie down and sleep.

“Gerald!” At this time, someone pushed the door of the infirmary open.

It was Giya, and she came in with a bag of fruits in her hand.

“For you!” Giya said angrily.

In fact, Giya could not understand her own mental state at the moment.

Why?!

No matter how you looked at it, Giya did not need to treat Gerald like this at all.

However, feelings were sometimes incomprehensible and unpredictable.

Giya did not know when she had begun having strange feelings for Gerald.

Anyway, she just wanted to see him, get to know him better, and just be by his side.

Perhaps it was when Gerald had given her the jade bracelet. That jade bracelet was his family heirloom, and he had given it to her without any hesitation at all. Wasn't that equivalent to an indirect confession of his feelings for her?

Wasn't a confession an indirect promotion of feelings and affections?

Whether it was a stranger or a friend...

As long as the other party confesses, the relationship between the two parties would change very quickly.

If the other party did not hate the other person too much, the relationship between both parties would involuntarily become some kind of ambiguous feelings.

This was obviously what Giya was feeling now.

She was very grateful toward Gerald, and she was also very curious about him. After Gerald's confession, Giya could not help but imagine what it would feel like to be together with Gerald.

She felt that Gerald would probably be very good to her in every possible way.

However, this kind of expectation was completely opposed to reality. It made Giya, who was a very

competitive girl, want to fulfill her own expectations.

Of course, the premise of this whole process was that this person had already gotten the girl interested.

That was why Giya had gotten into Yacob's car yesterday—just to annoy Gerald.

There was also the sad little scene just now when Giya had found out that Gerald already had a girlfriend.

Even so, Giya went to buy some fruits back for Gerald!

“Oh! You went to buy fruits for me?” 1

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Gerald took the bag of fruits.

“I only bought it for you because you endured a beating for me. Don’t overthink it!” Giya replied as she looked at Gerald. “I do not want your girlfriend to overthink things if she finds out about this!”

“Haha! It’s okay! I did not think too much!” Gerald replied as he smiled.

“By the way, Gerald. Since you said that both of us are friends, let me ask you something. What do you think of Yacob?”

Gerald had already walked out of the infirmary at this time, and Giya was talking to him as both of them walked.

Yacob?

Hahaha. Gerald knew that this person was not a good person because it seemed as though he was one person on the surface, but another person behind her back.

What was more, he was even willing to betray Giya.

At this time, Gerald only shook his head slightly before he said, “I don’t think that he is a very good

person. Giya, as your friend, I would advise you to keep your distance from him in the future.”

“Why?” Giya asked angrily.

“Because he really does not deserve someone like you!”

“Why? I feel that Yacob really treats me very well! At least he will not make me upset or ignore me, letting me wait for him on my own! As long as I say the word, he will definitely appear right in front of me! I also believe that Yacob will be willing to do anything for me. So, why is he not good?” Giya retorted.

“Just trust me. I believe that even this matter with Timothy that you’ve gotten entangled in this time has something to do with Yacob. You’d better be careful!” Gerald did not want to say too much about Yacob’s matter today. After all, he did not see it with his own two eyes, so he did not know for certain.

However, he knew for sure that Yacob was not a good person. That was for certain.

However, Giya became very angry. “What do you mean by that? Do you mean that no one is actually really good for me? Do you mean that I will never be able to find a guy who is sincerely good to me? Is that what you mean?”

“That’s not what I mean!”

“I think that is exactly what you mean! Don’t worry! I will find a man who is really good to me soon. After that, I will bring him in front of you to show you that you are not the only one who is willing...” Giya had wanted to say that he was not the only one who was willing to do anything for her without any hesitation at all!

However, she suddenly recalled that Gerald already had a girlfriend. So, what was the point of saying all these things to him?!

As for Gerald, he did not know what else to say.

Hence, he could only say, “Then, I wish for you to be able to find a man who truly loves you as soon as possible!”

“Thank you!” After that, Giya took a deep breath before she turned around to leave.

“I can’t finish all of these fruits by myself. Would you like to take some back with you to your dormitory to eat?”

“No need! If you cannot finish eating it, give it to me!” After she was done speaking, Giya grabbed the bag of fruits from Gerald before throwing it into the trash can directly next to them.

“Also, as a friend, I also hope that you will not give

your most precious and valuable possession to other girls so casually in the future. This is because you will cause the other girl to misunderstand you very easily. Of course, I will not misunderstand you, but other girls you meet in the future might inevitably misunderstand you!”

After saying that, Giya left immediately.

As for Gerald, he finally understood everything.

It turned out that Giya had been talking about the jade bracelet. Well, if he would have known that this would happen, he would not have lied in the first place.

Gerald returned to his dormitory and lay down on his bed to rest.

They would be having their exams tomorrow. As for the future, who would be able to tell what was going to happen?

Gerald was about to sleep when he suddenly received a few WeChat messages on his cell phone.

[Are you sleeping? I still want to talk to you. I can't sleep!]

[I feel as though I was a little too much today. I should not have thrown the fruits into the trash can like that!]

[But I was really angry at that time!]

[Gerald, are you there?]

[...]

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Chapter 379

[Should we have a meal together at noon after our exams tomorrow? Okay? I will be waiting for you!]

Giya sent a series of text messages to Gerald.

Gerald naturally saw all of her messages.

After thinking about it, he replied: [Thanks, but I will not be going. I have to rush home as soon as our exams are over!]

Due to the scattered examination schedule, Gerald had already sat for some of his exams before this. There were only two more subjects for the so-called final exams tomorrow morning.

Additionally, he did not want to have too many interactions with Giya anymore.

He replied to her directly before he turned off his cell phone so that he could rest earlier.

The next day, Gerald completed his exams for all of his subjects.

After that, he packed his luggage and put his blanket into another snakeskin bag.

Zack had initially planned to send a special car over

to take Gerald to Serene County.

After all, the project in Serene County had already begun progressing ever since the phone call yesterday.

Zack and Michael who stayed behind were naturally busy and had to get things done back and forth.

However, Gerald did not want to be so high profile.

After all, the first thing that he would have to do after going back to Serene County would be to visit Mr. and Mrs. Winters.

As for the investment matters, Zack and Michael could deal with it themselves.

Moreover, since they had three months of summer vacation, Gerald wanted to settle down to read a book or learn something.

Once his summer vacation was over, he would have to begin his internship.

He would truly be very busy then. Hence, he should just relax when he could now!

After turning on his cell phone, he received another message from Giya on WeChat.

Gerald replied: [I have already returned to my hometown. Goodbye!]

[Oh! Alright, then! I will not disturb you anymore!]

Gerald did not reply, and Giya did not continue talking anymore.

Anyway, Gerald thought that he would not see her again in the future anymore, right?

As he sat in the bus, Gerald felt that he rarely had the opportunity to look at the scenery outside the window quietly.

He could not help but feel a little melancholic.

As he thought about it, it had just been a few months ago when Gerald had taken the bus, and he only had two hundred dollars on him. At that time, he was thinking about how he was going to deal with his tuition fee and his life in the future.

Moreover, it would be Xavia's birthday soon. How was he going to save up enough money to buy her a birthday present?

He could still remember that it had been raining heavily when he took the bus to school that day, and he had been sitting in the bus by himself. Xavia did not forget to call him to tell him that she had already arrived at school and was waiting to have dinner with him.

She said that she had brought some delicious food with her from home.

At that time, Xavia was still a pretty good girl.

But this time around, he was going back by bus, and so many things had already happened.

He had found out that he was a rich heir—the exceptionally rich kind!

As for Xavia, she had also changed completely, and both of them had also broken up.

However, one thing remained the same. When he had been going back to school a few months ago, he had been thinking about how he was going to spend his money.

Now that he was going home, he was still thinking about how he was going to spend his money!

Hahaha!

Gerald continued staring out the window in a trance.

“Gerald?”

At this time, a female voice suddenly rang next to him.

This person had obviously recognized Gerald.

Gerald turned his head to look around and saw a beautiful woman who was about twenty-five to twenty-six years old sitting on the seat next to the bus aisle.

She was wearing light makeup on her face, and she

was also very beautiful.

“Miss Lewis?” Gerald really did not expect to see a familiar face on the bus.

Moreover, this person was his high school English teacher.

Her name was Montana Lewis, and she had been a substitute English teacher in high school. She had taught Gerald for two years and was very young and beautiful. She had just graduated from university at that time, but she could teach in high school because of her family connections.

There was a reason why Gerald had such a deep impression of her.

It was because Miss Lewis had the characteristics of all the young and modern girls. ①

For example, she would always be dressed in a very revealing manner. Back then, she would wear a miniskirt and crop top which revealed her belly button while teaching her students.

Everyone also knew that she had found a particularly rich boyfriend because of her beauty. Her boyfriend had even bought her an Audi A6! That was very impressive!

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Of course, her most notable feature was her love for the rich and her disdain for the poor.

She was almost the same as Cassandra, his current teacher.

Rich students were like their close friends and buddies.

If you had no money or power, you could just go and die wherever you wanted to.

Sometimes, her words were also very cruel and heartbreaking. That was the reason why Gerald had a very deep impression of her.

“Oh my God! This is such a coincidence. This is the first time that I’m taking a bus since I was young, but to think I would run into you now!”

Montana replied as she smiled wryly.

It seemed as though she was afraid people would misunderstand her and think that she took the bus often.

“Montana, who is he? Is he one of your students?”
A handsome young man in a suit asked as he sat next to Montana.

“Yes. I’ve told you about it before. I used to have a very poor student in my class. He would always bring two steamed buns and a bag of pickles to school every day. Moreover, he would only eat one meal a day! Do you remember?”

“Oh! Yes, I remember!”

“That’s right! This is him. Speaking of which, I have not seen him for almost three years now! He got into a pretty good university. He went to study at Mayberry University! Oh! There was a boy named James Laurie in our class at that time. In fact, everything about that kid was very good. Unfortunately, he did not manage to get into a good university. He should have been admitted into Mayberry University, but he did not. Instead, some people who should not have gotten into the university got admitted. Seriously!” Montana said in dissatisfaction. 2

“Nevertheless, Gerald, I haven’t seen you in two to three years. It seems as though your temperament has already improved quite a lot. You no longer have the inferiority complex that you used to have before. It seems as though the big city has done you some good!” Montana said lightly.

Gerald replied, “Thank you, Miss Lewis. You are also much more beautiful compared to before!”

To be honest, he had a very bad impression of Montana.

However, it did not matter, because no matter what it was, she was still his teacher after all. There was no reason for him to hold a feud against her.

“Hehehe! You’ve also learned how to sweet-talk. To be honest, you should be more pragmatic and honest. Don’t learn to say these things like other people do. Moreover, even when you compliment me, I don’t feel like it’s a compliment when it is coming from your mouth!” Montana insulted him directly.

If someone rich praised you, that meant that you were impressive, but when a poor person praised you, you would not feel any sense of accomplishment at all.

This was simple.

Gerald could not help but think this to himself.

Anyhow, he decided to change the topic. “Miss Lewis, where did the both of you go?”

“Hehehe! We traveled abroad. Otherwise, why else do you think we are coming back by bus? Seriously. Anyway, you would not understand even if I told you!” Montana replied as she held the arm of the man in the suit affectionately.

Gerald simply nodded.

When he saw that Montana was no longer looking at him, he stopped talking as well. After that, he turned his head around before he continued looking out the window.

The bus arrived at Serene County shortly after.

The passengers got out of the bus, one after the other.

Gerald also carried his own luggage down before he got ready to hail a cab to go home.

Montana and her boyfriend were sharing the same luggage, and it seemed as though neither one of them wanted to carry the luggage. “Well, isn’t Gerald here anyway? We can just ask him to carry our luggage to the exit of the station, then. How can your driver be late at a time like this? You shouldn’t let him off just like that!”

It seemed as though they felt that they would lose face if they were to carry it.

When Montana saw Gerald, she hurriedly waved at him.

“Gerald, come here and help us lift this luggage! I cannot lift it!”

Montana did not wait for Gerald to speak and she

simply pushed her luggage in front of him. ①

‘Can’t lift it? If you can’t lift it, you can just wait to die then!’ Gerald could not help but curse in his heart. However, as he thought about it, he would not lose anything even if he helped his teacher carry her luggage. ②

Therefore, he carried his own luggage in one hand as he carried the other two parties’ luggage in his other hand. After that, he walked behind them as they walked out of the station.

“Dear, do you think that your family can get the investment for the Serene County financing this time? If you can get it, you will really be rich! Hahaha! At that time, Serene County will also become a city in the future! I am so excited!”

Montana gushed as she held onto her boyfriend’s arm with one hand.

Her boyfriend replied proudly, “Haha. That will not be an issue. My dad’s company is considered to have the highest potential in the whole Serene County!”

“Eh? Why are there so many cars parked outside the station? These are all private cars in the county. It seems as though these leaders are all here to pick someone up, right?”

“Yes! Isn’t that Sir Herring Jenkins? He is here as

well?”

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Chapter 381

“Sir Herring Jenkins is the head of the county. Who on earth could make him wait at the bus station?”

Montana could not mask her surprise.

Was it that rich dude from the city?

No way. Why would someone as rich as him come here by bus?

“Wait here; I’ll go say hi!”

Montana’s boyfriend straightened his suit and tidied up his hair.

He was ready to go over.

“But Jonathan, will this work? Will Mr. Jenkins pay any attention to you?”

Montana couldn’t help but worry.

“I guess so. After all, he knows my dad too, and I’ve had dinner with him twice.”

Jonathan reassured Montana and headed over to the other side.

Montana, however, didn’t dare go with him. The other side was filled with big shots, and several

heads of the Ministry of Education were also present.

As a fellow staff member, of course, Montana didn't possess the courage to approach them.

As for Jonathan, he went and came back quickly.

While there, he looked very proud, thinking that he had a chance to stand out among the crowd if he just greeted everyone.

But when he came back, he was dejected and his face the color of an eggplant.

"Huh? What happened, Jonathan? Did the mayor ignore you? Ugh, I told you so didn't I? better not go over where all the big shots are!"

"Mmhhh, it seems like the mayor and the others are indeed waiting for someone's arrival, someone important. I heard them talking about a Mr. Crawford, the one about to bring a massive change to the entire Serene Town! He's a big boss, but something isn't right. If it really is Mr. Crawford, why would he come here by bus?"

Jonathan was confused.


"Hmm, the mayor probably did not tell you the truth. Let's go now. The few heads from the Ministry of Education are also there," said Montana in a hurry.

Jonathan simply nodded.

He hoped that Mr. Crawford could speed up his journey as well.

Gerald had been following from behind and heard them mentioning his name. Could they have come here to pick him up, he thought to himself.

But he had already told Zack Lyle not to turn his arrival into some grand event. He simply wanted to return home and get his own stuff sorted out, and he wanted to stay out of it.

Right now, though, it was a bad time for Gerald to go over and ask them. 

He pretended that nothing happened.

His hands were full of Montana and Jonathan's luggage. Her driver stopped in front of them as soon as they exited the Station.

“The heat is killing me! Jon, get the luggage inside, and let's leave!”

Montana rudely snapped at the driver.

After putting their luggage inside, Jonathan and Montana got into the car, and the driver drove away.

Gerald was left alone at the station with his luggage on the side, looking like an idiot.

He might be just a servant, but the least they could do was to greet him, right?

Inside the car, Jonathan looked at the rear-view mirror and saw Gerald, now standing stupidly at their pickup spot. He felt a little sorry for him.

“Montana, I forgot to greet that classmate of yours. We should’ve at least asked where he was heading and perhaps give him a lift, right?”

“Forget about him. We’re not giving him a lift. He’s just pathetic, and we’re not going to risk soiling our car because of him!”

“Alright then.”

Cursing Montana under his breath, Gerald decided to call home and prepared to leave.

On the way back, he remembered to give Mr. Winters a call.

He wanted to tell them not to make him any food as he would take away something on the way back.

The phone back home rang for quite a while, yet no one picked up.

He called three times until someone finally picked up the phone. A faint, weak voice came on the other side of the line.

“Hello? May I know who you are looking for?”

“Mrs. Winters, it’s Gerald here. May I know where Mr. Winters is?”

“Oh, Gerald? You’re back for your break, huh?”

Mrs. Winters sounded a little surprised.

Back when they were kids, Jessica and Gerald were both raised by Mr. and Mrs. Winters.

It was why the siblings had an incredibly deep affection for the old couple, treating them as their own grandparents.

In the past few years, Jessica was the first to rise to the top. Since Gerald still had to support his poor self, he could not provide Mr. and Mrs. Winters a comfortable life. The only thing he could do was give them financial aid discreetly.

So basically, Mr. Winters and his family still retained their original lives.

After Jessica received news that Gerald was about to have a break, the first thing she thought of was helping Mr. Winters and his family settle down.

Gerald would never forget about him.

Chapter 382

“Ahem, Mr. Winters was hospitalized this afternoon. I’d just come back to pack some clothes when I heard the phone ringing.”

“What? Hospitalized? Which hospital?”

Hearing Mrs. Winters’s gloomy tone, Gerald’s heart thumped in his chest. He hastily asked for the hospital’s location.

Mrs. Winters told him the address.

It happened to be at a hospital in the same county.

Mrs. Winters also happened to arrive at the same time after hitching a ride on one of the county’s bread trucks.

Gerald assisted her down from the truck before rushing to the emergency room in one of the hospital’s buildings.

Mr. Winters had apparently suffered from cardiovascular problems and passed out while having his lunch.

The incident gave her a big scare, and she immediately called for an ambulance. Now, the doctors were still doing all they could to save his

life.

“Why are we the only ones paying for his hospital bills? Big brother, he’s our dad... your dad, so you’ll have to chip in too.”

In the emergency room doorway, a woman with textured, caterpillar-like eyebrows was speaking to a couple.

Opposite her were also several couples with young children.

Upon closer inspection, Gerald realized they were Mr. Winters’s two sons and daughters.

Those young children were his grandkids.

After hearing of the incident, they had apparently rushed to the hospital as well.

“My brothers and sisters, what you said wasn’t exactly accurate. You’ve all been living with dad the longest, and I’ve always been out, busy with business; as for the bills, I’m only asking you to settle in advance. Never have I mentioned once that I’ll make you pay for it all, so calm down! At the end of the day, the four of us will split the bill equally!”

The eldest of the bunch had always been out managing his business. He crossed his arms, taking a drag from a cigarette.

“Why should the four of us pay an equal share of

the bill? Both of you brothers are the eldest of the family, so it only makes sense that you foot a little more. Sister and I should pay the lesser part.

Besides, my daughter just graduated from university this year, and she's getting an internship soon. I'll need some money for that!"

The third sister was disgruntled.

Gerald understood that they were somehow fighting over the medical bills.

And when Mrs. Hayward heard the fight brewing among the siblings, she was so angry she almost fainted. 1

"Can you guys stop arguing for once?! If none of you are going to pay, I'll pay for it, even if it costs me a kidney. Are you happy now?"

Mrs. Winters stomped her foot in exasperation and frustration.

"Calm down, mom. Didn't you use up most of your savings to help your grandson start his own business?" quizzed the second eldest son.

"How much are the medical bills?"

Gerald finally spoke up.

"Huh? Gerald is back?"

Only then did the crowd notice Gerald.

“Hmph! Why did you even bother asking? It’s not like you’ve got the money anyway!” a young lady named Queeny Winters snapped coldly. She was the same age as Gerald.

During their childhood, Mr. Winters had always been more fond of Gerald compared to Queeny. As a result, she was dissatisfied. What grandparents would care more for a poor kid rather than their own granddaughter?

“Stop pretending to be something you’re not and start showing us what you can do,” interjected Clifton Winters, the other youngster who had just set up his own enterprise.

Like Queeny, he despised Gerald all the same.

His hate stemmed from Gerald getting good grades since he was a kid, and his grandparents had often compared him to Gerald. As time went by, his jealousy slowly turned into hatred.

As for Gerald, he knew that Queeny and Clifton disliked him since the beginning.

Yet, he did not say anything.

It was then that a nurse approached them.

“May I know when the surgery fee will be paid? The total is 20,000 dollars, and I suppose all of you can

afford it, right?”

The nurse droned on with a tone of indifference.

“Listen to me, brother. Settle it now. I’ll give you the money later,” said the eldest brother.

“And why should I listen to you?”

“ ... ”

Soon, the jabs against each other that had supposedly mellowed down boiled up into a heated quarrel all over again.

The second daughter-in-law and the third sister had joined the quarrel. They even brought up past issues, saying something about how the second-daughter-in-law owed money to the third sister.

Then, the entire scene turned chaotic.

Everything was a royal mess.

The nurse didn’t even try hiding the scowl that had grown across her face.

“I’ll pay,” Gerald whispered to the nurse as he shook his head in helplessness.

“You?”

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The nurse led Gerald downstairs to pay at the counter, though she felt somewhat skeptical about him.

What then could be the reason for her doubts?

It was all because of the way Gerald dressed. He didn't look like one that would have much money on him.

The medical bill came up to 20,000 dollars, almost impossible for the average family to fork out, let alone someone like him.

Gerald proved her wrong, though. He paid the 20,000 dollars for the surgical fee and even settled the accommodation as well.

It was a whopping 30,000 dollars in total!

He paid for everything without even batting an eyelid.

The nurse was stunned, unable to move.

Gerald paid no attention to her and walked back to the hallway.

They were still fighting.

“Everyone, stop fighting, I’ve settled the bills,” said Gerald.

“Huh???”

Only then did the fight die down.

The siblings were stupefied when they heard that.

“You paid for everything? Gerald, it was 20,000 dollars! Where did you get the money from?” asked the eldest brother in astonishment.

“Well, not just 20,000 dollars, but this handsome lad paid 30,000 dollars, including the hospital bills!”

Unbeknownst to Gerald, the nurse had followed him all the way here.

“30,000 dollars?!”

The crowd became even more surprised.

In a worse state were Queenie and Clifton were even more embarrassed, considering how they kept mocking Gerald before this. Now, he had really forked out the money. They felt as if they had been slapped on the face, one hard slap after another.

“The money wasn’t stolen, right?” Clifton asked with a twisted face.

“Yeah, I remember an online news site reporting how someone lost their money! Gerald, did you

happen to find that money and not return it?”

“It must have been it! Beware, someone might just call the police on you. That 30,000 dollars might just land you a death sentence!” Clifton warned viciously.

After all, he owned an entire enterprise, and it wasn't surprising that he knew such things.

It was also precisely these words that scared Mrs. Winters.

“Gerald, where did you get that much money from anyway?”

“Oh, I just won the lottery, so there's nothing to worry about, Mrs. Winters!” replied Gerald, smiling slightly.

Although there was no reason for him to conceal his identity, he simply didn't know what to tell Mrs. Winters.

Instead, he panicked and ended up lying.

Queenie and Clifton's eyes opened wide the moment they heard that.

Especially Queenie.

“How much did you win?” she asked in an anxious hurry.

Mr. Winters's eldest sons, the adults, thought that

it was quite bold that a young girl like Queenie would ask such direct questions. She simply couldn't suppress her suspicions.

Mr. Winters had always said Gerald was a nice young man, and he intended for them both to be betrothed.

But who would like a poor guy like Gerald?

So, Queenie rejected him.

When she heard Gerald say that he had won the lottery, she felt a jolt run through her body.

Holy sh*t! If he really did become a wealthy man, would that mean she missed her shot?

“Quick, tell me, Gerald. How much did you win?”

Queenie jumped to her feet.

Gerald simply laughed, while showing five fingers,

“Huh? Half a million?” Queenie stared in shock.

On the other hand, Mrs. Winters was delighted by the news.

“What? You really won half a million dollars?!”

“Don't worry about it, auntie. Just relax. I've already paid for uncle's medical bills.”

Gerald helped Mrs. Winters sit down.

On the other hand, Queenie felt super anxious, as though a swarm of ants was crawling all over her heart.

What could she do now?

From Gerald's tone alone, he seemed to have won a lot more than just half a million.

Could it be five million?

Gosh!

The more she thought about it, the more anxious she became. Thanks to Gerald getting ridiculed a while ago, he had chosen to conceal the specific value and make them guess instead.

For the next two days, Gerald didn't go anywhere, staying by Mr. Winters' side all the time in the hospital. The good news was that his condition was not serious, and he only needed to stay in the hospital for a while.

During lunchtime, he first waited for Mr. and Mrs. Winters to finish their meals.

When his belly started grumbling, he headed to the hospital's cafeteria to get himself something to eat.

“Aren't you, Gerald? You're back!”

While he was queueing up for food, he felt a sudden

tap on his shoulder.

When he looked back, he saw a beautiful girl, all made up and wearing a ponytail.

But even with the makeup on, Gerald still recognized her.

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Chapter 384

“You’re Morgana Lopez?”

Gerald was a little surprised.

Of course, he knew her. She was from the same class in high school and even representative of the English class. Her name was Morgana Lopez.

During their high school years, she was pretty yet looked normal at the same time.

But he hadn’t seen her for three to four years, and all dolled up, she looked really hot and beautiful.

The metamorphosis was pretty evident.

In fact, he was mentally prepared to bump into high school classmates long before he returned to his hometown.

After all, the ones that should be working had already gone to work.

“I saw your picture taken by Montana Lewis in our English class representatives’ group today. You were carrying a duffel bag, so I knew you were back. I didn’t expect to meet you here... what a coincidence!”

Morgana straightened her hair.

Even after graduation, it was common for some teachers to leave behind their contacts to stay in touch with class representatives.

F*ck! Gerald was stunned.

Since when did Montana take a picture of him, and how on earth did he not come to know?

His guess was that she must have taken the picture after she got off the bus.

After all, she did yell at him to bring over her luggage while she was holding her phone at that time, so he guessed it must have been then.

F*ck. That b*tch...

As rude as it may seem, Gerald still cursed in his heart.

“By the way, why are you in the hospital? Someone you know got admitted?”

Morgana had a quick chat with Gerald. Last time, they did not talk quite as much, but now, it seemed she had grown wiser after mingling within society.

“Yeah, my uncle got admitted here. How about you? Seeing someone?” Gerald asked.

“Oh, I’ve got lots of patients here. Say hello to your uncle later for me. I sincerely hope it all goes well

for him!”

Morgana smiled.

“Oh, I understand now. You must be a doctor here, right?” Gerald asked.

“Yeah, I’m here under probation, and in a short while, I’ll become a full-time doctor here!”

Morgana said with a touch of pride.

“That’s great!”

Morgana’s family seemed to have some connections with the hospital, but that wasn’t unorthodox.

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Finding connections was a pretty common thing to do when students were nearing their graduation.

Those with connections would rely on them, and those without connections would need to rely on miracles.

It was nothing surprising.

It was time for Gerald to make his order.

“You don’t have to order anything. Let me treat you to lunch today. Miss, two servings for us, please!”

Morgana hollered to the canteen lady, and she soon filled up both of their plates with delicious food.

The meal was sumptuous and mouth-watering.

“Well, we were classmates in high school, and we haven’t seen each other for quite some time now, so you won’t mind me buying you lunch, right?”

Morgana covered her mouth a little, chucking.

“Now, why would I? Thank you so much for the food! It looks absolutely fantastic!”

The two then took their seats.

Morgana started off the conversation by introducing herself and what she’d been doing for the past two years. It might have seemed like some innocent catching up, but what she really wanted was to show off a little bit. Nonetheless, she was still more comfortable to get along with than the other classmates.

Gerald merely listened, occasionally inserting praises with a few words.

At that time, a young male doctor in a white lab coat walked towards Morgana.

“Who’s this?”

“Oh, this is a friend from high school. I ran into him here, so I treated him to lunch! Hey Gerald, let me introduce my boyfriend to you. This is Gabriel Lyons. He’s the one I told you about, and his dad is the hospital’s vice president.”

Morgana smiled.

“Ahh! A high school classmate of yours. Wouldn't it be better to get him a proper restaurant meal than in our cafeteria? You both can catch up properly then,” said Gabriel, smiling.

“Ahem. I still have to work this afternoon, so how would I find any time for that? Besides, you don't mind the cafeteria food, right, Gerald?”

“Of course, I don't! The food here is pretty good,” Gerald nodded as he shoved two big mouthfuls of potatoes down his throat.

To Gerald, it was actually alright that things turned out this way.

For the remainder of the meal, he listened to Gabriel and Montana ramble on. ①

“Right, didn't you have a few more high school classmates coming here tonight? I think it's Cameron Laver and the others. They're back for their break, and it looks like you have to be on duty tonight,” said Gabriel.

“Really? Then I guess I have to reschedule my shift for a later time. Cameron and his group were my best buddies during high school, and now that they're here on break, I've to treat them as well. Even if I have to take a day off. I haven't seen them for four

years now... Oh, by the way, did you book the restaurant?" Morgana asked.

"Yep, I booked Johnsbury Bistro for tonight!"

"Nah... that restaurant is too ordinary. How about Buntingford Grand Hotel?" After all, we haven't seen each other since we left high school, that's four years now. You're not going to make me look too shabby in front of them, are you?"

"Alright, then. That's changed. By the way, when are you going to get the other directors for a meal to settle this? You know that your director is the hospital's chief, and there's nothing my father can do about it."

Gabriel laughed bitterly.

"Urgh, why did you bring up the matter? I've just lost my appetite! I can't swallow another bite of this!"

Morgana slammed her fork onto the table in anger.

From what he had heard, Gerald guessed that Morgana had to be in some sort of trouble...

Chapter 385

“Hmph! Why did he make the other intern a permanent doctor and not me? It’s just as I’ve said before. He isn’t giving face to your father at all! Doesn’t he know we are both seeing each other? He made the other intern a full-time doctor and ignored me instead!”

Morgana was so enraged that her fork almost slammed into the table again.

Gabriel tried to console her.

Gerald listened as he ate, and he could almost understand what happened.

The gist of it was that Morgana Lopez’s entry into the hospital as an intern clinician had been arranged by Gabriel’s father, the hospital’s vice president.

Of course, Morgana was really good at her job, where she was very professional and was very proficient with her skills. Many hospital staff and patients had unanimously commended her.

Gabriel’s father, however, seemed to be at odds with the director.

In the end, Morgana became the victim of the

conflict between the two.

She suspected it would be a little more than challenging to become a permanent doctor her, and if her probation didn't end well, the only obvious choice was to leave the hospital.

Her spot had been given to another intern from the director's side, but that one seemed to perform way worse than Morgana.

It was apparent that the director deliberately wanted to embarrass Gabriel's father.

Now, things had become quite upsetting for them.

It was highly possible that things wouldn't work out in their favor.

Thus, it was the reason why Morgana wanted to have a night out with Cameron and the others.

Gerald knew who Cameron and his gang were since they were from the same class in high school.

Cameron's dad worked in a hospital, and his mother in the health bureau.

In short, they were going to have a discussion on the matter later.

Gerald felt uncomfortable and awkward as he listened to their conversation.

He quickly finished his food.

“You’re done? Have you eaten enough? See, I’ve got a lot going on here, so don’t take this at heart, alright?”

Morgana asked the question blandly. It didn’t sound as warm as it did before.

These days, most people were only polite for the first few minutes. When that time was up, their real character would emerge from within.

“It’s okay, and by the way, Morgana, did you just say you were having a hard time at work? Don’t worry too much, and just relax. I believe everything will turn out just fine!”

Gerald couldn’t finish his lunch and just leave like that.

He could, however, give her a reassuring word or two.

Gerald even thought that if he could help her, he was more than willing to help out.

Although he could tell that Morgana didn’t really see much in him, the fact that she invited him for a meal, regardless of whether expensive or not, was what friendship was all about.

As a result, Gerald sought to help and return the favor.

“Thank you, Gerald. Right, tell me the room number to your uncle’s ward, and I’ll have Gabriel go over and say hello.”

“Alright!”

Gerald told them the ward number.

Without interrupting Morgana and Gabriel, he walked out of the cafeteria to go look after Mr. Winters.

At the same time, he called Zack, seeing if he could pull some strings to help Morgana be a permanent doctor in this hospital.

It wasn’t a big deal anyway.

Not only did Gerald’s long-term investment plan include free-market industries, but it also included many of Serene Town’s business establishments.

Hospitals and educational sectors were also part of that investment plan.

“By the way, Gerald, I wonder if you’re free tonight?”

Zack asked just as they were about to hang up the call.

“Why, what’s wrong?”

“Well... the head of Serene Town County knew you

had returned for a few days. It was all my fault, I let slip of it when I was drinking, and they even went to the station specifically just to greet you. Now, they've set up a welcoming party for you, and they wanted to know if you would attend the party?"

"If it's in the evening... Fine, I'll go!"

That feeling in his gut was right, all along. They were indeed there at the station to pick him up.

Frankly, Gerald felt quite bad for leaving them disappointed.

As for the welcoming party, even if he didn't feel like going, they would just keep pestering him anyway. 1

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Chapter 386

So, he agreed to go.

In the afternoon, once Mr. Winters finally slept off, Gerald left for the party.

It would be held in Cape Grace Hotel, somewhere around Serene Town county.

Attracting investors had always been a top priority for the region, and this time, much thought had been put in to make it as grand as they could.

Even many business owners of Serene Town County would be attending.

Zack and Micheal arrived first since Gerald had to look after Mr. Winters.

Gerald stood at the entrance, ready to enter the hotel.

Beside him, a car pulled up at the parking space. A couple came out of the car, arm in arm.

The woman was dressed elegantly and formally, and the man had a suit on him.

“Oh my, we should’ve left earlier. Look at the time now!” complained the woman.

“Hmph, why is it always my fault? You were the one taking hour upon hour to put that makeup on! My dad even called a couple of times to hurry us since Mr. Crawford will be arriving. It’ll be an embarrassment if we are late!” retorted the man.

The couple was none other than Montana and her husband, Jonathan.

“Stop squabbling, let’s get inside!” said Jonathan.

Suddenly, he glanced over his shoulder and saw that a boy had also entered the hotel. He pointed at him in surprise.

“Montana, look! Isn’t that one of your students? Is that Gerald?”

“Wait; what? Your eyes must be playing with y... f*ck, it is him!”

Montana was startled, and by the look of her face, she was seriously taken aback this time.

“Gerald! Stop right there!”

Just as Gerald was ready to enter the hotel, he heard someone calling out to him. He looked back, and by incredible coincidence, it was Montana.

“Ms. Lewis, what a coincidence!”

Gerald greeted with a smile.

Quite frankly, he wanted to kick Montana badly on the kneecaps twice.

“We’re surprised you asked us... do you even know what this place is? They’re planning a grand event, so what are you doing here?” asked Montana, crossing her arms.

Without waiting for his reply, Montana looked as if she realized something.

“I see; you’re here to work, right? Wow, Gerald, I didn’t know you had quite the eye for the finer things! Cape Grace Hotel will be quite busy tonight, so you must’ve smelled your opportunity, huh? Not bad!”

Montana smirked and nodded slowly.

“Okay, work well. I’ll remember to spare you a tip!”

Montana patted Gerald’s shoulder. She then grabbed Jonathan’s hand and went into the hotel.

Hehe...

“Just wait and see, I’m going to make you cry, you b *stards!” Gerald laughed and shook his head.

He took a step into the venue.

The dining hall was packed tonight.

Gerald held his hands behind his back, scouring the

crowd for Zack and Michael.

Suddenly, he felt his face pelted by a small object.

F*ck! Who was that? That person must have been really bored, huh?

Gerald turned and saw Morgana sitting by a table, covering her mouth and giggling behind it.

Several young ladies sat next to her, and they all looked like they knew each other quite well.

They all looked at Gerald and laughed together.

“Stop standing there like a dummy. Get over here!”

Montana shouted at Gerald. 1

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Chapter 387

Gerald frowned, unhappy, but he walked over to their table anyway.

“Whoa, Madam Lewis, is this one of your students? He looks pretty good... hey, why isn't he in a uniform?” said a woman next to Montana.

“Yeah, look, all the waiters here are in their uniforms, and he's the only one not wearing it!”

“I guess he must be the handyman then. He'll work wherever there's work to be done, so he should be a temporary worker.”

Montana tried to find a reasonable explanation.

“Haha yeah, come here, little guy, come to my side. There's an empty seat beside me. Come sit and have a chat!”

“Yeah, little cutie, don't be shy! It's a rare chance to dine among so many rich and young CEO today, so you've got to appreciate your time here!”

In their late twenties, a few women saw how Gerald looked quite handsome and cute, and they tried to tease him.

Montana rolled her eyes.

“What are you staring at? Can’t you see that they’ve asked you to sit down?! Are you that dumb? Four years of college for nothing!”

In the end, Gerald could not resist the invitation. 2

He was feeling good tonight, so he chose to sit with them for a little while. He would then cross over to Zack’s table once he spotted him.

Still, he was a little annoyed, mostly because Montana had been incessantly abusing him with insults.

Why?

For the sake of their teacher-student relationship, Gerald did everything that she asked had him to do, yet he didn’t even get a single thank you.

Now, she had been mocking him ever since they stepped into the place.

Gerald was supposed to attend the welcoming party. Instead, he became the ladies’ laughing stock.

He preferred to remain low-profile, but it certainly didn’t mean he was easy to be made fun of.

Unperturbed, he sat down immediately.

“Hmph, you really are pathetic and gullible, aren’t you? I can’t believe you sat down after being told to

do so!”

Once again, Montana rudely jeered at Gerald.

It made the women giggle in glee.

These ladies were the wealthy spouses of Serene Town’s business elite, their husbands’ moguls involved in Mayberry’s top corporations.

Montana, on the other hand, was just a substitute teacher.

As a result, she endlessly flattered them on some occasions, hoping she could tag along too.

Seeing that everyone was so happy, she was even more eager.

Thwack!

Montana slapped the back of Gerald’s head.

“Why don’t you get up and pour some wine for Libby and the others? Think you’re some rich heir now?!”

Everyone at the table burst into fits of laughter.

Gerald remained silent, standing up and pouring everyone a glass of wine. ①

However, when it was Montana’s turn, Gerald deliberately shook the bottle, aggressively pouring its contents without the slightest care.

Shaking his hands, he spilled the wine directly on Montana's abdomen.

Now, her dress was full of wine.

“Ugh! Holy sh*t! My skirt!” Montana screamed.

“Gerald, do you even know how to pour wine??? Do you want to die?! Any idea how much I paid for this dress?”

Montana was enraged.

The party was about to start in a second, and there was no way she could meet people in this state.

Yet, Gerald looked like a numbskull.

She thought Gerald was a brat who had never attended any such events, so he was naturally careless and clumsy.

But she was the one who made him do it anyway, so all she could do was hold her tongue and save her curses.

“I was wrong... this is my mistake. I should never have let you sit here from the beginning! If I didn't, my skirt wouldn't have gotten dirty!”

“Oh gosh, what are you standing there for? I'm heading to the toilet. Hurry up and get me some tissue!”

Since her boyfriend was at another table chatting with some elders, and it would be weirdly unattractive just to go the get tissue by herself, she poked Gerald's head instead.

“Alright!”

Gerald smirked as he looked at Montana. He nodded and followed Montana to the toilet.

“F*ck! I told you to get me a box of tissue! What the f*ck am I going to do with just one piece?”

Montana was in a blurred rage.

The sink was universal, and both the men's and women's washrooms were located beside it.

At that moment, a girl came out of the washroom.

She happened to walk over to the sink to wash her hands.

Chapter 388

“Huh? Miss Lewis? Why are you here?”

The girl was surprised.

“Morgana, why are you here at Cape Grace? Didn't you say you were hanging out tonight with the group at Buntingford Grand Hotel?”

Morgana was surprised as well.

Morgana, the girl Montana chose as the class representative, and now a doctor at the county hospital!

“Forget about it. The hotel is closed for a few days, so we came to Cape Grace, but it seems they have some kind of event today. Luckily, we booked early, or we wouldn't have gotten a place!”

Morgana shrugged, grumbling away.

She seemed to have not noticed Gerald, who was just standing by her side.

“Miss Lewis, how could you have been so careless? You've got red wine all over your clothes!” asked Morgana.

“Hmph! Don't even ask. I'm here for a business

event, and it was all because of that bastard Gerald! He got the wine all over me!”

Montana rolled her eyes at Gerald.

Only then did she notice Gerald who was standing close by.

“Why are you here, Gerald? Don’t tell me you’re here with Miss Lewis for the event?” asked Morgana in astonishment.

“Huh, him? He’s just here as a handyman. There’s no way he would have been invited to this!” Montana said, her mood obviously foul.

No matter how much she tried to clean her dress, the stain was present, but the event was about to start soon, and she quickly stormed out of the toilet in a fury.

“Cameron, guys! Look who we have here!”

As soon as Montana walked out of the toilet with Morgana, a few boys walked out of the hall’s lounge on the first floor.

It happened to be Gabriel Lyons, Morgana’s boyfriend, Cameron, and the other classmates.

The truth was that Gerald hadn’t met Cameron and the others for years now. They didn’t even talk much back then high school, let alone college.

When they saw Morgana, they hurriedly came over to greet her.

Gerald did not interject or take the initiative to greet them, merely standing beside and listening silently. ①

“Cameron, you were the most handsome in our class. I didn’t expect you to be still a heartthrob! So, what’s next? Any future plans?” Morgana asked Cameron.

Cameron was dressed in a tuxedo, his hair slicked to the back. He had good posture, and indeed, looked absolutely dashing. More importantly, he wasn’t the wealthiest kid in class back then, but his family had the most connections, and the teachers somewhat respected him.

“I’ve no idea; maybe my family will pull some strings for me?” Cameron laughed heartily.

Needless to say, everyone understood that his future career would be stable and secure.

The others were dripping green with envy for him.

“But Cameron, you can’t be the only one that gets a stable path. Morgana is now working in the hospital, and you have to do whatever you can to help her!”

Of course, Montana had not forgotten her own class

representative.

“Don’t worry about that. It won’t be a problem for me.”

“Oh right, Gerald was also a high school classmate of yours. Why do you guys not seem to know each other?”

This time, Morgana’s boyfriend, Gabriel, suddenly pointed at Gerald.

“Huh, Gerald? F*ck!” he exclaimed with a smile.

Cameron and the others looked in Gerald’s direction, and sure enough, they realized that it was the same Gerald from high school!

“Yeah, I forgot to tell you guys that I met Gerald at noon today at noon, and he’s now a waiter at Cape Grace Hotel.”

As soon as Morgana saw that Gerald was let aside and ignored, she felt awkward and introduced him anyway.

“Ooh, that’s great, Gerald. Are you stationed in the kitchen or hall? If things don’t work out for you, I’ll find you some connections and promote you to be a supervisor or something?”

Cameron smiled and nodded.

“Is he your classmate from high school?”

Among the group of people, there was also a boy whom Gerald had never seen before, now looking at him and asking some weird questions.

Indeed, running into an old classmate who was a waiter during a class reunion, now that was newsworthy by itself.

“Yeah, he’s the famous broke guy from our class, haha!”

The other boy laughed.

The group introduced Gerald to that boy without hesitation, even bringing up his past.

“Mr. Crawford... so you’re here!”

Just then, a voice suddenly boomed from across the hall...

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Chapter 389

“Huh?”

When Gerald turned around, he saw a middle-aged man hurrying toward him.

They did not seem to recognize the man.

Could he have known Gerald personally?

Gerald stepped out of the crowd.

“Damn, Gerald. Why did you go for it? Didn’t you hear how he was calling for one, Mr. Gerald?”

“Haha, yeah! Aren’t you embarrassed?”

The few friends from high school followed Gerald as they laughed.

Even Morgana was laughing as she covered her mouth.

Montana rolled her eyes again and again at Gerald.

“I must have made him drunk... I’m speechless!”

Montana shook her head and sighed.

“Mr. Crawford, I’ve brought your car for you. It’s in Sector-C of the parking lot. Here are the keys, and the master instructed me to ask you to return early.”

“I got it, Mr. Lyle. If there’s nothing else, you should head back.”

Then, a boy next to Cameron stepped out and shook his head with a chuckle.

“F*ck... I think he mistook him!”

Gerald felt a little embarrassed.

“You’re hilarious, aren’t you? Your name sounds nothing like Crawford at all!”

The boys continued to ridicule Gerald.

“Okay, okay, that’s enough; let’s return to our table and continue with the drinking. Oh right, Miss Lewis, I’ll organize a student reunion when you’re free, and you have to attend. All right?”

Cameron didn’t bother ridiculing Gerald, replying to Morgana instead.

“Okay, no problem. Once you gather the students for a reunion, I’ll definitely be there!”

The group agreed as well. Paying no attention to Gerald, they returned to their tables.

Gerald followed Montana up the stairs.

“Aren’t you the least ashamed or embarrassed? Why did you show yourself when that guy called for Mr. Crawford? F*ck! I’m so ashamed of you!”

Montana reproached Gerald a few more times before they both returned to the event hall.

Perhaps he was used to it that he simply sat down on the empty seat next to Montana.

Just as Montana was about to start cursing, the emcee had already started the night's event.

It seemed to have gone on for quite a bit.

She had to quieten down.

When she looked at the stage, a spinning raffle wheel had appeared out of nowhere.

Several names were written on different sections.

One of them was Mr. Crawford, but without the first name.

This was a welcoming party for Mr. Crawford, after all, and everyone already knew who "Mr. Crawford" was.

The event continued with a raffle, and in the middle, the prize of a Mercedes-Benz G500.

"Montana, you almost missed the good stuff. Look at that, whose name do you see on that wheel?"

The woman beside Montana grabbed her arm.

"Jonathan? F*ck! You're in the raffle?"

Montana excitedly pulled her husband, Jonathan's arm.

"Haha, yeah, they were drawing the names earlier, and I made it into the shortlist! It's enough of an honor to have my name on the same list as Mr. Crawford. It doesn't matter if I win the G500 or not."

Jonathan was gratified.

"How could you say that?! That's a Mercedes G500, worth almost half a million dollars! If we win that car, can you imagine how awesome it would feel going out with it?"

"Right... by the way, is Mr. Crawford here? Which one of them is Mr. Crawford? Look at that table. It looks full of big shots!" exclaimed Montana excitedly.

"Gerald isn't here yet, but the legendary Zack Lyle and Michael Zeke are both here. Mr. Lyle said that Gerald might come over later, anyways, since Mr. Crawford said he'll come, he will come tonight."

Jonathan was excited.

On the other hand, Gerald was looking at his phone. As expected, there were several missed calls from Zack.

Seeing Gerald was using his phone, Montana

became dissatisfied again.

She was about to throw some insult when suddenly, the voice of the emcee filled the entire hall.

“Everyone, the raffle is starting now! Let’s spin the wheel and see who wins the top prize tonight, the G 500!”

In the county, a G500 was a pretty big deal. It was pretty apparent that they had put in an immense effort into this event.

With a loud hurrah, the emcee spun the wheel.

Ding!

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Chapter 390

“Congratulations, Mr. Duffy, for winning a gold keyboard worth 15,000 dollars!”

The host spun the wheel again.

Ding!

“Congratulations to...”

“...”

Three prizes were sent out subsequently.

Ding!

“Congratulations, Mr. Jonathan Ladd! You’ve won an emerald jade bracelet worth 30,000 dollars!”

“Ahh!!!”

Montana was dizzy with excitement as she heard the emcee’s announcement.

The audience burst into applause too.

The prize alone was just a part of the raffle.

More importantly, Montana could go up the stage with Jonathan, the same stage which the other big shots stood on. Besides, there were a ton of reporters on the side.

Gosh!

What more could a woman ask for?

Montana was so elated that she even smacked Gerald on the cheek. She was just too excited, and the smack felt like it was no big deal!

“Who will be the one to go home with the grand prize?”

The voice of the emcee echoed loudly, and the crowd fell into a hush.

As the pointer dropped, the crowd's eyes widened in anticipation.

Ding!

Finally, the pointer stopped moving.

“Congratulations Mr. Crawford, on winning the Mercedes-Benz G500 prize worth 300,000 dollars! Let's give him a huge round of applause!”

The host yelled in excitement.

“Ahhhh!!!”

The crowd screamed.

Of course, the winners for the other prizes were all by random, but as for the main prize, Mr. Crawford was set to win it even though he may not have

appreciated it.

Everyone knew the ruffle's set up.

"All right, may the winners please come up on stage! Also, Mr. Crawford, if you've arrived, please come up to the stage as well!"

The audience was suddenly quiet again.

Everyone's eyes searched everywhere around the hall.

"Hurry up, hurry up Jeremy, you can share the stage with Mr. Crawford!"

Montana straightened her dress to hide the wine stains.

She hurriedly took Jonathan's arm and stood up.

On the other hand, Gerald did not want to keep the others waiting any longer.

He decided he was not going to keep a low profile anymore. He stood up along with Montana and followed them towards the stage.

"F*ck, why are you following us?"

Montana only realized that Gerald was following behind her as she was reaching the stage.

"I'm here to claim my prize!" Gerald replied.

"F*ck off, no one said your name. That prize is not

for you, that's for Mr. Crawford, not Gerald, are you f*cking blind?"

Montana retorted anxiously.

"Oh my, Jonathan, you don't even want to know what just happened earlier. I ran into my ex-students at the hall downstairs. Then, one of the student's housekeepers came and called for Mr. Crawford, and this dumb*ss Gerald stood up, even I as a bystander could feel the embarrassed for him!"

"And now, he's trying to get on the stage to receive the prize! If people start making fun of him and find out he's one of my students, we'll be embarrassed!"

That was all that Montana was concerned about.

"Mr. Crawford, please come up the stage!"

This time, Zack Lyle took the stage as the guest of honor.

He looked respectfully at Gerald and called for him.

"Mhmm!"

Gerald nodded and did not say much.

He walked up the stage.

Michael Zeke, who was seated at the VIP table below, as well as the other teams of Mayberry

International Inc, all stood up and cheered for him.

“Mr. Crawford, congratulations!”

“Thank you all!”

Gerald smiled blandly.

“F*ck, so he really is Mr. Crawford!”

The entire crowd instantly fell into a pin-drop silence...

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Chapter 391

Especially Montana, who had just been reprimanding Gerald all this while.

Her eyeballs were about to drop out of her eye sockets.

F*ck!

She was extremely aware about Gerald's background. He was just a mere poor pauper with no money.

And who was Mr. Crawford?

He was the most reputable man from Mayberry, and even more so the man who was going to change the history of Serene County.

Montana would not believe that the two of them are the same person, even if she was beaten to death.

However, Zack Lyle and Michael Zeke knew who Mr. Crawford was.

So that meant Gerald's identity was not a mistake.

F*ck, Montana's was completely mind blown.

“Mr. Lyle, you guys must be mistaken right? You're calling this poor b*stard Mr. Crawford?”

Montana could not help but blurted out in a straightforward manner.

Zack frowned slightly at the question. Looking at the wine stains on Montana's dress, he turned to the organizers of the event with displeasure and said, "What's going on here? How can a woman this unkempt dare to go on stage and be so rude towards Mr. Crawford?"

"I'm sorry Mr. Lyle and Mr. Crawford, we overlooked our part!"

The organizer's staff immediately nodded as sweat trickled down his forehead.

He pointed at Montana and Jonathan, "You, and you! Get out of here!"

"Huh? Why? This guy is a fake, he's just a poor student! You guys are mistaken, I'm her teacher! F*ck you Gerald! Say something, tell them you're just a poor b*stard and they've got the wrong person!"

Several people dashed onto the stage to apprehend Montana and Jonathan.

Montana struggled to hold back a screech.

First, it would be too humiliating to be thrown out of the hall in front of others.

Second, how could Gerald be Mr. Crawford?! If it

was true, Montana vowed she would jump off a building.

At that very moment, she just wanted Gerald to say something to clear the air.

Gerald was too much of a d*ck after all. Earlier when they were downstairs, why did he even dare to step forward when that person called out for Mr. Crawford?

Zack glanced at Gerald this time.

He wanted confirmation from Gerald.

If this woman was acquainted with Gerald, Zack would not dare to go overboard with things.

Gerald unexpectedly then spoke out.

“Well, she used to teach me, but I don’t know her that well!”

Gerald laughed, “But if you want me to admit it, fine. I’ll admit it, I’m a poor pimp, a poor student, and they’ve got the wrong person!”

“Hah! Did you hear that Mr. Lyle? Hahaha, he admitted it, he just admitted it himself!”

Montana yelled in exasperation. ①

She thought to herself that she might even be able to get appreciation from Mr. Lyle this way.

But Zack looked at Montana and sneered, “Someone, get these two out of here!”

There were already people waiting, and in a flash, they apprehended Montana and Jonathan and forced them out of the hall.

The atmosphere in the hall grew ever more sombre.

Gerald was annoyed with Montana. Ever since they had arrived at the bus station, Montana had treated him this way, and the feud between the two had begun.

In the past, Gerald could tolerate these kinds of treatments, such as Alice Bradford’s mocks and taunts. He saved her face because she was a friend of Naomi Milton. 2

Hence, Gerald endured as much as he could.

But as for Montana, whose face was he going to save for? And why should he respect her?

With that, Gerald was a little more decisive this time.

This time, Gerald had won himself a Mercedes-Benz G500. The organizers thought that Mr. Crawford would think the prize would be a little too cheap since Gerald was asked to support this event after all.

But Gerald did not say anything.

To Gerald, the Mercedes was pretty good.

And now that he was back, he could not drive around with his own Lamborghini. 1

At first, he was thinking of borrowing a car from Zack to drive around the county, but it just so happened that he got himself a new car.

The event then continued as they made a toast and chatted about other topics. 1

In the blink of an eye, a week passed.

Mr. Winters was also discharged from the hospital.

Lately, Gerald had nothing much to do, so he was ready to go over to Zack's side to help oversee projects and others.

Plus, his sister had called him a few times too.

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After they had chatted over the phone, Gerald suddenly remembered his dad's advice to visit his comrade from the army in Serene County. He had been back for more than a week and he had long forgotten about it.

Gerald had nothing else to do at present. He then bought some gifts and headed to the upper-class area of Serene County to visit Mr. Willie Jung.

The relationship between their families, as mentioned earlier, had drifted apart quite a bit after several incidents that went on in the later stage.

But his dad was a very sentimental man.

He did not believe that it happened, but the reality remains. As a person, how could one have no humane feelings at all?

Gerald remembered the cold treatment from the Jung Family when his dad brought him along to beg them so he could go to high school six years ago.

Gerald understood his dad's feelings.

But this time round, he was alone, and he came here with a different identity!

He wondered if he would face the same treatment as before...

As he was deep in thought, he realized he arrived at their house, solely based on the directions from his memories.

He knocked on the door.

“Who is it?”

The door opened, and he was greeted by a middle-aged lady at the door.

Gerald knew the middle-aged woman, her name was Leia Tolbert, and Gerald referred to her as Aunt Leia. She was Willie Jung’s wife, and she was quite the influential leader in a reputable bank.

“Hello Aunt Leia, do you remember me? My name is Gerald, and I’ve visited your house with my dad before!”

“Ooh, I remember! Aren’t you the son of Willie’s friend, Dylan Crawford? I haven’t seen you for years, you’ve grown up so much! Come on in!”

She glanced at the things Gerald brought to her house.

Leia was very polite and friendly towards Gerald.

To her, this was an all-too-familiar scene. Judging

by Gerald's appearance, she knew he was here to ask for a favor.

She had already made plans on how she would refuse him later.

But it would be ill-mannered and rude to do it now.

They entered the living room.

Gerald saw a middle-aged man reading the newspaper on the sofa with his legs crossed.

He gave off a vibe as though he was an important director.

He was Willie Jung, whom Gerald referred to as Uncle Jung. He worked as a director in the Development Bureau. 1

They were a family of government officials.

“Hello, Uncle Jung!”

Gerald had no idea why after so many years, he was still quite constrained to meet them again.

“Oh, it's Gerald Crawford, it's been years since we've met. Right, I heard that your father left the country to make money to pay off his debts?”

Willie Jung put down the newspaper and quipped.

“Hmm, yeah something like that!”

Gerald chuckled.

“Didn’t you just graduate from college this year? What course did you study?”

Willie asked, blowing gently on his tea a few times.

“I studied literature, English language as well as codification!”

“Ahem, this major is pretty unpopular, but then again, jobs are pretty easy to arrange. By the way, have you found a job yet?”

Willie asked.

“Not yet Uncle Jung! I came this time to pay you a special visit, and my father specifically instructed me...”

“By the way, honey, don’t you have an appointment this afternoon?”

Leia interjected their conversation.

“Oh right, I have got an appointment! It’s a pretty urgent one. Gerald, how about you stay here for lunch?” ①

Willie smiled.

Gerald was not stupid. From what Willie and Leia said earlier, he knew that they thought he was here to beg them to pull some strings for him to get a job as soon as Gerald told them he was here to pay

them a special visit.

They were putting on an act to try to get him out of their house.

It seems that they did not treat Gerald's family as friends. If he were to go back and tell his dad about the incident, his dad would've probably given up on the friendship.

In the middle of the conversation, Gerald stood up and was about to leave.

Just then, a girl breezed down from the second floor of the house. She wore on headphones, and she was pretty cute.

“Mom, my classmates will be coming to our house for lunch later, is the cooking done? Do you need my help?”

The girl said with a smile.

Suddenly, she turned and saw Gerald, her gaze was fixed on him, “Mom, who is he?”

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The girl stared at Gerald, her eyes filled with curiosity.

To be honest, she was somewhat looking down at Gerald when she saw the ordinary clothes Gerald was wearing. His sense of fashion was a bit countryside-like.

When they heard of her question.

There was a minute of awkwardness between Willie and Leia.

Especially Leia.

It was just a second ago that Willie said he had an urgent matter to handle and he would be having a meeting soon. They were hoping Gerald would not stay for lunch.

And then her daughter jumped out of nowhere and popped this question.

This made things much more difficult for Willie and Leia.

If only their daughter had come out a little later, Gerald would have left by now!

“Oh, Leila, have you forgotten, he’s Uncle Dylan’s

kid, didn't you two meet when you were little?"

Leia said with an awkward tone.

"Ah I remember, he must be Gerald, right?"

The girl replied.

"You still remember me, I'm Gerald! It's been years since I've seen you, and you've gotten much prettier!"

The girl's name was Leila Jung. Gerald knew her.

That was because when he came to her house as a child, Leila would point at Gerald with a disgusted face, "Mom, ask him to leave our house this instant, he's making our floor dirty!"

It was also a matter of pride. During their childhood, Gerald was afraid that Leila would mock him.

But things were much better now, Gerald replied with a hint of politeness.

"Thank you, Gerald, you've become much handsome too! You have to look after me if I've any trouble in the future!"

Leila generously extended her arms to shake hands with Gerald.

Leila showed courtesy too.

To Gerald, it was considered to be the warmest words Gerald had ever heard from her since coming to the Jung family.

“Okay, that won’t be a problem at all, you can look for me if ever you need anything in the future!”
Gerald replied, smiling widely.

She withdrew her hand while smiling gingerly, but deep inside, she thought differently.

‘Huh, look for you if I need any help? Who do you think you are, I can’t believe you got carried away just because I was being polite towards you!’

Leila was from a family of government officials. Her father may have a lot of connections, but she too had her own.

Once she had graduated, she would set up her own business. She did not require anyone’s help!

Not to mention, how can Gerald help her?

“Gerald, why don’t you stay for lunch? It just so happens that Leila’s friends are coming over, maybe you should join along. Ah, I must’ve been so busy that I almost forgot, I’ve to prepare the meal!”

Leila said awkwardly.

Earlier on, she was trying to get Gerald out of her house, but her daughter ruined her plans. It would

not look good on her part.

If she did not ask him to stay for lunch, it might ruin a good impression of her.

“Yeah, you should stay, it’s good to meet more people!”

Willie Jung added nonchalantly.

Only Leila was looking a little displeased.

She only intended to invite her classmates over for lunch, but it was extremely awkward for a shabby-looking dude who looked like he was from the countryside to join in for lunch.

But since it was her parents who had invited him, it was better for her to not say anything.

Her attitude towards Gerald grew much colder immediately.

Soon after, Leila’s classmates all arrived.

There were around seven or eight of them, men and women.

After chatting for a while, Leila had finished preparing the dishes.

Willie hurriedly greeted Leila’s classmates and showed them to their seats.

“Douglas, come sit next to me, you must drink with

me today!”

Willie politely pulled Douglas’ arm and insisted on letting him sit next to him.

Douglas was a good-looking boy. Based on their earlier conversations, Gerald got to know that he seemed to be quite a higher-class leader. ①

He was quite a capable person.

Yet, looking at Douglas, he seemed to have some interest in Leila.

Willie could not help but try to make Douglas develop a close relationship with his daughter. He was especially fond and friendlier towards Douglas.

“Leila is lucky to have become good friends with you, it’s truly an honor for our Jung family! Look at Douglas, he’s so talented and capable. Who knows which lucky lady is going to be with him in the future! That lady is for sure not our Leila, I mean look at her, she’s still like a child, and she’s so far behind you!”

Willed joked.

“Mr. Jung, you must be joking! Leila is so beautiful, and she can be anyone’s girlfriend. That’s a blessing! Besides, Leila told us that you were in the army, could it be that you’ve betrothed Leila to your comrade’s son? Haha!” ②

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Douglas forced out a peal of laughter.

“That doesn’t count!” At that moment, Leia smiled as she served the dishes in front of them. Then, she turned to Douglas, “This is Gerald, the boy whom Leila’s father had made a promise to while her dad was drunk. As you can see, Gerald is now well-groomed, and Leila is no match to him, don’t you think so too, Gerald?”

Leia asked Gerald who was sitting at the very edge of the table.

“Yes, yes!”

Of course, Gerald had caught on what Leia’s words meant. He was also afraid that the crowd would draw the topic to himself, so he hurriedly nodded his head.

This, however, made Douglas a little scruple.

Honestly speaking, he had liked Leila for quite some time now, but he had not confessed his feelings to her. The two of them had always been in an ambiguous relationship.

But then, Mrs. Jung said that the boy whom Leila

was initially betrothed to was also here.

Here comes the drama.

Everyone else was also looking at both Douglas and Gerald.

They were trying to compare the two.

Douglas immediately stood up and laughed, “Whew, if it wasn’t for Mrs. Jung’s introduction, we wouldn’t have known that you almost became our goddess Leila’s husband! Come, we haven’t formally gotten to know each other yet. Nice to meet you, Gerald, I’m Douglas Lindt, I’m currently working for the government, eh...”

Douglas pretended to be surprised as he stood up and shook Gerald’s hand.

As he introduced himself, he shook his wrist, displaying the dazzling golden-strapped watch on his hand and continued speaking modestly.

“My job was arranged by my family, so you can say that I’ve got the upper-hand or some sort! I don’t have many capabilities myself after all!”

“Haha, Douglas, you don’t have to be this modest. If you don’t have the capabilities, who else would? Let’s take Gerald as an example, if you let him have your position, he wouldn’t be able to do much! Let’s not go over about those small matters shall we?”

Come come, let's have a toast!" 2

Willie smiled and patted Douglas' shoulder lightly.

They then proceeded to chat about some personal matters. The others just listened to the two as they talked and occasionally made a joke or two.

Leila was pleased. She rested her rosy cheeks on her hands as her eyes were fixated on Douglas.

She was proud of him.

She had an expensive taste in men, and the average joe was not up to her league.

Gerald sat on the chaperone's seat, and from time to time, he stood up and poured drinks for everyone.

"Thanks, Gerald!"

A pretty girl who was sitting next to Gerald smiled at him.

"You're welcome!" Gerald replied.

"You don't have to keep pouring us drinks, they will pour it themselves if they want, hehe. Do you rarely eat out with others?"

The girl looked at Gerald curiously and asked.

The girl was extremely elegant. In short, she was very pretty and stylish, just like Leila.

Because they were not drinking, the girls sat a little

off to the side.

And through their chat just now, Gerald got to know the girl's name.

Her name was Cindy.

“Yeah, not that often!”

Gerald indeed had only attended just a few occasions.

The main reason was that this occasion was different from the ones in the past, after all, the main, most respectable person in this event was Willie Jung.

Leia then served a plate of food and was about to put the plate in front of Douglas.

But Douglas wasn't paying attention to her, and with a swing of his hand, he accidentally swatted Leia, knocking the plate of food out of her hands.

“Oops!”

Leia screamed.

Douglas immediately stood up and apologized to Leia.

“It's alright child, I was afraid of burning you with the hot food. I'll clean up this mess, please carry on with your drinks with Mr. Jung, I'll prepare another

plate of food for you!”

Leia smiled at him.

She hurriedly cleaned the floor.

Then, Gerald saw that their wine glasses were half full. He got up and poured them some wine.

God knows if Douglas did it intentionally or not, as soon as Gerald poured wine into his glass, Douglas' hand shook and the wine glass slipped out of his hand. The wine glass shattered on the ground. 2

“F*ck!”

Douglas was shocked.

Leia rushed out of the kitchen to see what was happening.

“Do you know how to pour wine? What the hell did you do? Why did you drop the wine glass?”

Leia pointed her fingers at Gerald as she scolded him. She was outraged.

On the other hand, Wille glanced at Gerald with icy cold eyes. He despised Gerald for his rudeness... 2

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Because of what had happened, they gave Gerald a good scolding.

It made Gerald quite embarrassed.

F*cking hell, it was Douglas who did not hold the glass properly, and they were all coming after him?

But Gerald understood.

Heh.

It was down right obvious that the unfair treatment was because Douglas held some special status and Gerald was just a nobody.

“It’s not Gerald’s fault, I was the one who didn’t hold the glass properly. By the way, Gerald, you’re not working yet, are you?”

Douglas smiled as he asked Gerald.

“No.” Gerald shook his head.

“That’s not good, didn’t you find anyone to pull some strings for you? Why didn’t you find any?”

Douglas looked surprised.

“Connections are hard to maintain nowadays

unless you've strong ones. Just like Leila's current job, I wasted a huge deal of effort just to find it for her!"

Willie said bluntly.

He immediately disclosed that piece of information.

"I'm good, thanks!" Gerald replied.

"Hmm, I don't think that will be good, let me help you out. Right, Yorick, wasn't your dad looking for two young security guards for his factory? I think Gerald should sign up for that, I mean look at him, he looks like a loyal person and I think he will do a pretty good job!"

Douglas pointed at him.

"Pfft!"

Everyone at the table burst into laughter when they heard that.

Leila rolled her eyes at Gerald. "How can Gerald be a security guard when he's a graduate from Mayberry University?"

"I know right, my friends will laugh if I tell them about this!"

"I don't think he'll be able to look for a girlfriend after that!"

Several girls laughed.

Only Cindy was silent at the table.

“Hmph, our family’s business is quite strict when it comes to choosing security guards, we want someone capable, not trash!”

Upon hearing the group of girls, Yorick thought that asking Gerald to work for their family was quite condescending, and they were mocking his family’s enterprise. He immediately retorted.

“Yeah, you shouldn’t think of that just because Yorick’s family enterprise is the nearest here. Honestly, it doesn’t matter whether he’s a college student or not. In today’s society, university graduates are everywhere, and most workplaces don’t distinguish between the rich and the poor. What’s wrong with being a security guard?”

“Being a security guard is also a popular profession required in many places!”

Douglas said with a serious face.

“Well said Douglas, I didn’t expect you to have so many insights and be so matured at such a young age! You guys shouldn’t laugh, because what Douglas had said makes sense, so you guys should learn more from him!”

Willie added.

The crowd nodded their heads with stifled laughter.

Gerald did not enjoy the meal. He was getting picked on the entire time. He wanted to lash out at them, but it would be humiliating for him to do so. 2

Deep inside, he told himself to forget about it. He was just here to grant his father's wish.

Although they looked down on father.

His father is a peculiar person who likes to reminisce about the past.

It did not matter to him even if you disliked him.

He simply forced a smile as he swallowed the food.

After finishing the meal, Willie had an idea. "Right, how about you guys hang out in the karaoke bar for the rest of the afternoon? Don't stay out too long and come home early, so that your family will be at ease!"

"Got it, dad!"

"Don't worry Mr. Jung, I'm here, so I'll keep an eye on them!"

Douglas reassured with a smile.

"Hmm, that's why I'm so relieved that you're here, Douglas!"

Willie smiled and nodded his head.

Douglas looked at Gerald again. "Right, Gerald, we'

“If you head to the karaoke bar later, you should come along too! Are you free this afternoon?”

“No, I won’t be joining, you guys should go ahead and have fun!”

Is he being serious? Of course, Gerald will not go! Although Leila was quite pretty, he felt like he was not in the right circle while being with them.

“Don’t overthink, Gerald. After having a meal together, of course, we have to go out and have some fun together! Unless the reason is that you don’t like us, do you, Gerald?”

Douglas said.

There was a hint of displeasure on his face.

The real reason why he asked Gerald to hang out with them was that he intended to use him to relieve boredom.

Was that not how people are? Once they become capable, they would pick on the weaker ones to make fun of.

When Willie saw the displeasure in Douglas’ face, he added on.

“Gerald, I suggest you’d better go with them. Can’t you read what’s going on? Douglas is quite an important person, and what about you? Now that

he has invited you to come along, why won't you just accept his kind offer!"

"All right, I'll go." 2

Gerald was unable to brush them off.

Especially the girl next to her. Cindy kept looking at him, hoping that he would come along to have some fun together.

And Willie's persistence.

Gerald thought that he would just go with them, maybe he would just ignore their petty remarks.

Hmph.

A short while later, the group of them were waiting downstairs.

Douglas and Yorick had their cars ready.

The two men drove the group in their cars. 2

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Finally, it was Gerald's turn to get into the car.

But there was no space.

“Oh, f*ck! Just look. Both of our two cars are already full. We cannot possibly ask you to sit with the girls, right? It wouldn't be convenient!”

Douglas laughed and said after rolling down the car window.

He had been deliberately mocking Gerald ever since he heard that he had a marriage contract with Leila and deliberately making things difficult for Gerald to embarrass him.

Gerald also knew that the reason Douglas had invited him to the karaoke bar with them was probably for this very reason too.

“What's wrong with sitting next to a girl? I will move in a little. Gerald, come and sit next to me!”

Cindy said as she waved at Gerald.

Douglas felt a little unhappy at this, but he did not dare to say anything because Cindy was also a beautiful goddess too.

“Thank you!”

Gerald smiled and nodded slightly before he sat next to Cindy.

Soon, everyone arrived at a room inside a karaoke bar.

Douglas also invited another group of friends to join them.

The group also had both guys and girls, and the room suddenly became very lively.

Those who were drinking, drank, and those who were singing, sang. Everyone was very happy.

“Yorick comes to this karaoke bar very often. He is also very familiar with the female manager here. Hahaha! So, today everyone can just order whatever you like. Yorick and I will treat all of you!”

Douglas said as he laughed.

“Thank you, Douglas!”

“I love you, Douglas! Ahh!”

“Wait, Douglas belongs to Leila! How can I say I love him?”

A girl patted her head as she exclaimed.

That made everyone laugh out loud again.

Yorick also brimmed happily. He really gained a lot

of face today.

Leila also blushed as she lowered her head.

To be honest, Leila was really very satisfied with how Douglas carried himself. On the other hand, Gerald was sitting at the corner, who didn't dare say anything. The difference between both of them was really contrasting, like heaven and earth.

Leila could only shake her head helplessly as she looked at Gerald.

Suddenly, someone pushed the room door open. A woman in a red dress strutted into the room.

On first impressions, one could tell that this woman had the expertise of handling such social gatherings. She was holding a bottle of red wine and smiled as she said, "Douglas and Yorick, I know that the both of you are here today so I came here to specially give you a bottle of red wine. Have fun today!"

"And since Yorick comes here so often, I'll give all of you a ten percent discount on the overall bill today! Have fun!"

"Ahh? Why is it only a ten percent discount? Yorick, aren't you very familiar with this sister in the red dress? Why is she only giving you a ten percent discount?"

Several boys joked and booed.

Yorick's face blackened immediately. He felt as though he had already lost face.

“No! You have to at least give me a twenty percent discount!”

Yorick replied, with an unpleasant look plastered across his face.

“That will not work, sir. I still have to do business!”
The woman in the red dress covered her mouth before she chuckled.

“Hmph! Okay, fine. But Miss Hanna, please come and enjoy a drink with us too!”

When the boys saw that the woman dressed in red was very sexy and beautiful, they asked her to accompany them to drink.

“Sorry, but I have another important customer to attend to today. I really cannot drink with you!”

Miss Hanna waved her hand before she went out.

The atmosphere suddenly became very awkward.

Several boys looked at Yorick, one after the other.

“Yorick, what's going on here? Why isn't Miss Hanna giving you any face at all?” ①

“F*ck! How could you say that you are familiar with her? She is only giving you a ten percent discount. I

thought that the both of you had a good relationship but she completely ignored you!”

A few boys voiced out bitterly after Miss Hanna left the room.

This made Yorick feel as though he had been insulted with pins and needles.

He felt extremely uncomfortable.

Yes! Miss Hanna did not give him any face at all just now.

When he came before this, she was still very polite to him and that was the reason why Yorick thought that he was already very familiar with her.

However, now that he had already bragged about it to everyone, she did not give him any respect when he needed it. It was no use bragging at all.

“Hmph! You don’t believe me? Okay then! I will go and bring her over here to drink with us now. Just wait for me.”

Yorick yanked open the room door angrily and stormed out. It seemed as though he had gone looking for Miss Hanna.

Gerald could only shake his head as he smiled wryly, observing the situation from the side.

Was keeping one’s face really that important

sometimes?

Was it worth being so angry and causing a scene just because of such a trivial matter?

Moreover, Gerald could tell that Miss Hanna was generally the kind of person who was courteous and polite to everyone. It was only normal for people to think that they were familiar with her when she was just doing her business.

It was not good for a person not to have any self-knowledge.

“Ahhh!”

A short while later.

One of the girls who went to the bathroom earlier suddenly ran into the room with a panicked expression on her face:

“Douglas! Go out and take a look! Yorick is getting beaten up!”

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”What? He got beaten up?”

“F*ck! He got into trouble!”

The boys and girls in the room suddenly grew very nervous.

Even Douglas became anxious.

But he did not panic. He simply replied calmly, “Why are you so anxious? Come, let’s go out and take a look. I want to see who’s the prick that actually dares to touch my buddy!”

Douglas then waved his hand and a crowd of boys and girls followed closely behind him.

A few of the boys even grabbed a few bottles of beer with them. It seemed as though they were going to start a fight today!

Gerald had already expected Yorick to get easily agitated.

But he really did not expect him to get beaten up.

Everyone had already headed out now. It would not be good for Gerald to continue sitting and drinking in the room by himself. Hence, he decided to just

follow everyone out.

Let's talk about Yorick. A group of people were surrounding him in the center of the karaoke bar.

He was curled up on the ground and blood was oozing out of his forehead.

About a dozen bodyguards from the karaoke bar had just beaten him up.

As for Hanna, she was just glaring coldly at Yorick with a sinister smile on her face.

“You pathetic brat! Don't you know how to appreciate it when I was still giving you face? You actually dare to pull my hair? You must be sick of living. Don't you know whose territory this is? Aren't you afraid that Big Dolph will hack you to death? F*ck!”

Hanna sneered.

Upon the words, 'Big Dolph', the faces of several people standing on the sidelines turned pale immediately.

They could not help but look at Yorick, who was lying on the ground, with sympathy.

Earlier on, Yorick had called out to Hanna, who had just entered another room. He angrily pestered her to come and drink with them. Of course, Hanna

ignored him completely.

In fact, there were not many people in this karaoke bar who had the ability to convince Hanna to give them a toast and drink with them.

However, Yorick refused to tolerate it. Towards the end, he even pulled Hanna's hair.

In the end, things turned out like this.

Someone from the other room witnessed this young man barging into his room and pulling Hanna's hair.

With just a flick of his wrist, seven or eight strong men rushed forward immediately.

They even brought out some sticks and bashed Yorick to the ground.

They taught him a good lesson.

It was also the same time that the girl who went to the bathroom witnessed the entire event unfold. She dashed back to the room to report this incident to everyone else.

“Miss Hanna, just let my subordinates handle this matter. The guests at my table are still waiting for you to drink with them!”

A rather lax young boy was standing next to Miss Hanna.

He had a scornful look on his face but he looked like someone rich.

“I know, Mr. Lourdes, but can you let me vent my anger first? Look at him! He pulled my hair just now!”

Miss Hanna replied as she smiled cynically.

“Hahaha. No problem. If that’s the case, drag him into my room then. Since he dared to cause trouble for you in front of my room, then he is not giving me face either! Damn it! I really have to teach this damn kid a lesson today for being so obnoxious!”

As soon as Louie raised his hand, several bodyguards immediately acted on his order. They grabbed Yorick before they started dragging him into Louie’s room.

After entering the room.

“Stop! If you know what is good for you, then let my buddy go!”

Suddenly, someone shouted out loud.

It was Douglas, who had one hand in his pocket as he led a large number of people over here with him.

He was very aggressive.

And he looked impressive.

“Damn. This is getting interesting. There are still people who are coming here to seek revenge on his behalf. I really want to see who it is who is so brave and courageous.” 1

Louie had a nonchalant look on his face. He then entered his room before asking his bodyguards to open the door to let them in.

Douglas felt even more unfazed now because he thought that the kid was afraid of him.

So the group of people swarmed into the room.

However, as soon as they saw the man waiting inside the room, not only Douglas, but many others behind Douglas who were holding beer bottles in their hands were all shocked.

“Mr. Lourdes, it’s you? Mr. Zorro, Mr. Hank, and Mr. Saul...you...you are all here?”

Douglas’s eyes immediately widened and all of his arrogance was instantly extinguished.

As for the few girls, they initially thought that they would be able to enjoy a good show with Douglas. The moment they saw Douglas losing his spirit, they were all very embarrassed.

This was especially so for Leila who was standing next to Douglas.

Chapter 398

"Louie, who is this young brat? A friend of yours?" asked a man with a dragon tattoo.

"I don't know him, but f*ck! He actually knows who I am!"

Louie replied with a laugh.

"Douglas, who is he?" asked Leila as she quietly nudged Douglas's arm.

"He is Louie Lourdes. The mine in Serene County belongs to their family. He's the richest man there, and their family is considered one of Mayberry City's top-ranking families. His father is also the leader of Serene County's underground triads. Big Dolph works for him. They are definitely a bunch of ruthless people."

"The few around him are also famous members of triads."

Since Douglas knew many people, he hurriedly explained the situation to them.

After listening to his explanation, Leila and the others became even more afraid.

They had heard of Louie's name before.

They knew about his great influence and power. In fact, how could they not panic when they heard Big Dolph's name?

"Wow! Buddy! What are you doing here with people holding beer bottles in their hands? Trying to scare me to death?" Louie said, crossing his legs as he lazily slouched on the chair.

"Cough! Erm... Mr. Lourdes, this is all just a misunderstanding. It is all a big misunderstanding. Everyone drank a little too much today. My friend over here has offended you too. I hope that you will show grace and let him go. I am Douglas Lindt, and my father is Gary Lindt. Please give us some face. Mr. Hank, Mr. Saul, my dad even brought me along to drink with you guys..."

Douglas hurriedly pleaded as he introduced himself.

"Oh, oh! I know who he is... But Douglas, no one has ever dared to confront me with beer bottles in their hands. What do you think I should do about this?" Louie replied with a smile.

His eyes swept across the faces of Leila and the other girls who were standing next to Douglas.

He couldn't help thinking that all these girls must be of the highest quality.

"That will not do. Look, Mr. Lourdes, why don't I

finish a bottle now? Please take it as my sincerest apology!”

“Yes, Mr. Lourdes! We will down a bottle of beer now!” echoed several boys, one after the other.

“Well, if that is the case, then each of you will have to empty a bottle each. As soon as that happens, this matter will be over.”

Louie looked at the scared girl laughing his head off.

“There is but a condition. It’s not going to work for sure if you just finish the beer. You will drink white wine instead. I want each of you to finish a bottle of white wine each, and the issue will be resolved. This includes all of you girls who walked into this room.”

“What? White wine?!”

Douglas was dumbfounded.

“Why? Are you not humoring me this round?” he asked Louie with a cold expression on his face.

As soon as his voice fell out, a bodyguard had already walked in with a box of white wine.

Douglas gritted his teeth in frustration. He had no choice but to take the lead and set the example.

He pinched his nose, gulping down the entire bottle as though it were plain water.

The other boys followed suit, and each soon

finished their own bottles.

“Clap! Clap! Clap!”

Louie applauded in admiration. He looked at Leila and the other girls. “Beautiful girls, don’t you know you have to drink too? If you refuse, you won’t be stepping out of this room today!”

“As for you guys, you can get lost!” snapped Louie said as he pointed at Douglas.

“Mr. Lourdes, this is my girlfriend. Will you allow me to take her with me? I beg you, please? Can you give me face?”

“No! There is no need for me to give you face. If you don’t choose to leave now, you might just be unable to leave after this.”

As soon as Louie said these words, a few boys quickly left the room in fear.

As for Douglas, he could only stay silent with gritted teeth. He sincerely didn’t know what else to say. After all, Louie was known to be very ruthless.

He could only walk out of the room with his head hung low.

As for Leila, Cindy, and the other girls, they were naturally stopped by the bodyguards.

Leila was so frightened that she was about to burst

into tears.

“You are Mr. Lourdes, right? Why don’t you give me some face and let them go?”

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Chapter 399

“Huh?”

A moment of silence broke out in the room. Everyone was staring at the young man who just spoke.

Give you face?

Who are you? Why would I give you face?

The person who just spoke was none other than Gerald.

He had been outside the room, watching in excitement when he saw Douglas getting embarrassed and humiliated.

It had nothing to do with him, after all.

Now, Louie obviously had eyes for Leila, Cindy, and the rest of the girls.

He didn't have many reasons to worry about Leila.

After all, even though Leila was somewhat polite to him on the surface, Gerald knew very well that this girl actually despised and looked down on him.

There was no need for him to brag or show off in front of her.

However, Cindy was also here, and Gerald would feel bad if he really did not care about her.

She had treated him well since the beginning, never once despising him in any way. She was also the kind that held no preconceived judgments or prejudice in her heart.

Perhaps, it might not have meant anything to Cindy, but Gerald was still very grateful nonetheless. Thus, he decided to take a stand for her sake.

“Gerald, what nonsense are you talking about? Why don't you just get lost? There are some things about the underground that you will never understand.”

Leila reprimanded Gerald with a cold hard look on her face. ①

She couldn't accept it. Leila grew up in a small town, and she was very well-informed. She naturally understood the situation about to unfold tonight.

be that as it may, Leila's mind was made up. What was the big deal anyway? At most, she would have to finish up an entire bottle of white wine like Douglas did, then run out of the room quickly. Louie wouldn't dare be too rambunctious, would he?

Unexpectedly, Gerald stepped up and pretended to be a hero. She was annoyed now, really wanting to give him a tight slap or two across his face.

“Give you face? What right do you have?” Louie asked with a deep frown. The rest of the men in the room also stared at Gerald.

Gerald put his hands in his pockets, grinning lightly.

“This girl over here is my friend. So, I will settle this issue on her behalf. Mr. Lourdes, if you really want to drink, why don't you let me make a call so that I can get some people here to accompany you?”

Naturally, Gerald wanted to pay no attention to a puny roach the likes of him. He looked at Cindy.

Louie gawked at Gerald and sneered. “Young brat! Did you know that there are grave consequences for pretending to be the hero? Based on your words, it seems you're getting some people to deal with me too. Hahaha! Why don't you take a look at your pathetic face right now? Ask yourself. Are you worthy?”

“Nothing to worry about, Gerald. You should leave now,” said Cindy, her tone worried and anxious.

Gerald gave Cindy a reassuring look.

“It's okay, don't worry,” he promised with a smile.

Gerald then looked at Louie.

“So, what about it, Mr. Lourdes? Why don't you tell me if you dare or not? My people will be coming over here later. Perhaps they'll have a good drink with you?”

“Okay. Fine! It's the first time I'm challenged before so many of Serene County's reputable folk. It seems I'll have to experience it for myself today, but allow me to put in all the ugly words first. I may not be so forgiving later. Know what happens to those who dare offend me? I believe you will find out very quickly if you just ask around,” retorted Louie in the most condescending way as though Gerald was a joke.

Gerald simply asked Cindy, Leila, and the rest of the girls to leave now.

Cindy looked at Gerald with worry on her face. She felt suffocated but wanted to stay back and accompany him anyway.

As for Leila, she simply stared blankly at Gerald, as though he was really an idiot. After that, she dragged Cindy away forcibly.

Louie did not stop them. It was because he knew that there had to be a sequel to this. When the time came to look for those girls, it wouldn't be as

simple as making them drink a bottle of white wine.

Gerald made a phone call after that.

Of course, the call was to Drake and Tyson.

“Call. Call as many people as you can! Hahaha!”

When the call was done, he looked at Louie with a smile on his face.

For several reasons, Gerald had no choice but to keep a low profile in front of acquaintances. This was the case when he was at Willie’s house today. It was all because he was an elder.

Gerald was no prodigal son of a millionaire, so he usually tolerated whatever that could be tolerated.

As a matter of fact, it would be elementary for Gerald to give their family a slap in their face if he wanted to.

However, things were different with Louie this time, just like when he dealt with William Rye from Rye Group. It would be problematic, but Gerald wasn’t afraid.

Very soon.

The sound of cars screeching to a halt could be heard, where a larger number of luxury cars pulled up at the entrance of the karaoke bar.

Bodyguards, dressed in black, stepped out of the

cars in unison. They were all led by Drake and Tyson, Gerald's current base manager, and personal bodyguards.

Wherever Gerald was, so would they, providing him with on the clock security support.

“Mr. Crawford is inside. Go in now, double-time!”

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Chapter 400

A group of men rushed into the karaoke bar after Drake and Tyson waved their hands.

At the same time, in the room.

Louie was fiddling with the wine glass in his hand as he looked at his watch and said: “Young lad, it has already been five minutes now. There hasn’t been a single phone call. Are you kidding me?”

He laughed as he spoke.

The next moment, the room door was kicked upon with a loud bang.

A group of men swamped into the room.

The bodyguards of the group immediately tried to stop the men.

However, before they could even do anything, the bodyguards had already been kicked to the ground by the men dressed in black.

Their action and movements were all very swift and violent, like a predator attacking its prey!

“Who are you guys?”

Louie was taken aback.

When he saw the skills of these people and the tough yet mysterious aura surrounding them, Louie knew that these men were not from any ordinary backgrounds.

“Mr. Crawford, is it him?”

Drake and Tyson walked over to Gerald and whispered in a low voice.

“Yes. Teach him a lesson!”

Gerald replied as he nodded lightly.

“F*ck! How dare you? Do you know whose territory this is?”

The middle-aged man called Mr. Dee cried out in a hostile manner.

Although his expression was fierce, his forehead was already beaded with sweat.

He knew that they definitely encountered a tough opponent this time!

“This is Big Dolph’s territory! When Big Dolph arrives, don’t even dream about being able to step out of this place!”

Louie continued threatening.

“Miss Hanna, call Big Dolph!”

Louie signaled Hanna.

Hanna nodded and replied, "Okay! I have already sent a text message to him just now. Big Dolph is already bringing his men over here. When he arrives later, then we will be able to watch a good show!"

On the other side.

"Douglas, stop the car! I want to get off!"

Douglas had already drove away in a hurry.

Halfway through, Cindy suddenly yelled out loud as she anxiously wanted to get out of the car.

"What's wrong, Cindy?"

Leila asked.

"No! No! I am still worried about leaving Gerald behind all alone! Everyone knows who Louie is! He will really destroy Gerald!"

Cindy could not help but cried out of worry as she thought about it.

"Hmph! Why are you so worried about him? It serves him right for pretending to be a hero! He deserves it!"

Leila replied contemptuously.

Everything was as clear as day. Gerald and Douglas were simply incomparable.

One was a fool whereas the other was really a man who knew how to find a way to survive.

This was especially so when earlier on, Douglas had taken the lead to down the bottle of wine. Leila was moved.

Man. Nothing could beat that! 1

But when it came to Gerald, Leila simply shook her head because she was utterly speechless.

“That’s right, Cindy. Besides that, the both of you don’t even know each other that well anyway. Why do you care about his life or death? Why are you so worried about him? Damn it! Cindy, don’t tell me that you like that pathetic dickhead?”

Douglas asked as he continued driving.

“Go ahead and think whatever you want. All I know is that if it weren’t because of Gerald, none of us would have been able to get out of that place so easily! Stop the car! I want to go back and take a look!”

Douglas could not bear to see Cindy acting so anxiously. So, he stopped the car.

Cindy got out of the car before she ran back towards the karaoke bar.

“Cindy, come back!”

Leila yelled anxiously.

“Douglas, what do we do now? How am I going to explain it to Cindy’s grandfather if she is in danger?”

“Oh.. okay you know what, let’s do this. We’ll turn around and go back too.”

“Ahh? No! Douglas, do you want to save that Gerald too?”

“F*ck! Why would I want to save him? I am just afraid that something will happen to Cindy. We should go back and look out for Cindy from a distance. That way, we can also see what’s going on with the entire situation!”

Douglas explained.

Everyone agreed to his plan. So, the two cars turned around, back to the karaoke bar...

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Chapter 401

“Huh? What’s going on, here?”

Staying out of the way by the side of the road, Leila and the others watched what was happening in shock.

A veritable fleet of expensive cars lined outside the karaoke bar. A throng of people swarmed about the place.

“Something must have happened! Gosh... could it be that rascal Gerald’s gotten in over his head?” Douglas wondered aloud.

“Must be. I mean, who else in Serene County could stir up this much of a fuss? I should’ve known better than to bring that guy here, no matter what anyone said. Now look at this mess: The moment something major goes down, we’re gonna get dragged into it—Mr Lourdes knows very well he’s with us!” The guys whispered amongst themselves, their outlook seemed bleak.

Cindy had gone pale, hearing their words. If what they said was true, then Gerald’s life might be in extreme danger!

No, she had to go in and see for herself. If things

were really that bad, she'd call the cops! Thinking thusly, Cindy threw open the car door and ran for the karaoke bar.

Gerald had left a good impression on Cindy. They'd only just met, so it was still too soon to talk about any real feelings between them... but she just felt that he was a really nice guy, down-to-earth. What's more, in order to save everybody, he'd taken the whole thing onto himself.

Abandoning him without a second thought, like Leila and the others had done... that was something Cindy simply couldn't do. She couldn't just sit this one out.

"Cindy, are you crazy? Get back here!" Leila had gotten out of the car as well, shrieking hysterically.

Cindy was her best friend. Leila couldn't allow her to do this. Seized by terror, she chased after her, desperate to stop her.

As for Douglas and the rest, they remained right there inside the car, just smoking and keeping watch from afar.

"Holy hell, it's a bloody mess in there! I don't know who Mr Lourdes pissed off, but he's been beaten to a pulp!"

"Anyone else wants to go next? Oh, the horror... but

what a twist! Mr Lourdes thought he was the biggest cheese around—never imagined he'd bump into someone even more powerful than him... ahahaha!"

Some young men and women passed by in front of Cindy, chattering noisily about what had happened. Overhearing them, first she was shocked by the news of Mr Lourdes' tragedy...

But what about Gerald?

Anxiously, Cindy stopped them to ask about the situation within. This allowed Leila to catch up.

Aroused by the sight of these two ravishing beauties, the guys scrambled to recount what had happened back at the bar.

"Hey, babes... I guess you weren't there, so you wouldn't know—but of course you've heard of Mr Louie Lourdes, the richest kid in all Serene County!" One of the guys was so excited he was sputtering. "Just now, a whole gang of black-clad bodyguards beat him within an inch of his life! Totally brutal, and I hear they're from Mayberry City! Just take a look at all these cars they brought here! Incredible!"

The other guys were eager to contribute as well:

"As for Louie, when he started shouting for

someone to get Big Dolph over here, I thought the tables had turned, you know? I was expecting Louie would clean all their clocks out! But when Big Dolph arrived, he was suddenly bowing and scraping for those two, offering them smokes and drinks... Mr Lourdes' face was a nasty sight, then!"

"The other big players in the room all knew whose side to take, then!"

"But I'm not asking about Louie Lourdes!" Cindy wailed. "I'm asking if there was some other young man who also got hurt! Did Louie... hack up some other guy in there?"

"Huh? Some other guy? Well, Louie and someone he called 'Uncle' caught a bloody good thrashing... but no, no one else was hurt... Oh! Louie's own bodyguards were knocked out cold instantly—but I wouldn't have called any of them a 'young man'..."

"How could this be? What about Gerald? Is there any possibility you might have made a mistake?" Leila blurted out in disbelief. "Are you absolutely sure the one who got roughed up was Louie Lourdes?"

"Of course! We've all seen his picture before!" Hooting and jeering, the group wandered off.

"Does this mean... Gerald's alright?" A massive weight in Cindy's heart was suddenly eased—but

then she added, “But why would all these wealthy people suddenly turn on Louie? Leila... do you think Gerald might have summoned them to his aid?”

Thinking back, she'd just remembered how, as Gerald was clearing the way for them to escape, he'd also said something about calling his own people to come deal with Louie.

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Chapter 402

He'd meant summoning people to help fight Louie Lourdes.

At that time, Cindy hadn't paid much thought about it. She'd assumed Gerald was just stalling for time.

But right here right now, were a whole horde of people whom, sure enough, had attacked and vanquished Louie.

What Cindy was suggesting sent a tremor through Leila's entire body.

"Impossible! That guy? I don't know much about him, but isn't he just some penniless loser? How could he have so many rich and powerful friends? Don't you fall for his nonsense, Cindy!"

Heaven's sake! If it turned out to be true... Leila might as well just ram her head against the nearest wall.

But no, haha, it was simply not possible!

Leila turned to gesture for everyone back in the car to come over and join them, where she then shared with them what had been learned. Everyone was gobsmacked by the news that Louie had been wiped

out clean. They gazed with admiration at the magnificent cars lining up along the street outside the karaoke bar.

“Look! Isn’t that Gerald?” Glancing around, Leila suddenly spotted him in the Western restaurant next door, dining at the window seat.

For a moment, she doubted her own eyes.

“It can’t be... no, but it really is him!” Douglas was every bit as stupefied.

Everyone had been convinced that Gerald was dead meat. Instead, he was in a fine restaurant nearby, sitting at their premier table?

This... how... what...

“Gerald’s okay after all! Leila, maybe he was really telling the truth! Maybe all these guys really did come here to back him up! Maybe Gerald really is friends with lots of rich people!” Cindy seemed delighted by this.

“No way, no way! I refuse to believe it!” Leila was stamping her feet in agitation. “Douglas, we’re going over there to get to the bottom of this. Anyway, can you believe that tramp can afford that class of fine dining?”

Someone she held so much contempt for, turned out to be someone so amazing? That would be a

right slap to the face!

“Right! Let’s get over there! You, send the drunk ones home first!” Douglas issued this command to one of the boys, ignoring the fact that he wasn’t completely sober himself.

Earlier, quite a few of the guys had downed an entire bottle. Now the alcohol was running its course, and some were no longer able to stay on their feet.

Douglas himself had quite a high tolerance—and anyway, he couldn’t bear to walk away from such a momentous affair, so he would just grit his teeth and bear it.

Leila and Cindy were by his side as he walked straight into that restaurant.

In the grip of a terrible rage, Leila stormed across the floor. “Gerald, do my eyes deceive me? So it really is you... Huh! You came into a place like this, but ordered nothing, just sitting here... Don’t tell me you just slipped out from there, and just needed some place to sit down?”

She’d been a little worried—worried that Gerald might actually turn out to be someone of wealth and influence. However, now that she was standing at his table, she was able to breathe a sigh of relief.

Most likely, he’d only ducked in here to find shelter.

“Leila, perhaps you’re not aware of how exclusive this restaurant is. It’s considered a first-class establishment, with their main branch based in Mayberry. Common folk generally don’t dare to trespass in here—so you could hardly have found a safer hiding place, Gerald! Hahaha!” Douglas added his own mocking comments to the mix.

Gerald just sat there mutely.

Back in that karaoke room, when his bodyguards were giving it to Louie and his grunts, Gerald had watched for a while, but then lost interest.

It was enough just to teach that fool a lesson. There was no reason for him to hang around. That sort of thing wasn’t his style.

Anyway, he hadn’t had much to eat for lunch earlier, so by now he was starving, and had come out looking for a bite to eat.

But after he’d placed his order, and was taking a moment to contemplate how he’d handle things from here on out...

... Unexpectedly, Leila and company had come charging back into the fray.

What was this? Hadn’t he gotten rid of them already? Gerald couldn’t even begin to imagine how he’d explain himself now.

At the corner of his eye, he saw six restaurant staff form into a line, trays of food in their hands. And then, they began making their way towards Gerald...

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Chapter 403

“Excuse me, miss!” The waitress in the lead smiled at Leila, who stared with mouth gaping wide as a feast was laid out upon the table before Gerald.

“Huh? What?” Leila stuttered for a moment, then exclaimed, “Hey, hey, hey! There must be some mistake—you’ve got the wrong table!”

Anyone could tell that it was a sumptuous meal worth a small fortune—at least five hundred dollars or more—and it was meant for Gerald?

Leila had always held him in contempt as a man with nothing to his name. One time, she’d let slip that their fathers had been arranging for them to be married, and it had made her a complete laughing stock.

“Hey, Leila! Somewhere on a far away farm, your fiancé’s waiting for you!” She could still see those mocking grins vividly at the back of her mind.

It had been the greatest source of misery in her life. She never spoke of it, but it was always on her mind. As a symbol of her humiliation, she utterly despised Gerald Crawford.

And yet, Gerald was eating so well right now...

“How could there be any mistake? Mr Crawford here ordered our most expensive menu, prepared by the hand of a master chef from France! It costs a thousand dollars in total!” The waitress offered her another sunny smile, then bowed to Gerald, and left him to his meal.

“What? One thousand dollars!” Leila stood stunned. Never had she ever indulged in such luxury!

“Gerald, what are you up to? No one’s poorer than you, and yet you’re burning money like nobody’s business... French cuisine? Are you out of your mind? Have you never thought about taking that one thousand bucks and doing something useful with it?” Leila harangued him acidly.

“That’s right, that’s right,” Douglas joined in. “The poor sure like to act like they’ve got money to spend! Who am I, and who are you? My handphone costs as much as this meal you’re eating here! Did what happened just now scare the wits out of you?”

1

Truth be told, here in Serene County, a five-hundred-dollar smartphone was a substantial status symbol—but Douglas was one step up: With his thousand-dollar phone, it showed that he was really somebody.

But now, it was nothing more than the price of one meal for Gerald. No one would take this without

comment.

“Gerald, it’s not that we’re trying to make you feel bad... But wouldn’t it be better to take this money and buy yourself some nice clothes, or a decent phone, or maybe some kind of makeover... Instead, you’re just... urgh!” Leila shook her head at him in disgust. ①

Compared to Douglas, whether in terms of manners or intellect, Gerald fell far short.

Bzzt! Gerald’s phone was vibrating. He pulled it out for a quick glance. It was an unknown number calling.

Leila and Douglas stared with eyes as wide as the plates on the table.

Due to the awkwardness of the current situation, Gerald didn’t take the call. Terminating the connection, he tried to shove the phone back into his pocket.

At the end of the day, she was still Uncle Jung’s daughter, and he shouldn’t cause her too much offence.

“Hold it right there! Let me see that phone!” Seized by a sudden frenzy, Leila snatched it over, and murmured, “This model, it’s...”

“It’s the latest model to hit the market, four

thousand and five hundred dollars apiece. This is your phone, Gerald?” Besides Leila and Douglas, even Cindy was shocked to see it.

“Haha, I borrowed that from a classmate! Just for appearances, you know!” Gerald disparaged himself.

“Hmph! Tell the truth, or else!” Cindy rolled her eyes at him. “Don’t you think I can’t tell that this belongs to you?”

Leila was no longer able to speak, now.

How could this be possible? The man she hated so... how could he be... Did this mean all those guys back there had truly been summoned here by him?

“Alright, alright... it’s just a phone. You guys were only drinking back there—you haven’t had anything to eat... How about I treat you all to some French cuisine?” Gerald attempted to change the topic with everything at his disposal.

“Oh, that sounds good! I’m famished—and I’ve never had a thousand-dollar French banquet before! Hahaha! This will be your treat, Gerald!”

Chapter 404

Cindy giggled.

“Of course!”

Stony-faced, Leila snapped, “Cindy! Have you forgotten what you came here to ask about? And, and... weren't you so worried about Gerald, just a moment ago? Aren't you curious why he's unscathed?”

“Oh, right! Gosh, in my excitement I quite forgot. Gerald, tell us. How are you still in one piece? And are all those guys outside your people?”

“Indeed... how am I still in one piece?” Gerald answered dumbly.

“We're asking you!” Leila frowned, glaring at Gerald.

Then Gerald clapped a hand to his forehead. “Oh, I remember now. Just as I was about to come to blows with Louie, the patrons from next door burst into the room, and maybe they had some kind of grudge against Louie, because everyone started fighting on sight! In all that chaos, I managed to slip away.” Gerald finished with a laugh.

Leila was so mad that words failed her.

Gerald was obviously lying. Slipped away? Like, out of the karaoke bar... and into the restaurant next door, for a spot of fine dining? Who'd believe you!

Ah, forget it! She was too angry now, too agitated!

“Why don't the two of you stay for dinner, too? It'll be my treat, okay?” Gerald said pleasantly to Leila.

To be honest, seeing the mouth-watering feast that had been served, Leila felt extraordinarily tempted. All girls are gluttons, aren't they?

But with the way things were between Gerald and her, how could she accept?

What about her pride?

“Hmph! No need—if we wanted to eat, we'd order something ourselves!” Folding her arms, Leila glanced towards Douglas.

Oh, how she wanted to order something.

Douglas peeked into his wallet. A thousand bucks per pax... he'd started the night with a thousand five hundred on each person. He'd picked up the tab for karaoke earlier, to the tune of a whopping one thousand and two hundred dollars. There was no way he could afford to whip out another couple thousands for an impromptu feast...

His family held influence—but not so much

affluence...

“Um, well... Perhaps next time, Leila. My treat! It’s just... I’ve had too much to drink tonight!”

“You...” Leila could also tell that it was beyond his means.

She sighed wretchedly. Douglas felt the same.

They stood up to leave, but as they turned to go, they ended up knocking over a vase of flowers on a side table.

With a crash, the vase shattered on the floor.

Ah, crap! Douglas froze. A moment later, a waitress hurried into view, having heard the noise.

“Sir, this vase...” she began in a whisper.

“Just a bunch of lousy flowers, barely worth looking at. I’ll pay for them, alright? Here, one hundred. Is that enough?” Fishing out a hundred-dollar bill, he slapped it down on the table. ①

How’s that for cool?

He glanced at his woman. “Leila, let’s get out of here!”

Swooning for him all of a sudden, Leila nodded submissively.

“Hold a moment, sir!”

“What’s the matter?”

“That was an artistic flower arrangement... Rather than a hundred dollars, it’s worth a thousand five hundred!” The waitress declared with a smile.

Douglas was paralyzed on the spot. “What? A thousand five hundred?”

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Chapter 405

“That’s right, sir. One thousand and five hundred dollars!” The waitress beamed.

Douglas’s face was a sight to behold. At first, he’d thought to just toss down a hundred bucks, and then swagger out of there. He’d never expected that bunch of flowers to be worth so much!

If he called his father over to make some noise...

No, that wouldn’t do. This restaurant chain was owned by a powerful figure over at Mayberry. Whatever clout his family had counted for nothing in here!

But neither did he have a thousand five hundred on him right now!

“Hmph. So it’s a thousand five, so what? No big deal!” Leila sneered. She was this close to slapping the money in that waitress’s face.

Gerald was watching. No matter what, she had to have the last word in this!

Leila glanced towards Douglas. He’d definitely be able to do something about this!

Patting his pockets, he leaned in close to whisper to

her, “I’ve only got a few hundred left on me... I can’t pay!”

“Ah?” Leila had been expecting Douglas to still have around a thousand left, just like her. That way, they’d be able to pool their money and fumble their way out of this mess somehow... but he barely had any cash on him at all!

Now, this was embarrassing...

Gerald hadn’t planned to get involved, until he saw them whispering furtively amongst themselves, and realized that Douglas was probably broke. “

Hey, waitress! Add it to my bill! I’ll pay in their stead for now!”

Leila was wearing an absolutely hideous expression on her face right then.

Although those two had been very rude to him, Gerald nevertheless couldn’t bear to see Leila caught in such a plight. Anyway, when they’d encountered each other again earlier, he’d mentioned something about counting on him in case of any trouble—that was why he spoke up now. 1

“Hmph! Douglas doesn’t need your money! He’s got friends, you know?” Leila snapped.

But who was going to lend Douglas a thousand five on short notice? What’s more, his dad would hear

about it, sooner or later... and then he'd be in for it.

This was his way out. He'd be a fool not to take it.

“Alright, Gerald!” Douglas said. “Just cover for me this time, and I'll pay you back tomorrow!”

“No problem—but you'll have to write me an IOU!” Gerald chuckled.

The waitress produced pen and paper for them.

His face a portrait of misery, Douglas nevertheless wrote out that IOU and presented it to Gerald.

Then he took back that hundred-dollar bill on the side table, and stuffed it back into his wallet, before making his escape with Leila.

Outside, Douglas decided to get back at Gerald a little. “Hmph! Leila, it would have been silly not to take advantage of that fool, back there! I've been disgraced in front of him this time, but heh! When he comes calling for me to pay back that IOU, well, fat chance! It's not like that worm's got any kind of clout!”

Hearing him speak like this, Leila felt like she didn't even know who he was anymore. Was this really the man she'd taken as her boyfriend?

What a piece of trash!

That's what Douglas looked like to her right now.

There was a time when Leila used to believe that money wasn't the most important thing. Having been raised in the lap of luxury, she'd never wanted for money herself. As such, she'd decided that she needn't find a boyfriend who was totally loaded—as long as he could treat her to a little something once in a while, that'd be fine!

Douglas was well-connected, and had an amazing job, so he'd been her preferred choice. After all, everywhere he went, people looked up to him.

However, after what had happened today in that restaurant, Leila's worldview had been changed completely.

Someone who could give her a little treat, once in a while? Forget that! Without money, they wouldn't even be able to get anything worth eating! ❶

Leila wanted to be at that table with Gerald right now, partaking in that sumptuous feast—but Douglas couldn't afford it. ❶

He couldn't even afford to pay for a broken vase of flowers.

Someone had bailed him out, and now he was plotting revenge against that someone.

Was this her type of guy? Leila shook her head.

“Leila, come on! I'll drive you home!”

Chapter 406

Douglas called out to her, but Leila replied, “That’s alright. You go on without me. I’ll find my own ride home!” With that, she hailed a passing cab, and departed—leaving Douglas dumbfounded by the side of the road.

He already knew what was wrong—and he blamed Gerald for it!

Some time later, Gerald and Cindy finished their meal together, and exchanged their contact numbers. Then he called for a cab to send her home.

Gerald stepped into the karaoke bar next door to have a look. Everyone had left, and the bar had closed for the night.

He hadn’t expected this to be such an eventful day. He was exhausted.

Hailing a cab for himself, he returned to the hotel where he was staying. The moment he stepped into his room, his phone rang again. It was that unknown caller who’d tried to reach him while he was at the restaurant earlier.

Who could it be? Curious, Gerald took the call.

“Gerald, what’s going on? Why didn’t you pick up?”

It was a lovely, feminine voice. Gerald was taken aback when he recognized who was speaking.

“Giya? It was you calling?” he exclaimed, baffled.

It had been half a month since term break started. Gerald had spent most of this time in the hospital looking after Mr Winters. Perhaps because of what had happened on the first day of term break, Giya hadn't spoken to him at all since.

Gerald had been thinking that it was just as well. And so, they'd severed contact with each other.

He hadn't been expecting to get a call from her.

“Hmph. Surprised? I'm calling you from the landline phone in my room. So what am I to make of you not contacting me all this while? Are we not friends anymore?” Giya grumbled.

“Nothing like that... I'm just shocked that you called me!” Gerald responded wryly.

“And just what's wrong with me calling you?” Giya asked teasingly.

“Well, I'm not some rich guy... just a poor loser with no money!”

“I won't allow you to talk about yourself like that!” she snapped.

“It's true! Most girls say that about me!”

“Most girls. I’ve never looked down on you—if anything, I think more of you than all those rich brats. I know you were only treating me that way for the sake of your girlfriend. If not for her, you’d be much nicer to me, isn’t that so?”

“Something like that...” For lack of anything better to say.

Truth be told, a girl like Giya, gorgeous and charismatic, with a heart of gold... Any man would be lucky to have her as their girlfriend.

But Gerald already had Mila. Though he admired Giya... it wasn’t like that.

“Was there some reason you called me?” Gerald inquired.

“I can’t call you without a reason? Well then... No, no reason! Hang up, won’t you?” Giya’s tone was sharp as a knife.

Doot... doot... doot...

As instructed, Gerald hung up. A moment later, she called back.

“What the hell? Why did you do that? You’re killing me, here! Look, something’s come up, alright? Something big!”

“What is it?”

“I’ll pay you a visit tomorrow at your place—and then I’ll need to stay for a few days. Is that cool? Hello, Gerald? Can you hear me?”

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Chapter 407

“What was that?” Gerald couldn’t believe his ears.

Stay a few days, at his place? How would he be cool with that? He talked to Mila every day, and on that note: He was spoken for right now—just that his girlfriend was abroad at present—and yet he’d be living together with another woman?

Even if the rest of the world was cool with it, Gerald certainly wasn’t! What madness was this?

“No way, forget it!” he answered.

“Oh... haha, it’s alright... I thought someone would be willing to help me, but I get it now...” Giya’s voice was barely more than a whisper.

“Has something happened over there?” Gerald asked, intrigued.

Come to think of it, Giya was hardly the sort of girl to suddenly run off to crash at some guy’s place for a few days without rhyme or reason. Had she fallen for him?

Hah! As though Gerald thought that highly of himself... He was only asking out of curiosity.

After a pause, Giya suddenly announced, “I’m

getting engaged!”

“Oh, congratula—” As Gerald began to respond to this, he suddenly realized there had been something odd in her tone. Changing tack, he instead tried, “That’s wonderful news! Who’s the lucky fellow?”

“Yacob Lincoln. My dad’s business has recently hit some rough waters, so he’s hoping to win the patronage of the Lincoln family to help us get through this. Meanwhile, Yacob’s been after my hand, and when his dad brought up the subject of us getting married... well, Yacob’s dad helped save my mom, too—so my dad said yes! Now I’m engaged to Yacob!

“But I don’t want to be engaged to anyone, you know? This whole thing feels like a nightmare! I had so many plans... I didn’t think I’d even consider marriage until I was thirty! But here I am, not even finished with university yet, and already engaged to somebody—somebody I don’t like! I just don’t know what I should do!”

“I’m looking for a place to hide—but Yacob knows all my friends, and he’ll definitely be able to find me through them—that’s why I came to you, but you’re leaving me out to dry!” Somewhere along the way, Giya had started sobbing.

Gerald felt he more or less understood, now.

Indeed, it was a heavy burden for anyone to have to bear. Furthermore, it wasn't as though her predicament had nothing at all to do with him...

After all, when Giya's mother was saved, the one behind it had actually been Gerald. He'd kept quiet about that, in order to minimize his involvement with Giya.

Turns out, the Lincolns had taken full credit for it, and had been holding it over Giya's family. In that sense, it was also Gerald's fault that Giya had now been forced into her current dilemma!

So, now what?

It was obvious that Giya was seeking asylum somewhere—and that, by running away from home, she hoped to apply pressure upon her father. That was why she'd sought him out.

If he turned her away, would she be forced into that marriage, after all? To be perfectly honest, a girl like Giya falling into the clutches of a guy like Yacob, it was akin to feeding caviar to pigs. Even Gerald himself considered it a crime against nature.

If he agreed to help her... how would he explain it to Mila?

But he already knew that he'd never forgive himself for abandoning Giya now. He'd planted these seeds

himself—now he had to reap the harvest!

“Alright, you can come stay with me,” Gerald said, “But I’m not at my family home—I’m staying in the city. Also... Once this matter has been settled, out you go!”

Since he was the one to blame for all this, it naturally fell to him to resolve the problem. The solution was simple: He’d reveal his true identity! Problem solved.

It would be okay to let Giya come over, because he had it all planned out.

Giya was jubilant. “Alright! You got it! Thanks, Gerald! You’re the best! Don’t worry, I’m only doing this to give my daddy a scare! Once he annuls the engagement, we’ll be in the clear!”

After the call ended, Gerald had some thoughts about the nature of impropriety.

Well, too late for regrets—he’d already said yes!

Anyway, he was renting a suite here, which was convenient for having guests over—besides taking care of Mr Winters, he also had to meet with Zack Lyle and the others regularly. It wasn’t merely a one-bedded room.

Gerald had decided to drop the ruse with Giya, and let her know who he really was! ①

First thing the next morning, Giya arrived by train. Gerald drove to the station in his Mercedes-Benz G500 to get her. If not because he'd left it behind at the Mountain Top Villa, he would have taken his Lamborghini instead. 1

If he was going to reveal his big secret to her, as part of helping to resolve this matter, Gerald was sure that all he needed to do was show off a little.

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Chapter 408

He parked the 4WD outside the train station. As expected, it attracted a lot of attention. There were even some girls coming over to snap pictures on their phones.

After all, this was a car that cost over three hundred thousand dollars!

“Oh, wow! A G500 here in Serene County? Who’s inside? Must be some rich kid!”

“Gosh... Hey, how do I look? What if he gets off the car, and falls for me at first sight? What will I do?”
“Hahaha! Get over yourself!”

“Girls, let’s go over there and say hi!”

The girls whispered amongst themselves, giggling out loud every so often.

Just then, an old woman of eighty approached the girls and said, “Whoever owns that car must be loaded, I guess?”

“Of course! The G500 goes for over three hundred thousand dollars! What’s up, grandma? Hoping to catch a big fish? He’s probably some young lordling, though...” The girls chortled with laughter.

“So what if I’m old? I’ve still got just as much right to flirt around. Hmph!” the old woman replied flippantly.

Saying so, she began to hobble towards the car. The girls followed after her.

A crowd was growing outside the train station. More and more people were gathering to look.

Inside the car, Gerald sucked in a deep breath. This should be the first time he’d ever made such a show of himself.

He’d always kept a low profile before this. He admitted to some excitement over the occasional moment in the limelight.

How would he describe these feelings? He’d been waiting three years for a moment like this. He was going to make a statement—not about how great he was, but about how he was going to get back everything he’d lost!

Hahh...

Gerald put on his sunglasses, and withdrew the car keys from the ignition.

Time to make his debut.

Wham! When he opened the door, he seemed to hit something. A moment later, there was a cry of

agony.

A white-haired old woman was sprawled across the ground outside, her cane still rolling away from her.

Good heavens! Gerald stared in shock.

“Young man, ahh... I hope your car’s alright...” the old woman mumbled in fright, still prone on the ground.

“What’s happened here?” Someone arrived on the scene immediately. The crowd surged forward.

“Hah! What do you think happened? When that young man opened his door, he knocked that old woman down—but I saw that she was lying in wait beforehand... and rushed forward just as he was getting out! It’s a scam!”

“So that’s how it is!”

But other onlookers continued to arrive, ignorant of what had really happened.

“Goodness, how could that guy be so careless? Repairing a G500 is gonna cost an arm and a leg!” someone remarked.

Annoyed, Gerald stepped out of the car to help the old woman to her feet.

“Don’t touch me! It’s no concern of yours! I fell down all by myself!” the old woman wept. “I live all

alone by myself, no sons or daughters... I simply can't pay you back for your car!"

"Hmph! Don't you worry, ma'am! Being rich doesn't make him untouchable! Even a rich man has to pay for injuring somebody! He opened the door and knocked you down, isn't that right? Rest assured, ma'am—we'll get you justice!" There were some hot-blooded youths, hollering with fury.

Soon, the police arrived on the scene, and dispersed the crowd.

Although the old woman had tried to set him up, it couldn't be denied that he'd knocked her down with his own hand. She was sent to the hospital, and Gerald was brought to the police station so they could take down a statement from him, that sort of thing.

Gerald was on the verge of tears. Why was any of this happening?

It took forty minutes to settle everything. Gerald even gave some money to the old woman. ①

Leaving the police station, he got a call from Giya: "Didn't you say you'd be picking me up from the station? Where are you?"

"Oh! I'm on my way right now!" Gerald spluttered.

"Forget it! I'm already in a cab, heading to your

place!”

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Chapter 409

“Gerald, I bought these fruits for you. I’ve already washed them, so come over and eat them!”

Giya set a tray of fruits down upon the coffee table, then took an apple herself and began munching on it as she watched the television.

Rather than a runaway fiancée escaping an arranged marriage, Gerald thought she looked more like she’d come for a pleasant holiday.

He’d returned half an hour ago. After helping Giya get settled in, he’d gone to take a bath.

At the moment, he wasn’t sure what to say about this relaxed, untroubled mood she was in.

Regarding the luxurious suite he was in, Gerald had only mumbled some throw-away excuse so far.

His earlier attempt at theatrics had flopped, and now he was no longer in the mood. Imagine bringing it up out of nowhere...

Gerald took a seat. “So, about your engagement... I think it’s best to talk things through with your father. Certainly, you can’t keep running away from it forever. The trouble with his business will ease in time—surely it’s not worth sacrificing his daughter’

s happiness forever?”

Anyway, if the Quarrington family was facing any financial issues, he could simply make an investment in their interests.

“I get that... but it’s not as simple as you think! Gah, I finally managed to calm myself down a little —could you not keep bringing that up?” Giya sulked at him.

Then, with a simpering smile, she said, “Gerald, I haven’t seen you in a while... Your skin’s turned fairer, and you’ve become so handsome now!”

“Is that so...” Gerald chuckled dryly.

That was when Giya’s phone rang. It was easy to see that she didn’t want to pick up, but after a moment, she did.

“What is it? I already said I’m not going back! Don’t try to find me, either! I’m not coming home until you call this whole thing off! There’s no way I’m marrying him! I don’t like a single thing about him! In fact, I despise him! And I don’t plan to get hitched so soon, whatever you say! I’m doing just fine over here! If there’s nothing else, I’m hanging up!”

Giya tossed the phone down on the table, in abject misery.

Gerald had heard it all. That had most likely been her father, trying to persuade her to return.

And then Giya's phone rang again.

"Argh, so annoying!" Giya testily snatched up her phone once again. "Didn't you hear me? Oh, it's you, Tammy..." Giya eased off a little. Setting the phone to speaker mode, she laid her hands on her lap, and her head on her knees, and the two girls began chatting.

"Giya, you didn't really run off to Gerald? You know, just now your dad even called my dad, asking if you were here! He's asked all the girls from our dorm, too! He's worried sick!" Tammy burred.

"Yeah, I'm with Gerald right now. Let him worry... as long as he knows there's no way I'm marrying that guy!"

"Mm-hmm... Hey, I've got nothing going on right now. I know some people over in Serene County, too. How about I come over there to hang out with the two of you? Now that the two of you are an item, Gerald owes us all a treat, surely... Hahaha, you know... for Gerald to become your boyfriend, it's truly a case of scattering pearls before—"

Tammy was spilling all the beans right now! Giya turned off the speaker in a hurry—and then, with

infinitesimal care, she stole a peek over at Gerald, who sat there in stunned silence.

Indeed, Gerald was thunderstruck! Exactly when did he become Giya's boyfriend? What had this girl been telling everyone?

Some moments later, Giya finished with her phone call, then came back.

Sheepishly, she said to him, "Gerald... they all know I'm with you right now. I didn't want to raise a scandal, so I also told them that you're my boyfriend. You don't mind, right?"

Gerald shook his head. "Not at all!" What else could he say? ①

"Also, Tammy said she'd be swinging by in a bit. She's got a relative staying in these parts—let's all go out and have some fun together! I mean, if you don't go, then they might start to think.." Giya was pleading with him. ①

"Alright, I'll go!" Since he'd already promised to help her, he couldn't very well refuse.

It was almost noon when Tammy arrived with a younger cousin sister—a high school girl from Mayberry.

Chapter 410

Tammy's car was a handsome Camry.

The very first thing she said to him was, "Hmph! Gerald Crawford... to think that a bottom-feeder like you could snare yourself a goddess like Giya—what a dream come true for you!"

"Yes! Yes, indeed!" Gerald nodded.

"Huh? Tammy, this guy is Giya's boyfriend? Ah... what is this world coming to?" Tammy's cousin clutched her forehead, staggering in place.

After all, anyone who knew Giya, knew that she was a beauty among beauties, a goddess among goddesses. No one would have expected her to find someone like this to be her boyfriend.

It seemed that Tammy and her cousin were of like mind. They stood there now, scowling contemptuously at Gerald.

'Wipe those dirty looks off your faces!' Gerald thought to himself.

"Alright, that's enough," Giya cut in. "Oh, Tammy—didn't you say you had a bunch of distant relatives here in Serene County? Are they not

joining us?”

As she said this, she hugged Gerald's arm tenderly... and also rolled her eyes at him, as though to say, ‘There, you see! Everyone thinks you hit the jackpot, scoring a girlfriend like me! But some people don't seem to appreciate their good fortune!’

“Oh, they're coming. I just got off the phone with them—they were asking me where we'd be eating, you know? Gerald, what have you got planned for lunch?” Tammy's tone was kind of sharp as she posed this question, as though Gerald's relationship with Giya came as some sort of affront to her.

As though she held some sort of grudge against him.

Indeed, Tammy didn't hold Gerald in high regard. She grew up in the cosmopolitan city; he was a country bumpkin. He was simple and poor, a lightning rod for ridicule.

The thought of him becoming a mainstay of her inner circle... she just couldn't stand it!

With a grimace, Gerald replied, “On the subject of lunch... just leave that to me! There's a decent place here in Serene County, called Mead Hall. Let's eat over there!”

“Hmph! You should have told us that earlier! Come

on, Giya! We'll go in my car!"

And so they found their way to Mead Hall, the finest restaurant in Serene County, frequented mainly by the rich and powerful.

When they arrived, Tammy announced with a mysterious air that she needed to find a place to park her car, and wanted Giya with her. Gerald was to go ahead and reserve a table for them.

Since that had been his intention all along, anyway, Gerald went inside and asked for a table for eight. Rather than having any private dining rooms to offer them, all the patrons were seated in the same enormous hall together.

Just as a table was found for them...

"Oh, gosh! Is that you, Gerald?" someone called out.

"It really is him! What's he doing in Mead Hall?"

A group of young men and women, halfway through their own meal, exclaimed with surprise when they spotted him.

Gerald turned when he heard someone calling his name, and saw six or seven people sitting together over there. Not just anyone, either—they were his classmates from high school, including Morgana Lopez and Cameron Laver.

What a coincidence! Almost as though...

Chapter 411

“Gerald, did you come here to have lunch?”

Morgana enquired, with no small amount of disbelief.

At the table sat Morgana, her boyfriend, Cameron, and several others. Everyone was smiling his way.

Mead Hall was unmistakably an upper-crust establishment, and you paid by the head here, from a starting minimum of thirty dollars per pax. After accounting for drinks and so on, each meal could easily cost hundreds.

Everyone knew Gerald wasn't rich, so this was a fairly peculiar circumstance.

Gerald smiled back at them. “That's right! I'm meeting with some friends, and I thought I'd treat them all to lunch here! Who would have thought I'd run into you guys here, too!”

“Pfft! We eat here all the time!”

“Ah, Gerald... It's nice that you're treating your friends to something, but do you know they charge at least thirty dollars per person here? Are you sure this is a good idea?” This was coming from a girl seated beside Morgana, who had also gone to the

same high school with them. 1

Sully was her name. Not a bad-looking girl. She pursed her mouth as she gave him that warning.

This was a high-class place, after all, meant only for people like her, who already held a certain standing in society. It wasn't as though she took especial pride in eating here, but... come on, a hobo like Gerald taking his lunch here? That just put her off her palate.

People like him ought to just stick with fast food joints and hot dog stands, that sort of thing.

It was downright disgraceful. Did Gerald presume to being their equals?

That was why she'd taken such an acrimonious tone with him.

“Hey now, Sully! You shouldn't talk to Gerald like that—he's got his pride, too! If he wants to eat here, then that's that. Anyway, this is a chance for us to get to know the friends he's made! Hahaha!” Cameron sneered as he said this.

Whether in terms of family background or career prospects, he was indisputably the alpha at this table, making him the keystone of the group.

Sully cackled. “Goodness, Cameron... The sort of friends a guy like Gerald would make—are you sure

you'd like to shake hands with them? Anyway, I only said that for his own good: Without taking stock of his own capacities, thinking to eat wherever he pleases... are appearances all he thinks about? Living beyond his own means... no one respects a person like that!" 1

She had disliked Gerald since high school: some impoverished bum prancing about before her... Pathetic! She could hardly care less about his feelings.

Anyway, for Gerald to be eating in the same restaurant as her showed that he didn't care about her feelings, either. 1

"Alright, Gerald's friends will be here any moment. Pipe down, you guys!" Morgana couldn't bear to watch any longer.

Gerald gave her a smile and a nod.

"Cameron, who's this guy? A classmate from high school?" An exquisitely made-up girl beside Cameron inquired curiously.

"That's right, ahahaha! Think he's cute? If he's your type, Gerald's still single—you could be his girlfriend!" Cameron burst out laughing.

"Hey! Cameron, you're the worst! Keep this up, and I'm not talking to you anymore!" The girl pinched

the tender portion of his arm.

Everyone chuckled. Gerald kept quiet and continued nodding away.

“Hey, look! Gerald’s blushing! I know... he must really like the idea of Maybelline becoming his girlfriend! Otherwise why would his face be turning red like that? Haha!” Another one of the guys decided to join in.

“Yo! Serious offer, Gerald. If this girl’s to your taste, she’s all yours. My word is good!” Cameron guffawed again.

“That’s alright—I already have a girlfriend!” Gerald replied in exasperation, although he understood that they’d only been making fun of him with that. It had been the same back in high school. Gerald knew it was best to just keep quiet.

Chapter 412

He couldn't very well go around telling everyone that he was rich, like some fool who'd just won the lottery, and try to show up everyone, right?

Feh. What would that achieve?

“Heaven have mercy! Gerald's actually found himself a girlfriend?” One of the guys exclaimed. “Holy hell, this is big news! We've got a high school reunion coming up in a few days, right? Everyone will be floored when they hear about this!”

“Gosh, what sort of girl would take a fancy to him? Oh, no... who's grandma is it?” Sully shook her head, and took a sip of her juice.

This elicited a round of merry laughter from everyone at her table.

Morgana watched Gerald with a growing sense of disquiet. Then she said, “Gerald, today we're actually celebrating my promotion at work—to the Reserve Department, no less. Cameron's my guest here today. How many friends of yours will be coming? I'd be glad to have them join us.”

“No, I can't accept that. There may be seven or eight of them!” Gerald said with a laugh.

So Morgana had finally settled that problem of hers. He remembered bumping into Zack Lyle, there. However, Zack hadn't followed up with him on that matter, probably because he considered it too minor to be worth his attention.

As for her recent stroke of good fortune... Gerald couldn't say if that was thanks to him, or Cameron. As such, he didn't offer any comments, only nodded. Then he took a seat at the next table.

Honestly, he felt embarrassed to be here, too. However, the restaurant was packed right now, and there were no other tables available further away—even if there were, it would be too awkward to switch places now. Neither could he just walk out of here...

He could only sit there and sweat.

Just then, Giya and Tammy entered. Following after them, besides Tammy's cousin, were also two other guys and girls each—presumably Tammy's aforementioned distant relatives.

“Wow, wow, wow! Babes! Hot babes!” Cameron and the other guys had noticed the new arrivals, and were too stunned to do much more than gape. Such beauty as had suddenly graced this hall!

“Who are they? They're smoking hot! Absolute, top

-tier charisma!” One guy beside Cameron noted.

“Hmph! They’re not that hot. They’re just really tall and sorta skinny. Pah!” Sully actually thought Giya and Tammy looked like celebrity supermodels, and had been moved by envy to speak.

As for that girl in the heavy make-up, sitting on Cameron’s other side... Compared to the girls who’d just walked in, she looked like a party clown.

“Anyone got the stones to go ask for their numbers? Whoever steps up, I shall know him as my lord!” The guy who said this was positively drooling.

And then, all eyes turned to Cameron.

After all, whether in terms of family background, or career prospects... he was the alpha!

Cameron was already getting up from his seat. He cleared his throat, smoothed out his shirt...

“Watch this. I’m going in!”

“Oh, yeah! Cameron rocks!”

“All our hopes ride with you, my lord!”

But Cameron had already intercepted the targets. “Hey there, sweet things... Here for lunch? Found a table yet? Maybe I could be of assistance—I come here all the time!” They were even more dazzling

up close. Cameron's heart was racing out of control. 1

“We're fine, thanks!” Giya and Tammy calmly deflected his advances. Something about him just put them off.

Cameron fished out his phone. “Ahem... Could I ask you ladies for your numbers? Call me Cameron. You may have heard of my family—”

“He's over there! Come on, let's go!” Spying her target across the hall, Tammy completely ignored Cameron, and led her entourage straight towards Gerald.

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Chapter 413

“Hmph! Gerald, don’t you even know how to wait for us outside once you’ve got a table?” When Tammy reached him, Giya was by her side. The first thing that spewed out of her mouth was abuse.

Gerald put down his phone and smiled faintly. He’d been preoccupied with reading investment reports coming in from Zack Lyle.

Meanwhile, Sully and the others were staring as though their eyes might pop out of their sockets. “What? What! These are the friends Gerald was going on about?”

Cameron still stood there, phone in hand, his face now turning blue.

They ignored him, but yet, they were so friendly to Gerald? Blast! It was indeed a vicious slap across the face!

“Huh? Gerald, happen to know those people at the next table?”

Giya had taken a seat beside him, and she now wondered why everyone at the adjacent table seemed to be gawking strangely in his direction.

“Hey, hey! Gerald, why don’t you introduce your

friends to us? When I went up to welcome them, those ladies just brushed me off, you know?”

Cameron, smiling stiffly, tried again.

He thought Gerald perhaps hadn't moved to receive the girls, hoping that Cameron might get some humiliation there.

He continued in an aggravated tone, “How are you doing, ladies? We went to the same high school as Gerald! How lucky we must be to meet such gorgeous girls today... Really, this isn't right of you, Gerald—the ladies have already taken their seats, so why aren't you ordering anything to eat? How could you bear to watch these beauties starve?”

Desperate to salvage his dignity, Cameron was now hovering beside Gerald's table, trying to assert himself as someone handy, hoping to attract the attention of those girls.

“Indeed, they're my ex-classmates from high school. What a small world we live in!” Gerald reluctantly admitted.

Giya laughed merrily.

“That's great! You ought to introduce these old friends of yours to me! After all, as your girlfriend, I can't possibly not know who your friends are.”

To her, it was simple: Gerald's friends were her

friends and though they were just masquerading as a couple, it was becoming more real to her with each passing moment. 1

However, that last thing she said left everyone at the next table wholly disconcerted.

What? Really? This epitome of loveliness was Gerald's girlfriend? Seriously?

Fires of jealousy flared in the eyes of the other guys.

Who were they? Uptown boys they were—filthy rich, set for life.

Who was Gerald again? Some loser who couldn't even rub two pennies together.

Not all of them had even found their own girlfriends, yet here was Gerald, a supermodel by his side. Who wouldn't be jealous? Without a doubt, Cameron was turning viridian green with swathes of envy oozing out of his chest.

“So you're Gerald's girlfriend, I see! How do you do? I'm Cameron. My parents are in the Health Bureau. I do hospital work. Ahaha!” As he made clear his superiority, Cameron reached out to shake hands with Giya.

With a flick of his wrist, a watch with the commanding price tag of well over a thousand dollars slid into view.

Giya considered this fool before her, one who felt the inexplicable need to introduce not only himself but his parents as well. What an odd way to go about things.

She decided not to take the hand he was offering her.

Anxious not to embarrass Cameron too much, Gerald shook his hand instead, at least so he wouldn't be left hanging there.

“Haha! Who would have thought: Gerald Crawford, the renowned tramp of our year, back in high school ... reviled and loathed everywhere he went...” Cameron went on. “Who could have possibly imagined that he might have caught himself such a ravishing beauty of a girlfriend?”

As he said this, he shot a meaningful look at one of the other guys back at his table.

The indicated henchman slapped the tabletop hard! “That’s right! Gerald,” he shouted. “I can’t believe your luck! Do you all still remember that one time when Gerald almost couldn’t pay his own tuition fees because he was just six bucks short or something? Great Scott, our teacher chased him right out of the classroom! Hahaha! And guess what—I think it rained heavily that day!”

“Of course I remember,” Sully sneered. “Gerald

trudged through the rain looking for trash to sell and somehow managed to scrape together those last six dollars, just so he could stay in school.

Hahaha! No one in class cared to lift a hand to help him! He's sure come a long way, hosting his own table at Mead Hall with that doll at his side... Well done!" 2

There was a strange parade of veiled hints getting passed around here. They were digging up all manner of dirt from Gerald's past, all to be stripped bare before Giya and her friends.

Predictably, Tammy's cousin and several of her friends were already peering at Gerald's askance. Thus far, he sounded all but a sorry loser.

"Never mind that, Gerald!" one of the guys hooted. "To commemorate your girlfriend's first-ever visit to Serene County, you can't start lower than sixty dollars each, right?"

Cameron frowned.

"What nonsense are you spouting over there? Only sixty dollars?! This pair of goddesses are worth far more than that! Gerald, if you don't go straight for the best quality at a hundred dollars per person, you don't deserve the company of these ladies! Haha! But worry not, Gerald—if you're strapped for cash, I'll pay for you. It's important to keep up

appearances, after all!”

Just then, the waiter arrived to take their order.

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Chapter 414

“What grade will you select today?”

Across all tables, all eyes turned to Gerald.

“Give me your best. A hundred per pax!”

It was what he'd been planning for all along, anyway.

“Pfft!” Cameron and company tried to hold in their laughter.

What an imbecile! A hundred dollars per head, plus drinks—the final bill would add up to a thousand dollars!

Tammy's side of the table was equally shocked by the turn of events. They reached the same conclusion: Gerald was a complete fool. Anyone could see that Cameron was up to no good, provoking him intentionally. Yet, Gerald walked straight into his trap. Really?

Gerald's lack of affluence was hardly news to Tammy. She'd already agreed with Giya not to allow Gerald to foot this meal's bill.

Now, Gerald was going for the most expensive option available? Argh! May the heavens help her!

“I beg your pardon—that’s not what we want. Something simpler will do just fine,” Giya interceded.

“Nope, a hundred it is. Go on, then!” Gerald was losing his temper under the barrage of jeers from Cameron and the rest.

“Hmph! Let him order what he pleases. We’ll see what he does when the bill arrives,” Tammy’s cousin declared.

And so, the best food in the house was brought to their table. Cameron’s table deliberately ate as slowly as possible. As Gerald’s table was being cleared, both parties rose in unison to pay.

“Oh? Leaving already, Mr. Laver?”

The cashier smiled and waved when she saw Cameron.

Cameron made sure his wristwatch was in full view as he waved back. “That lady’s a good friend of mine,” he pointed toward Morgana. “Please set a good price for her!”

“No problem, sir. 30% off! In fact, please accept this exquisite tea set and our best compliments! Each set is worth quite a bit, and it’s just a promotion we are running at the moment.”

The cashier, clearly older than Cameron, beamed as

she answered him.

“Aha! Hanging out with Cameron Laver means good times all the way,” cheered one of the other guys.

Morgana settled the bill, but Cameron continued to hang around—Gerald would be next to pay.

“Another friend of yours, Mr. Laver?”

The cashier could tell that they were acquainted, meaning she'd have to extend certain courtesies to Gerald as well.

Cameron pretended he didn't hear it, peering at his watch.

The cashier understood what it meant.

“Hello, sir. That will be nine hundred and seven dollars in all. Cash or credit card?” she asked smoothly.

“Surely, you can round off the last seven dollars,” Gerald chuckled. Cameron could leave him out in the cold if it were what suited him. One meal wasn't something worth fretting over.

With her face resting idly on her palms, the cashier responded indifferently.

“Forgive me, sir. Our prices are not open to haggling. Seven dollars or seven cents, you'll have

to pay it all, just the same.”

She saw it all from behind the counter—Cameron had deliberately coerced that fellow into going for the top of their line. It was apparent the man didn't have much in the way of money. There was no need to be too nice to him.

“Hey! You gave that bunch a thirty-percent discount! Now what's all that 'no haggling' about?”

Giya was first to lose her patience after seeing how everyone ganged up to give Gerald a hard time.

Gerald shook his head. “Forget about it, Giya. We'll just pay for our food and leave.”

“Hmph! You'll be offering us a tea set too, at the very least? We've spent over a thousand bucks at your place!” Giya hissed icily.

The cashier replied without the slightest sincerity, “We'd certainly like to—but you must forgive us, miss... These gift sets are only limited to fifty pieces per day—and the fiftieth has just been given to Mr. Laver. Perhaps if you come again tomorrow, I'll make sure I reserve a set just for you!”

At the end of the day, these were only one-time customers. It made more sense to appease a big spender like Cameron Laver. Furthermore, her own little sister was currently in the Laver Academy. The

cashier knew that if she kept playing for this side of the field, her little sister would have a smooth sailing journey in the future.

“Hey... Bring me the bill!”

Right at that moment, a hoarse voice boomed across the hall. Someone strode up and slapped a hand on the countertop.

It was a young man, and when the cashier, Cameron, and friends included, saw who it was...

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“Mr. Lourdes...” Cameron murmured. He suddenly felt silly for waving his watch around earlier. He stood at attention, much like a misbehaving student before the discipline teacher.

“Cameron, which Mr. Lourdes did you mean?” the girl beside him wondered aloud.

“Who else could I have meant? Louie Lourdes, scion, and heir to the Lourdes family mining conglomerate! The big kahunas!”

“So, it’s that guy!”

“I didn’t know he was that handsome in person!”

Morgana, Sully, and the other girls gazed with ardent admiration at the legendary character.

The guys, meanwhile, seemed afraid even to breathe too loudly.

Not mentioning the cashier, who was already on her feet, displaying the most professional smile she could muster.

Louie had a handful of people with him, not even bothering to look at Gerald or his guests as he cut in front of them.

“My bill!” Louie barked.

The cashier’s smile didn’t falter. “Of course, Mr. Lourdes. Your bill this time comes up to one thousand, two hundred dollars. To this, sir, we are pleased to offer you a 70% discount!”

As she spoke, she also leaned forward, inviting gazes at her cleavage. Who knew... perhaps her figure might entice the interest of the great man?

“Bah! Who needs your discount? I’ll pay the full price!” Louie hurled a wad of money on the counter.

“Understood, Mr. Lourdes. Any of our promotional gifts tickle your fancy, sir? We will provide you with anything you want,” the cashier responded reverently.

“None of that hogwash! Just give me my receipt!”

“Gosh, so this is the real Mr. Lourdes! What commanding aura he has!”

The girl standing beside Cameron was about to go cross-eyed from amazement.

Even Morgana and Sully were exchanging stares from the corner of their eyes, wondering when they’d be able to find a man his equal.

Meanwhile, Tammy simply wasn’t in the mood to play games between Gerald and his stupid friends.

Seeing somebody cutting the line, her temper instantly flared up.

“Hey, now... haven't you ever heard of first come, first serve? Don't you know you've interrupted us right in the middle of our turn?”

“That's right, bro. First come, first serve. I've been waiting in line for a while now too.”

Gerald hadn't expected to run into Louie here. He could still see the fresh scars on his face. What a pounding he must have been given that night.

Barely a couple of days later, here he was, coming out looking for trouble again.

A wry smile worked its way across Gerald's face.

“Hmph! Be quiet, you. Your comments are not welcome. If Mr. Lourdes is here, you'll all have to wait then.”

The cashier had utterly abandoned all gestures of courtesy toward them. She rolled her eyes at Gerald.

“Good lord, this blind fool!” Cameron cackled from the side. “Don't you know Mr Lourdes? He's obviously in a foul mood today... this Gerald is really tempting for misfortune today!”

Now, even the cashier had started ridiculing Gerald. Louie, on the other hand, pretended to have heard

nothing. Now, it was his turn to get angry.

He planted his foot hard into Louie's butt.

Whack!

"Ow!" Louie cried out, his wounds searing with pain once again.

Louie smacked the counter hard. "God d*mn it; I'll kill you!"

Cameron and the others couldn't believe their eyes. Gerald actually dared to strike Mr. Lourdes? The only thing that could happen next was him getting beaten to a pulp.

As Louie whipped around to retaliate, his fist suddenly halted mid-air.

"Cr... Crawford?"

Louie was paralyzed.

Wasn't this the same Gerald Crawford who'd summoned all those guys to clean his clock at the karaoke bar the other day?

Those men were skilled fighters. The beating he'd taken from them nearly crippled him, yet, they left no incriminating marks.

His misery definitely hadn't ended. That very same night, his dad had been summoned by a few who

demanded to speak with him.

On the other hand, Louie had been expecting his father to respond with all his wrath and fury and leaving the men bowing and scraping like a winded dog. Afterward, Louie's father had come away from that meeting, practically skipping with delight.

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Louie's father had even told him that he deserved to be beaten up.

His father explained that the person who had beaten him up was none other than the extremely rich and humble heir, Mr. Gerald Crawford from Mayberry.

Hearing that, Louie felt chills run down his spine.

He had almost brought great trouble upon himself that day.

Perhaps like his father had said, being beaten up was a good thing after all. Maybe it could even get Mr. Crawford to invest in his company.

Thus, with that possibility in mind, Louie was faced with a cocktail of surprise, fear, and joy at the same time the moment he saw Gerald.

“Gerald! So you were eating here as well!” said Louie with a chuckle as he patted his hurt bottom.

‘What.’

Cameron and the others were all thinking the same thing. They had all been eager for some drama but Louie's reaction only left them stunned.

‘What? Why does Louie know Gerald? He even addressed Gerald in such a familiar way!’

‘How is that possible!’

“That’s right. If we weren’t, how else could we have seen you cutting the queue?” replied Gerald with a faint smile on his face.

In his mind, he was wondering if he had not beaten Louie severely enough that night.

“W-well, you see, my dad’s invested quite a bit in this place before. Because of that, I’m used to not having to queue! But don’t you worry Gerald! Your meal’s on me today! Actually, scratch that. All of your meals here in the future will be on me!” said Louie as he rubbed his hands together.

“That won’t be necessary. This lady here won’t even lower the price by a dollar for me. We aren’t being given any special gifts either. I’m afraid that this will be the last time I ever come here,” replied Gerald, a smile on his face.

“What? Give me a minute, Gerald!”

Realizing that it was the cashier lady who had offended Gerald, Louie turned to glare at her. She had been standing beside them all this time, a dumbfounded expression on her face.

“Ah! Louie, so this gentleman here is your friend!”

The cashier lady was terrified now. She began thinking up excuses in her mind as cold sweat dripped down her forehead.

‘I only treated him like that because Cameron had signaled me too! He told me to make it difficult for Gerald so I was only following his orders!’

‘Cameron’s family works in the health department so of course I wouldn’t dare disobey him!’

‘Besides, that Gerald guy looked like a loser so I didn’t think twice about it. To think that he knew you, Louie!’

Before she could even begin explaining herself, a slap was heard.

Louie’s hand left her now reddened cheek as he shouted, “How could you look down on a customer! Isn’t Gerald just here to enjoy a meal? How dare you bully a customer you’re not even familiar with! I better hear about your resignation the next time I come here!”

“But I... I only did it because...”

Her left cheek was swollen and red and in pain as she looked toward Cameron.

Cameron had already been nervous even before she looked at him. He simply pretended as if the

incident had nothing to do with him as he quietly began sneaking out of the place.

He didn't want to retreat like a coward, but the situation was a difficult one so with a great reluctance and unwillingness in his heart, he left the premise.

He regretted his actions tremendously.

As for Gerald, he exchanged a few pleasantries with Louie before finally leaving with Giya and the others.

Gerald already knew that Louie was just a rich and useless brat so he didn't want to get too close to him.

Upon leaving the shop, they caught sight of Cameron and the others standing not too far away from them.

In the beginning, Cameron and the others had wanted to enjoy Gerald's misfortune, but humiliation greeted them headfirst instead.

This was especially true for Cameron who had a terrible expression on his face.

“How on earth does Gerald know Louie?!” said Sully.

Her respect for Gerald had grown tremendously

now.

Cameron simply sneered at her question. “He just showed Gerald a little respect! He said all that but Gerald was still the one who paid the bill in the end! It’s only a matter of respect. Don’t you know who Louie is? He would never befriend a person like Gerald!”

Cameron was brimming with jealousy.

As per usual, Gerald made up a story regarding him and Louie to casually explain what had just happened to Giya and the others.

They then left and returned to the hotel.

“Oh my god! Why is Gerald staying in such a grand hotel?”

Since Tammy and the others had not entered the hotel earlier, the little cousin was shocked when they stepped through its front doors for the first time.

What more, Gerald had spent a lot of money just on the meal they were treated to earlier. He also knew a lot of people. Tammy and the other distant relatives were constantly surprised the longer they stayed around Gerald.

As they went further into the hotel, a few men tried to gain Giya’s affection. However, they gave up

immediately the moment they knew that they first had to rival Gerald. They were nothing compared to him.

Once they got into their room, Gerald put his phone on the coffee table to wash some fruits for them.

“Oh my god! Tammy! Tammy come look! Look at the phone Gerald’s been using!”

The little cousin picked the phone up to show her, an expression of surprise on her face.

Tammy was equally stunned.

‘That phone could easily amount to two to three thousand dollars... Why would Gerald have it?’

At that moment, his phone began to ring.

“...Hmm? The most beloved Mila? Who is this person?” said the little cousin as she looked at the caller ID. She was dumbfounded by the discovery.

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The little cousin's surprise turned into a sneer. "Who is this 'most beloved' Mila? Doesn't he like you most Giya? Let's see who she is!"

Giya couldn't react fast enough and before she could stop her, the little cousin had already answered Mila's call.

"Hello? Who is this?" asked the little cousin.

"What? You're definitely not Gerald's girlfriend. Stop spouting nonsense!"

Even though she said that, the little cousin was stunned.

She then looked toward Giya before saying, "Giya! This girl's saying that she's Gerald's girlfriend!"

"That's quite enough, Felicia! Hand me the phone immediately!"

Giya then snatched the phone from her and hung up immediately.

Giya, for one, definitely knew who Mila was. She was Gerald's girlfriend who was in a long-distance relationship with him.

However, that was all Giya knew about Mila. She

had been quite curious about what Mila was like in person ever since she knew about her existence.

Still, it would be inappropriate for her to say anything else at the moment.

“Felicia, what did you say? What did that other girl say again?” asked Tammy as she confirmed with Felicia if she had heard right.

Felicia simply sneered again. “I asked her who she was and she said that she was Gerald’s girlfriend! She even asked me where Gerald was!”

Felicia spoke as if she had just uncovered a great secret.

“Giya, do you know that girl?” asked Tammy as rage brewed in her mind.

‘What the actual f*ck! How sleazy is this guy! To get Giya to be his girlfriend is no easy feat and yet look at him! How bold and absolutely disgusting! To think that he still dares to fool around with other women when he already has Giya!’

“What are you all talking about? I have some fruits with me!”

At that moment, Gerald finally came back, holding a plate of fruits in his hands.

“To hell with the fruits! Who’s this Mila, Gerald!

You better have a good explanation!” sneered Tammy.

She snatched the phone from Giya and held on to it as she glared daggers at Gerald.

Gerald didn’t even know how to begin explaining the situation.

Mila was his actual girlfriend of course.

“It had never crossed my mind that you were such a vile and disloyal man! How dare you treat Giya this way!” scolded Felicia next.

“That’s enough! Don’t scold him anymore! I already knew about this and... And let me just admit that we’ve never been a couple!”

There was no use hiding it anymore so Giya simply shouted the truth out.

“...What? You two aren’t a couple? Oh god, then why are you living with him if you’re not his girlfriend?” asked Tammy, shocked.

“I did it so that no one would get suspicious! I needed Gerald’s cooperation to lie to my dad, otherwise, he would definitely continue to force me!” explained Giya truthfully.

“You scared me half to death! I thought you really had become Gerald’s girlfriend! But I guess it really

is impossible. It's a little hard to believe that since Gerald's been treating you so well today even though he already has a girlfriend. He's even given you so many expensive things!" said Tammy as she glared at Gerald.

Women hated vile and disloyal men.

It was clear that Gerald had that label on him now.

"That's enough, Tammy. Didn't your mom call earlier? Asking you to go home immediately? And you need to promise to keep this a secret for me. Please don't meddle with Gerald's business!" said Giya in a persuading tone.

Eventually, Giya managed to persuade them to leave.

Only Gerald and Giya were left in the room now.

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It definitely took Gerald a while to explain the entire situation properly to Mila.

By the time he was done, Mila was no longer angry.

Gerald sighed. He had never anticipated for that crazy girl to actually pick up and answer his phone.

He was stuck in an extremely awkward position now.

“Say, Gerald, do have a seat... I have something I want to ask you,” said Giya as she looked toward him. On her face was a demure smile.

“I’m fine standing. What’s your question?”

“Do you really like Mila that much?”

“Of course I do!” replied Gerald without hesitation.

Giya took in a deep breath before continuing. “Then, if that’s the case, why did you give me such an expensive gift in the first place? In case you weren’t aware, when I learned that it was the most priceless gift your family could offer, I was touched beyond compare!”

“I’ve never been in a relationship before, Gerald. Though many other men have given me expensive

gifts before, those gifts were different from yours. Your gift was meaningful. And to tell you the truth, to me, you're different from the other men.”

Deep inside, Giya knew that she was trying to win Gerald's affection.

She couldn't explain why. She was just in love with him.

Initially, she had thought that his long-distance relationship girlfriend posed no threat to her. However, Giya now realized how much Gerald cared for her.

Gerald on the other hand, was filled with self-reproach at that moment.

He knew that the dragon jade bracelet was never his family's heirloom.

However, back at university that day, he couldn't just say that for fear that his identity would be exposed. His lies became the truth that day, at least for those who heard it.

He had lied because he had assumed back then that he was nothing but a loser compared to Giya, Tammy, and the others.

His logic was that there was no way that they would ever feel anything for him.

What more, lying wouldn't matter since he had also

assumed that he would never have to contact any of them again once the jade bracelet had been handed over.

Never could he have imagined the complex chain of events that would soon follow and eventually lead to this very day.

Now here he was, in a room together with Giya. A Giya who had misunderstood his intentions from the moment he had given her the bracelet.

It was getting too messy. Gerald knew he couldn't hide the fact from Giya any longer. It was useless to even hide his identity from her at this point.

Gerald took in a deep breath before saying, "The truth is, Giya, I lied to you. The dragon jade bracelet is not a family heirloom like what you and the other girls thought. I bought two bracelets from the shop, the dragon jade bracelet being one of them. You were supposed to receive the other, as I just wanted to compensate for the one I broke."

"However, I somehow mixed the two up and gave you the wrong one," he said as he left the room. He came back soon after along with the two jade bracelets and placed them in front of Giya.

He didn't want Giya to believe the lie any longer. With the proof in front of her now, she definitely couldn't.

Giya bit her lower lip softly before smiling bitterly. She nodded slowly.

“So that’s the entire story... No man would ever be that stupid and give his family heirloom to a girl he barely even knew! I guess I’ve just been overthinking everything!”

Gerald looked down with a sigh. The weight on his chest had been lifted. It felt relieving to finally be able to clear things up with her.

“Alright then Gerald, I won’t be disturbing you anymore. I’ve given it some thought and I know that I’ll only end up troubling you more by staying here. I really shouldn’t worry my dad too much either. Though Yacob has numerous flaws, at least I can trust that he’ll be sincere. I’ve decided. I’m going home now.”

As soon as she ended her sentence, she stood up immediately and began packing her things up.

Giya had made up her mind. She would return home to be engaged to Yacob.

Gerald felt uneasy but who was he to stop her?

He had Mila now. What right did he have to have ambiguous relationships with other women? With that thought in his head, he chose not to stop her.

As he sent Giya off, he thought that the incident

was now truly over.

He could finally focus all his attention on the investment of Serene County.

Sometime later, Gerald received a call...

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It was a call from Morgana.

She told him that the gathering for high school friends was going to be held that afternoon.

Morgana had simply called to remind him about the event and to tell him to be there early.

It had been three days since Gerald had last eaten a meal at Mead Hall.

So Giya had been gone for three days now.

Morgana had elaborated on the event the day before. Soon, many of their classmates would start their internships or work.

Therefore, the gathering was planned for old friends to catch up with one another while they were still here.

At first, Gerald had not wanted to participate. However, Gerald had attended an opening ceremony for a newly invested company the day before. As he was about to leave, he bumped into Morgana and a few others who had gone to the carnival to have some fun.

Tagging along with Morgana was another female

high school friend by the name of Xella Jaquin.

She was their assistant monitor back then and she was definitely one of the class beauties. She was excellent in her academics as well. Similar to the old Sharon, she had always had a good relationship with Gerald who shared an equally good academic performance.

Gerald found out that Xella had returned to Serene County for future prospects. She seemed to have also found a nice job there.

The moment they saw Gerald, they tried their best to invite him over as well.

Gerald found it hard to reject so many people so he ended up promising that he would go.

After telling Morgana he hadn't forgotten, he hung up.

A few seconds later, he received a message on his phone. It was Xella.

“So when are we going, Gerald?”

Gerald knew that she lived in Serene County. Actually, it wasn't too far off from the hotel Gerald was currently staying in.

On the day they met, Gerald had joked that they should go to the gathering together.

However, he hadn't expected Xella to agree to that.

"I'll be right there soon!" replied Gerald.

"No need to rush. I need another forty minutes to wash my hair and some other things. Let's meet up at the Tranquil Road bus stop later!"

"No problem!"

Though Xella used to be the assistant class monitor, she was a quiet and gentle girl who rarely talked.

She just liked to study and her friends in class were mostly the more studious people.

A good example would be how she didn't like talking to people like Cameron—who had a powerful family background—and Waylon Letts—who was the wealthiest in class—since they were both quite mischievous. Money and power just weren't how she chose her friends.

Meeting her again, however, Gerald could see that Xella had undergone some big changes from when they had last met years ago.

The way she presented herself, she had become quite optimistic and capable. She was even able to joke with the others, much unlike her past self.

It seemed that girls would naturally change after experiencing different things in society.

Ignoring all that, something much more important was on Gerald's mind. He remembered back when he had an ambiguous relationship with Xella at the start of their junior year.

She had been with him not because of his charm.

Back then, Gerald was still considerably handsome. However, the things that mattered to her was his honesty and his studious nature. Adding to that, he also liked to listen to a group of girls—which she was a part of—when they told him things. As a result, an ambiguous relationship blossomed between the two.

However, his ambiguous relationship with Xella lasted only for a short while. It ended not too long after.

Shaking his head, he batted the old memories away before taking his car key out.

Gerald then drove his Mercedes-Benz G-Class to the Tranquil Road bus stop.

He didn't need to keep a low profile anymore since he was no longer in the university.

Besides, he wasn't driving the car to show off. He simply needed a vehicle to get somewhere.

He knew that there was a chance that Sharon and

Lilian might be at the gathering as well. Though they didn't know who his true identity was, they at least already knew that he was rich. Knowing that, Gerald didn't think too much about them.

When he arrived at the bus stop, there was still half an hour left before the appointed time.

Since he still had some time before she arrived, he parked his car at a nearby parking lot.

He then went to a coffee shop to buy two cups of coffee before finally walking toward the bus stop to wait for Xella.

“Gerald?”

While sitting there, he heard a female voice call out to him.

Gerald turned around.

Before him, was a girl intimately locking arms with a man. Both of them were wearing sunglasses and they were dressed up fashionably.

Though her eyes were hidden, the rest of her face was beautiful. She even had a nice figure going for her. The man, on the other hand, looked slightly displeasing to the eye to be absolutely honest. He was short, plump, and ugly. His face was filled with pockmarks too.

Despite them looking like night and day, they

appeared to be a couple.

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Chapter 420

“What, it’s only been a few years, Gerald. Have you already forgotten about me?” said the girl as she removed her sunglasses.

“You’re Rae!” said Gerald, recognizing her immediately.

After hearing him say that, her partner took his sunglasses off as well. Gerald immediately realized who he was after that.

His name was Heath Seaver. His classmates liked calling him ‘tycoon’ since he definitely looked the part. He was actually quite rich back when they were still in school. However, he was also famously known for trying to gain the affection of up to ten girls back then, though he was rejected more than fifteen times.

How was that possible? It was because some of the girls rejected him twice!

The issue always boiled down to his face having too many pockmarks.

Aside from that, he had suffered from a high fever once when he was young, so his reactions were always a bit slower compared to the others.

When it came to bullying back then, the victims were always either Gerald or him. Both of them suffered the same misfortune.

And what about Rae Walker?

She had been a beauty even back then.

She was from the school's art team and she danced Latin just like Lilian.

However, compared to Lilian, she was way more attractive and seductive.

Gerald still remembered how much Rae had enjoyed herself during the schooling years. There were always several people trying to gain her affection. As a result, she had been in love many, many times.

Some of the boys she dated had rich family backgrounds and were quite famous in school.

Others were from the school's sports team. Back then, they all looked like they would become celebrities one day.

Rae had even dated handsome gangsters from outside their school before.

During that period, a few magnificent motorcycles could always be seen parked at the entrance of the school during weekends. It meant that she was going out on a date, and it always made for a

spectacular scene.

It was a surprise to Gerald that she would end up being together with the tycoon after graduating from high school.

His surprise was obvious to them as his eyes were wide open.

“What are you staring at? Actually, I never expected to see you attending the gathering! It’s really been quite a while since we’ve last met!” said Rae as she placed a hand on Heath’s shoulder while rolling her eyes at Gerald.

“It truly has been. Both of you are even together now!” replied Gerald with a smile.

Rae simply sneered. “That’s right, we are. What about it? He loves me very much and that’s all that matters. He even owns a few shops in the county town!”

Gerald couldn’t tell whether she was trying to show off, but she really liked talking.

Seeing that he had gone quiet, Rae showed a smug expression on her face as she locked her arms with Heath’s again.

She could sense Gerald’s astonishment at how the tycoon and her were a couple now.

Gerald couldn’t deny that he was slightly jealous.

However, it wasn't about love. Gerald and Heath were both losers at heart. However, one of them had a beautiful girlfriend now while the other remained the same. 1

With that in mind, anyone would be unhappy about that.

Rae enjoyed seeing Gerald's mood sour.

"Xella will be here soon. Let's go together!" said Gerald as he smiled bitterly while shaking his head.

Rae simply sneered again. "We're definitely not taking the bus. We're just waiting for our ride here. Jason and the others will be picking us up later. That's only because the tycoon hasn't had the time to get his driving license yet. Otherwise, we would have bought a car by now!" replied Rae.

"I see!"

It was unpleasant talking to her so he spent the remaining time chatting idly with them.

It was sometime later when he heard a female voice calling out to him.

"Gerald!"

Looking up, he saw her standing opposite the road, a parasol in hand. Her body appeared slim and tall, and her shoulder-length curls were red. She was

walking toward him now.

The closer she came, the more attention she received from the other men waiting at the bus stop. Their eyes were glued onto her.

With her beauty and grace, who could blame them?

The woman who now stood before Gerald, was none other than Xella.

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Chapter 421

“Here comes Xella!” said Rae as she and the others smiled toward Xella.

“Have you waited for a long time, Gerald?” asked Xella, smiling as she looked at him.

“Not at all!” replied Gerald.

Xella was dressed charmingly that day. She was certainly the kind of woman who could bewitch others with a single glance.

However, Gerald knew better and actively stopped himself from thinking unnecessary thoughts.

“Speaking of which, Xella, I looked at the group chat yesterday. The others were discussing how you had landed a great job. How did you manage to get into the Dream Investment Group? I heard that a billion dollars were required for the registered capital!” said Rae, a slight jealousy projected in her voice.

Initially, Rae was considered much better compared to her other classmates in the group.

Since she was now dating the tycoon whose family owned a few shops, she was considered quite well-

to-do and she was proud of that.

She had a great life as well.

However, comparing herself to Xella, she felt like a small fry.

Everyone knew that the Dream Investment Group was established with the funds provided by Mr. Crawford from Mayberry. In the near future, it was planned to become a large development project in Serene County. Whoever managed to enter the group would continue their efforts even though they had to pay about one to two billion dollars that year.

Naturally, when the news was shared in the group chat, everyone became excited.

It was a sign that Serene County was going to undergo some drastic changes soon.

“I just so happened to be recruited by the company. I’m not too sure how its development will end up being and to be frank, I don’t have much confidence either. Besides, it’s not like I’m working in the headquarters of Dream Investment Group. I’m just working in a subsidiary investment holding company under them, it’s not as mysterious and good as most people say!” said Xyla as she smiled bitterly.

“That’s still quite an exceptional post, Xella! You

don't have to be modest!" replied Rae, her jealousy more apparent in her voice now.

Gerald on the other hand, was standing beside them and he appeared quite shocked.

So Xella had been recruited by a subsidiary company under Dream Investment Company.

And who owned the Dream Investment Company?

It was, of course, Gerald!

No wonder Xella and the others were there the other day! After completing the procedures for the opening ceremony, he had bumped into them in the main square just outside the hall.

Quite a few celebrities had attended the carnival the day before so it hadn't crossed Gerald's mind that Xella was involved with the Dream Investment Company.

With her role as an employee of the subsidiary company under Gerald's, it was definitely alright for her to bring along a few friends to enjoy themselves there.

Gerald couldn't help but think to himself, 'What a great coincidence!'

"Since we're all here, let's get on the bus together!" said Xella.

“It’s fine, someone’s picking us up later! Actually Xella, why don’t you come with us instead?”

Just as Xella was about to reply, her phone started ringing.

The moment she picked up, she stepped to the side before saying something, a blush forming on her cheeks. She continued talking for a while before finally hanging up.

“Your boyfriend?” asked Gerald with a smile. He couldn’t help it, seeing her face all shy and flustered.

“What are you talking about? I’m single! That’s just a friend!” she replied with a smile though her voice was quivering awkwardly.

Gerald shook his head with a smile before fishing his car keys out. He was ready to drive her to the gathering.

All of a sudden, a new white Audi A4L could be seen and heard dashing toward the bus stop.

The brakes were slammed and the car stopped abruptly right next to the surprised crowd.

The car’s window was rolled down and a man in sunglasses poked his head out.

“Come on, Xella! Your classmates will be there

soon! Let's get there before them, just the two of us!" said the man.

Naturally, the car caught a lot of attention from the people who were waiting for the bus there.

As usual, the beautiful one would always get picked up by the rich kid.

This was what a few of the boys there thought as their inferiority complex sank in.

"Ah, hello Waylon. Is this the newest car you've bought?"

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Chapter 422

Rae recognized the man and she bore a look of surprise on her face.

Seeing that Rae and the tycoon were there, Waylon was surprised as well.

He got out of his car and leaned against it with one hand in his pocket. He then smiled and said, “Bought it about half a month ago. I finally found a chance to drive it today!”

Waylon was another of Gerald's old classmates. Back when they were still in school together, there were only two boys who were very rich and powerful. They still are today.

One of them was Cameron, whose family was related to the health department. The other was none other than Waylon.

Both Waylon and Cameron shared a good relationship back then. They enjoyed messing around during class.

Since the two of them had wealth and power, they both lived good lives even after graduating from high school.

However, Gerald was more interested in Waylon's relationship with Xella. The two of them had never had a good relationship, even quarreling with each other at times, at least as far as Gerald could remember. They now looked like they shared quite a good relationship.

As they were chatting with each other, Rae pointed at Gerald before saying, "Say, Waylon, Gerald's here too. Why don't you talk to him?"

Waylon then finally looked toward Gerald who had been standing beside them all this time.

"Oh goodness! If you hadn't told me about it, I really wouldn't have recognized him. You're here too, Gerald!" said Waylon as he smiled faintly.

Rae simply sneered at that. "What, have you forgotten already, Waylon? You once asked Gerald to lend you his workbook so that you could copy his answers. Gerald didn't let you so you took a chair and beat him up all the way from the platform to the back of the classroom. I remember him looking scared half to death back then since you did it so harshly," said Rae as she reminisced.

Gerald was placed in an extremely awkward position as soon as she said that.

He distinctly remembered that incident and it had

been a reoccurring bad memory for him. Waylon was like a shadow in Gerald's heart since he always ridiculed Gerald openly. That wasn't the only time he had beaten Gerald up either.

It had been so traumatizing that whenever Gerald heard even his name, he grew instinctively frightened.

During that incident, both Xella and Sharon had quarreled fiercely with Waylon because they wanted to help Gerald.

Xella had even taken a textbook and smashed it on Waylon so that she could avenge Gerald.

It was an unpleasant experience as a whole and Gerald could only reply with a bitter smile.

However, Waylon was indifferent to the situation and simply changed the topic. "Well, that's enough chit chat. When I called Xella earlier I thought she was going to be here alone. It turns out that all of you were here waiting for the bus! Either way, come on Xella, let's go."

'Xella must have been afraid that I would misunderstand earlier, so that's why she answered the call secretly' Gerald thought to himself.

It wasn't really necessary. Gerald didn't care, quite honestly.

However, she had promised and agreed that they would be going to the gathering together. As it turned out, she had both Gerald and Waylon waiting to take her there. That was the only thing that slightly troubled Gerald.

“Sure. Let’s go in Waylon’s car together, Gerald. You don’t have to take the bus too!” said Xella as she blushed slightly while looking toward Gerald.

In their minds, the tycoon and Rae had added themselves to the picture. ‘Imagine riding in an Audi! That would feel so good! We could even deepen our relationship with Waylon! How nice!’

“I’m afraid that just won’t be possible. I need to pick up another classmate later and if Gerald joins, there won’t be any space in the car left!” said Waylon, a grimace on his face as he stepped into his car.

Xella was now sitting beside Waylon who had just gotten into the driver’s seat.

This made Xella feel even more awkward. “I... see... Then... What should we do then?”

“How about this, Gerald can just hail a taxi since it’ll only cost about ten dollars!” replied Waylon.

“You don’t need to do that! Aren’t there Ofo bikes by the street? Just scan one then ride the bike to the

gathering!” said Rae.

“D*mn! That’s just too pathetic!” Waylon then burst out laughing.

Once he stopped, he said, “Let’s just meet later at the hotel then, Gerald.”

After that, he just drove off without saying another word.

Xella had wanted to say something to Gerald but in the end, she couldn’t bring herself to say anything. She could only roll up the car’s window.

She sighed internally. ‘What else could I have said...’

Once they left, several people were already looking at Gerald pitifully. A few others simply sniggered.

‘That Gerald guy there was clearly being looked down upon. He’s so pitiful!’ That was what almost everyone there was thinking at that moment.

However, Gerald didn’t let it bother him. He simply smiled in resignation before walking to the parking lot beside the bus stop.

He passed by the bus stop as his Mercedes-Benz G-Class drove swiftly toward the venue of the gathering.

Chapter 423

Once he had parked his car, Gerald entered the private room. Almost half of his classmates were already there.

There were about twenty people and the atmosphere was quite lively.

The dining table that they had booked was huge as well.

Most of the students there only greeted Gerald casually before turning to look away and continuing talking among themselves.

To them, Gerald was simply a poor loser so he was naturally easy to be ignored.

Going back to Gerald, there was one thing that surprised him.

Both Lilian and Sharon were nowhere to be seen.

“By the way, Waylon, why aren’t Lilian and Sharon here? Didn’t they say they would join us?”

Similar to Gerald, some of the other classmates were also puzzled.

Waylon simply smiled faintly. “They won’t be

joining us. They're not the same as they used to be. They've entered rich and powerful circles. They're arguably the most powerful among us! Why would they ever attend such a small event such as this?"

"Oh my, is that really true? What else do you know, Waylon?" asked Xella who was sitting beside him. Her curiosity had gotten the better of her.

"Well, Sharon's found herself quite a powerful boyfriend in Mayberry. Do any of you know about Yorknorth Mountain Entertainment City?" said Waylon as he lit a cigarette.

"Of course we all do! It's net famous! Yorknorth Mountain is going to be developed and transformed into a tourism, food, and culture focused city. Literally everyone has heard about it!"

"Well, Sharon's boyfriend came from Yorknorth Village, though the village has now been demolished. But that's beside the point. See, her boyfriend's family owns a few shops on the commercial street in Yorknorth Mountain Entertainment City. The amount of money they'll be earning in the future will be almost impossible to calculate!"

"Holy cr*p! They sound really powerful!"

Hearing that, everyone was astounded.

"Her boyfriend's name is Hayward, and he's quite

famous in Mayberry. I had visited Mayberry last month for a little entertainment and fun. I called Sharon while I was there and met up with her boyfriend too. We had a meal together and exchanged contact information too,” said Waylon rather proudly.

“D*mn Waylon! You’re so great!”

“Back when we were in school, Waylon and Cameron were equally influential and powerful! Waylon still is! How about you Cameron? No news from you? You’ve got to work harder!” teased a few girls who were sitting casually beside Cameron.

A hint of jealousy could be seen in Cameron’s eyes. Cameron knew that he couldn’t compare himself to Waylon.

This was especially true now since Waylon had already grown to know a lot of people from Mayberry whereas Cameron’s contacts were only limited to those from the health department.

Thinking about it made Cameron both anxious and restless.

He felt like he was being humiliated.

“Hey, hey, don’t say that! Cameron’s a great guy too! If your family or relatives work in hospitals or something close to that you can just give Cameron a

call! Come over here Cameron! The guest of honor seat is your's to claim!" 1

Waylon was already sitting on the main seat while Xella was sitting to his left as the secondary guest of honor. The only seat left was reserved for the guest of honor so who else could sit there other than Cameron?

"But Waylon, wouldn't it be better for you to take the guest of honor seat? You're definitely the most powerful among us here! Besides, I'll let all of you know something. Waylon's company has also received funding from the Dream Investment Group!" said a classmate as he smiled while looking at Waylon.

Waylon was enjoying himself. He felt smug that the others knew about his achievements.

When his other classmates heard that, their eyes widened as they turned to look toward Waylon.

"They are companies that belong to my family, so they're none of my business. I've established my own company but it's still quite useless since I've yet to yield any results!" said Waylon while smiling bitterly.

Many of his classmates were both jealous and envious of him.

His declaration only made Cameron feel more and

more inferior.

As he smiled awkwardly, he suddenly noticed Gerald who had been sitting near the door. With a cold smile on his face, he said, “Speaking of which, Waylon. We shouldn’t just pass the seat of honor among ourselves. Gerald should be the rightful one sitting there!”

Cameron had had enough. He was annoyed and he didn’t want to be compared to Waylon anymore so he changed the topic to Gerald.

“What? You’re suggesting Gerald take it?” said a random classmate as he burst out laughing.

Cameron simply sneered.

“Of course he should. You may not know it, but Gerald’s quite close with our Serene County’s Louie. We met two days ago at a restaurant and Louie even wanted to pay the bill for Gerald!”

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Chapter 424

Cameron smiled coldly as he said that.

“What? Very funny, Cameron! As if Louie could ever be acquainted with Gerald!”

“I know right? The difference between Louie and Gerald’s status is synonymous with comparing a planet with some dirt!”

“You can choose not to believe me, but Xella knows it’s true. She saw it too!”

As he looked at Xella, she simply nodded in agreement.

“Well, d*mn!”

At that moment, several of the classmates began looking at Gerald in a slightly different light.

However, there were also a few others who turned to look at Waylon.

Everyone was aware of the incident where Waylon had severely beaten Gerald up back in high school.

Gerald was somehow rich now, and he was even well acquainted with Louie who was known for having a good rapport with both good and bad guys.

How would Waylon respond to that? What kind of face would he make?

On Waylon's face was a scornful and bitter smile. "So what if he knows Louie? Also, I'm assuming that most of you don't know about this, but Louie was beaten up by someone in a KTV a few days ago. His father was even warned by that person. What more, their Lourdes Mining Group shares are being taken over by someone else as well! With that in mind, do you still think that Louie is that f*cking great?" said Waylon.

Waylon then continued sharing other information that he had heard regarding what had happened to the Lourdes.

By the time he was done, everyone was finally able to see the entire picture.

"You know Gerald, you look like an honest person! But in the end, you got acquainted with such a person! I would never have expected you to be like that, Gerald!" said Waylon with a smug smile before he continued.

"Are you surprised at how I know all this, Gerald? Unlike some people, I'm not afraid to tell others about these things! See, the person who had framed the Lourdes this time around was none other than the powerful boss from Mayberry, Zack Lyle. He did

something to them and whatever he had done, it made them obedient to him. Some time ago, my dad had a meal with Jaxon, more commonly known as Mr. Lyle's driver. During the meal, Jaxon became so drunk that he ended up telling my dad about it. I was present during that meal and Jaxon even patted me on the shoulder and told me to work harder. I've even received his permission to give him a call should anything happen!"

Waylon ended his sentence with a faint smile.

The others were all dumbfounded.

"Mr. Lyle's driver? Your father knows Mr. Lyle's driver, Waylon?"

Everyone there knew who Zack Lyle was. It was literally impossible not to know about him if you were from Mayberry.

He was an extremely powerful and influential businessman.

His driver must be very well to do as well!

"Yeah, my dad's had a few meals with him before. Jaxon's quite a dominant man. You know, I think that we really should have more gatherings like this in the future. If any of you need any help, I'll definitely lend you a hand. And don't just think I'm sitting here telling lies either! Have a look at this

photograph! Took it while I had that meal with Jaxon and my dad!”

Waylon then held his phone out to show the picture to everyone.

Curious, Gerald took a look at it too.

It was indeed, Jaxon Sanders in the photograph.

In it, he could be seen dressed up nicely and wearing an expensive-looking watch.

It was surprising to Gerald, to say the least. He would never have expected to see Jaxon like that.

In the past, Zack had always assigned Jaxon to be Gerald's chauffeur when Gerald went to Wayfair Mountain Entertainment. Gerald had been quite close to Jaxon.

He had initially thought that Jaxon was an honest and sincere man, as he presented himself as a simple and plain person whenever Gerald saw him in the past.

To Gerald's surprise, he was actually a quite dominant man.

Not that there was anything wrong with that. Everyone had a private life after all.

“So don't think that Louie is some kind of big shot. The people who fawn over him aren't going to be of

any use to you either. Just find me if you have any trouble!”

Waylon then peeked at Gerald before looking toward Xella.

“And Xella, don’t you worry! I’ll help you deal with that person from your company today. No matter what it takes, I’ll help you resolve that issue!”

“Hmm? You’re facing troubles at your company Xella?” asked Rae.

Gerald’s ears perked at Rae’s question and he looked at Xella as well.

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Chapter 425

“Yeah, come on Xella, tell us. What’s wrong?” asked a few of the classmates curiously.

Xella nodded before she began sharing an incident that had happened to her in great detail.

Not too long after, Gerald’s curiosity was sated.

It turned out that not long after she had been recruited by the company, her superior began constantly harassing her. The superior in question was a deputy manager of one of the departments.

According to Xella’s description, the deputy manager was a balding man who had lost all his hair around the crown of his head. He looked quite old and obscene in general.

Initially, he hadn’t dared to do much. He simply asked Xella out to have meals with him.

After rejecting him several times, Xella eventually found it difficult to continue doing so. Hence, she finally decided to accept and have a meal with him one day.

From that day onward, the man became more perverted and daring.

He constantly called Xella to his office. At the start, he would only say imprudent things to her from time to time. Now, things were getting physical and it was not uncommon for him to use both his hands and legs to harass her.

About two days before the carnival, the deputy manager had called Xella to come over. This resulted in her thigh being caressed by him.

She was so nervous at the time that she instinctively picked a glass of water up and poured it all over the deputy manager.

Now, she was being threatened to be fired. He wanted her to obey him, otherwise she would have to resign from the company. She was told to be sensible and act accordingly as well.

After that incident, Xella ended up telling Waylon about what had happened.

Only Waylon was powerful and influential enough to set the deputy manager straight. Help from her classmates was also welcome.

“Well d*mn! Now I really want to beat up that old pervert! How dare he bully our goddess!” shouted some of the men indignantly.

“That’s the spirit! However, we women really need to learn how to better protect ourselves. We’re

always being harassed and bullied. You know, a few people who didn't know about my connections or background had constantly requested me to do things for them back when I first arrived at the hospital. Once they got to know who my boyfriend was, nobody tried anything funny with me anymore!" said Morgana.

"I know right? Speaking of which, Xella, you and Sharon were both equally the most beautiful girls in our class during our school days. Sharon's already found herself a good and powerful boyfriend so you should definitely do the same! Find yourself a man like that who cherishes you and you'll bump into way fewer problems like this in the future!" added Rae.

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Xella only blushed slightly at this before looking toward the floor.

"Don't worry, Xella. After today's gathering ends I'll resolve the issue for you! He's just a deputy manager after all!" said Waylon confidently.

"Waylon I just want you to scare him a little so that he'll stop bothering me, please don't do anything unnecessary!" replied Xella with a slightly worried tone.

"Don't worry, I know what I'm doing!"

"If you want to scare him off, you need to look no

further! Gerald's here and he can easily ask Louie to help with that!" said Cameron as he looked at Gerald.

Gerald looked back at him and could only give a cold smile as the others burst out laughing.

It was a rare moment for Gerald to have finally found someone equally fun, good, and capable. However, it didn't matter in the end.

Xella looked toward Gerald for a brief moment before averting her gaze and looking back at Waylon.

Her answer was quite obvious.

Back in high school, Xella had shared quite a good relationship with Gerald, up to the point where she actively defended him from Waylon.

Now, however, she was much closer to Waylon.

Waylon was naturally considered to be the most powerful among the classmates and he had a lot more connections and resources compared to the others as well. Gerald had nothing except for Louie, as far as the people there knew.

Gerald could understand her reasoning and couldn't fully blame her.

After experiencing enough in society, ordinary

people usually concluded that money and resources were much more important than actual friendship.

Gerald was honestly slightly upset since it happened to someone he had treated like a close friend before.

However, Gerald chose to not say anything about it.

He simply looked at the others when the topic was changed to ridicule him again.

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Chapter 426

After a while, Gerald stood up and went to the washroom.

Not long after he had entered the gents, Xella stood up to head to the washroom herself.

After washing his hands, Gerald bumped into Xella who had also left the bathroom at the same time.

The meeting was awkward, to say the least.

“Speaking of which, I haven’t had a chance to properly talk with you. How’ve you been recently?” said Xella with a bright smile as she tried to conceal her awkwardness.

She knew how her relationship with Gerald was like in the past, and she was also very aware of the conflicts between Gerald and Waylon.

However, now she had become quite close to Waylon. Even if he didn’t say it, Gerald would definitely not feel alright with that.

“Not bad!” said Gerald as he wiped his hands dry with some tissue paper.

“I heard that you haven’t found a job yet, is that true? Do you have any plans for the future?” asked

Xella.

“I plan to make a name for myself,” replied Gerald honestly.

Xella frowned slightly at that before shaking her head with a faint smile on her face. “Listen Gerald, I really suggest that you go look for a job. It doesn’t matter what kind of job you get. You know very well that you’re different from the others!”

“Or, you could even try to please Waylon. He’s started his own company and he’s looking for people to hire. If you want, I could put in a word for you so that he’ll be more willing to take you in! The basic salary is around three hundred dollars a month and that’s better than nothing!” advised Xella. ²

“I appreciate it, but I’ll have to refuse,” said Gerald as he smiled.

Xella simply sighed. “Gerald, I know that Waylon beat you up badly back then, but he was young so please try to understand. Why don’t you try looking at it this way? If you had let him copy your answers then he wouldn’t have beaten you up! Now that you’ve graduated from university, who knows? He may be willing to lend a hand!” continued Xella.

“I don’t take that incident to heart anymore. Also, regarding the issue with your deputy manager. All

you need to do is to tell your manager or report the incident to the other superiors at your company. They'll definitely punish him severely!"

The manager and several of the superiors there were originally staff from Mayberry International Inc. so Gerald knew about their capabilities and virtues well. They would definitely not allow any sort of harassment to continue.

Xella simply looked at Gerald for a while before smiling bitterly and shaking her head. "You don't know much about what goes on at my workplace. You don't have to bother about it anymore.

Anyway, it's been nice talking to you again, and thank you, Gerald!"
After ending her sentence, she simply waved at Gerald before turning away and leaving.

It made Gerald feel that Xella herself was quite a strange person.

It was just like back when he had met Sharon. She had acted strangely to him as well.

Feeling disappointed, Gerald began walking back himself.

Less than two dozen steps later, he saw that Xella's path had been blocked by a middle-aged man. The man was even trying to hold her hand.

“What are you doing, Mr. Zabel?” said Xella as she moved her hand away from his.

“Xella, I was planning to have my meal here today. I didn't expect to bump into you. Since we're both here, why not have a drink with me? I can introduce some colleagues from our company to you!” said Mr. Zabel, lust reflected in his eyes.

“Come now. Stop trying to leave or I'll get angry soon!” he said.

“Let go of her!”

At that moment, a loud, angry roar could be heard.

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Chapter 427

The roar had come from none other than Waylon himself who had just left the private room.

Earlier, another girl had left for the washroom but as she was about to exit the private room, she saw a man blocking Xella's path.

Once Waylon learned about the fact, he immediately got up and headed toward the washroom alongside a few others.

“What’s this? A group of uncouth b*stards! Who’re you yelling at?”

Though perverted, Mr. Zabel was certainly no small fry. His expression was cold as he asked the question.

“That girl’s my classmate. Why are you blocking her path?” asked Waylon, unafraid.

Xella was so frightened that she instinctively hid behind Waylon.

“Xella, I’ll go ahead and say this. The colleagues waiting for me this time around are no ordinary people. If you know what’s best for yourself, follow me. Also, why don’t you tell these b*stards who I

am?” replied Mr. Zabel, his arms folded behind his back.

“Waylon... His name is Charlie Zabel... And he’s the deputy manager of my department!” said Xella.

“D*mn! So this is the guy!”

Waylon had initially decided to deal with Charlie that afternoon. However, Charlie had been kind enough to show up in front of Waylon! Good, he didn’t need to waste any time looking for him!

Xella clearly had not expected to bump into that old pervert here either.

Waylon sneered before saying, “How convenient. I had planned to go looking for you but here you are, Mr. Zabel. Let’s have a chat, shall we? First of all, do you know who I am? My dad is Spencer Leets! My family owns Queenzon Enterprise! The biggest company in Serene County!”

Hearing that, Charlie’s heart skipped a beat.

He definitely knew about Queenzon Enterprise.

In the past, it had just been an ordinary company. Now, however, things were completely different.

Due to Queenzon Enterprise’s high environmental protection standards, they had gained funding from the Dream Investment Group.

One could even say that it's one of Dream Investment Group's development projects.

The Letts family's status greatly benefitted from this, and they now enjoyed a powerful and influential status in Serene County.

Similarly, Mr. Zabel had also received funding from the group. However, as a mere deputy manager of a company, he still needed to think and behave properly.

"Ah, do you're from the Letts! But Mr. Letts, I have some business to attend to with Xella which only concerns our company. It would be inappropriate for you to intervene in such private affairs, don't you think?" said Charlie coldly.

His company's percentage of investment was much higher than the factory and company belonging to Queenzon Enterprise. Comparing the two, Charlie's company was definitely a more important asset for the Dream Investment Group. Charlie didn't have to be too scared when it came to the aspect of power and background.

"Oh, but I do wish to intervene. No matter what you say!"

Waylon spoke without filtering his words, projecting his assertiveness in the situation.

Things got physical soon after due to both men feeling the need to protect their pride.

Waylon was first to attack. He rushed toward Charlie and began punching him without even flinching.

Seeing that, Cameron and the others began taking action as well.

In their minds, they all thought that the deputy manager was not as powerful and influential as Waylon's family.

In the end, Charlie was beaten up quite severely.

Xella had been standing beside them the entire time, trying to get them to stop fighting but to no avail.

“You absolute b*stards! How dare all of you! Just you wait!” Charlie shouted with a hand on his bruised cheek as he ran away in a rather pitiful manner.

Not too long after, a group of people rushed out of Charlie's own private room.

The leader of the group seemed to be a middle-aged man in a suit.

“Who was it who started it all?” asked the leader, coldly.

Charlie immediately pointed at both Waylon and Cameron before whispering something into the leader's ear.

The man simply sneered. "Like I care whose son he is! Today's my first day reporting to duty at your company as a senior executive! These brats need to be taught a lesson, otherwise, they'll think we're small fries that can be bullied easily!" 1

While the tensions continued to heighten, Gerald simply continued standing at the side. He really didn't know whose side he should be on now.

On one hand, Waylon was definitely a useless, rich brat but he was efficient when it came to fighting. On the other, the middle-aged man was clearly not any saint either.

As Gerald thought to himself, someone from Charlie's group smashed a wine bottle against Waylon's head. Blood soon started dripping down his face.

"Hey! Stop fighting! Cease this!"

Noticing how bad the situation already was, Gerald quickly rushed forward along with a few other men. They tried to persuade both teams to stop fighting.

After all, those people who were beating the others up were Gerald's subordinates. On the other hand,

Waylon was the one who was being beaten up. Although Waylon could almost be considered as Gerald's enemy, it was imprudent to cause such a great mess since they were having a gathering that day.

It was something that just shouldn't happen that day.

Charlie's subordinates finally stopped beating up Waylon after the staff from the hotel gave their cooperation to stop the fight. Charlie then paid the bill and left the hotel in a huff, surrounded by the people from his company.

"Oh no, what are we going to do? Waylon, you're bleeding!" said Rae, extremely frightened.

"They're the first bunch of b*stards who have ever dared to beat me up. I'm calling my dad! Those b*stards are going to pay a terrible price for this!" shouted Waylon, his eyes bloodshot.

Gerald had observed how Waylon had fought earlier. He was clearly someone who would never allow himself to accept loss or defeat that easily. ①

Chapter 428

Due to his father's power and influence, Waylon had always done as he pleased, acting smugly and arrogantly in front of all his classmates.

It had never occurred to him that Charlie's subordinate could act even fiercer. They had even severely beaten him up.

At that moment, Waylon was a wreck both physically and emotionally.

"He needs medical attention immediately!" shouted Morgana before taking her phone out and calling for an ambulance.

The ambulance soon arrived and since Morgana herself was a clinician, she entered the ambulance as well to help bandage his wounds. She left for the hospital together with Waylon.

"Waylon was beaten up and now he's being sent to the hospital... What should we do?"

"Let's just leave for now... What if those madmen come back with reinforcements?"

"You're right! They don't seem like ordinary people ..."

The classmates continued discussing the situation among themselves, all of them quite indecisive on whether pride or safety was more important.

Since no immediate conclusion was achieved, they all turned to look at Cameron.

Cameron looked back at them, dumbfounded.

Cameron had been lying on the floor throughout most of the second half of the fight. He had been kicked down and he stayed there. He was afraid of fighting back the moment he found out that the leader was some kind of senior executive.

It was also the reason why only Waylon was beaten up when the fight began again.

He had initially been worried but seeing how everyone was expecting him to make the next decision, he soon became smug again.

“Everyone remain calm! Let’s just head to the hospital first. Waylon’s father will definitely be going there as well!” said Cameron. ①

The rest of his classmates agreed and they all headed toward the hotel’s underground parking lot together.

For a brief moment, Gerald was too stunned to move but he simply shook his head before heading

downstairs to get his own car as well.

‘These people seriously like making a mountain out of a molehill! If Xella had only reported it to her superiors, none of this would have happened! Charlie would definitely be dealt with easily!’

‘All she needed to do was give me a call and everything would’ve ended just like that!’

‘What a mess this has become...’ These were the thoughts going on in Gerald’s mind.

All of them were now in the parking lot.

“Alright, we have four cars with us now. Who else drove here?” asked Cameron.

At that moment, Xella started crying out loud.

“I’m so sorry everyone! It’s my problem but I pulled you all into it as well!”

Xella wailed, a terrible guilt weighing on her heart.

“How could we blame you Xella? I witnessed the old pervert blocking your way with my own eyes! What more, Gerald had been standing beside you but he didn’t do anything! If he had done something, maybe all of this wouldn’t have happened! It’s all his fault!”

“That’s right! If anyone’s to blame it should be Gerald! Don’t blame yourself! Let’s just get into the

car and head to the hospital now!” said Rae.

The classmates then began entering the available cars. Xella herself got into Cameron’s car.

“Oh god, look! Gerald’s here too!”

At that moment, everyone finally took notice of Gerald who had just arrived at the parking lot.

“What’s that idiot doing down here? All the seats in the available cars have been filled! Didn’t he come here by hailing a taxi?” asked a female classmate coldly.

“That’s right! Since you took a taxi here why are you down here with us? Were you planning on joining us in a car? You won’t be of any use even if you come along with us! Just hail a taxi and stop blocking our path here!” said Rae with a cold sneer.

Xella simply glanced at Gerald though she said nothing else before looking away.

“Don’t bother about him, Cameron. Is your car or Waylon’s faster?” asked Rae as she rolled her eyes while looking at Gerald.

“They’re almost the same! We’ll be heading out first! Sit tight!” shouted Cameron as he stepped on the pedal, sending the car lunging forward.

What followed was a loud bang.

Cameron had not held on to the steering wheel firmly enough. His car had crashed against the back of a white car that had been parked in front of them.

The hood of Cameron's car was lifted. It looked like it had been badly damaged.

“F*ck!” yelled Cameron in shock.

All of them got out of his car and Rae immediately started screaming. Her mouth was covered with her hands in shock.

“Cameron. Cameron look! I think you crashed into a Mercedes-Benz G500!” 3

“What? How could that be?”

Most of the other classmates didn't think too much about it. To them, it just felt impossible that such a luxurious car would even be in Serene County.

However, when they approached the car, Rae had unfortunately been correct. It really was a Mercedes-Benz G-Class...

Chapter 429

“F*ck! A Mercedes-Benz G-Class is worth more than three hundred thousand dollars!” shouted a classmate in a worried voice.

Though the two cars had collided, the Mercedes-Benz G-Class had suffered much less compared to Cameron’s own car.

However, if compensation was required, Cameron knew he had to fork out at least a hundred thousand dollars. He quivered slightly in fear.

“I’m so sorry Cameron! If it wasn’t for me you wouldn’t have hit that car!” wailed Xella as another burden was added to her heart.

She sighed internally while holding back her tears. ‘If it wasn’t for me, none of these incidents would have happened today...’

‘Waylon’s been beaten up, and now Cameron’s just crashed into another car when he was just trying to send me to the hospital to visit Waylon! What can we even do now?’

Xella’s mind was filled with negativity and it only made her feel more flustered and agitated than she already was.

The others were starting to feel afraid as well. They began discussing how to resolve the issue regarding the expensive car.

“Just go ahead, it’s no big deal. Go to the hospital, all of you!” said Gerald with a sigh while he slid his hands into his pockets.

It was quite unfortunate but of course, the car Cameron had crashed into was Gerald’s.

His Lamborghini was hit by someone and now his Mercedes-Benz G-Class faced the same fate. Was he really that unlucky?

Though it was his car that had been hit, he found it difficult to ask them for a maintenance fee, given how terrified they all already looked thinking about how much money they would have to fork out.

“For f*cks sake! Do you even understand the value of this car, Gerald? This is a Mercedes-Benz G-Class! Who would dare to just leave like that! If the owner of this car ever found out who we were, we would definitely have to pay an even heavier price! Do you even understand half of what I’m saying?!” shouted Rae, her anxiety now in high gear.

“Let’s calm down and think about this. How about we all wait here for the driver. When they arrive, we’ll apologize sincerely to them and with any luck,

they might let us leave if they're satisfied with just that," suggested one of the girls.

"That's the best idea we have at the moment. It definitely beats leaving the car like this!"

This seemed to be what the majority agreed with.

Some of the girls even had other things on their minds. They wanted to see whether the driver was a handsome young man.

"Say, Cameron, why don't you leave with the others first? I'll stay behind and wait for the driver. I'll settle the issue of the maintenance fee!" said Xella out of the blue.

Although she didn't have much money, she couldn't just allow Cameron to pay for the maintenance fee all on his own.

"No way, we can't just leave you here! How about this, everyone, please try to use your connections to see if you can find out who owns the car. Maybe someone you know may know who the owner is!" suggested Rae.

The idea was approved by almost everyone there and they began taking action.

"One of my cousins works in the construction zone. I'll ask him!"

"My uncle is responsible for the housing and

building projects. He knows quite a lot of people too. Let me ask him!”

“My uncle’s a teacher. He’ll know a lot of people as well!”

Several of them started calling up whatever relevant connections they knew of.

Xella herself joined in on the effort.

“You guys. You really don’t have to do this, just listen to me! Get going now!” Gerald was getting more and more perplexed at how complicated this simple thing was turning into.

“And what? Let you handle it? What could a loser like you even do!”

“You barely have any common sense in you!”

Before they could continue mocking him, the Mercedes-Benz G-Class made a sound.

Gerald had given up trying to explain. He had retrieved his car key and pressed a button on it. The lights of the car flashed for a moment following the sound of the car unlocking.

At that moment, everyone present was stupefied.

“...What?”

“What the hell?”

Some of the girls couldn't hold back their shock and accidentally shouted out whatever was on their minds.

Even Xella put down her phone as she looked toward Gerald in immense shock.

All of them were in utter disbelief.

'How could that Mercedes-Benz G-Class belong to Gerald?'

'Didn't he hail a taxi to get here?'

'Isn't he a pauper?'

Everyone had the same questions in their heads. It was nothing short of astounding.

By the time everyone had gotten back to their senses, Gerald had already driven his car out of the parking space. The car had not been severely damaged and he made a mental note that he would find an automobile sales service shop later to get any dents repaired. 1

Chapter 430

Whatever the case was, Cameron's car certainly wasn't going to be driving anyone anywhere with that damaged hood.

Everything that had gone wrong had stemmed from Xella, but there really was no use crying over spilled milk.

Besides, Gerald didn't think that it was appropriate to just leave them like that. They were friends in the past after all.

"Come on, get into my car. I'll give you a ride to the hospital!" said Gerald calmly.

This new mature and calm Gerald felt quite strange to the others.

Thinking back, no wonder he seemed so calm and casual earlier when he was talking to them at the bus stop.

They honestly hadn't paid much attention to his demeanor then since they thought he was still a loser.

However, now when they paid more attention to the way he spoke, they found that his tone sounded

cold and composed as opposed to the old Gerald they knew. It was somewhat awe worthy.

“Gerald! Is... Is this your car?” asked Rae, her eyes wide open.

“Yep. It’s still pretty new,” replied Gerald as he nodded slowly.

“Why are you talking so casually about a Mercedes-Benz G-Class?! My god! Who would have ever thought that Gerald would buy such an expensive car!” said Rae, almost jumping in excitement.

“Um... Gerald? Can I ride in your car?”

“Sure, why not.”

“Oh god, I get to ride in a Mercedes-Benz G-Class!” Rae squealed as she clapped her hands happily before getting into the car.

Xella simply stood at the side, her face flushed red.

‘Well this is embarrassing... I even advised him to get a job just now but to think that he’s doing so well! He even has a Mercedes-Benz G-Class!’

‘We had promised to meet each other at the bus stop yet I left for the gathering without him... So it turns out he had wanted to drive us there in his car!’

“Come on Xella, we don’t have all day,” said Gerald with a smile. He could see that Xella was clearly

feeling embarrassed.

Though she hesitated at first, she nodded slowly before getting into the seat next to Gerald's.

The car was full by the time Gerald began driving off to the hospital.

On their way there, Rae had rolled down the window and poked her head out to take several photographs.

“So Gerald, how did you manage to afford this car? Have you become rich?” asked Rae curiously while her head was still outside the car.

“I didn't buy this car. I attended an event and I just so happened to win it!” said Gerald honestly.

The car that he had bought—his Lamborghini—was still parked at Mountain Top.

“Ah. So it's just a grand prize,” said Rae, a slight disappointment in her voice.

Aside from Rae, the other girls were also already planning their next moves.

None of them had boyfriends yet.

Even if Gerald wasn't actually rich, selling the car alone would instantly grant him three hundred thousand dollars. With that kind of money, they could buy a house and an ordinary car. In other

words, a standard well-to-do family.

As they thought about this, some of the girls began developing feelings for Gerald.

However, Xella's reaction was the complete opposite.

When she heard that the car was only a gift, her surprise instantly disappeared.

Instead of surprise, she now felt only ridicule.

So it was just a prize... At that moment, she concluded in her mind that the reason Gerald had promised to meet her today was to just show off the car that he had won. 1

Waylon was different. He definitely had the money and capabilities needed to buy himself the Audi A4. Thus, whatever regret she had toward Gerald ceased entirely at that moment.

“Still, I never would have thought that you'd own a Mercedes-Benz G-Class! Ignoring how you actually acquired the car, you're still a rich person now! Why did you keep such a low profile at the gathering earlier? You should show off a little!” said Rae in a flattering tone.

“Do rich people need to show off? I don't like looking down on others because even though some people may look ordinary, they may be the only

people who can help you one day!”

Gerald was talking like Mr. Crawford.

The girls, however, didn't agree with his statement.

Xella frowned as well, averting her gaze out the window with a tinge of disgust reflected in her eyes. 2

Since he was greeted only by silence, Gerald stopped talking as well.

It wasn't long before they reached the hospital.

By the time they arrived, all of Waylon's wounds had been bandaged. He was on the phone talking to someone when his classmates entered his ward.

“Hey Jaxon, my dad called you earlier. I'm in the hospital right now, could you please come over for a bit? I heard from my dad that they're quite a difficult bunch to deal with!”

Chapter 431

Waylon was definitely asking Jaxon for help.

However, before they could hear about the specifics, Waylon had already hung up. This was because he had noticed Xella and the rest entering the room.

“I’m so sorry Waylon! It’s all my fault!” said Xella apologetically.

“What are you talking about Xella? I was just caught by surprise when they started beating us up without even making the situation clear first! Don’t worry, my dad’s subordinates are dealing with them right now! My dad’s heard about your troubles as well!” said Waylon in a fierce voice.

Xella was just about to say something when her phone began ringing.

Taking in a deep breath, she answered it. It was only a brief talk and she hung up not long after.

“...It’s all over now! The call was from my president and he informed me that I was fired!” said Xella weakly.

She knew that she had just lost her chance of

having a great career. Since she was now fired, she would no longer be able to enter any excellent subsidiary companies or investment in companies under the Dream Investment Group.

It was all gone.

“...What? You were fired?”

Somehow Waylon had never considered that possibility. At first, all he wanted to do was to show off his capabilities in front of Xella.

His goal was to make her admire and fall in love with him.

He had fought and taken a beating to help her but not only did that fail to resolve Xella's issue, it only increased her burdens since she was now essentially jobless.

“Waylon... what should we do now? It definitely feels like they'll continue to harass Xella!” asked Rae, being the meddling person she was.

“Don't forget! We still have Waylon's father on our side! He's definitely much more powerful than some deputy manager!” sneered a male classmate as he analyzed the situation.

At that moment, Waylon's phone rang.

He picked it up immediately.

“How is it, dad? ...What did you say? Oh god. Alright, I got it. What about me? Alright, dad. I get it!”

When he finally hung up, his face was pale and his hand was trembling so much that the phone dropped onto the bed.

“...Waylon? What’s wrong?” asked Xella, concerned.

“...It’s all over for me. The person who had beaten me up was the senior executive from the headquarters. Though dad wanted to manipulate his connections with Jaxon, in the end, Jaxon is just a driver. He’s definitely not as influential as that senior executive... What more, the senior executive has worked for Mr. Michael Zeke before... He’s Mr. Zeke’s loyal confidant! Even Jaxon doesn’t want to get involved in this. My dad’s begging them now and he called to tell me to apologize to that deputy manager tonight!”

Waylon wiped the cold sweat off his forehead with his sleeve.

Xella was in utter dismay.

So it turns out that Waylon was also in deep trouble.

“Also Xella... My dad told me... told all of us not to act too rashly anymore... Charlie had harassed you in the company. The issue could have been solved

easily with you filing a complaint to your superiors ... They'd definitely punish that pervert severely once they find out about his misdeeds... All that we've done today has only made the situation much, much worse... Nothing is going right. I'm in deep trouble now and you lost your job too!" said Waylon in an uncharacteristically soft tone. He was finally speaking like a humble person now.

Hearing that, Xella felt as if someone had given her the exact same advice before...

As her view panned across the wardroom, she noticed Gerald standing by the door. Of course. It was exactly as Gerald had advised her to do when they had met outside the washrooms earlier.

Before this, she had thought that Gerald was inexperienced. She had even disapproved of his suggestion...

In the end, if she had only followed his advice, none of this would have happened. The matter could have been resolved easily.

But it was too late to regret it...

The classmates then tried to cheer the mood by sharing possible positive outcomes from today's events. However deep inside, they all knew that they were just consoling each other.

At that moment, Xella's phone rang again.

She picked the call up and just like before, she only talked for a short while.

However, the details of the call seemed to be either very shocking or very important to Xella. This was because nearing the end of the call, her eyes were wide open and an expression of utter disbelief was painted on her face.

“Xella? What’s wrong?”

It took Xela a while to answer as she was still dumbfounded by the call.

“The boss... My company’s boss called me in person just now. He told me that I could resume my work there and that I was going to be transferred to the personnel department. I’ll work as a trainee there and I’ll even be given training so that I’ll be able to hold much higher posts in the department in the future... He even apologized to me about the issue regarding Charlie... He told me that Charlie had been fired and he even said that it was a decision made by the superiors!”

“...Eh?”

Chapter 432

Everyone was stunned. In their minds, they were all thinking the same thing.

‘...What? That’s such a drastic change! And so quickly too!’

“...Xella, I definitely think that someone’s been pulling the strings behind the scenes to help you... Otherwise, why would your boss even step forward to deal with the pervert in the first place?

Investigating the matter doesn’t require the boss’s involvement and yet he still called your personal number to apologize! What more, the pervert’s been fired!”

“I agree. You said it yourself that the decision was made by the superiors. Someone must definitely have used their connections to do this!”

Rae and the others were openly discussing their speculations now.

“I think that’s the case as well. It’s extremely difficult to get appointed as a potential trainee for the personnel department. I can’t help but wonder who has that much power to make even the boss and my superiors take action...” said Xella as she

rubbed her temple gently.

Suddenly, she froze before looking up and fixing her gaze on Gerald.

“Gerald!” she unconsciously shouted as she stood up.

“...Eh? Gerald?”

Everyone else in the room looked at him in shock.

Gerald had not expected Xella’s reaction, even though she was right.

Earlier when the rest were discussing among themselves, Gerald had left the wardroom to give Zach a call. Zach was ordered to resolve the issue as soon as he could.

Now that everything had been resolved, it surprised Gerald that Xella could guess the truth so quickly.

“I think I know who helped me, Gerald!” she said as she walked toward him.

“You know, thinking back, on our way here you had said that we shouldn’t look down on others since they may be the only people who can help us in the end, even though we had initially looked down on them. Thank you for reminding me about this Gerald!” Xella continued to express her gratitude to Gerald.

'You think you know who helped you?' Gerald thought to himself. Did that mean that the cat wasn't out of the bag yet?

She then began explaining. "I was hired by the deputy manager from the personnel department. He's a diligent young manager and every time we meet, he nods slightly and says a simple greeting. Though it doesn't sound like much, I think that he's been the one helping me a lot in secret!"

"At first, I simply thought that he was an honest and well-behaved man who only focused his attention on his work. Thinking back, however, he may be much more humble and sophisticated than I thought. I'm saying this now because I heard from my colleagues the other day that he may not be who he portrays himself to be!" said Xella.

Gerald's confusion was cleared the moment she finished her explanation. So she had guessed wrong after all, though it didn't really bother him.

Xella however, still felt the need to confirm her theory so she called up a close female colleague of hers.

"Hello? Lyla? Do you still remember our talk about the deputy manager from the personnel department? I think I remember you saying that he's a cousin to a superior? Alright. Yeah, it's nothing.

Thanks! You can resume your work now!”

After hanging up, Xella looked so excited that even her eyes were now teary.

“Xella? Are you really sure it was him? Does he like you or something?” asked Rae, her inevitable jealousy firing up again.

“Whether he likes me or not, I’m unsure. However, I’m sure that he’s helped me several times in secret by now. He must have been one of the first people to find out that I was getting fired! Whatever the case, I’ll ask him to clarify all this when I get to work tomorrow!”

“I’m so jealous of all of you. Morgana was helped by Cameron so she’s now an official doctor while Xella has both Waylon and the deputy manager constantly aiding her! Sharon even has a rich heir as her partner! I don’t have anything that fancy!” said Rae while biting her lower lip in jealousy. She glanced at the tycoon once without saying anything else.

Morgana could only smile bitterly at her statement while she consoled Rae.

“Don’t say that, Rae. The tycoon isn’t that bad! Also, since you’re so free standing there, could you get some hot water?” asked Morgana as she turned to look at Gerald.

‘Really? Everyone else is standing here doing nothing too!’ Gerald sighed as he thought to himself.

Still, he couldn’t refuse so he simply walked over to a table with an empty glass jug on it.

“Dr. Lopez, both the president and the vice president are coming to the ward now!” said a nurse who had stuck her head into the room. After passing the message, she left.

“Eh? The president is coming?” asked Morgana, shocked.

Waylon was shocked as well. “Maybe the president found out that I had been admitted to the hospital so he’s coming over to pay me a visit. Xella, come help me up. My dad is acquainted with the president so I need to look my best.”

Seconds ago, Waylon was honestly still angry that his moment had been snatched away by Xella’s deputy manager.

However, knowing that the president was personally coming over to meet him calmed his rage slightly. As Xella supported him, he slowly got to his feet, feeling slightly excited.

Gerald on the other hand, wanted to leave the room since the number of people there was going to

increase again. He grabbed the jug and headed for the door to get some hot water.

At that moment, the door opened and in front of him, was the president himself.

“Oh? Mr. Crawford, what are you doing here?”

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Chapter 433

He rubbed his hands together excitedly as he asked the question, a smile on his face.

“...Eh? Mr. Crawford?”

The others in the ward were dumbfounded when they heard the name.

This was especially the case for Waylon who had been ready to greet the president and act smugly in front of the others. He was twice as stunned as anyone else in the room.

‘Why did he address Gerald as Mr. Crawford?’

“You know who I am, president?” asked Gerald. He was stunned as well.

“Of course I do! Back then when Mr. Winters had been admitted to the hospital, I went to pay him a visit as well. However, I wasn’t able to catch you in time before you left!” said the president as he continued to smile.

Thinking about his words, Gerald pieced the puzzle together quickly.

When Mr. Winters had been admitted to the hospital, he had bumped into Morgana at the

cafeteria. Back then, Morgana was troubled with her issue at work.

When he left and met up with Zack later, he had told him about Morgana's job issues.

Though her issues were eventually resolved, the credit had been snatched by Cameron in the end.

It must have been sometime then when the president had heard about Gerald.

Thinking back, Mr. Winters had also mentioned the president visiting him a while back ago though Gerald hadn't paid it much notice then.

"Mr. Crawford, I heard from the head nurse that you were here so I specifically came over to meet you! Do tell us if you have any requests. We'll get it done immediately!" continued the president.

He then looked at Morgana who had been standing beside them. "Look here, Mr. Crawford! After being recommended by you, Morgana is now an official doctor here! She's quite a diligent and responsible employee so she's been receiving high praise from both the patients and our staff! It was kind of you to recommend such a good and talented person to us!" The smile on the president's face widened as he said that.

The two of them continued to chat about some

other things. A few talented people who had been standing behind the president shook hands with Gerald before all of them finally left.

Back then, Gerald had simply told Zack to use his connections in the province to resolve Morgana's issues. Gerald wasn't even directly part of that.

However, it would seem that the president was quite a capable man himself. After all, he managed to learn that Zack was just Gerald's subordinate acting under Gerald's orders.

When their backs could no longer be seen, Gerald turned to look back into the room.

It was then when he realized that all his classmates had been looking at him in shock.

This was especially true for Waylon. He appeared stupefied as he stood beside his bed, frozen in place.

So the president hadn't come to meet him. He had come to personally meet Gerald alone! How humiliating!

"...I'll uh... Go get some hot water first!" said Gerald before turning for the door once more.

"G-Gerald!"

It was Morgana who had called out to him, a look of disbelief on her face.

“...Yes? What’s wrong, Morgana?” asked Gerald.

“Was... Was it you who had helped me? Were you the reason why I managed to become an official doctor here so easily?”

The president had clearly said that earlier. That it was Gerald who had recommended such a good doctor to the hospital.

Back when she first got the job, even she was puzzled. She simply assumed that it was Cameron who had helped her.

Her father had even thanked Cameron’s father for that! However Cameron’s father just appeared to be a cold and aloof man. The extent of his hospitality to her father was a single glass of water before sending him off.

If it truly was Cameron who had helped her, why would that have happened?

It all made sense now. It was Gerald who had been helping her from the start.

It turned out that Gerald was quite close to the president.

“Well, yes. It’s no big deal though. I’m just lucky to know a few relevant people so I told them about you,” said Gerald as he smiled softly.

Morgana was filled with regret after hearing that.

She remembered the first time she had met Gerald again after such a long time. She had only treated him to a meal in the cafeteria while Cameron was treated to a grand feast in a magnificent hotel.

The actual person who had thought about her future and helped her resolve all her issues was Gerald.

Looking at Gerald again, Morgana found herself looking at him in a different light.

“...Oh god. Gerald, you were driving that Mercedes-Benz G-Class earlier! You even have such great connections with influential people! What exactly are you working as now, Gerald?”

Chapter 434

The question had come from Rae.

“What did you say? He’s driving a Mercedes-Benz G-Class?” said Waylon, shocked.

Thinking back, Gerald had simply smiled calmly at the side while Waylon was showing off his car earlier.

He had thought that it was jealousy, but Gerald was just having fun looking at the fool showing his Audi A4L car off! With the current price of a Mercedes-Benz G-Class, that amount of money could easily buy eight or nine Audi A4L cars!

“As I said before, I won it as a prize! It’s just a vehicle to help me get around,” said Gerald calmly as he smiled.

He then put the jug down and left the ward.

Xella had not said anything, but she now respected Gerald more than she ever had.

He had simply left the ward once the issues had been resolved without expecting any appreciation at all.

In her mind, she knew that even though she had

constantly thought that others had been helping her, Gerald didn't care as long as there were no more issues.

Even by the time Gerald had gotten into his car, his classmates had not moved an inch. They were still staring at each other in shock that he had just left like that.

While Gerald drove on, his phone began to ring.

It surprised him slightly that the caller was Tammy but he still picked up.

“Gerald, please advise Giya to come home. Mr. Quarrington's been extremely anxious. He's tried to call Giya several times now but her phone's probably been switched off. She isn't even replying to any of my messages anymore! Please advise her, I 'll meet up with her this afternoon!” said Tammy.

Hearing that, Gerald was momentarily stunned.

He immediately stopped his car at the side of the road. “What? What do you mean he's worried? Hasn't Giya gone home?”

He knew very well that Giya had said that she would return home before she left. Gerald hadn't even contacted her at all since then.

He had thought that it was fine just ending it like that.

After all, he couldn't let her stay, otherwise it would only increase the chances of Mila misunderstanding in the future.

Where had she gone? And why couldn't anyone contact Giya now?

“...Eh? What? What do you mean by that? I was still able to contact her yesterday before I found out that I couldn't even reach her anymore today. She had put on a great show and now her father is truly scared. Please don't pretend anymore, her dad isn't at my home. Pass the phone to Giya now!” said Tammy.

She wanted to think that Gerald was only pretending.

“Tammy, I'm dead serious. Don't scare me please. You left my place three days ago and the morning after that, Giya had ridden a car back to Mayberry. She said that she was going to get engaged with Yacob the moment she returned home.”

Gerald dabbed his sleeve against his forehead as cold sweat began to form.

He explained to Tammy everything that had happened the day Giya had left.

“D*mn it! Even if that's the case, we should still be able to reach her but we can't! Did she really tell

you that she was going to be engaged with Yacob?”

“Who else could it be?”

“I’m just going to say this. The person she was supposed to get engaged with isn’t Yacob. It’s a man from Yanken known only by others as Mr. Long. However, Giya doesn’t want to be with him so she ran away from home. I suspect that she went to you with several excuses in mind just in case you wouldn’t take her in! Oh, Giya... Now I’m just worried that something has happened to her!” cried out Tammy in a worried voice.

After sharing whatever they knew about the situation, Gerald hung up before immediately trying to call Giya. However, it was true. Her phone had indeed been turned off.

He tried contacting her through other social media as well but the result was the same.

‘F*cking hell! What happened, Giya!’

‘Even though her disappearance isn’t directly related to me, the last place she was seen at was still my place!’

Gerald was deeply upset and he was filled with self-reproach.

‘If I hadn’t said those things Giya may not have left

in the first place...’

‘If only I had given her a call after she had left, I might still know where she is now.’

‘But it’s too late for that. I wouldn’t have been able to anticipate this happening anyway. Something’s happened to Giya and I need to find her immediately.’

‘Tammy had also said that she thought Giya was still together with me.’

Gerald scratched his head in frustration. In his mind, there were countless possibilities of things that could have happened to her. Each possibility he thought of only made him even more frightened than the previous one.

He smacked his steering wheel hard to calm himself down a little.

Shaking his head, he then turned the car around immediately.

He was now returning to Mayberry...

Chapter 435

While all this was happening, a sigh was heard. “Tammy, Mr. Quarrington is extremely nervous now. He’s even gone to the police station to launch a report. What should we do? How much longer should we wait here for that Gerald?”

Something had happened to Giya and her family and friends definitely knew about it.

The one who had sighed was one of Giya’s roommates.

They were all now waiting for Gerald at the entrance of Mayberry University.

Tammy had agreed to meet him there on the phone earlier.

Since Mr. Quarrington had gone to make a police report, Tammy and the others had acted sensibly by going to the university. Informing and sharing what they knew with the university was really all that they could do at that moment.

“Let’s just wait for him. He’s the one who knows most about the situation since Giya was last seen at his place. However, he’s not free from being taught a lesson by us later! Her disappearance is still

related to him!” said Tammy angrily.

The other girls were angry as well. They had decided that they would beat him up as soon as he arrived.

“D*mn it! How did Giya ever get bewitched by such a loser! What more, he hadn’t even bothered to contact her since the day she left!” said the girls angrily.

All of a sudden, a girl pointed toward the road. “Hey, Hey all of you! That’s a Mercedes-Benz G-Class! The driver must be a handsome guy!”

“For god’s sake, Yvette! Read the mood a little! How could you still have more interest in luxury cars and handsome men at this moment!”

Though the roommate had said that, she and the rest of the girls still ended up staring at the Mercedes-Benz G-Class. It was, after all, a magnificent and cool looking car.

“...Hey. Look at the window. Doesn’t that look a bit like Gerald?” said Yvette.

“As if that could ever be possible! He’s a poor loser! I’m expecting him to appear before us on a bike!” scolded Tammy.

However, the Mercedes-Benz G-Class was coming closer.

Gerald hit the brakes once the car was in front of them and got out of the car immediately.

“What’s the situation like?” he asked anxiously.

After a short silence, one of the roommates screamed.

Tammy and the others were equally as astounded.

They had always had the impression that he was just a regular poor loser. But here he was! Driving a Mercedes-Benz G-Class!

Tammy had initially assumed that she knew Gerald inside out. However at that moment, all she could do gape her mouth in shock.

“Why do you have a Mercedes-Benz G-Class, Gerald?” she finally managed to ask.

“I got it a while back but is that really what’s important now? What’s the situation like?” asked Gerald again.

Tammy gulped, suppressing the shock that she was still feeling.

She then told him the details of the current situation. In short, it didn’t look very promising.

Despite having launched a police report, not much progress had been done. No further clues had been

uncovered either.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Quarrington were worried out of their minds now.

At first, they had been quite upset to know that the Longs from Yanken had wanted to force a marriage on their daughter to marry their son.

Now that Giya was missing, the weights on their chests had been doubled. Their grief was immeasurable.

As Gerald heard all of this, his self-reproach only intensified.

As for Tammy and the others, they didn't dare to beat Gerald up now after seeing his Mercedes-Benz G-Class. Their tones had turned polite as well.

“However, you don't have to worry that much, Gerald. I've thought up a plan. See, my cousin, Felicia, had told me that one of her classmates was in charge of controlling the live broadcasts of a famous anchor. A month ago, their live studio had asked for help from their fans to look for a young boy who had been missing for several years. Shockingly enough, by investigating through different social media and forums, they actually succeeded in finding him!”

Chapter 436

“I’ve called Felicia and told her about the situation. She’s told me that she’ll try to get her classmate to help us. Hopefully it goes well! With the help of the anchor’s fans, we could finally locate where Giya is! There is strength in numbers after all!” said Tammy.

Gerald nodded. He thought that it was a good idea.

Normal people didn’t understand the true capabilities of those who worked with mass media and those who treated the internet like their second home.

As long as one was willing to research, the information they needed would definitely be found.

Gerald called Drake and Tyson to investigate the matter as well. None of them were taking any chances.

“Felicia’s here!”

At that moment, a black car parked by the road and Tammy’s little cousin hopped out. A handsome man in glasses guided her toward the group.

Gerald had met Felicia the other day along with

Tammy, so he knew who she was.

She definitely knew what had happened to Giya since the moment she saw Gerald, she rolled her eyes in disgust.

“I’ve brought Quade along, Tammy. He’s my classmate. As I’ve explained earlier in the car, Giya’s missing. We would like to ask for you to broadcast a missing person report so that the anchor’s fans can help look for her! We’ll definitely pay for it!” said Felicia.

Quade adjusted his glasses slightly before saying, “You don’t need to worry about the pay. The Internet Celebrity Carnival is coming soon and the anchorwoman is thinking of doing some charity to increase her influence. It’s definitely not a problem!”

“Also, her office is here in the city of Mayberry University. I’ll bring all of you over to meet her. You can then give her a general understanding of the situation!”

“...Wait, is the anchorwoman you’re referring to Felicity?” asked Gerald, stunned.

Quade simply sneered as he looked at Gerald. “Who else could it be? You?”

“Oh god, Gerald! I asked my classmate to come look

for Giya! You're just looking for the anchorwoman! Could you please stop being such a loser you bastard?" said Felicia coldly.

"That's enough. Time is ticking so let's just use it to find Giya with Quade's help!" said Tammy.

"Alright! Get in the car, I'll bring you there!"

At first, Gerald had thought that tackling the issue would be slightly inefficient if they didn't know who the anchor was.

Now that he knew that it was none other than Felicity, he became slightly more excited and hopeful.

Since Felicity had become famous with the help of Ordinary Man, she would definitely listen to him.

As Gerald opened the door of his car, a shout was heard.

"Oh my god, is that a Mercedes-Benz G-Class?" Felicia asked, stunned.

"Gerald, is that car yours?"

"Just get in the car already!" said Gerald in resignation.

Quade had a surprised look on his face. He adjusted his glasses again. Though Gerald looked like a loser, he drove such a luxurious car.

Tammy drove her own car as they set off. Gerald knew the way there well. Soon, they reached the Entrepreneur Base which belonged to the university students.

Quade worked there. He was a person who had never finished high school yet he dreamed of becoming an internet celebrity. In the end, he became the person who controlled the live broadcasts for Felicity.

“Miss Dunn, Tammy and the others are here!” said Quade as he brought Gerald and the others into the office.

A girl had her back facing them when they first saw her. She was none other than Gerald’s classmate, Yvonne Dunn.

“Ah, alright...”

When she turned to walk toward them in her high heels, she was momentarily stunned.

“Gerald? Why are you here?”

Chapter 437

Yvonne had been working as Felicity's assistant which explained why she was there. She was clearly shocked when she saw Gerald there.

“Don't worry about it first. More importantly, we need your help!”

It felt like ages ago since Gerald had last met Yvonne and Felicity.

They had not met face to face since the day he had saved them when they were kidnapped.

Gerald felt slightly uneasy talking to them now.

“Wait here for a moment. Felicity's still having her makeup done. I'll tell her that you're all here first!”

Yvonne wasn't as mean as she used to be toward Gerald now.

A lot had happened since then and it probably really was Gerald who had saved the four of them. Gerald definitely held quite a bit of power and influence. They knew that much.

Now, Yvonne wanted to instead try to please Gerald. Felicity clearly had the same thought process.

His background was suspicious to them, to say the

least.

They were in such grave danger back then yet nobody would have been able to help since nobody even knew that they had been kidnapped.

Well, except for Gerald of course.

What more, the incidents regarding Cassandra's power bank and Gerald's coat being left behind in the Maybach car also further increased their suspicion. His items just seemed to be present whenever such a situation occurred.

Once they reached that conclusion, Felicity decided to treat Gerald better.

"Gerald? Why are you here?" asked Felicity as she walked toward the group. She had only light makeup on, but she was still very charming and attractive.

It was a surprise to Tammy and the others.

It had never occurred to them that internet celebrities could look so charming even with basic makeup on.

Tammy, Felicia, and Quade, however, looked even more shocked. "You know her Gerald?"

"She's my classmate of course she would!" said Gerald calmly.

“Gerald, this Giya girl. What’s your relationship with her?” asked Yvonne slightly anxiously.

“She’s a good friend. Please ask for help from your fans to look for her. Once she’s found, there’ll definitely be a reward waiting for you!”

Gerald was in no mood to keep a low profile at that moment so every word he said sounded dominant and strong.

However, both Felicity and Yvonne didn’t think that it was out of place.

They had speculated about his true identity long enough, and this only served to prove that their theories were right.

“I’ll help. However, I’ll need you to come into my office with me, Gerald. I need to talk to you about something personally. Yvonne, please serve Quade’s friends for me.”

Felicity then turned around and re-entered her office.

Gerald followed after her.

In his mind, he had already concluded that both girls already knew his true identity by now.

It was because he wasn’t careful enough the few times he had saved them. He had left behind

enough clues for them to piece the puzzle together.

Why else would Felicity ask him to enter her office? In fact, Yvonne would have scolded him immediately and kicked him out if she didn't know who he really was.

However, Gerald wasn't one to hold resentment toward Felicity, even if she had constantly remarked sarcastically at him in the past.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have allowed her to become the famous anchorwoman that she was today.

"I'll make this clear, I'll definitely help you with this no matter what. However, Gerald, could you please tell me something and be truthful about it? Are you Ordinary Man? And are you also Mr. Crawford from Mayberry?"

Felicity bit her lower lip as she finally decided to ask Gerald face to face.

Felicity had had extremely complicated feelings the moment she met Gerald again after quite some time.

Was Gerald really the person that she had liked all this time?

Ordinary Man had always treated her well.

Although they had never personally met, Felicity had grown to have feelings for him after receiving

his help a few times. It was the kind of feeling that just stuck strongly to her heart.

It had also been the reason why she felt nothing whenever other rich and young men tried to gain her affection or help her.

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Chapter 438

Recently after Felicity had become famous, several men who were both handsome and rich began stepping up to help her. Once, she had a minor fever but even then, a few young and rich men had driven over to her place to send her medicine in person.

Some of them would even chat with her every night.

Technically, by doing all that for her, those men were already good enough to reach her 'partner standards'.

Ordinary Man himself had not spoken much with Felicity for a few months now. She had never met him in person either.

Despite all that, Felicity still felt nothing for the others.

It was definite proof of her admiration toward Ordinary Man.

She had even imagined how he looked, countless times.

However, with every passing clue that she got, it further revealed the fuller picture that Ordinary Man was none other than the person that she had

always looked down upon, Gerald. How could she not have complicated feelings about that?

‘Could it really be Gerald?’

‘If it is, then is Gerald the one for me? Will I... Will I still love him?’

‘I honestly can’t believe that I’ve fallen for Gerald!’

Such questions and thoughts would fill her mind from the day they last met at the restaurant.

She had been constantly anxious about it, and she was now more anxious than ever with him standing before her.

She couldn’t hold herself back anymore so she asked him for the truth.

“And what if I were? Would you still like me?”

asked Gerald back, a bitter smile on his face.

Felicity bit her lower lip slightly before shaking her head. “I... I don’t know! I don’t know if I’d be able to like you even if you truly are Ordinary Man!”

Gerald chuckled at this. “You’re just overthinking this. How on earth could I ever be Ordinary Man?”

Though his voice was calm, his face couldn’t fully hide his unease. Gerald was having complicated feelings as well as he looked at Felicity.

Gerald was afraid that meeting her again in the

future would be awkward if she knew the truth, so he kept silent about his identity.

After what had happened with Giya, Gerald now knew better not to flirt with other girls if he wasn't determined to give them happiness and good prospects in the future.

He was aware as well, that Felicity would definitely be in great pain and confusion if he admitted to her claim. There was nothing to be gained by doing so.

"I don't buy it! You're definitely lying about that!" said Felicity as she stared straight into Gerald's eyes.

"Gerald, please... I... I just want to hear the truth from you. If you tell me the truth, I'll... I'll share some information with you! I'm positive that you'll definitely find the news interesting. How about that?" asked Felicity as she slowly approached Gerald.

"I'm neither Mr. Crawford, nor am I Ordinary Man. There are no lies there. I just won the lottery and it was a great amount of money. If I really were Mr. Crawford, why would I ever keep such a low profile? Besides, Mr. Crawford comes from a huge family. We've been in the same class for the past three years now. Do I look like someone who comes from a huge family?" replied Gerald.

Felicity simply nodded.

Despite that, she still couldn't bring herself to hate Gerald anymore, even if he wasn't Mr. Crawford or Ordinary Man.

"...Fine! I'll believe what you said for now! Also, are you interested in the information?" she asked while shaking her head to regain her composure. 1

"What happened?"

"Half a month ago, I attended a function in Yanken. I bumped into a girl there!"

As Felicity said that, she peeked at Gerald. She was curious to see what reaction he would give.

"Go on. Do I know that girl?" asked Gerald.

"Of course you do. You're quite close to her as well!"

"I hadn't expected to bump into her there, but here's the thing. She's changed drastically! If you ever plan to meet her again, I can guarantee that you'll find yourself very surprised!"

Gerald couldn't help scratching the back of his head in confusion.

"She's Xavia! Your ex! Could you already have forgotten about her?" said Felicity when she realized that he still couldn't guess who the girl was. 1

“Xavia?”

It was Gerald’s turn to be shocked this time.

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Chapter 439

“Xavia’s in Yanken?”

He was stunned just hearing that name again. He hadn’t heard from her for months.

He felt a sudden excruciating pain in his heart.

After all, he had been a couple with Xavia for two years. His memories at Mayberry University mostly consisted of both of them being together. However, she had severely hurt his feelings. At one point, Gerald felt only resentment toward her.

After he revealed his identity as Mr. Crawford to her, he became quite cold toward Xavia.

She received such a great blow from that, that she dropped out of university.

Since that happened, any resentment he had for her ceased to exist.

He was instead filled with self-reproach.

In the past, he had nothing. Yet Xavia didn’t dislike him for that. She still chose to be with him.

They had their meals together, and even went shopping together.

While it was true that Xavia had changed in the end, she was much better compared to Alice and the others.

After all, she hadn't been disgusted with him for being poor. That was what touched Gerald back then since most girls naturally preferred rich partners.

His coldness back then literally ruined her future, to the point where she could not even complete her studies at the university.

Gerald had pondered before about getting someone to look for Xavia. If he was able to find her, he could provide her with a job that had a steady income and good prospects. He would be able to rest much easier if he knew she could still sustain herself.

However, Gerald gave up on that idea because he felt that she would hate him even more if she ever found out.

“What kind of response even is that? Are you happy? Excited? Or maybe you're just blaming yourself in your head now?” Felicity asked curiously.

“How is she now? Is she doing well?” asked Gerald, ignoring her question.

“Oh, you don't have to worry about her. Honestly,

she's doing great! She's living such a good life that it'll definitely be beyond your expectations. Before we parted ways, she told me that she'll return to Mayberry one day to retrieve what she's lost there!"

"She had quite a scary expression on her face as she said that. When I asked her about it, she didn't say anything else regarding the matter. Speaking of which, Gerald, why did Xavia drop out of university?"

Back then, Xavia had told her to pass a message to Gerald. Felicity, however, was uninterested in anything related to Gerald so she simply kept the message to herself.

Of course, things were much different now, plus she was curious about what Xavia had meant.

"I wonder..." said Gerald, a bitter smile on his face.

She had announced that she would retrieve what she had lost in Mayberry... Xavia was definitely going to have her revenge on Gerald.

What on earth had Xavia gone through throughout the past few months?

Gerald had no idea where to even begin speculating. However, one thing was for sure. Xavia was doing great and that was all that mattered to him.

"Well, it's fine if you don't want to talk about it. I'll

just find out when she finally returns one day!” said Felicity before sighing.

“Alright, that’s enough chit chat! I need to finish up my makeup for the live broadcast this afternoon!”

“Alright!” said Gerald as he nodded his head. As he was about to walk out of the office, Felicity called out to him. As he waited for her to say something, she walked up to him before blocking the door with her arms spread out.

“Also, Gerald. I hope that you’ll promise me one thing since I’m helping you this time around.”

“What is it?”

“You can’t marry before I learn who Ordinary Man’s true identity is. That’s my only request. Is that possible?” asked Felicity as she bit her lower lip.

She didn’t even understand why she was asking for such an absurd thing from Gerald.

‘Could this possibly mean that I’ve fallen for him since I know that he’s most probably Ordinary Man?’

‘If Gerald really is Ordinary Man and he marries someone else... What would happen?’

Felicity didn’t want to have to feel such bitter

remorse. As she pondered her own question a bit more, she realized that that must have been the reason why she had told him to make such a promise.

She still wasn't even sure if she truly loved Gerald.

After hearing Felicity's request, Gerald looked at her in surprise.

"Don't get any misunderstandings. I don't like you, I'm just looking for an answer!" said Felicity.

"Alright, you have my promise!"

In all honesty, Gerald was still feeling slightly flustered after hearing Xavia's name again.

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Chapter 440

He made the promise without even the slightest hesitation.

It was much better than telling Felicity that he was actually Ordinary Man. 1

But now wasn't the time for that. Now was the time for Felicity to ask her fans to look for Giya.

After he descended the stairs, the other could see that Gerald clearly had something weighing on his mind.

As he paced around slowly, both Felicia and Quade followed closely behind him.

Felicia kept alternating between poking Quade and nudging her head toward Gerald's back. It was clear that Quade wanted to say something to Gerald.

Quade, however, definitely looked like he didn't dare to go up to Gerald.

"Quade, it's really no big deal. Go ahead and talk to Gerald about it!" said Tammy as she sighed, looking at the two. She couldn't bear seeing them act so sneakily behind Gerald anymore.

Gerald heard his name being called and he turned

around. Behind him, he saw Felicia poking Quade while both of them stared back.

Gerald was slightly confused at the scene but he shook his head before looking at Quade and asking, "What's the matter?"

Quade coughed while adjusting his glasses. "I need your help with something, but I'm not sure if you'll be willing to lend a hand..."

Initially, Quade had looked down on Gerald but when he saw that he drove a Mercedes-Benz G-Class, he was shocked.

"Go on..."

"Well, my elder sister works in a leasing company. She needs to lease a Mercedes-Benz G-Class this month though she hasn't had any luck getting her hands on one yet... If she fails to hit her target this month she might get fired. You may already have guessed by now, but could you please lease it to my sister's company for three days? Just three days. My sister will definitely pay you the leasing fee!" said Quade.

Gerald understood Quade's situation.

Some companies specialized in stuff like that. People would sign leases for cars for different reasons such as shooting for movies.

Once the lease was signed, if anything happened to the car, the leaser would not be held responsible for it. The leaser didn't have to bother about all the expenses either. The car would just be leased for a few days and they could earn three thousand dollars without needing to do anything else.

“If that's the case, sure. I'll lease it to her,” said Gerald as he smiled faintly.

Gerald found no reason to decline. Quade had a hand in helping Gerald find Giya too after all.

What more, Gerald approved of him, seeing how much he cared for his sister. Gerald could understand his worries since he had a sister himself. If Gerald's sister was ever in any trouble, Gerald would rush over to help her without the slightest fear or hesitation.

“Thank you, Gerald! I'll call my sister now to tell her the good news! She'll be coming over soon with a contract for you to sign!” said Quade excitedly.

Soon after, his sister arrived and the contract was signed. Once that was done, Tammy and the others went home to try getting their connections to help resolve the issue of Giya's disappearance.

Gerald called Zack up himself along with a few others.

They needed to find something. Anything that could give a clue as to where Giya's whereabouts was.

Otherwise, Gerald knew that he would not be able to rest easy for the rest of his life.

Night came soon enough.

Gerald was exhausted and hungry after doing all that he could the entire day.

He retreated for the moment to a restaurant to fill his belly up before resuming the search.

“What do you mean? Do you think I'm unnecessary? Am I that bad?”

While he was having his meal, Gerald suddenly heard arguing coming from a dining table not too far from his.

There were voices of two women and a man.

All three voices came from the same dining table. It seemed that the man had been caught red-handed cheating with another woman. The man's original lover was the one doing most of the shouting as the cheating duo remained silent.

“I treated you so well! What do I lack that she has? You loved me before this... Do you not anymore? Why do you want to be with her?” The woman

continued shouting at them.

This sort of scene wasn't uncommon. Gerald really didn't need to look at them at all. ①

However, he had glanced up out of curiosity since they were being so noisy. This resulted in his gaze being fixed upon the trio.

The shouting woman turned out to be Lilian.

As for the pair who had been caught cheating, they were none other than Hayward and Sharon.

Turning back the clock to the day of the class gathering, Gerald remembered hearing from Waylon that Sharon was now Hayward's girlfriend.

Lilian must have been anxious all this time since she liked Hayward too.

A slap was heard, and the shouting ceased.

The recipient of the slap was Lilian.

Sharon had stood up, a cold expression on her face. "Lilian, that's enough. Are you out of your mind?"

Chapter 441

“Sharon, you- You! How dare you slap me! Hayward this b*tch just slapped me!”

While she said that, Lilian looked at Hayward while cupping a hand over her hurt cheek.

However, Hayward only averted his gaze. It was clear whose side he was on.

“I... I see... So that’s how it is... To think that I was that blind before to not be able to see what kind of person you really were...”

Lilian’s voice was quivering. She then turned around and ran away in tears.

Sharon slammed her fork and spoon on the table. She was in no mood to enjoy her meal anymore after such a mess. Soon after, both of them left the restaurant.

‘What a pity to see two best friends fighting like enemies now...’ Gerald thought to himself.

From what had played out before him, Gerald could get the gist of what had happened among the three.

It would seem that Lilian and Sharon were both getting more assertive over Hayward because of the

properties that he now owned.

In the past when Hayward was still poor, they never treated him well even though he had always stayed by their sides.

It was a completely different story now. Ever since he owned a few properties and managed to get some great connections, he had essentially become a rich and handsome man to them.

What more, to both Lilian and Sharon, the experience he had gained while obtaining the properties and connections must also have made him more solemn and mature.

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Gerald could definitely understand their situation. However, he wasn't sure how the two girls would react if they ever caught wind that the things Hayward now had were all given to him.

Gerald simply sneered while shaking his head before smiling in resignation.

After finishing his meal, he left the restaurant. However, the minute Gerald's foot stepped out of the restaurant, a hand grabbed on to his other.

“Oh! My grandson, please wait for a short while!”

Looking down to see who was holding on to his leg, Gerald saw an old man sitting by the entrance.

“My god, what are you doing?” said Gerald, stunned.

“My grandson, you must be rich since you can afford to eat at this restaurant! Please spare me some money, I haven’t eaten in days now!” said the old beggar as he crawled closer to hug Gerald’s thigh.

The old beggar looked dirty and his white hair stank.

He wouldn’t let go of Gerald’s leg until he got some money.

Understanding this, Gerald could only sigh as he reached into his wallet and handed a hundred dollar bill to the beggar.

In his mind, the old beggar was chuckling victoriously. ‘I was right to choose this boy, he’s filthy rich!’

The beggar immediately slid the money into his dirty front pocket but he didn’t let go.

“Are you done?” asked Gerald, his tone getting angrier.

“My grandson, I need help with something else too ... Could you please send me to a clinic? My leg is injured and I need to have it cured!”

“D*amn it you old beggar! Just because you’re old

you think you can blackmail me?”

Gerald was angry but also speechless.

“What old beggar? I just got into some trouble! I’m no beggar!” the man replied.

By then, several people were starting to surround the two. Naturally, the gossiping soon began as well.

Gerald sighed, thinking how unlucky he was. The old man had even addressed him as his grandson all this time.

In the end, Gerald brought him to the clinic across the road, defeated.

The Chinese medicine practitioner there treated the old man’s leg in no time. As Gerald paid the hundred dollar bill, he could only glare at the old man bitterly.

However, it was upon closer inspection that he saw that there was a tattoo on the old man’s chest. It was the head of a dragon that looked rather intimidating.

‘Could it really be that he really is some hero who’s down on his luck?’ Gerald thought to himself.

Maybe the old man really was influential and great once. Then again, it was none of Gerald’s business.

He had spent a total of two hundred dollars on that

old man. Usually he would never do something like that but it was just his luck that the old man had clung on so tightly on his leg and in public no less.

Gerald was just about to leave when he noticed some news being broadcasted on a TV in the clinic. The news was being broadcasted on Mayberry TV and it was regarding Giya's disappearance. It was stated in the news that the police were already investigating the case.

It was clear that Giya's father had thought of using mass media to help look for Giya too.

Seeing the news, Gerald began blaming himself again.

There were a few more patients in the waiting room, waiting for their turn to meet the Chinese medicine practitioner. One of them sighed. "Such a beautiful girl... I do hope that she's safe. The world is filled with all kinds of villainous and perverted people nowadays..."

"I know right? Girls need to learn how to protect themselves when they're out and about..." said another patient.

"Hmm... I seem to recall seeing her a while back. She was blocked by a few men..." said the old beggar who had limped out and saw the news as well, now that his leg had been treated.

Gerald had just begun walking toward the door again when he froze in place.

“What? What did you say? You’ve met her?”

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Gerald's voice was filled with anxiety as he asked.

The old man simply chuckled as he looked at Gerald.

"Why yes, I did. Met her outside Mayberry Station around noon that day, alone. I distinctly remember her because she was so fair, tall, and beautiful. A few people were waiting for her at the station though. After a short chat, she got into their car hurriedly and that was the last time I saw her."

"You seem interested. You know her or something?" asked the old man as he smiled.

"We're acquainted, yes," said Gerald as he nodded before asking the old man for more details.

Based on the old man's description of the event, the person he had seen that day truly was Giya and the timing was right too.

As long as he knew where Giya first went missing, whether she was kidnapped or not, the situation could be resolved rather easily.

As he was about to leave, the old man grabbed his arm nervously.

"What else do you want?" asked Gerald.

“My grandson, you’re a very kind man... May I please know your name?”

“Gerald Crawford...”

Since he had given Gerald such a vital clue, Gerald felt no reason not to tell him his name.

“Your surname is Crawford you say... Can I have a look at your chest?”

The old man’s voice had suddenly become a mix of agitation and excitement.

Before Gerald could even reply, the old man was already tugging on his collar.

Naturally, Gerald tried to resist but the old man was something else. Though he looked frail, when he needed to, the old man was strong enough to make sure Gerald couldn’t even move his arm anymore.

Once Gerald’s collar had been pulled apart, the old man frowned slightly.

“How queer! It’s not here!” said the old man as he released Gerald.

‘This old man’s crazy!’ Gerald thought to himself as he gently rubbed his wrists.

While the old man was still in a daze, Gerald made a dash for the exit and didn’t look back.

After running quite some distance away from the clinic, Gerald called Drake, Tyson, and Tammy. He told them about what he had found out.

He knew that both Drake and Tyson would be able to get to the bottom of this very soon.

Thinking about the case, Gerald felt that the kidnapping involved lots of fraud and deception. However, his priority was always Giya's safety.

What a surprising turn of events though. To think that that old man knew about Giya... What a great coincidence!

However, it wasn't time to dwell on that now.

It was an hour later when Drake and Tyson contacted Gerald again. As expected of highly trained men, they had found their next lead.

Giya had apparently been lied to which consequently led to her being kidnapped. From what they could deduce, she had been locked up in a house in a luxurious neighborhood for about two days now.

After some research, it was found that a student by the name of Yacob was the cause of all of this chaos.

Yacob had owed the gangsters in Mayberry a sum of money, so they were now using Giya to make him

pay.

'F*ck!' Gerald cursed in his mind.

Drake and Tyson were immediately ordered to get their men ready to save Giya.

However, being the professionals they were, both of them were already at the neighborhood with their men. They had been waiting there for their next command from the moment they called Gerald to inform him about their findings.

Hearing that, Gerald wanted to rush over himself. However, he realized that his Mercedes-Benz G-Class had just been leased out. He couldn't go to Mountain Top Villa to retrieve his car either.

Thankfully, the neighborhood was not too far away so he got an Ofo bike and rushed there immediately.

A roar of thunder could be heard and soon, it began raining heavily.

Gerald updated Tammy on the situation and he was thankfully able to relay all the vital information before his phone battery died. Cursing under his breath, he continued cycling in the pouring rain till he finally reached St. Cloud Neighborhood. 2

While Gerald was still making his way there, about a hundred Maybach cars had gathered around the neighborhood, causing a terrible traffic congestion

there. All four entrances of the neighborhood had been completely blocked as well.

What more, several men in black suits were standing under umbrellas as they waited outside their cars. It was a rather incredible scene to behold.

Naturally, people began taking photographs of the event through the windows of their homes. There was definitely something big going on.

There were no hints as to what was happening or who had offended who. To put simply, the entire situation was both confusing and shocking to the clueless residents living there.

While all this was happening, a few young men and women were standing behind the door of a restaurant in St. Cloud Neighborhood.

“Counselor, it’s raining heavily and all the entrances of the neighborhood have apparently been blocked! We can’t leave even if we wanted to!” said one of the girls.

“Why don’t we just stay at the counselor’s house then? Since she’s just moved into a new one here!” said the man as he cleared his throat.

“Speaking of her house, if the counselor hadn’t asked us to help her move to her new house, we could easily have missed the scene happening

outside. They're all Maybach cars!"

Earlier, the students had been surprised to see that it wasn't just a regular congestion since all the cars causing it were Maybach cars.

"...Hmm? Counselor, look there. Doesn't that man on the Ofo bike look familiar?" said another girl who pointed at someone cycling an Ofo bike into the neighborhood.

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“...Hey. That’s Gerald isn’t it?” said a man who recognized the cycling figure in the rain.

“I think you’re right! Oh god, he’s cycling in such heavy rain! And he seems to be rushing as well!”

“I heard he won a car or something but it turns out that he’s as shabby as ever!”

“Yeah. To think I once admired him the moment I found out he had won a lottery.”

The group of women there began discussing Gerald. All ten of those standing by the door were his classmates. The counselor, as most would have guessed by now, was none other than Cassandra.

It just so happened that Cassandra was moving into a new house again today. She didn’t need to live in the faculty apartment anymore.

Since St. Cloud Neighborhood was a luxurious neighborhood, the house had cost around four hundred thousand dollars.

Cassandra had been working as a lecturer in the university for some time now. She had even established her own online shop, working as an

online seller.

With the help of Felicity promoting her shop and products, it was no wonder that Cassandra had managed to earn so much money.

With that kind of money, she could afford to buy herself a new house with three bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen.

Since she needed to move her belongings to her new house, she had asked for help from the students at Mayberry University.

Once the moving was completed, she treated all of them to a meal in a local restaurant which explained why they were all huddled near the restaurant's door in the first place.

Seeing Gerald again after some time, Cassandra could feel her heart skip a beat.

She was just like Felicity as both of them had liked Ordinary Man. Knowing that Gerald could most probably be the real Ordinary Man, she felt sensitive whenever things regarding Gerald came up.

Moving back to Gerald, since it was raining very heavily, he just couldn't cycle fast enough no matter how hard he tried.

At that moment, three cars rushed past him

consecutively, all of them moving toward the entrance of St. Cloud Neighborhood.

Once the last car hit the brakes, Felicity, Yvonne, and a few others rushed out. In their hands were their phones along with other live broadcasting equipment.

Gerald had updated Tammy about what he had found out earlier before his phone had died. She must have told everyone else about it.

By the time Gerald got to the house, he saw Tammy and Giya's parents trying to get past several bodyguards who were standing guard over the entrance.

"Let me pass! Let me see my daughter!" cried Giya's mother.

Realizing that they were the victim's parents, the guards looked at each other before noticing Gerald standing in the rain. He gestured for them to let them in and they immediately allowed the rest of the people there in.

A guard hurriedly ran over to Gerald before whispering something in his ear. Gerald's legs felt weak as he could finally breathe a sigh of relief. Drake and Tyson had rescued Giya. Gerald nodded to the guard and the guard ran back into the house to deal with other things.

Gerald noticed that Felicity was just about to enter the house so he walked to her and told her about the good news. Felicity stopped in her tracks for a moment before nodding. Gerald simply nodded back, a tired smile on his face before he walked away slowly.

As she watched him walk away, a voice suddenly called out to her.

“Felicity! Here! Over here!”

The students from earlier had left the restaurant to get a closer look and one of the girls just so happened to catch sight of Felicity.

Felicity was shocked. Why were so many of her classmates here?

Noticing that Yvonne was there, she went up to her.

“Felicity, you’re awesome! They hadn’t allowed anyone in but you’re being given access to enter along with your crew! What exactly is happening in there?” asked a girl curiously.

Felicity had just been told to come along to broadcast the scene so even she was shocked when she first saw all the Maybach cars blocking the entrances. Thankfully, Tammy had told the guards that Gerald had sent them so they were allowed access into the neighborhood.

“A girl was kidnapped. We received news about it so we rushed here without knowing how large a scale the rescue mission actually was. I’m as shocked as all of you are to see this many people involved!”

“Eh? Who’s the girl? Looking at how her parents reacted they don’t seem to be the leader of this group...” asked another girl.

Cassandra was curious as well so she looked at Felicity.

Felicity simply shook her head. “I’m not too sure either. Gerald was the one who told us about the girl’s location in the first place. I was talking to him just seconds ago and he told me that she had been saved as well. She had apparently been kept in the dark about what was happening and she was shocked to find out that she was now in a house in St. Cloud Neighborhood!”

“Gerald?” said Cassandra, stunned.

“Yes, the girl in question is his friend. He was the one who asked for my help to look for her in the first place...”

After saying that, she paused for a moment.

Both Felicity and Cassandra looked at each other, shock reflected in their eyes.

Out of the blue, someone burst into laughter. “

Everyone, look! Gerald's drenched from head to toe! Someone's late to the party!"

"Look at him! How pathetic! Hey, Yoana! Didn't you say that you liked him earlier? Why don't you go confess to him now?"

"F*ck that, only fools would ever confess to him!"

As the students continued laughing at him, a shout was heard.

"Mr. Crawford!"

Several bodyguards holding black umbrellas suddenly shouted in unison. The shout was so loud and clear that the entire neighborhood could probably hear it.

Two bodyguards then instantly rushed toward Gerald to shelter him from the rain.

Gerald shook his head as he wiped his face dry with his hanky. As another guard quickly handed him another one, Gerald pointed toward the Ofo bike laying on the ground.

When he arrived at the scene, he had gotten off the Ofo bike immediately and it had tumbled onto the ground when he was rushing toward the front door. A guard moved toward the bike, putting it upright. Gerald knew the guard would take care of the rest.

"Mr. Crawford, we successfully saved the girl.

However, she fainted once she found out where she had been held captive all this time. Rest assured, she isn't injured, just a little tired," said a bodyguard who had stepped forth.

"That's a relief. Take me to her."

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Though Gerald was relieved, he still felt the need to see her with his own eyes before believing it.

As he walked forward under the umbrellas held by the two guards from before, the guards who had guarded the door lined up in two rows, bowing respectfully as he walked past them.

Inside, a few bodyguards who were dealing with the final procedures of the operation ran over when they saw Gerald entering.

Just like the guards standing guard over the entrance, those present inside stood in two lines respectfully before bowing as well.

“Mr. Crawford!” they shouted in unison.

Tammy, Giya’s parents, and a few others were present in the room when that scene happened and they all looked at Gerald in shock.

“Mr. Crawford?...”

“Gerald... He’s that Mr. Crawford?”

Tammy and the other girls she had brought along all quivered in fright.

They now knew who his true identity was.

Gerald didn't bother about it since he wasn't worried about Tammy and her group of friends at all.

However, when he heard something drop, he turned around and froze.

Felicity had accidentally dropped one of the broadcasting equipment she was holding on to. Behind her, Cassandra and a few others were trying to squeeze through the confused guards who were unsure whether to let them enter the house.

'Why are they here?'

Though the situation was awkward, he signaled to the guards to allow them in. All his classmates were deeply astonished by this.

Gerald sighed. They could wait. What was more important now was to check if Giya was safe.

"Mr. Crawford, you're here!" said Michael who had seen Gerald while exiting one of the rooms.

"We've confirmed it. The rich gangster heir of Mayberry, Kevin Sanford, was the leader of the operation and Yacob was their target. They imprisoned Miss Quarrington to get Yacob to pay up what he owed the Sanfords. He had been given three days and if he failed to return the money by then, it was said that they would r*pe her!" said

Michael as he detailed what he had learned from his investigation.

Since Kevin had tried to resist earlier, Drake and Tyson had thrown him off the building. Kevin was now unconscious.

Zack, on the other hand, had continued to pressure the Sanfords till they finally gave in.

That was the basic summary of the entire situation.

Gerald was led into the room where Giya currently was. He didn't want to bother about Tammy, Cassandra, Felicity, or the others who were still in a daze just yet.

A few guards were looking after Giya who had been placed on a couch. She was unconscious as the guard earlier had said.

Relieved that she was still in one piece, Gerald ordered for an ambulance to be called. He could finally breathe a bit easier the moment the ambulance transporting Giya to the hospital drove off into the distance.

While he continued looking out the door, Tammy, Cassandra, and a few others slowly walked toward him.

All of them equally felt that it was strange seeing Gerald like this.

“Gerald... His real identity is Mr. Crawford from Mayberry? Holy c*ap! This is too much for me to take in!” Yoana said aloud as she bit her lower lip in remorse.

The others there were all feeling more or less the same but the revelation affected Cassandra and Felicity the most. They felt their chest tighten the more they thought about it.

“So... It really was true... The one who had always been helping me was Gerald! The rich heir I had been trying so hard to find had been in my class all along! We were so close by!” said Felicity as her phone dropped to the ground. Her hands were trembling badly and her mind had gone blank.

Gerald took in a deep breath before turning to look at all of them. He slowly walked forward, picked up Felicity’s phone and returned it to her.

“I had not expected all of you to be here, counselor ... What are you guys doing here today?” asked Gerald, a soft and tired smile on his face.

“We were helping the counselor move Mr. Crawford ... Wait, no! We were helping her move her things to her new house, Mr. Crawford! Because we helped, she treated us to a meal in a restaurant nearby...” said a girl, blushing hard.

“I see... What a coincidence you were all here while

all this happened... Well, since you're all stuck here because of my cars in the first place... I'll give all of you a ride back," said Gerald as he walked out of the house.

A guard opened the door of a car that had been waiting for Gerald outside.

He got inside without another word and left the scene. He knew that even if he stayed for any longer, there was not much else he could say anyway.

Felicity trembled in place as the car Gerald was in slowly disappeared from sight.

"It's... really him..." whispered Felicity to herself. "Oh Lilian, don't be upset anymore! I wonder what's happening here today... Why are there so many people?"

At that moment, three women walked out of a building unit.

The girl who hadn't spoken quickly grabbed Lilian's arm, pulling her out the door to show her all the cars that were slowly leaving. Lilian however, was still in a slight daze. She looked like she had just finished crying not too long ago. 5

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“You’re right! Look at all the luxurious cars!” said the other girl.

Lilian was momentarily stunned out of her daze when she saw that they were telling the truth.

All of them were Maybach cars and every single one of them was worth as much as a single housing unit on the street they were currently in.

Imagine getting married to a person from such a rich and powerful family... How envious the others would feel.

Lilian sighed internally. “That god d*mn Sharon... I’m much more beautiful than she is yet Hayward still chose her! That b*tch!”

‘The only thing Sharon is good at is pretending!’

Lilian was here because she had rented a house alongside her two other female colleagues there.

Looking at all the Maybach cars refueled Lilian’s jealousy toward Sharon and she fumed.

Soon after, the cars all left and everything returned to normal.

As for Yacob, naturally, he was taken away by the

police.

The very next day, Gerald immediately headed to the hospital after he woke up to visit Giya.

“Thank you for saving me, Gerald!” were the first words she said the moment she saw him entering her ward.

After she had regained consciousness, her parents had told her what had happened the day before.

“It was my fault for not taking care of you in the first place. I’m just glad you’re safe!” said Gerald, a tired smile on his face.

“I’ve been wondering... Did you save my mother too? I’m asking since Yacob had made some confessions to the police officers. He said that him saving my mother was a lie! If he hadn’t mentioned the incident, I wouldn’t have entered the car with him the other day!” said Giya as she looked at Gerald.

She had been terribly shocked when she heard from her father that Gerald was actually Mr. Crawford.

“Well, yes I saved her,” replied Gerald as he nodded. He didn’t need to keep it a secret anymore.

“You idiot! Why didn’t you tell me about that earlier? You know, there was a time when I thought of becoming Yacob’s girlfriend! If I ever got into

such a situation I'd have blamed you for burdening me like that!" said Giya as she pinched his arm lightly.

"Hey Gerald... Are you afraid that I'll cling onto you and continue to pester you for the rest of your life?" asked Giya, her eyes serious.

"After thinking about it, I finally understand why you're so unwilling to be with me. You're Mr. Crawford from Mayberry, a highly prestigious person! It would be impossible for you to fall in love with a girl like me!"

"Not at all! I've already told you before! I'm with Mila now... It's impossible for me to fall in love with another woman!" replied Gerald honestly.

"I was just pulling your leg, I understood that the first time you told me... Actually, now that I think about it, maybe I was never truly in love with you in the first place. I was probably just touched by the precious gift you had given me the other day... However, now that I know your true identity, I understand that that gift must have been worth nothing much to you!"

"Aah... I've been overthinking about this for way too long! I think it's better this way... I'm feeling much more relieved now... I think I can honestly say this now too. Gerald, I hope that you'll be happy

together with Mila!” said Giya as she smiled brightly.

Gerald felt the tenseness leave his shoulders when he saw that Giya had finally understood and accepted the situation.

“Alright so... We’re good friends from now on, okay? If you have any troubles, I’ll lend a hand as long as I’m able to!” said Gerald as he returned a smile.

In all honesty, Gerald was still filled with self-reproach.

He had canceled so many of her plans in the past. His inactions had also nearly gotten her r*ped if he had acted any slower!

So Gerald really meant what he said.

“Hmmm... Fine then. I’ll remember what you told me today! If I ask for help in the future you better not try to run away!” joked Giya.

“I won’t! Alright... For now, just focus on resting. I’ll get you some porridge from the cafeteria!” said Gerald as he got up and left the room.

As the door closed behind him, the smile on her face slowly faded. She then clenched on to her blanket tightly.

As Gerald continued walking to the cafeteria with

Giya's lunchbox in hand, he nearly knocked into someone.

"Hey! You blind? Look where you're going!" scolded the woman who had almost been knocked over. She was being supported by a girl who was also holding on to her IV bottle.

"I'm sorry, I wasn't- ...Lilian?"

"...Gerald? What are you doing here?" asked Lilian in surprise.

The night before, Lilian's housemates had accompanied her as she had her IV.

She had suffered from a great shock and she was also fully drenched due to the heavy rain by the time she got home.

Though she showed symptoms of having a high fever, they couldn't do much about it last night due to all the cars congesting their neighborhood.

Lilian had even thought that the fever would be gone by the time morning came.

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Unfortunately, her condition had only worsened by the time her roommates woke her up.

Her roommates then immediately rushed her to the hospital.

Now that she had the drip on, she was finally starting to feel a little better again.

Unexpectedly, she bumped into Gerald here!

“Well, my friend’s been hospitalized here. I’m about to get her some porridge now,” said Gerald as he smiled.

“Gerald? Oh! Is this the Gerald from your class who keeps running errands for rich heirs?” said one of the girls as she looked at Gerald with contempt.

“Quilla! What are you talking about?” said Lilian in embarrassment.

“What? Isn’t this the guy? Look, he’s even running an errand for a rich heir now! He said he was getting porridge for someone, remember?” sneered Quilla.

Lilian’s face alternated between turning red and pale, unsure which emotion she should be feeling

first.

Quilla had always been like this. She had been this straightforward for as long as Lilian knew her.

Honestly, Quilla was even more heartless compared to her.

Though Lilian had indeed been the one who told Quilla about all of that before this.

This was because Gerald had been awesome the last time they were at the Yorknorth Mountain Celebration Festival. Back then, Lilian had insisted on giving her cup of milk tea to Gerald. She was even prepared to lick his boots if she needed to.

She had thought of pursuing Gerald then as well.

Sharon, Hayward, and Lilian were all still speculating on Gerald's true identity back then.

They just couldn't understand how he had so many good and close connections with rich heirs. What more, the rich heirs were treating him well!

In the end, Hayward looked into the matter and eventually found out that Gerald wasn't as awesome as they had initially thought. In truth, he had just been running an errand for someone and he was even looking after their home on their behalf!

Lilian and Sharon had no trouble believing Hayward

's words.

However, they both kept in mind that they would have to treat Gerald better in the future. After all, he was very close to quite a number of young and rich heirs.

Thinking back, it was precisely because of Lilian's thoughts and her performance during the Yorknorth Mountain Celebration Festival that Hayward felt that she was no good, instead opting for Sharon.

'That b*tch had just been too shocked to react that day!' Lilian thought to herself, fuming slightly.

Between the two of them, Sharon definitely looked down on Gerald more!

Though both of them were shocked and filled with regrets when they found out that Gerald's connections were better than Haywards, Lilian was the only one who had reacted while that b*tch didn't react at all.

After that, Lilian had given it some thought and she came to the realization that just pleasing Gerald just because he had good connections and interpersonal relationships was quite unrealistic. After all, Gerald had nothing else going for him.

Hayward on the other hand, had his assets and also

his shop.

What more, he had even helped Sharon by arranging for a better job for her.

This was just the reality of the situation.

Back in the present, Lilian was embarrassed yet again by Quilla's comment and she immediately said, "Don't listen to her nonsense, Gerald. Speaking of which, where are all your young and rich friends?"

Though Lilian still looked down on Gerald for being nothing more than an errand boy, he was still close to several rich heirs, so he wasn't that bad.

"Oh, they've gone to Harnsley to play, I think!" replied Gerald.

"Why didn't they bring you along?" asked Lilian.

"What reason would they have to bring me there?" said Gerald with a bitter smile on his face.

While that group of young and rich heirs enjoyed spending their money specifically only for having fun, Gerald himself liked leading a plain and simple life. Aside from special events or the usual drinking, he didn't really join them for anything else.

Lilian curled her lips slightly. In her mind, she thought that they wouldn't want to bring him

along with them anyway.

After chatting a little longer, they eventually went their separate ways.

“You know, he was actually pretty handsome! If he was a little more capable I might have considered pursuing him! Such a pity...” said Quilla.

Lilian looked at her before snorting,

“Pft, if he really was a young and rich heir I’d have pursued him long ago. Unfortunately, that’s just how it is. Speaking of which, I honestly thought of pursuing him just a few days ago.”

“Even though he’s not rich himself, he’s still acquainted with several rich heirs. Life might be a little shabby but we would always have the heirs’ backup and support. That way, I would be able to give Hayward a slap to make him regret choosing that b*tch over me! Plus, Hayward’s always had an inferiority complex whenever it came to Gerald.”

“Once Hayward’s complex is triggered, he’ll definitely change his mind and try to get me back! Once that happens, I’ll have Hayward all to myself!”

“It’s such a pity that those rich heirs are playing by themselves at Harnsley now... D*mn it! If only Hayward didn’t know everything about Gerald’s background... Gerald’s still somewhere at the

bottom of the food chain now! How am I ever going to make Hayward regret not choosing me?” said Lilian sadly.

“Hmm... Actually, while you were talking, I suddenly had an idea that just might help you get him back! If it works, he’ll be begging on his knees for you to come back!” said the girl as she grinned.

“What do you have in mind?” asked Lilian immediately, her interest piqued.

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The moment Gerald finally got his hands on some porridge, he felt a light pat on his shoulder.

It was Lilian with a bag of food in hand.

“Say, Gerald! You haven’t eaten yet, right? Come sit with me! I’ve just bought some delicious food from outside the hospital so let’s eat together!”

“I’m fine. Aren’t you still on drips? Why are you here at the cafeteria?” asked Gerald as he smiled.

He didn’t know why Lilian had suddenly become so enthusiastic. It was slightly uncomfortable.

However, despite the fact that she would often ridicule him, Gerald didn’t hold it against her at all.

That was the only reason why he was still speaking politely to her.

“I- I’m fine! I was fine the moment I saw you! You’re... Just like my medicine! Didn’t you know?” asked Lilian with a questionable smile on her face as she looked at Gerald.

She was now standing very close to Gerald and her arm would rub against his from time to time.

Gerald could feel goosebumps all over his body.

To be honest, Lilian had a perfect body figure and looked extremely beautiful. This was because she used to be an art student and she was the captain of the Latin dance team as well.

Compared to Sharon, she definitely looked more enchanting and she was more seductive too.

However, when Gerald had talked to her just a little earlier, her attitude wasn't like this at all. What had happened under the course of half an hour to make her this enthusiastic? Honestly, she was somehow too enthusiastic this time around.

"Is there something you need, Lilian?" asked Gerald, thoroughly weirded out.

"Oh, don't worry about it! Food comes first! You know, I ran downstairs to buy some food just now because we all know cafeteria food isn't the greatest in the world! They're overpriced here too! But enough of that, look at what I've bought!"

In addition to some roast chicken, some drinks, and various other dishes, Lilian had also bought a hot egg crepe.

"I know how much you like eating egg crepes. I remember back during our high school days, you would usually only eat steamed buns with pickles for lunch but on weekends, you'd be willing to treat

yourself to an egg crepe after saving a few dollars. Since I saw a stall selling egg crepes by the roadside, I got one for you!”

Before Gerald could reply, she had pulled him down to sit with her.

Gerald felt a little moved when he saw the egg crepe. Back when he was still living in poverty, egg crepes were like food for royalty for him.

He still didn't know what Lilian was up to. However, seeing how enthusiastic she was and how much food she had bought for him, Gerald felt like it would be a little too cruel to just turn around and leave her like that.

Besides, Lilian was also now starting work as a teacher at the Scothow Elementary School. It was a school that he had built himself, so he would be able to look out for her in the future. Looking at it that way, Gerald became more willing to accept this treat from her this time.

However, the main reason he continued sitting there was still because he didn't like the idea of outright rejecting her before even listening to what she had to say.

“Come now, eat the food while it's hot! Why don't you put the porridge down first? I'll tell you something once you're done eating!” said Lilian as

she pushed the food toward Gerald.

After doing so, she cupped her hands on her face as she looked at Gerald with a smile.

Gerald began eating and after a while, he asked, “So, what’s the matter? You can tell me already.”

Gerald couldn’t help but hope that Lilian really had a change of heart. If that were the case, then Gerald would definitely be more willing to help her out since they were classmates in the past after all.

“Well... Hehe... I want you to pretend to be my boyfriend for one day! Just for tomorrow! If you help, I’ll always remember your kind deed!”

“...What?”

Gerald was so shocked that he almost spit out the egg crepe in his mouth.

Again with pretending to be someone’s boyfriend?

This wasn’t Gerald’s first time doing that and he knew it wouldn’t be his last either.

It was exactly because of that that he had inadvertently given some girls the wrong idea when he teased them while pretending to be their boyfriend.

Since it was all just for show, it would be impossible for him to really get close to the person anyway. So

why should he even pretend to be their boyfriend?

Gerald was sensitive to the matter for sure.

This was because Gerald was really afraid that eventually, someone would come up to him to ask his help for a fake marriage too! That would open an entirely different can of worms. 3

“Hmm? What are you afraid of? It’s just for one day, and you’ll just need to help me put on a show. Please?” asked Lilian as she placed her hand on top of Gerald’s gently.

She was begging sincerely for his help. 1

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Chapter 448

“Be honest with me... Is it because of Hayward?”

Gerald didn't need to be a rocket scientist to figure that one out. He sighed.

People wouldn't treat you well without a reason. Gerald knew this as a fact since there were no such things as free lunches in this world!

“Bingo! I just need you to act a little so that I can slightly provoke him! If he takes the bait, he'll definitely change his mind soon enough! Hayward's a very petty and narcissistic person so he'll definitely never be able to accept that I'm going out with someone more outstanding than he is!”
replied Lilian with a smile on her face.

Gerald sighed as he replied, “Then rather than provoke him, I think he'll only end up laughing at you if we go along with this plan... I'm nowhere near as outstanding as he is... His family is developing Yorknorth Mountain and he even has a shop there! He's lightyears better than me!” lied Gerald as naturally as he breathed.

“Of course I know that, which is why I specified the word, 'act'! Let me tell you something, Gerald, did

you know that Hayward's always been rather sensitive whenever it came to you? Not only did you have an ambiguous relationship with that b*tch- I mean Sharon in the past, but you've also put him in tough and awkward situations for quite a few times now! If you change your identity and appear before him, then he'll definitely feel jealous!

Consequently, since I'll be pretending to be your date, he'll surely regret not choosing me in the first place! That's why I feel that you're the perfect candidate for this task!" replied Lilian confidently.

It was her friend who had given her this idea earlier. Though Gerald wasn't really a rich and young heir, he could definitely play the part!

"Hold up, change my identity? Elaborate on that please," said Gerald in confusion.

"Oh that, it's simple, really. All you need to do is pretend that you've become filthy rich by winning the lottery! By saying that, in a way, you'll be even wealthier than Hayward! Can you drive? I've rented a luxury car for you to help keep the illusion up. As long as you're willing to act according to how my friend and I have planned, I'll definitely be able to give Hayward a tight slap on his face tomorrow!"

"I'll owe you one if you help me, Gerald. I've already rented the car so please agree to my request!" pleaded Lilian.

It seemed that Lilian was really going the extra mile just to regain Hayward's love and attention.

Knowing how much this meant to her, Gerald found it hard to turn down her request.

He had initially planned to say goodbye to Giya tomorrow and drive her back to Serene County since his car would be due by then.

However, it seemed that his plans would have to be delayed for another day.

"Alright fine, I'm in," said Gerald as he nodded.

"Yes!" said Lilian as she smiled excitedly.

"I am curious though, how are you so certain that we'll be able to meet Hayward tomorrow?"

"Oh, we definitely will! You don't have to worry about that. You just need to meet up with me at the hospital's entrance tomorrow. I'll pick you up there!"

Once he finished eating, he left the cafeteria with Lilian. Lilian looked much more energized now and it seemed like her fever had subsided.

Gerald couldn't help but think that this was the power of love. Could love really make a girl go crazy?

Then again, since it was Lilian he was talking about,

it could also possibly just be the power of money.

Gerald simply sighed.

After the two parted ways, Gerald went back to Giya and fed her the porridge. ①

Nothing notable happened for the rest of that day.

Early the next morning, Gerald waited for Lilian at the park next to the hospital as they had previously agreed to meet there.

He didn't have to wait long when a brand-new dazzling white Mercedes Benz G500 drove over and stopped in front of Gerald.

When the car window was rolled down, Gerald saw that both Lilian and her friend were inside.

“I really wasn't expecting you to be this punctual! Alright, get in! We're bringing you to a hairstylist next!” said Lilian.

“Hey, Hey! Snap out of it, Gerald! Are you shocked because you're looking at such a luxurious car? Get in already! You're in for a treat today because you'll get to ride in a Mercedes Benz G500 today!”

Gerald rubbed his temple as he shook his head.

Of course he would be shocked! After all, this Mercedes Benz G500 felt way too familiar...

Chapter 449

“Is... This the car you rented?”

Once he got into the car, his doubts were cleared. It really was the same Mercedes Benz G500 that he had leased to Quade’s sister, Quartney!

This was way too coincidental.

“It is. Also, I’m assuming that though you’re acquainted with many rich and young heirs, they don’t usually bring you along to play with them, right? You’ve probably never had the chance to sit in such a good car before, have you Gerald?” said Lilian arrogantly as she drove.

“You know, this model costs a full, three hundred thousand dollars! What more, this car is brand-new! Lilian and I paid fifteen thousand dollars each for the deposit just to rent it! Our saving accounts are barren right now!” said Lilian’s friend proudly for some reason.

She then took her cell phone out and started recording some videos.

“Lilian, why don’t you open the sunroof? I want to stick my head out and take some pictures!” said Lilian’s friend excitedly.

“Opening it now! But please control yourself up there! The amount we can claim back will be deducted if even the tiniest scratch appears on the car!” said Lilian as she looked for the sunroof’s button.

“...Wait, which is the button for the sunroof? It seems to work both ways? I don’t understand!” said Lilian, confused.

It was natural for her to get confused with how the car operated since it was her first time in it after all.

Gerald had been sitting at the back of the car and he couldn’t help but feel slightly uncomfortable as he watched Lilian press all the buttons she could find. It wasn’t long before he gave up and told her which button opened the sunroof.

Lilian tried it and it turned out that he was right.

“Well, look at you! I didn’t expect you to be this capable! You seem to know this car pretty well!” said Lilian.

“Oh right, you used to like cars a lot back in high school right? It seems that you still maintain your interests from back then!”

Gerald simply nodded with a wry smile on his face.

With the sunroof now open, Lilian’s friend popped

her head out to take some pictures.

Not too long after, all three of them arrived at a hairstylist and Gerald was given a cool new look.

They then gave Gerald a suit, a white shirt, and a pair of leather shoes to put on.

Lilian and her friend couldn't help but feel that Gerald looked a little handsome after going through that makeover.

Though Lilian had high standards for her men, she couldn't help but feel impressed and secretly peeked at Gerald whenever she could.

"So where are we going now?" asked Gerald after they got into the car again.

"We're going to the coffee shop next to Mayberry Hotel. Also, Gerald, you should know a few things first. Since you know Aiden and his friends, you know how rich and young men usually behave. However, you're pretending to be a completely different kind of rich and young man today. Since you 'won the lottery', you'll have to display a more rebellious and haughty attitude so that Hayward will take the bait. That's the usual mentality of the nouveau riche, do you get what I'm saying?" replied Lilian.

"I... See. Do I really have to act that way just because

"I got rich overnight?" asked Gerald, a bitter smile on his face.

Gerald couldn't help but think to himself. If he really had become extremely rich overnight, why would Lilian still be trying to pursue Hayward?

"Just do as I say and everything will turn out just fine! You'll also have to listen to all of Quilla's arrangements! She'll be helping you with all the preparations!"

Hearing that, Gerald could only nod helplessly. What else could he say?

Upon arriving at the coffee shop, Lilian began putting up her act.

She clung on to Gerald's arm as he placed his hand over hers while they entered the coffee shop.

Gerald saw that both Hayward and Sharon were having coffee there as well. Admiration toward Lilian grew in Gerald, understanding how much research she must have done to plan all this out.

Both of them acted like a real couple as they walked toward a table next to Hayward and Sharon before sitting down.

It wasn't long before Sharon idly looked to the side and saw the two beside them.

She was startled silent for a moment.

“May I take your order?” asked a waiter respectfully after he walked over. Seeing how formal both Gerald and Lilian looked and dressed, the waiter was careful to be on his best and most polite behavior.

“Hmm. Give us your most expensive coffee!”

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Chapter 450

As Lilian had instructed him, Gerald was now acting out the impression of someone nouveau riche.

He even sat with his legs crossed.

“Our most expensive coffee? Sir, our most expensive one costs forty-five dollars each,” replied the waiter, slightly surprised.

“So be it! Nothing is too expensive for me! Two cups of that coffee and make sure they’re brewed perfectly!”

“Right away, sir!” said the waiter before bowing and running off.

Lilian found it both curious and funny when she saw Gerald acting so ostentatiously while flaunting his wealth. He even shook his watch from time to time to let others see it! Honestly, Lilian hadn’t expected that Gerald could be this cool!

By then, Hayward had already noticed Gerald and Lilian sitting next to them.

His face turned sour the moment he heard Gerald ordering two cups of coffee which cost forty-five dollars each.

What more, wasn't Lilian being a little too intimate with Gerald? Hayward felt very uncomfortable.

He used to have her sticking close to him every day after all. Truth be told, he also enjoyed her constantly fawning over him back then.

When he chose Sharon over her, he knew that Lilian would still love him, being as vain as he was. However, now that she was being intimate with another man, he was feeling extremely dissatisfied.

He had not expected Lilian to move on so quickly.

And to think that she had chosen Gerald! The person he had always felt sensitive and competitive toward!

A fuse snapped in Hayward's mind as he slammed his hands onto the coffee table.

"Pft! Why are you pretending to be rich? Do you think I don't know about your background? Stop being so pretentious!" said Hayward coldly.

Sharon looked at Gerald and Lilian before trying to calm Hayward down.

"Speaking of which, Gerald, you've just bought a new car right? Where are we going to have fun later? Can we go to Mayberry Commercial Street? I saw a skirt that I really liked there so can we please

go there later to buy it? It only costs four hundred and fifty dollars! Please!” pleased Lilian as she gently shook Gerald’s arm.

“Four hundred and fifty dollars? Are you a beggar? You’re only to wear clothes that cost at least a thousand dollars! Otherwise, don’t even bother telling me about it! Have some shame!” replied Gerald as he carefully pushed her hands away from his arm.

Lilian really hadn’t expected nouveau riche Gerald to be this cool.

She simply put on a cute and helpless face before nodding obediently when she heard his words.

“Humph! Showing off when you’re just in charge of running errands for others?”

Hayward was getting more and more agitated by the second when he saw Lilian being so submissive toward Gerald after being reprimanded by him. His jealousy was reaching new heights.

D*mn it! What did Gerald have that he didn’t? How could Gerald ever be better than him in any way?

“Relax, Hayward. Some people just like to show off. They’re just being pretentious so you don’t have to bother even looking at them!” said Sharon as she added her two cents to the conversation.

“Oh right, there was a time when we really thought that you were just an ordinary errand boy for rich people! I’m glad to say that we were wrong about that! While you were helping them you must have gotten some of their good luck as well! Hahaha! I really hadn’t expected you to win that much money from the lottery!”

Seeing that she had hooked Hayward deep into her trap, she began speaking even more admiringly toward Gerald as she held on to his hand.

“...What? Won what lottery?”

Her words had caught Hayward’s attention.

“Gerald, how much did you win?” asked Sharon as she stared at Gerald nervously.

It would be impossible for Gerald to get a girl like Lilian to fawn over him like this if he had only won fifty thousand dollars. What more, Gerald was also spending so lavishly now.

The figure needed to be immense.

Sharon was really afraid that Gerald would surpass Hayward. If that happened, then she would probably be the one regretting it the most. Knowing that, her anxiety and nervousness only grew as she waited for Gerald to answer.

“Oh, I was just lucky... I didn’t think I’d win so

much money just like that. As for the amount I won ... Well, let's just say that it isn't convenient for me to reveal such information to you" said Gerald as he winked at Lilian with a smile on his face.

At that moment, Gerald reached into his pocket to take his cell phone out.

As a result, his car key 'accidentally' fell to the ground.

When Hayward and Sharon looked down, their eyes widened in shock.

"That's... That's the car key of a Mercedes Benz G500?!"

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Chapter 451

“Gerald, is this the new car you bought?” Sharon asked in surprise.

“Yeah. I got it a few days ago. Just a means to get from point A to B,” replied Gerald as he casually tossed the keys on the table.

This excited but distressed Lilian, as she was afraid that the expensive key to the car would be damaged.

What excited her more, though, was that Hayward’s face had already turned green.

“By the way, I heard Lilian saying that you've recently bought a car? I haven't seen it yet. What did you get yourself? A BMW 7 Series, a Mercedes-Benz, or an Audi? Worth more than a hundred fifty grand?” Gerald asked with a smile on his face as he looked at Hayward.

“Hehe! Hayward procured the Passat for more than thirty grand, but how could that compare to your three hundred thousand dollar car?” scoffed Lilian as she rolled her eyes at Hayward.

Hayward inhaled sharply, as his hands started going into an uncontrollable tremor.

“Oh? You bought a Passat? Why did you buy that?”

replied Gerald with a chuckle.

“I can buy whatever I please, and the two of you have nothing to worry about. Didn’t you just win the lottery anyway? So, why the gloating?”

Hayward replied anxiously.

“I’m the luckiest woman in the world, Gerald, being together with you. I’ll stick by your side for the rest of my life, and we shall enjoy a wonderful life together! You’ll have to treat me well, though, and that includes buying me all the clothes I want today!”

“Yes! Of course, I will buy them for you. But don’t forget that you’ve also promised me that you’ll give me your first time tonight, hehe!” Gerald whispered as he held Lilian’s soft hands.

When Lilian heard Gerald’s words, she really felt like giving him a tight, bloody slap..

Damn it! Who gave him the right to say that? When was this ever part of the script?

After all, dating was dating, and if Gerald were to bring the topic into the conversation, Hayward would undoubtedly be very easy to break.

Fortunately, Gerald’s sentence left a massive impact.

Lilian originally planned to warn Gerald from

talking too much nonsense, but it was then that she realized Hayward's face had already turned green.

His lips quivered with rage.

She saw that those few words from Gerald had provoked Hayward's anger in more ways than one.

“Ah! Naughty, naughty! I hate you...”

Lilian replied shyly.

Sure enough, Hayward got up to his feet, filled with rage and anger.

“No way, Lilian, why are you doing this? What did you want to get again? How about letting me buy it for you instead? Why give your first time to this pathetic jerk? Don't degrade and abuse yourself just because he won the lottery!”

Lilian ignored everything else, instantly refuting Hayward with an aggressive comeback.

“Pfft! Hayward, who gave you the right to call my boyfriend a pathetic jerk? Besides, he's already mine. So, what's wrong with me giving my first time to my boyfriend anyway? What has it got to do with you?”

“You know, I've always thought you were the reliable and dependable kind, Lillian. I thought you'd always paid great attention to your conduct, and

frankly, although I chose to get together with Sharon, I felt really entangled, and I was in a hell lot of pain throughout the whole thing. I'm filled with regret as well, but now that I see you behaving like this, I am with no resentment, nor do I blame myself anymore for letting you go. Let's go, Sharon!" snapped a furious Hayward as he was about to pull Sharon away.

Lilian looked at Hayward with a sea of worry in her eyes.

Compared to Sharon, Lilian's most significant advantage was that she understood every part of Hayward. She was the one who knew best about his psychological and mental state.

She also knew all too well that Hayward must be saying this to test if she still liked him or not, waiting to see if she would be remorseful and apologize to him for her actions.

That said, if Lilian were to do that, it would all be truly over.

She hugged Gerald as tightly as she could, as though Hayward's words meant nothing to her at all.

"My dear... I don't care what anyone else thinks of me. I promise I'll treat you well from now on. Will you treat me well too?"

Gerald took the opportunity to hold Lilian's waist, giving it a gentle and passionate squeeze.

"Of course, I will treat you well."

He wasn't stupid either. Why not seize this opportunity and take advantage of her when he could?

He continued caressing Lilian's body.

Those words were loud and clear to Hayward too, and now, his face had lost all color, looking a ghostly white.

Without saying another word, Sharon dragged Hayward out of the coffee shop.

"F*cking hell... that's enough! Why are you still touching me?"

Lilian pushed Gerald away as soon as she saw Hayward leaving.

Chapter 452

Lilian looked at Gerald reproachfully, “You did a pretty good job but I don’t want you to be touching me. Do you really think that I am your girlfriend?”

“Oh? So, now that Hayward’s gone, what should we do?” asked a perplexed Gerald.

“Hmph! Don’t worry. He will definitely come back for me... One, Two, Three...”

Lilian counted with her fingers when suddenly, Sharon’s voice suddenly came over her shoulder.

“Hayward, what are you doing?”

“Lilian, there are some things that I need to clear up with you. I don’t know what you think of me now, but I admit I was wrong for not standing up for you when Sharon hit you yesterday. I’ve been regretting it a lot. I sincerely hope that you’ll give me a chance. I wish to prove that I am way stronger and capable compared to a nouveau riche like Gerald!” replied Hayward, his tone contrite, much humbler than he always sounded.

Obviously, his self-esteem seemed completely diminished, which was once held so highly by him.

Gerald couldn’t help feeling a deep sense of

admiration toward Lilian as he watched the scene unfold from the sidelines.

“But I already have Gerald, a guy who has a luxury car, and he’s about to buy me lots of branded cosmetics and bags too! What about you? What can you offer me?” Lilian asked in response.

“Wow! So, you and Gerald are together simply because he’s wealthier than me, right?” Hayward asked in disappointment and disbelief.

Gerald remembered how the conversation sounded eerily familiar. Wasn’t that what Xavia said at the small grove the other day?

He completely understood what was going on; it wasn’t because Hayward really loved Lilian but rather, a question of the very fabric of the dignity of a man.

It had always been the case, whether he liked it or not. Men like Hayward, with a wall of ego surrounding him, would never be able to swallow the fact that the person who was once head-over-heels for him was now in love with someone else.

He desired to conquer Lilian in her entirety to reclaim his dignity.

“Say whatever you like! Let’s go for a ride, Gerald.”

Lilian then grabbed Gerald’s arm before the two

headed off to his car.

“Get out of my way! You’re standing in my way,” said Gerald as he patted Hayward gently on his chest before walking towards the parking lot.

Unwilling to yield, Hayward chased after the two.

“Gerald, can I drive your car? I have never driven something this good before,” begged Lilian with a sparkle in her eye.

“Yeah sure! Here, take the keys,” Gerald grinned as he tossed the car keys to Lilian.

“Lilian... don’t go! Please. Can you just listen to me? I was wrong. I was really wrong! Can you please just give me another chance? I will cherish and treasure you more than Gerald ever would! From now, I will buy you whatever you want as long as I can afford it! Allow me the chance to prove that I am definitely a hundred times more capable than Gerald!”

Hayward implored Lilian as he held her arm tightly.

“Is that so? But don’t you already have Sharon?” Lilian asked as she looked at Hayward with accusing eyes.

Hayward looked into Sharon’s eyes, lowering his tone by a notch. “I’m sorry, Sharon. I just discovered that Lilian is the person I really love. Let’s end this.”

“Hayward? How could you?!”

In a dejecting mix of rage, anger, and confusion, Sharon instantly broke into a fit of tears, weeping and sobbing uncontrollably.

A smile finally appeared on Lilian’s face. She felt that her pride had been rightfully restored and a sense of satisfaction and contentment filled her heart.

As for Hayward, Lilian had taken advantage of his ego and pride, knowing how he would undoubtedly be stimulated once he found out that she had gotten a far more capable boyfriend than him.

After all, no matter how beautiful a person turned out to be, her value would certainly depreciate if nobody pursued her. Not to mention how countless gorgeous women were walking the earth.

That would all change the moment a capable man of robust standing was head over heels for you. It was then that your value would skyrocket beyond the bounds of social strata.

Otherwise, even if a man finally managed to capture your heart, they wouldn’t cherish you anyway.

Through this, Lilian’s importance to Hayward had far surpassed that of Sharon.

After all, Murphy, Sharon’s ex-boyfriend’s

capabilities were simply no threat to Hayward at all.

Hayward grabbed Lilian's hand as he continued to speak to her.

Gerald felt strangely embarrassed, and since he just had a massive mug of coffee, he had to use the toilet urgently.

“This time, since I can tell you're sincere, Hayward, I promise to be with you then.”

Lilian replied with a smile on her face when she saw that her goal had been achieved.

At that moment...

“Eh? What a coincidence, Miss Cole! You are here? I happened to be looking for you...” said a woman.

When Lilian caught a glimpse of the person walking towards her, her pupils instantly contracted...

Chapter 453

“Miss Cole?”

A woman looking to be about twenty-five years of age strutted over, calling Lilian as she gazed upon her respectfully.

Lilian, on the other hand, pretended not to know the woman the moment she saw her.

Who was she?

She was none other than Quartney, the business manager who rented this car to her.

“Oh? Is it urgent? Should there be anything urgent, perhaps you can talk to me on WeChat when I am home. It’s not a really convenient time at the moment.”

Lilian’s face was drained of its color.

Oh god! How could there be such a coincidence?

She actually ran into the manager of the rental car here.

Why couldn’t it happen later? She just got back together with Hayward.

“It’s okay, Miss Cole. I just wanted to let you know

that I did not pay attention to the time when I rented this car to you. I wrote that you should return the car tomorrow, but I made a mistake. You have to return the car before 4 p.m today as we will have to deliver the car back to the customer before five! I am sorry. It is really our negligence at work! I was initially planning to give you a call later!”

Quartney smiled apologetically.

She then waved her hand at Lilian before leaving.

What?

Hayward and Sharon were both stunned for a moment when they heard Quartney's words.

“Lilian, a rental car? What's going on here?”

Hayward did not understand what was going on.

“Huh? I...I don't understand what is going on too!”

Lilian did not know what else to say.

She was completely at a loss for words.

“Wow okay, I get the whole picture now. Lilian, you were the one who rented this car, right? You rented it so that you could use it to deceive Hayward on purpose. Tell me I'm right.”

Sharon poked.

Lilian did not know what to do.

She suddenly saw Gerald walking back towards her from the washroom.

Lilian suddenly had a plan in mind.

She turned around and quickly ran towards Gerald.

“Gerald, come here. There is something that I need to tell you!”

Lilian grabbed Gerald’s arm before she whispered, “It’s over! Hayward found out that the Mercedes Benz G500 is a rental car! Can you just pretend that you were the one who lied to me about the car? Okay? Please, you have to help me!”

Gerald was stunned for a second. What was going on here?

As he was lost in the moment, Hayward and Sharon were making their way towards Gerald.

“Gerald, you b*stard! How dare you lie to me?! You rented this car just so that you could deceive me. This car doesn’t belong to you at all!”

Lilian suddenly roared.

“What is going on? This is my car!”

Gerald replied in shock.

“Pfft! Gerald, stop being such a tough nut! I’m shocked to see what a sly person you actually are!

Using such despicable methods to cheat and deceive Lilian and she almost fell for your tricks! And not forgetting, I almost broke up with Sharon for real because of you too!”

Hayward sniggered.

“So now, can you see who are the ones who are truly good to you? Some girls simply like to stick to a guy just because they think they’re loaded, but they end up getting fooled instead! Do you see the clearer picture now?” Sharon exclaimed as she glared at Hayward.

“Hayward, you said that you were going to treat me well moving forward!”

Lilian cried out.

“C’mon Lilian, you know I think it’s time for a wakeup call. This pathetic jerk almost cost my relationship with Sharon today. Seriously! The both of us are supposed to attend Miss Larson’s birthday banquet at noon later today. We almost made a fuss and broke up for no reason at all because of this matter!” ①

Hayward clutched Sharon’s hand tightly, threw Gerald and Lilian a cold glare before leaving for Mayberry Hotel.

It was Miss Larson’s birthday today so Hayward

definitely did not want to be late. He then decided to pop by a cafe for a quick coffee fix first.

Alas! What a dramatic outcome.

Lilian's value just completely plummeted with the devaluation of Gerald's identity.

“By the way, Gerald, didn't you win the lottery? Hahaha! Why don't you come over to Mayberry Hotel too? We have tickets!”

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Chapter 454

Hayward mocked Gerald before ushering Sharon away with him happily.

Lilian squatted and started sobbing.

“Oh! Mr. Crawford! How come you’re here?”

A voice suddenly spoke.

A middle-aged man clad in a suit and leather shoes trotted towards Gerald.

“You are?”

Gerald thought he looked really familiar, but couldn’t put a name to it.

“Well, Mr. Crawford, it’s normal for you not to know who I am. But I know who you are. I was also there at your last reception meeting in Serene County. I witnessed how you took the day with grace. My name is Blake Wadford. Mr. Lyle has just recruited me into the group as the events planning manager. Are you also here to attend Miss Larson’s birthday banquet?”

The man smiled and rubbed his hands nervously.

Lilian’s sobbing stopped, as she stared at the men

blankly.

Even Hayward and Sharon who were about to enter the hotel were confused with the statement they heard.

“Oh! Hello, Mr. Wadford. So you planned Miss Larson’s birthday banquet too?”

Gerald couldn’t seem to figure it out. Which Miss Larson was he talking about? Why was someone from his own group planning her birthday banquet?

“Ahem. Of course! It’s Miss Elena Larson’s birthday today. Since we’re all members of the same group, it goes without saying that I should be helping out in her banquet arrangements. Many owners of Mayberry Commercial Street will be here too today. Anyways, the whole lot of them will be moving into Yorknorth Mountain Commercial Street in the second half of the year together, so this kinda feels like a gathering too.”

Blake explained.

“Oh, I see!”

Gerald felt a twang of uneasiness creeping up.

Elena was also friends with him. So, why wasn’t he invited?

“Mr. Wadford, you know Gerald?”

Lilian asked, her eyes wide with curiosity.

She was observing the look on Hayward's face right now.

Lilian felt as though this was a good chance to make a comeback.

Could this be the man that her friend, Quilla had arranged to come and rescue?

After all, Quilla had been keeping an eye on the situation nearby, but she had not shown up yet.

The more she thought about it, the more Lilian was convinced that this was all staged by Quilla.

"Of course, I know Mr. Crawford. Even if I didn't know him, his car is definitely recognizable."

Mr. Wadford responded, pointing at the Mercedes Benz G500.

Perfect!

Lilian was certain that her best friend had made the move.

She had zero clue how Quilla managed to find someone like him, but it felt really good.

Since Hayward and Sharon insulted Gerald earlier, it would be tough for Lilian to explain herself if he were to just walk away.

Plus, Gerald wouldn't be happy about it either.

Since he was already here, just in time for Elena's birthday, he figured he'd pop by inside to take a look then. This would also be a slap in the face for Hayward and perhaps stop him from being so pretentious.

Gerald turned to Blake and said, "Mr. Wadford, why don't you give me two tickets then? I didn't bring it with me today."

"Oh? Okay! Of course, Mr. Crawford."

Blake nodded.

Lilian peered at Gerald, as though she was trying to remind him not to overdo it. This was Miss Larson's birthday banquet. How would this man be able to give them admission tickets if he was just here to put on an act?

But much to Lilian's surprise, Blake whipped out the tickets for Gerald.

Hayward and Sharon were stunned too.

Gerald was oblivious to his surroundings. He simply pulled Lilian into his arms as he said, "Come, let's go. Let me bring you to a banquet today!"

Lilian was taken aback and confused when Gerald suddenly pulled her into his embrace, but regained

her senses and gently held his waist back.

The both of them breezed into the hotel, under Hayward's envious glare.

'Damn it! Why thick could Gerald get?'

Hayward thought in envy.

He then followed closely behind the pair and went in as well...

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Chapter 455

"F*ck! Gerald, we really got in!"

Lilian breathed, stupefied.

She barely showed any resistance, although Gerald was still hugging her waist.

It was all only too exciting, now that the tables have turned.

They were in the venue.

Elena's birthday banquet was exceptionally grand this time. This was mainly because Mr. Larson wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to host a large gathering for all the business owners too.

As Hayward was from the Yorknorth Mountain, that automatically qualified him on the banquet attendees' list.

There were more than a hundred guests on the scene. Most were rich and young heirs, and there were many bosses too.

The layout of the event was a bit similar to that of a wedding ceremony. There was a long aisle in the middle, and the banquet tables lined both sides of

the aisle.

Gerald managed to find a seat for both of them.

After all, there were many people here, and most would just be casually looking for a place to sit with their friends.

Hayward made his entrance in the ballroom, threw a fierce gaze at Gerald and Lilian before pulling Sharon over to sit at another table with some of his friends.

“Gerald? Why are you here too?”

A random voice questioned out loud.

As he turned around to have a look, Gerald was startled.

It was a girl, and it turned out to be Leila, Mr. Jung's daughter.

A group of dashing young men and beautiful women were standing next to her. Leila also stared at Gerald in surprise.

Why was Leila here?

As Gerald gave it some thought, he could slowly put things into perspective.

Mr. Jung was not the leader of Weston Merchants Holdings. Since he was investing in Serene County,

he must be acquainted with and had many deals with large managers and bosses.

Since Elena's father organized such a large gathering and Hayward could get an admission ticket, it went without saying that Leila would get one too.

What a coincidence that they had to bump into one another.

"Leila, is this a friend of yours?"

A young, handsome man next to Leila suddenly asked.

"Well, I don't think he's considered a friend? We're both from the same hometown, that's all, and his dad had some connections with mine in the past. But we've not been in contact with their family since a while back. His family owes a lot of money now, and his parents and sister are working abroad to pay off his family debts. That being said, it's really unexpected that he's able to attend such a huge function!"

Leila explained as she squinted at Gerald.

After all, she could still remember how Gerald previously placed her in a very tough and awkward situation at the western restaurant.

She finally succeeded in getting her father to bag an

admission ticket for her this time around, not to mention how he got it with inside help. By coming here, she hoped to gain some insight too.

Ever since she became even more exposed, she had met Liam Zachman, a young and rich heir from Mayberry City.

Liam's family used to run a large enterprise in Mayberry City. When they heard about the developments of Yorknorth Mountain, they managed to secure the contract to run one of the largest restaurants there. It only meant that they wouldn't have any shortage of funds in the future.

He was one of the most influential and loaded heirs among the rest.

In retrospect, Douglas had been totally eclipsed by Liam.

Leila also found that slapping Douglas in the face just because of Gerald was somewhat ridiculous.

“Liam, he's a nobody. He used to be an infamous pauper in our Serene High School.”

Douglas was there to attend the gathering too.

“Oh! Hehe, so that's the case, eh. Well, let's look for a place to sit down first. We can all then have a good chat together!” He told Liam politely as he emerged from the crowd.

Liam said to the group of young men and women behind him,

“Liam! You just arrived? I’ve already reserved a good seat for you!”

Hayward brought Sharon over to greet Liam.

His table was very close to Gerald, after all.

“Hayward, you’re early! Leila, let me introduce you to my friend, Hayward!”

Liam introduced as he smiled.

Impressions of Hayward skyrocketed.

Since he owned a shop at Yorknorth Mountain, his reputation had peaked.

He, too, was to be considered a part of the rich heir circle.

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Chapter 456

Leila too introduced herself after everyone. She had learned a lot from these people.

Leila always thought that the rich only talked about luxurious cars, but these people did not. Their discussions had a depth to them—money management and a healthy lifestyle, and Leila was very much impressed.

Douglas, who loved to flaunt his wealth, or Gerald, of whom she thought was loaded by sheer luck, were nowhere to be compared to this sophisticated bunch of technocrats.

Lilian was upset after listening to the manner in which Hayward spoke. She knew Gerald would not keep up to his self-proclaimed status since everyone there was well off.

Hayward had been doing pretty well and knew many people. Thanks to that, Lilian couldn't bear to raise her head, feeling as though today had been an utter failure.

“When is Elena Larson coming?” quizzed a few young chaps. For most of them, it was their first time meeting Elena Larson, and they were very

excited.

Meanwhile, backstage.

“Mr. Wadford, are you sure? He came? How’s that possible?”

Elena sprung away from the makeup artist and asked.

“Ms. Larson, did you know that Mr. Crawford is here today?”

“Why would he be here...it must’ve been an optical illusion. Was there a girl by his side?” Elena questioned.

Ever since Gerald and Mila had gotten together, Elena didn’t bother reaching out to him because she knew Gerald never liked her in the first place, and whenever she saw him, she would feel this great sense of grief flood her chest.

She was going to invite Gerald to her birthday party, but her father told her that Gerald had been busy with his project, and one of his older family members was in the hospital. Elena ought to not be disturbing him.

In fact, no one of extreme importance from the company was attending. Not even Aiden and the others, so, there was no point in inviting Gerald.

Elena promised her father, disappointed, as she

wanted him to attend really badly. Especially after she heard that Gerald was there.

“It’s true, Ms. Larson! How could I have recognized Mr. Crawford wrongly? I gave him the tickets personally, but he brought along a girl with him,” replied Blake.

“This is really hard to swallow!” She turned to the workers. “I’ll be going out soon, so get ready.”

Elena graced the ballroom as the spotlight fell on her. She donned a pristine, white gown.

“Oh, wow! She is breathtaking!”

“Oh, my goodness! Ms. Larson is so gorgeous!”

When he heard the excited murmurs, Gerald looked up to the stage.

Chapter 457

Gerald had not seen Elena in a while, and she seemed much prettier now.

“Elena Larson is gorgeous!” a stunned Hayward exclaimed. Sharon, nonetheless, wasn’t jealous at all.

She had to admit that Elena was a real beauty.

“Of course, she is! Elena is Mr. Crawford’s godsister. She has to be!” Liam smiled.

“Then why isn’t Mr. Crawford here, Liam?” Leila asked.

She was really hoping to see who Mr. Crawford was.

“Let me tell you why. My dad mentioned he’s someone who keeps a low profile and doesn’t like banquets and functions as such.” Liam explained as if he knew about Gerald very well.

“Aw!” Leila was disappointed.

“Hey Leila, would you like a drink? This fruit juice is imported, it’s excellent! Let me get you some!”

Douglas was unhappy seeing Liam and Leila hitting off well.

“I’m good. Just leave me be.” Leila frowned at Douglas and turned towards Liam again.

“I need one, please!” A waiter passed by Lilian, and she reached out for a drink.

Lilian was parched after what happened earlier on, and she was even more anxious now.

Elena delivered her speech on the stage as her eyes skimmed around the room.

Suddenly, someone shouted, and everyone went silent.

It was Lilian.

She had discovered how lovely the drink was, and she wanted to get one for Gerald too, but the glass slipped, spilling the drink all over him and herself.

“Oh, no! Let me help you!” Gerald quickly offered to help.

He grabbed some napkins, helped Lilian clean her dress, then wiped the remainder of the liquid off his pants.

“How embarrassing! She can’t even hold a glass properly!”

“I know, right! Elena’s still speaking, and she’s only bothered by the food. Ridiculous!”

A few people seated at the same table insulted her.

“There is an obvious difference between finding a rich boyfriend and dating a fraud. Even the standards are worlds apart!” added Sharon, sniggering away silently.

“Thank heavens I didn’t end up with her!” Hayward exclaimed.

Leila just looked at Gerald and shook her head judgmentally.

“I’m so sorry! I really didn’t mean it!” A scared and quivering Lilian immediately apologized.

Her face blushed a bright beetroot, and she tugged hard on Gerald’s sleeves.

“Gerald, I think we should leave!”

Lilian knew how tall of an order it was to get Gerald acting like someone of wealth, but she chose to follow him anyway. Never did she think she would embarrass herself like that.

“Why should we leave? It’s just a glass. We’ll be fine!” Gerald found it really intriguing that a girl like Lilian would have such low self-esteem. 1

Gerald remembered his first time attending such functions. He was not unlike her.

Chapter 458

Gerald tried to calm her down.

“Who were these two? How did they even come in here? Did they know the rules?” exclaimed a middle-aged man from the other table. The entire room fell into a hushed whisper.

It was nothing but plain rudeness stealing Elena’s limelight while she was still talking on stage.

All the more, standing up while everyone else was seated must have caught the attention of the Larsons.

Everyone’s attention then shifted back to the stage to see how Elena would react.

Tears welled up in her eyes as she dropped the microphone in her hand.

“You came!” Elena cried.

Gerald cleaned his pants, and when he heard Elena’s voice, he realized she was looking right at him.

“Yes. Happy birthday!” Gerald replied awkwardly.

He looked around, realizing he didn’t actually bring any gifts for her except his car keys.

“I’m sorry I didn’t manage to prepare anything for your birthday. I can only wish,” Gerald said apologetically.

“I thought you’d forgotten me!” Elena wiped off her tears, bolting toward Gerald and embracing him as tightly as she could.

The scene shocked everyone.

“It’s been so long since you last called! Ever since you’ve gotten yourself a girlfriend, you completely forgot about me!” Elena wailed helplessly.

“Hey, hey. I’m here now. Don’t cry!” Gerald patted Elena gently on her shoulders.

“What?”

“What the f*ck?”

Everyone was dumbfounded.

Elena was like a goddess to everyone else, and only the elites could be acquainted with her, but this ordinary looking guy just got a hug from her?

Even their conversations were so cheesy! Who on earth was this guy?

The lot of young men had their eyes green with envy and hearts bursting with jealousy.

Even Hayward and Sharon were stupefied.

Gerald must have gotten lucky—how on earth did he ever get that likeness of a goddess?

Hayward failed to comprehend, and even Leila and the others could not believe their eyes.

“I’ll celebrate with you again tonight!” Gerald smiled.

Gerald had made an effort to be present, only to shut Hayward up and the rest. But this wasn’t what he had in mind, and all turned out to be a mighty embarrassing affair.

“Alright. Now’s your chance to make it up to me.”
Elena’s tears stopped falling.

Once she had calmed down, Gerald left the scene with Lilian.

The two walked in front while Hayward, Leila, and the rest tagged behind.

They felt really embarrassed by what happened earlier, but they were very curious about who Gerald truly was. How could he do that to Elena?

After walking for some distance, they finally reached the car.

“Ms. Cole, I’ve been waiting for you but couldn’t get hold of you through your phone.”

Quartney was waiting next to the car, in her hands, laid the contract...

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Chapter 459

“I turned off my phone, Ms. Weaver,” Lilian shouted as she ran toward Quartney.

Since Hayward and the others were following them, she was afraid they might get exposed.

The last time Gerald claimed the Ferrari was his, Sharon did not believe him. This time, she had to make it clear.

She stomped over to Gerald and stood in front of Quartney. She glared at Lilian and asked, “What are you afraid of, Lilian?”

“Ms. Weaver, right? Is this car rented by Lilian?”

“Absolutely not!”

Lilian tried to make eye contact with Ms. Weaver—it was apparent she was trying to hide something.

Sharon snatched the contract from Ms. Weaver and laughed, “This is a rental! Look, Hayward! Oh, Ms. Jung and Douglas, let me humor you guys. I was having some coffee with Hayward today, and this girl called Lilian...”

Sharon showed them the contract smugly while spilling the details from this morning’s incident.

Hayward was envious of Gerald, but after what Sharon said, he felt terrible for Lilian again. Seeing how everyone had witnessed Elena hugging Gerald, this was the only way to get back at him.

It wasn't that surprising that Gerald knew about Elena, seeing how he was Aiden and Yoel's subordinates.

Everyone eagerly anticipated Lilian's explanation about the car.

The moment Sharon found out the car was not Gerald's, a wave of relief instantly washed over her.

"Lilian, did you really rent this car?"

Hayward threw Lilian a disgusting look.

Lilian started sobbing. "I'm really sorry, Hayward... I'm sorry... I shouldn't have lied to you!"

"Hah, so it's rented by Lilian. Even the IC numbers don't match! Let's see who the owner is. Wait... huh? Gerald?!" Sharon froze, stunned to the point her mouth was wide open. 1

"This...this has to be a mistake, right?" Sharon's eyes widened in disbelief.

"Mr, Crawford you're here! I was talking to Ms. Cole just now, and I didn't notice you. My apologies!" a surprised Quartney quickly apologized.

“It’s fine, Ms. Weaver. Anyway, I can leave after signing, right?” Gerald smiled.

“Yes, Mr. Crawford, but don’t you need to go over the details first?”

“No worries. I’ve been staring at it for the entire day anyway,” Gerald replied and chuckled.

He walked toward Sharon and took the contract from her.

“The car, it’s really yours?” Sharon quizzed Gerald with questioning eyes.

That was the closest she had stood next to Gerald since high school, and all she had was this confused feeling in her heart.

“Who did it you think it belonged to? I’ve already said it’s mine, but none of you believed me!”

Gerald replied calmly, his eyes piercing right into Sharon’s soul.

He then tapped Lilian on her shoulder.

“Let’s go. I’ll send you home first.”

“Okay. Just drop me off at the station; I’m headed back to my hometown tonight,” responded Lilian.

Chapter 460

Gerald felt good about it, but Lilian didn't resent Hayward at all.

"Gerald, this car must've cost a bomb, right? It's quite a sight!"

Liam walked toward them and smiled at Gerald.

No matter how much the rest mocked him, Liam knew that being friends with him would be advantageous since he personally knew Elena and drove such a luxurious car.

"About 22,000 dollars!" Gerald replied, smiling politely.

They both shook hands.

Meanwhile, Liam's phone rang.

"Dad? Okay, I'll go back now!"

Liam hung up his phone. "Hey, Gerald. I'll have to leave now; it's really nice meeting you! I'm so sorry, Douglas and Leila, something came up, and I can't take you guys home."

"Huh?" Leila was stunned.

They were supposed to hitch a ride from Liam back

home since Douglas did not dare drive his car.

Meanwhile, Gerald had already started his car engine, and Lilian was sitting next to him.

Douglas then turned to Leila and asked. “Leila, why not we take an Uber?”

“Uber? Look at you, is taking an Uber all you know? You bought a car, and you don’t even drive it, and now I’ve got to take the Uber!” Leila snapped, pissed.

“I’ll give you guys a ride to the station!” Gerald smiled and beckoned them over.

Gerald just felt that it was not right to leave them there like that.

Leila glanced at Gerald hesitantly and then hopped into the car. She stole a peek towards Lilian and felt a pang of jealousy. She wanted the co-pilot seat to be hers.

“Damn it!” Douglas cursed under his breath.

“What do you think you’re doing?” Gerald eyed Douglas.

“What do you mean? I’m getting into the car!”

“When I said them, I meant both the ladies. Not you, Douglas. And the money you owed me, don’t forget to pay up!” Gerald locked the door.

The last time Gerald tried to help him, he got insulted in return, and this time around, he was definitely not going to offer help again.

As she watched them drive off, Sharon was left in a confused state.

Gerald cared about her a lot back in high school. Even when she forgot to take her meals while busy studying, he would brave the rain just to buy her food. Gerald always saw her differently.

Even after three years, despite what she did to him, he still looked at her the same way. But this time, Gerald just grew so cold. He completely ignored her, and she was not too used to it. He did not even look at her when he took the contract from her.

After dropping them off at the station, Gerald booked a hotel room to rest for the evening. ①

That night, Gerald received a call from his family. It was a classified call that only his family members knew of. Gerald immediately picked up when he realized who the caller was.

Chapter 461

“Hey, dad!”

Gerald called out respectfully, answering the video call.

Although it wasn't the first time he video called his father after discovering his true identity, Gerald had somewhat grown to be more respectful towards his father.

He increasingly felt how honorable of a man his father was.

“What are you up to now, son?”

Gerald's father broke into a smile the moment his son came on the screen.

“Am just about to rest, Dad. What's up with the late call? Anything you need to tell me?”

“Yes, I do. I was initially planning to ask your sister to look into this matter. As I'm aware, you spend most of your time and energy, focusing on your homework. This thing will be delayed since your sister has gone to handle factory issues in North Africa. I wonder if she'd already told you about it?”

“You need my help finding a woman?”

Gerald recalled his sister's instructions and what she confided in him previously. She had asked for his assistance in looking for a particular woman.

“Yes, I'll send over her picture to you in a bit. I need your help finding out about her whereabouts as soon as you can. Otherwise, this guilt in my conscience will eat me up for the rest of my life!”

“There is also one more thing that you have to remember. You cannot let your mother know about this!”

Gerald's father warned as he sighed.

This made Gerald feel a little awkward.

He scowled as he tried to grasp the meaning of the situation.

Could this have been a woman his father had let down in the past?

Damn it! His father was actually asking both the siblings to look for this woman in secret! The first person that crossed Gerald's mind was his mother. He could not help but feel a little sorry for his mother because he thought they were letting her down.

“What is your relationship with this woman? You have much greater power and influence compared

to us. If you wanted to find her, you would've definitely been able to find her. Isn't that the case?" asked Gerald.

"Hey, kiddo. If it was that easy for your father to find her, would I even be asking you or your sister's help? What's my relationship with her? It's a question you both have asked me. Anyway, let me assure you that it's not whatever you are thinking of. But that being said, she was highly involved in our major family event that year. I can't help but feel that the Crawford family had let her down even after so many years. Don't ask me about the details as to what really happened. I'll explain everything to you at a later time."

"Okay, that's it. Please put in some effort to help me to deal with this."

Gerald's father hung up as soon as he finished speaking.

It didn't take long before Gerald received a message.

It was a black and white photo—one which looked like it was a few decades old.

It was a picture of a woman.

The moment he saw the woman, Gerald's hand trembled uncontrollably, and he nearly dropped his cell phone to the ground.

After looking at the photo again, Gerald inhaled sharply.

“This...isn't this Queta Smith?” 1

Yes. The woman in the photo was indeed beautiful. In fact, she was incredibly charming and enchanting.

She looked almost exactly like Queta.

But if this photo was in black and white, then Gerald knew for sure that it could not possibly be Queta.

Who was she?

Gerald presumed that this woman was most probably a peer of his father, which meant that she was around his age.

If that were the case, it was most likely she was Queta's mother.

After all, Gerald knew that Queta grew up in an orphanage.

It seemed as though her parents abandoned her for no apparent reason.

Putting the pieces together, it led to a clear conclusion that it was Queta's mother, the woman his father asked him to look for.

Thoughts started shrouding Gerald's mind.

He could remember vividly how his heart was throbbing and beating uncontrollably the first time he saw Queta.

He also felt a strange sense of comforting closeness to her ever since the first time he saw Queta and even had the urge to protect her for no reason at all.

Now, as he gave it a much deeper thought, he couldn't help but wonder if Queta was actually his sister?

Despite his father's explanation, Gerald wasn't convinced that his father had nothing to do with that woman at all!

That night, Gerald was washed with anxiety. He tossed and turned around his bed, felt extraordinarily restless, and could not sleep at all.

Gerald called Queta early the next morning. He had to meet up with her and clarify this once and for all.

Chapter 462

Throughout this whole time, both of them have occasionally been chatting with one another on WeChat whenever they were free.

At present, Queta was already teaching at a new kindergarten and was doing pretty well.

Gerald had helped Queta out and gave her a house to live in, where Drake and Tyson shared the same place with her.

“Miss Smith, can you do me a favor? I can’t review these children’s homework in my class on time. My boyfriend is already on his way, picking me up to go shopping. Could you review their homework on my behalf?”

A female teacher with waist-length hair asked Queta, who was also reviewing her students’ homework.

“But Miss Lawrie, I’m still reviewing my own students’ homework too!”

Queta replied shyly.

“Pfft! If you’re not keen to help me, then just say it. Why come up with so many excuses? Don’t think

for a second that you're so great just because Mr. Teves introduced you to work here. Hah, just think about it! I mean, who are you, Queta Smith? You got crowned as Mayberry City's Early Childhood Education Academy's most beautiful teacher after only joining the kindergarten for a month. Isn't that great or what? If so, can't you even help me review my students' homework?"

The teacher named Kaitlyn Lawrie retorted icily.

She became a teacher at the best kindergarten in Mayberry City two months before Queta's arrival. When Queta first joined, Kaitlyn would often bully her, making her review her students' homework on her behalf.

Kaitlyn had a wealthy and influential boyfriend who was really handsome too.

She was confident that she would be selected as the most beautiful female teacher in the entire district, optimistic that she would definitely bag the top spot.

But alas, the students' parents voted for Queta, a woman that was beautiful inside out.

Of course, that threw Kaitlyn into a nervous breakdown.

She even dug into Queta's background, but there

were zero bad records about Queta at all.

Hence, the bullying situation at hand.

Other female teachers who were present just kept their mouths shut.

“Well, I will just review it for you then, Miss Lawrie.”

Queta bit her lips. She then moved the massive pile of homework from Kaitlyn’s table onto her own.

“Hmph! Now that’s much better. Miss Smith, don’t be too high headed thinking you’re so great just cause you won the most beautiful teacher award. Let me tell you something. I, Kaitlyn Lawrie, will not lose to you in anything!”

Kaitlyn mocked before turning around triumphantly as she prepared to leave.

“Queta, everyone should review their own students’ homework. You don’t owe her anything at all, so why are you helping her to do it?”

Suddenly, a soft voice spoke out.

A boy walked up to Queta’s table before moving the pile of homework back to Kaitlyn’s table.

“F*ck! Who do you think you are?”

Kaitlyn was appalled.

Gerald did not even bother looking at her. He simply grabbed Queta's arm as he said, "Didn't I ask you to apply for leave? Let's go out and grab something to eat. I have to talk to you about something!"

"Mm! I have already asked for the day off!"

Queta replied as she nodded.

Upon seeing Gerald, Queta was immediately filled with a sense of security.

Kaitlyn seemed really intimidating to her, and she was a teeny bit afraid.

When the other female teachers saw Kaitlyn being outrightly ignored, they simply lowered their heads and giggled.

Kaitlyn's face flushed red.

"Oh! Miss Lawrie, your boyfriend is here to pick you up again! God, I envy you so much!"

Several young female teachers who had gone out to shop were chatting with Kaitlyn's boyfriend at the door.

When they spotted Kaitlyn, they instantly felt jealous.

They then saw Queta and Gerald walking out from

the side doors.

The girls continued the gossip among themselves, “
Oh, look at that! Is that Queta’s boyfriend?”

“Oh my god! Seriously? He looks pretty low...”

“Haha! I guess they’re meant for each other.”

“...”

The moment Gerald stepped out, these ridicules
came flooding...

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Chapter 463

“Pfft! No wonder Queta dared to disobey me today. It turns out she’s gotten herself a boyfriend! Wow, this is pissing me off right now!”

Kaitlyn rolled her eyes as she glared at Gerald, who was talking to Queta at that time.

“Kaitlyn, what’s wrong?”

The man leaning against his car door had his hands in his pockets asked as he threw a quick look at Gerald.

“It’s all because of Queta! All the kids are on vacation today, so we’re supposed to stay back in school to review their homework. But I’ve made plans to go shopping and ask her to help me review my students’ homework! But look, she refused to help just because her boyfriend’s here!”

“I thought that she actually found a great boyfriend for herself, but he turned out to be nothing more than a pathetic jerk!”

Kaitlyn cried out in exasperation, explaining the details to him.

She saw that Gerald had on a simple white T-shirt,

a pair of sports pants and some sneakers.

She couldn't be bothered to filter any of her words.

“That's right. He thinks that he's so great just because he got together with the most beautiful teacher? Hahaha! Kaitlyn, your boyfriend, is still the best! Look, he's driving a BMW 5 Series — simply too awesome!” ①

“Of course! It so happens that I'm going out shopping with my boyfriend too. Why don't all of you get in my boyfriend's car and we can go together then? After all, we should have a good relationship since we are all colleagues!”

Kaitlyn replied as she laughed.

She wanted to isolate Queta and make sure that she was an outcast in the future.

“Yeah, sure!!”

The girls smiled happily as they got into the car and left together.

Gerald wanted to reprimand Kaitlyn.

He could not help feeling enraged, seeing the way she bullied Queta.

But Queta tugged Gerald's hand back — she didn't want him to act rashly.

“Damn it! Do they really think they're so great just

because they're loaded?"

Gerald cursed as he watched them leave.

They then got into the Mercedes-Benz G500 that he had parked by the side of the road.

It was almost eleven in the morning now.

Gerald drove Queta to a restaurant.

"Gerald, you said you've something important to talk about? What is it?" asked Queta curiously once they had taken their seats.

"Queta, do you know a woman named Xara Machamer?"

Gerald asked forwardly. After all, this matter did not only involve Queta, but it also involved his own life to a certain extent.

This mattered even more if Xara was involved with his father in the past.

Wouldn't this mean that he would suddenly have another sister out of the blue?

Gerald felt that the entire situation was just weird—it was best asking Queta himself.

Queta looked stunned when she heard those two words. She looked at Gerald in surprise.

"You...you...how did you know about her?"

Upon seeing how she reacted, he was convinced that this was leading somewhere.

He asked again, "How is she related to you?"

Queta shook her head in response as she said, "I don't know who she is. I only know that she was the one who abandoned me. She's probably my mother. The orphanage dean only told me about it when I asked him about it later on."

"They found me at the entrance of the orphanage, and I was wearing a jade pendant with the name 'Xara Machamer' engraved on it."

Queta carefully examined Gerald before saying, "I have not mentioned this matter to anyone else before. How did you find out about it? Did Drake and Tyson tell you about it?"

Gerald was silent as he thought to himself for a moment.

He decided not to tell Queta the truth for the time being, as he did not know how he was going to explain things to her.

He simply took advantage of the situation and said, "Well, yes. One of them mentioned it to me just randomly. Queta, don't you want to find your mother or this person named Xara Machamer?"

Gerald quickly changed the subject.

“Of course, I want to find her. But how am I going to look for her?”

Queta replied, “This is one of the reasons why I didn’t want to tell you about this. You’ve already helped me a lot and I don’t want to cause more trouble and inconvenience. Otherwise, I really don’t know how I am going to repay you!”

“What’s the matter? Since you do want to find her, then you don’t have to worry about anything else. I will help you find her!” 2

Gerald replied and smiled as he patted Queta gently on her shoulder.

“Okay.”

Queta replied, nodding slowly.

She then took out a jade pendant that was wrapped in a piece of red cloth.

“Here, Gerald. This is the jade pendant that I was talking about.”

Queta handed the jade pendant over to Gerald.

Gerald looked at it. Wasn’t this the jade pendant in one of the photos that his father had sent to him?

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“Queta, do you mind if I hold on to this jade pendant for now? I want to look for a master to help me to look into the origins of this jade pendant!”

Gerald asked, smiling lightly.

Queta paused for a moment before she nodded and said, “Yeah, sure, go ahead!”

Gerald continued to question Queta about her past.

“It’s really too hot outside! My sunscreen isn’t working at all!”

Suddenly, a group dashed into the shop.

One of the girls could not help but exclaim out loud as she carried a few bags in her hand.

“Kaitlyn, there is a branded shop next to this restaurant. Shall we go in and take a look later?”

One of the girls asked.

“Okay, let’s eat first!”

This girl was not just anyone else, but it was none other than Queta’s colleague, Kaitlyn.

“Oh my god! Kaitlyn, look! Isn’t that Queta? Can’t

believe she's eating here too!"

The girl next to her pointed at Queta and Gerald.

This was totally unexpected.

Kaitlyn's boyfriend was filthy rich — they knew that he definitely would not bring them to just any casual place to eat.

This restaurant had quite a reputation.

But seeing Queta was completely unexpected, as she was someone who could usually only afford to eat a meal with a dish every day. How was it that she could actually afford to eat in such a high-end restaurant?

"Oh! Queta, did you come here for lunch?"

Kaitlyn sneered as she walked over to both of them.

Gerald had just taken the jade pendant from Queta. He could not help but frown when he saw those girls heading in their direction.

"Did you order anything to eat? Why are you only having two drinks?"

Kaitlyn questioned.

"Hahaha. Perhaps this young couple simply wanted to come in here just to look around. There are just too many of these kinds. They won't order anything

to eat but just get drinks so that they could take some photos and show off to their friends!”

One of the female colleagues whispered in Kaitlyn’s ear.

Her statement made Kaitlyn and the others burst out in laughter.

“Waiter! Is there a four pax set meal here? Can you give me a set meal that is of a higher standard?”

“Of course, ma’am. Our shop has also recently added a new dish to our menu. It is a special foie gras dish, specially made by our chef from Silton. Would you like to try it too?”

The waiter asked as he looked at Kaitlyn and the rest.

This time around, Kaitlyn glanced at her boyfriend.

“Okay, then. Let me have a look at it...”

Kaitlyn’s boyfriend took the menu in his hand, and he was shocked when he saw the price.

“F*ck! Are you crazy? A plate of the foie gras actually costs two hundred and sixty dollars? Just one plate?” ①

Kaitlyn’s boyfriend was speechless.

Kaitlyn was also taken aback. “Ahh? It is so

expensive! Oh my god! That is a big portion of my salary!”

“Yes, sir. This is just the price for a small portion. There are about six pieces in it. But once you taste it, you will definitely feel that it is worth the money and experience!”

“Look! All of those customers also ordered it!”

The waiter gestured at the other guests who were dining next to them.

There were indeed plates of foie gras on each of their tables.

When they looked at the large portion’s price, they were even more dumbfounded to see that it cost four hundred dollars!

This was simply too exorbitant.

Before coming to the restaurant, they were thinking of spending about two to three hundred dollars tops.

“Why don’t we order a small portion to try then?”

Kaitlyn suggested when she saw that everyone seated around them had also ordered the dish.

“Alright, you want to order a small portion of foie gras then? Hah, sure! No problem.”

Kaitlyn’s boyfriend raised his voice and ordered, “

We'd like a portion of the foie gras, please!"

He wanted to prove that he was superior.

At this same time, Gerald's food was also being served.

The waiter brought two bread bowls over to his table.

"Hahaha! They only ordered two bread bowls? Isn't that a little too pathetic?"

"Oh my god! It's okay. You can ask them for some rice and a plate of potatoes too!"

The girls commented as they laughed.

"Sir, can you please make way. This is the large portion of foie gras that you have ordered. I will serve it to you now."

Just then, a waiter respectfully placed the large portion of foie gras on Gerald's table.

Kaitlyn and the others were all covering their mouths in laughter as they continued to make fun of Gerald and Queta. But the moment they saw the waiter and the foie gras, they were so shocked that they froze in place... 1

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"F*ck! How is it that they're eating so well?"

Kaitlyn was shocked.

The vanity from her face was thoroughly washed away.

"Pfft! Why are you showing off when you have no money? Why bother ordering something that expensive?" mocked Kaitlyn.

The other two female colleagues who felt the burn also chimed in as they mocked the pair.

Gerald and Queta were really eating very well. Both of them ordered the expensive and large portion of foie gras, while the other four only ordered a small serving to share among themselves.

As the waiter served the dish to them, he could not help but give them a look.

Gerald chose to keep quiet because Queta kept persuading him, and she didn't want him to confront them directly.

They simply continued chatting as they ate.

Once they were done eating, he then realized that

Kaitlyn and the others had already left.

They obviously couldn't take the humiliation, so they left in a hurry once they were done with their meals.

“Let's leave too,” said Gerald while rubbing his belly.

He then ushered Queta out.

“By the way, Queta, where are the clothes that I bought you before? Why aren't you wearing them?”

Gerald asked and smiled as he looked at Queta.

Back then, he bought a lot of clothes for her.

Queta blushed slightly, and she lowered her head as she said, “I feel a little embarrassed to wear such beautiful and nice clothes!”

Gerald couldn't help but smile.

She was so similar to him. Back then, when he was poor, he felt that he only needed to wear clean clothes.

Gerald still chose to wear plain and ordinary clothes now because he wanted to maintain a low profile.

Whereas on the other hand, there was no reason for Queta to maintain a low profile.

“What are you afraid of? By the way, there is a

branded shop here. Come! Let me bring you in to pick out some nicer clothes!”

“Huh? No, I don’t want to! It’s too expensive!”

Queta rejected, shaking her head.

“It’s okay. Let’s go in. I have a black card anyway!”

Gerald replied as he smiled.

He then gently pulled Queta into the shop.

“Grayson, I want this dress. It’s gorgeous. Do you think I’ll look good in it?”

Kaitlyn asked as she held a dress in front of her, gesturing for her boyfriend to comment.

The dress was really beautiful.

The rich, young chap named Grayson flipped the price tag, and he almost threw the dress away.

“F*ck! This dress costs more than 3,000 dollars! Why not rob a bank instead? Darling, can’t you choose another dress?”

Grayson persuaded Kaitlyn as he clutched his wallet.

“Alright, then. What about this one?”

Kaitlyn asked again.

From a single glance, it was still too pricey, costing 1,500 dollars.

As for the other two girls who were with Kaitlyn, they merely held on to their shopping bags as they sulked in envy from the side. Anyways, they did not have a rich boyfriend like Grayson who could afford to buy them such luxurious goods.

It was sufficient for them to take advantage of being acquainted with Kaitlyn, but it would most certainly be unrealistic for them to expect Grayson to buy them something too!

Even after Kaitlyn chose a couple of dozen dresses to try, Grayson realized that it was way over his budget, and they ended up not buying any of them. Kaitlyn was extremely depressed.

“Gerald, aren't you buying too many clothes? I can't wear that many clothes anyway! Plus, it's way too expensive!”

Queta exclaimed in shock when she saw the number of clothes piled in Gerald's hands.

She felt a little distressed.

“Why is it expensive? The tailor makes the man, anyway!”

Gerald strongly felt that Queta did not need to live such a life like him.

“Hey, this dress looks not bad, and it's quite cheap

too. We are buying it!”

Gerald saw the dress next to Grayson, rummaged through to pick the size before asking the dumbfounded salesgirl to wrap it up for him.

“F*ck! Queta? You...are you both crazy?!”

The moment Kaitlyn saw both of them, she could not help but simultaneously feel both stunned and confused, especially when she saw the number of luxury items they were holding.

Judging by the number of pieces in Gerald’s hands, it was probably more than a dozen.

“Oh my god! Can you even afford to buy anything here? How are you actually buying that many? Why are you so pretentious? Are you just going to take pictures again?”

Both of Queta’s female colleagues sneered along.

They felt as though Queta had just trampled all over their self-esteem.

Gerald couldn’t care less about them. He simply walked straight to the counter once he was satisfied with his selection. ①

Kaitlyn and the others exchanged glances with one another before tailing behind Gerald and Queta.

“Hello, sir. The total amount for all the clothes and

bags that you have selected is 48,000 dollars. How would you like to make the payment?” 8

The cashier was also utterly dumbfounded at the amount. 1

Kaitlyn and the rest who stood behind gaped, utterly stupefied. 17

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Without saying another word, Gerald simply swiped the black card in his hand.

Though utterly dumbfounded, the cashier was a professional and he immediately bowed.

“Sir! You’ve spent so much on our shop today that it would be rude if we didn’t give you any free gifts! Please select any three articles of clothing and they’ll be on us!” said the cashier respectfully.

“No, wait! He’s not buying any of that! Gerald, all of this is way too expensive! I don’t need that many fancy clothes!” replied Queta frantically as she shook her head.

“I don’t think I’d ever have a reason to wear half of what you’ve selected anyway! Please just put them back...”

Her voice was still quivering slightly from the shock of the final bill.

“You don’t need to wear all of them, you know. Now come on, go choose another three articles of clothing. If you want, you could even give them to the teachers or colleagues that you’re close to in the kindergarten. I’m sure that that’ll definitely help

boost your relationship with them!” said Gerald with a faint smile on his face.

Gerald knew that many people bullied Queta for her honesty. Which was why Gerald thought that it was worth spending some money on her.

Gerald had to use his black gold card anyway. He needed to spend at least forty-five thousand dollars monthly, so Queta was making his life much easier this month.

Gerald was also aware that he could be willingly spending so much for her because of the feelings that he had for Queta, deep down in his heart.

While this was happening, Kaitlyn and the other two female colleagues were standing not too far behind them.

All three of them were surprised, and this was especially so for the two female colleagues who had heard Gerald’s last statement.

“Wow! Queta, your boyfriend’s so rich! His name is Gerald, right? What a nice name, and he’s so handsome too!” said the two girls who had begun walking toward them and praising Gerald.

Who the more powerful one now was, was clear as day.

“...Huh? Gerald- He’s not...” said Queta, still in a

state of shock as she tried to tell them that he wasn't her boyfriend.

Gerald however, hurriedly replied, "I'm just her god brother! And please, handsome? Have you even looked at how casual the clothes I'm wearing are?"

"Haha! You're hilarious Gerald!"

The two girls couldn't help but to feel slightly embarrassed.

God brother? D*mn it! And here they were thinking Queta had a boyfriend!

However, this didn't move Queta's position in their hearts. After all, she had a rich and powerful person backing her up.

"Say Queta, Gerald's bought you so many clothes. And he's even said that you could give some of them to your closer colleagues! So... Do you remember that time I smiled at you on your first day of work at the kindergarten?" asked one of the girls with a smile.

"Also Queta, I remember clearly that I was the one who had pointed out where the cafeteria was to you when you first arrived," said the other.

"I remember both those moments, yes!" replied Queta as she nodded.

"Pfft. Oh, Queta! I really hadn't expected you to

have such a rich god brother! If he's that willing to buy so much for you, you should just appreciate it! But anyway, I was the one who was interested in that dress first. If you're giving out clothes to your colleagues you'd better give that one to me!" said Kaitlyn, her voice filled with jealousy. ①

"Oh? Kaitlyn how shameless! You're the one who bullies Queta the most and you're still expecting her to give you something? Who do you think you are?" scolded both girls at the same time.

"F*ck! Whose side are you two on anyway?" cursed Kaitlyn, her eyes widened in anger.

"Alright, settle down," said Gerald as he glanced at Kaitlyn. He smiled before looking away and continuing what he wanted to say.

"Queta, since these two colleagues treated you well before, feel free to give them some of the clothes. I trust that if anything happens in the future, all three of you will continue looking out for one another. Now let's go, I'll send you back to the school!"

"Ahh! Thank you, Gerald! We'll definitely continue to help each other in the future, right Queta?" said the two colleagues gleefully.

When they finally left the shop and arrived at the parking lot, the two girls were surprised once again

when they saw Gerald and Queta getting into his car.

“Queta... that’s... That’s a Mercedes Benz G500! Oh my god, your brother drives a Mercedes Benz G500?!”

Kaitlyn was already fuming at that point and Gerald knew that he had taught that arrogant girl a lesson.

Later that afternoon, once Gerald and Queta had parted ways, Gerald bid farewell to Giya who was still in the hospital.

His next stop was Serene County. Gerald made sure he had Queta’s jade pendant with him before he started driving. He decided that once he reached Serene County, he would ask Zack to help him look into the matter.

However, upon entering the county, Gerald found that the main road had been blocked and the border had been pulled up.

Several police, workers, and leaders were there.

Taking off his sunglasses, Gerald rolled down his car window to have a look at what the commotion was about. Noticing some workers nearby, he handed them some cigarettes before asking them what was going on.

Seeing how polite Gerald was, they willingly explained the situation to him.

“Young man, I’m afraid you can’t go any further. Something big has happened ahead!”

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“Well, what exactly happened?” asked Gerald, confused.

“See, this place was originally a construction project. The Weston Merchants Holdings were hired to oversee the job about a year ago. Apparently, the developers used less than appropriate quality materials and because of that, there’s been a collapse around the project area. More than a hundred people were injured because of this, sixty of whom were workers! Thankfully, no lives were lost this time around!”

“Yep. I heard that the developers ran for the hills last night! Those from Weston Merchants Holdings are definitely in hot water now. About a dozen people, including Mr. Jung, have been dismissed from their positions, or so I’ve heard! They’re waiting to be dealt with at this very moment!” replied the workers.

As Gerald recalled, Mr. Jung was the director of Weston Merchants Holdings. He had been dismissed as well?

After thinking about it for a while, Gerald asked, “Why would the developers need to run away? Since

no lives were lost, compensation would've been enough, no? What more, the main responsibility doesn't fall on the investors, right?"

"The thing is, I've heard that the developers ran out of money quite a while ago. According to rumors, six months ago to be exact. But that's beside the point. Right now, we're just wondering who to look for! We just want our salary!"

"As for Weston Merchants Holdings, well, someone has to take responsibility for the matter. All this is happening during such a critical moment too. If you haven't heard, a large group has been planning to develop and reconstruct Serene County. Due to such an unfortunate event happening now, the leaders must be furious. The impact of this accident is truly terrible!"

After hearing the whole story, Gerald finally understood the general situation.

However, he couldn't do anything to help with the matter, though he still sympathized with all those involved in it.

Gerald then turned his car around and drove off after thanking the workers.

Along his journey, Gerald received a text message from Zack. It was the same story about the building's collapse which the workers had told Gerald about

earlier. What a disaster!

Seeing that Zack had messaged him, Gerald took the opportunity to ask him to look for a master specializing in jade.

Gerald knew that Zack knew way more people than he did.

Once Gerald got back to the hotel, he took a shower. As he was about to leave for a quick dinner, he received a phone call. It was from his father.

“Dad?”

“Son, you’ve made an investment in our hometown right? I heard that a building collapsed there. Such a catastrophe...”

“That’s right, though my group isn’t involved in that matter.”

Gerald thought to himself that his father was very well-informed.

“Oh, I know it isn’t. However, I just wanted to say that your Uncle Jung has been dismissed from his position. Could you go over and help their family out?” ①

“Dad, I’ve already told you. Uncle Jung has already forgotten all about his friendship with you a long time ago. Why are you still asking me to help him?”

replied Gerald in a puzzled voice.

Gerald's father was really something else. The same topic always popped up whenever his father called him.

Gerald was constantly reminded to offer the Jung family help if they faced any difficulties.

Why else would Gerald continue to help Leila even though she despised and looked down on him?

However, Gerald had been disappointed with the Jung family since the last time he had gone to their house. He had also explained to his father about the situation back then.

That left a sour taste in Gerald's mouth and even though he knew that the Jung family was in hot water this time, he didn't really care.

After all, just as Uncle Jung had said, Gerald was not to go to his house to look for him unless there was something truly important.

Gerald really couldn't be bothered with their family.

"Well, some things can't be explained easily. Anyway, have you met up with your Aunt Leia yet?" asked his father, suddenly changing the topic.

Gerald frowned slightly before saying, "Yes, I've met her. Why?"

“To tell you the truth, I’ve let your Uncle Jung down before this. I can’t help but blame myself for what happened. Just... no matter how they may treat us, please help them whenever you can...” replied Gerald’s father as he sighed.

“...What? What did you do?”

Gerald was shocked.

Could his father and Aunt Leia be having an affair?

Was that the reason why Uncle Jung was always so cold toward Gerald’s family?

“Dad? Explain yourself. Also, what exactly is going on with that woman you asked me to look for? That Xara Machamer. Is she and Aunt Leia both your women?” ①

Gerald couldn’t help but ask out of frustration.

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Upon hearing that claim, Gerald's father immediately coughed aloud.

“You... you rascal! What nonsense are you spouting? Just know that my relationship with both of them isn't how you're imagining it! Ignoring that, your Aunt Leia is part of the Jung family as well, and they really need your help now. Just help them if you can. Think of it as though you're helping me repay a debt to them! Don't forget to look for Xara too! Your mother is here! That's it for now!”

After saying all that, his father hung up immediately.

Gerald held on to his cell phone, frozen for quite some time before finally coming back to his senses.

...What?

Gerald was tempted to call his mother at that moment to tell her about all this. After all, he had been helping his father lie to her and he couldn't help but feel guilty about it.

After giving it some thought, he sighed. He would trust his father for the time being.

Rubbing his forehead, he looked at his phone and

saw that it was only 5.30 p.m.

Scratching the back of his head, he sighed again. So be it. Having lost his appetite, he left his room and began driving to the Jung family's house.

Upon arriving, Gerald saw that many people were already there.

Inside the house, Uncle Jung was lying on his sofa. He was on a drip and feeling faint from all the things happening to him. Since he had to take responsibility for the event and was even dismissed from his position in Weston Merchants Holdings, the sudden wave of anxiety had hit like a truck, causing him to feel ill.

Accompanying him, were some guests who chatted occasionally with the man.

“It’s going to be fine, Willie. No use crying over spilled milk. Since the impact of the accident was so sudden and huge, the county leaders may have just dismissed you out of pure anger! Who knows, they may even reinstate you once things have calmed down!”

“He’s right you know. Besides, Leia’s working in a bank now, right? There should be no problems for you, financially!”

“Thank you, Lucas, Zayne... Why don’t you stay

over for dinner tonight?” replied Willie weakly.

“Oh, there’s no need for that. We only came to pay you a visit. We’ll be taking our leave soon!” said both of them as they stood up.

“Lucas, Zayne, is there really nothing more that you can do to help Willie? Both of you have several good connections if I recall correctly. There must be some way you can further help him!”

Hearing that, both of them simply shook their heads. They had done what they could and the people who saw their reactions understood.

“Don’t worry, Aunt Leia. I’ve had a talk with my dad about Uncle Jung’s situation before coming here today...” said Douglas.

Naturally, he was there too.

Hearing this, both Willie and Leia turned to look at him.

Douglas couldn’t help but think highly of himself. They were all looking at him so expectantly, knowing that he would be able to help them when they were at their lowest.

“So... how did your father respond?” asked Willie as he continued looking at Douglas.

“He said that the situation wasn’t that serious. The

only reason it sounds so terrible is because you're making a mountain out of a molehill. After all, you shouldn't be the one shouldering all this responsibility in the first place!"

"My dad added that as long as you can recruit new developers to fill in the vacancies and achieve a settlement with the injured workers, everything else should be easily resolved," replied Douglas with a smile.

To simplify, he just needed to find new funds to take over and support the development of the project.

"But this is already such a messy project! Worst come to worst, we may even have to demolish the real estates that have already been built! I can't see why anyone would take up this kind of real estate or project after hearing about this disaster. What more, the county would be responsible for some of the compensation funds. How could our county possibly have that much money? We simply can't afford it!" said Willie as he shook his head slowly.

He had already considered that approach before.

Ding dong!

At that moment, the doorbell suddenly rang.

Thinking it was just going to be another one of his

colleagues or maybe even a leader who had come to pay him a visit, he told Leila to help him get up. “Thank you. Please welcome our guest, Leila!”

His wife simply nodded before heading toward the door. The moment she opened it, Leila was taken aback.

“Gerald?”

‘Why... Why is he here?’ Leila couldn’t help but think to herself, disappointed.

Hearing his name, Willie shook his head as well, frustrated.

When Leila returned to his side, he told her to help him lie down again.

To think that he had thought that it could have been a leader or colleague who would be able to help with the situation. The gap between his expectations and finding out that it was just Gerald was simply too wide.

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“Uncle Jung, Aunt Leia, I’ve come to visit!” said Gerald with a smile on his face as he carried a bag of gifts into their house.

Leia simply looked at him without saying anything else as he placed the bag down.

Willie himself was already on the sofa again, looking toward the ceiling without even caring to reply to Gerald’s greeting.

Leila felt embarrassed seeing Gerald get ignored like this since she knew that Gerald was probably doing very well in Mayberry City.

After all, he had been the one who had sent her to the station the other day in a big Mercedes Benz G500!

In all honesty, Leila was slightly grateful toward Gerald.

However, she hadn’t had the time to tell her father about this yet. By the time Leila got home yesterday, this series of unfortunate events had already kicked off.

Even then, her father was already on the verge of

collapsing from all the pressure. How could she ever tell him about how much fun she had had?

Sensing the awkwardness, Leila walked over to Gerald before setting the bag he had brought on the table.

“Thank you for coming over to visit, Gerald!” said Leila with a smile.

Douglas simply narrowed his eyes at Gerald when he heard his daughter greeting him.

Gerald didn't really have anything to say so he simply nodded and took a seat on one of the couches. He had anticipated Willie's poor attitude. Thus, before arriving, he had made sure to fortify his mind psychologically.

“Oh, funding! Where on earth am I supposed to get such a huge sum of money to take over this real estate project!” said Willie out of the blue in a saddened tone.

“Uncle Jung, what about the Dream Investment Group in Mayberry City? They're going to invest and spend one and a half billion dollars to develop Serene County. Have you asked for their help in this project?”

“Of course I have. To be honest, I know a few of the managers working for the Dream Investment

Group. Though we used to share a good relationship, I don't think it would be appropriate for me to look for them now. After all, what company would want to take on this project anymore!" replied Willie as he shook his head miserably.

"They're the only hope you have left now, Uncle Jung. Besides, we're talking about the Dream Investment Group. This is just a small sum of money for them! As long as you can get them to take on this project, the matter can be easily resolved! My dad told me this as well!"

Knowing that Willie was obviously relying on him to deal with the issue, Douglas spoke every word confidently.

"Douglas, you've helped us ask your father to put in some effort to deal with our situation... Your Aunt Leia, Leila, and I will remember this favor for as long as we live!"

"Worry not, Uncle Jung! My father will definitely try to get the Dream Investment Group to help in this matter!"

Though he said all that, Douglas was thinking otherwise in his mind.

Pfft. As if my father would ever worry about this.

If I weren't after Leila, I wouldn't even have

bothered wasting my time coming here.

Despite thinking so, Douglas still knew that he had to say all that to save his face.

“Alright then... I feel much more relieved after hearing you say all that... Douglas, why not stay for dinner tonight? You know what, all of Leila’s friends and classmates are invited to join as well! Aunt Leila will be preparing dinner for all of you right now!” said Willie, some color finally returning to his face.

“Alright, I’ll go clean up first! But wait! I don’t think we have enough vegetables for all of us here! And I can’t leave to get any since I still have to prepare the meat!” said Leila anxiously.

At that moment, she noticed Gerald drinking a glass of water. He had been sitting quietly on the same couch ever since he entered.

Suddenly feeling irritated, she said, “Since you’re clearly free, why don’t you get the ingredients, Gerald? I’ll write you a list of things to get and you can run over to the supermarket just outside the community to get them for me!”

“Me?” asked Gerald, startled. Wasn’t he just being treated like a servant then?

Thinking about it, however, it would still be more

awkward for him to stay here since he would have to continue looking at Willie's disgusted face.

What more, if he left now, he could give Zack a call to tell him to take over the real estate project.

In a way, that would mean that he had fulfilled the task that his father had entrusted to him.

Nodding to himself as he got up, he agreed to Leila's request.

He was rather glad to be able to leave, honestly. He was only here because his father kept insisting that he helped them after all!

He didn't need to be in their good books and he knew it.

"I'll go with you, Gerald!" said Leila as she saw him leave with the ingredient list and a basket that he had been given.

"Leila! Can't you differentiate between who's more important? Hurry up and pour a glass of water for Douglas!"

When he had heard Leila's words, Willie started getting anxious again.

Even Leila could feel that something was wrong.

What was going on with their daughter? From the moment Gerald had entered, Leila's tone toward

him seemed to be completely different compared to how she used to talk to him.

The Crawford family weren't good people after all!

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Leia told Leila to remain home as well to accompany Douglas.

As for Gerald, he immediately called Zack as soon as he got out of the house.

Once Zack had been updated on the matter, Gerald knew that the situation would be dealt with swiftly. This was Zack after all.

As Zack immediately set out to start making the appropriate arrangements, Gerald headed to the supermarket to get all the items on Leia's list.

Once he had everything, he returned to the Jung family's house.

When he set foot into the house again, however, a massive change had apparently taken place.

“Congratulations, Uncle Jung!”

“Thank you! I really hadn't expected the Dream Investment Group to actually take over the real estate project! To decide to take over the entire project... I'm honestly stunned!”

Willie didn't need his drip anymore. His initial paleness was all gone and in his raised hand, was

his cell phone.

“Gather round, everyone! All of you need to enjoy a good drink with me today! Especially you, Douglas!” shouted Willie joyfully.

To him, he felt that Douglas’s father’s help was crucial in the Dream Investment Group’s final decision. His own connections may have also played a part in that.

To simplify, the leader had called Willie just a while ago to tell him that his position in Weston Merchants Holding had been reinstated. He was also to take charge of this project in the future.

They would then collect a donation and the matter would be completely resolved.

How could he stay depressed after hearing all that?

Willie then looked at both Douglas and Leila. He had an idea in his mind.

“Leila, let me tell you...”

“Gerald, have some food!”

Just as he was about to say something, Willie saw Leila serving some dishes to Gerald.

He was utterly shocked. “Leila! What are you doing? Gerald still has both his hands, doesn’t he? Let him get his own food!”

Leila turned to look at him before replying, “Dad, actually, Gerald...”

“Uncle Jung, Gerald’s no longer who he used to be!” shouted Douglas as he glared fiercely at Gerald before Leila could finish her sentence.

If Leila was just going to relay the same information, he would be the one to say it!

“What’s so different about him now?” asked Aunt Leia as she served another dish on the table.

“See, Gerald here won the lottery! With the money, he bought himself a Mercedes Benz G500! That’s the reason why Leila’s treating him so well now!” replied Douglas enviously.

“Oh my god...”

Everyone seated around the dinner table was shocked.

“How much money did you win?” asked Aunt Leia as she subconsciously gulped.

Gerald didn’t know what to say.

He had lied to Leila and told her that he had won the lottery just so he could conceal his identity back then. Apparently, now he had to lie to an entire group of people. 1

“I just used most of the money to buy a Mercedes

Benz G500!” replied Gerald.

“You used the money to buy that? You won more than three hundred thousand dollars through the lottery?”

Everyone was shocked silent. Gerald remained quiet as well.

All of a sudden, Willie slammed his chopsticks against the table, staring at Gerald with a cold gaze.

“What a fool!”

“Gerald, other people are free to show off, but don't you even realize how poor your own living conditions are? Why are you even trying to show off? Wasting your money to buy a Mercedes Benz... Do you even know how much you could have done with that three hundred thousand dollars?” yelled Willie as he shook his head.

Douglas was satisfied. He smiled as he said, “That's true, Uncle Jung. If he had only used one hundred and fifty thousand dollars as a donation for your fundraiser, you could have arranged a position for Gerald in the labor dispatching department! Ha! But all Gerald knows how to do is try to compete with other rich heirs!”

“See? Douglas is clearly more knowledgeable! Gerald, let me ask you. Have you bought a house for

yourself in Serene County?”

Gerald simply shook his head, knowing where this was going.

“Have you found a job?”

Gerald sighed as he shook his head again. ①

“Oh, I haven’t seen anyone as brainless as you are! Why are you spending so extravagantly? Get a decent job first then start working to make an honest living for yourself! Tell you what, sell the car again immediately. If you’re lucky, you’ll be able to get at least two hundred and seventy thousand dollars back. With that money, you can buy yourself a house. Once that’s done, I can arrange a job for you with social insurance and housing funds. ” ①

“What else, what else... Ah yes, there’s one more thing,” said Willie as he sipped some wine before looking at Gerald again.

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“...Actually scratch that, I guess I can accept you, even if you don’t fulfill all the standard conditions. All you need to do now is sell the car and buy yourself a house. If you can at least do that right, you’ll get a job as a clerk in the public office. You’ll have social insurance and housing funds then. That way, you’ll be able to have a stable life in the future!”

“You know, I used to have a subordinate who had a sister just three years older than you. She’s still unmarried. Once you’ve settled down, I can be your matchmaker and help you get a wife as well!” said Willie.

Gerald was dumbfounded. So, as long as he was willing to donate money to him, Willie was going to give him such good treatment?

Leila, however, was shocked. “Dad... Isn’t that secretary’s sister... You know... Intellectually slow...?”

“So what if she is? It’s not easy for anyone to get a wife these days. Look at Gerald’s qualifications! I can’t even guarantee that the other party would be willing to marry someone like him!”

“Um... Uncle Jung, you don't have to worry about me!”

Gerald was trying hard not to burst in anger, his face alternating between red and pale.

He could only endure it by thinking about what his father had said.

Unfortunately, Willie wasn't done yet.

Once dinner was over, Willie immediately contacted a second-hand car dealer without even waiting for Gerald to step in. After all, he wanted Gerald to donate part of that money to him before using the remaining money to buy a house for himself. This was an excellent opportunity to arrange a contractual job for Gerald as well.

At the very least, he would belong partially to the organization then!

Gerald, naturally, was unwilling to do any of this.

He was very, very close to revealing his identity at that moment just so that he could slap all their faces.

However, he clenched his fist behind his back while thinking of his father's words to keep himself calm. After all, his father had said that he had done things with Aunt Leia to let Uncle Jung down.

Since he didn't know what his father had done with her yet, he remained silent.

He simply wanted to put an end to this matter quickly. Once that was done, he didn't want any part of them in his life anymore.

The car didn't matter to him anyway, so Gerald simply agreed. 2

"Alright, let Douglas accompany you when you sell your car off later. At least he knows more than you do. That way, you won't get tricked without even realizing it!" said Willie without filtering his words in the slightest.

If Douglas hadn't raised the idea of using Gerald to donate and raise some money for him, Willie would never have dreamed of landing Gerald a job. He wouldn't even have done so even if it was just a contractual job!

Thinking about it now, once he received the donation money, he could just randomly arrange for Gerald to work as a clerk in any department. That way, Gerald would be able to earn at least two thousand dollars a month! Willie felt that he would already have done Gerald a huge favor!

Naturally, Douglas agreed to go with Gerald.

His intentions were obvious. He wanted Willie to

take all of Gerald's money and even his car away. Let's see Gerald try to show off in front of him again in the future!

Unexpectedly, Gerald was rather willing to agree to all this just for the sake of getting a job! Haha!

Of course, Gerald already knew what was running through the minds of Douglas and Uncle Jung.

He was simply doing this to draw a clear distinction line between them in the future. 1

That way, he would have a good reason to refuse and turn down any of his father's future requests if he ever asked him to help this family again.

Leila and a few of her close friends followed Douglas and Gerald to the second-hand car shop.

“Boss! We're here to sell a car!”

A young man came running out of the shop as soon as he heard people calling for him.

“Coming! Oh wow! A Mercedes Benz G500?!”

When Douglas saw the boss of the place, he quickly walked up to him. He was going to be the one to talk to him in this transaction.

His goal was to get the boss to lower the price of the car as much as he possibly could for Gerald.

When Douglas turned to peek at Gerald's reaction to

this, he was surprised to see that Gerald was instead, smiling.

“Xeno?”

Hearing his name, the boss looked up and he was stunned when he saw Gerald.

He smiled wide and patted his thigh twice. “Well f*ck me! Gerald? Is that really you?”

Xeno walked toward Gerald with a surprised look on his face.

The boss there was actually Gerald’s childhood neighbor whom Gerald also considered to be his best friend. Xeno was only six months older than Gerald and the two had played together a lot as children. Xeno had always been kind to him.

Back when they were younger, both of them were top of the class academically. However, due to some reasons, Xeno stopped studying before he could finish junior high school.

From that point on, he learned how to fix and repair cars. Unexpectedly, a few years later, Xeno would be doing well. He was even the owner of a second-hand car shop now!

Ever since Gerald had left his hometown to attend university in another city, he hadn’t come home for a long time. As a result, both of them had rarely

contacted each other in the past two years. 1

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Despite that, they were still close childhood friends. Even if they hadn't met each other in a decade, the same childlike feelings of joy that they shared would still remain.

“You f*cker! When did you come back? Why didn't you give me a call, huh?” asked Xeno as he playfully smacked Gerald's back a few times.

“Ow, ow! I just came back some time ago! It's been a long time since I've returned, so I'm staying in Serene County for the time being!” replied Gerald as he smiled happily.

“Xeno, that's a customer! Be professional!” shouted a woman as she came out of the shop.

She was dressed fashionably and she looked to be around the same age as Gerald.

Of course, Gerald knew who she was too. She was from his junior high school and back then, she was in a relationship with Xeno.

Her family owned a supermarket in town and they were pretty well to do.

It seemed that both of them were still maintaining

their relationship even after so many years!

“Heh, don’t tell me you forgot about Sienna?” said Xeno as he smiled.

“She’s my fiancée now... Both of us got engaged just three months ago!”

“Oh? Oh, it’s Gerald? And here I was wondering who it was. Hurry up and greet the customers!”

When Sienna saw Gerald, she simply looked at him coldly before turning around to leave.

She didn’t really despise or look down on him, but Gerald could still sense a slight resentment through the way she looked at him.

Gerald simply smiled awkwardly after hearing that.

“Boss, are you done? We’ve been standing here for a while! Are both of you done chatting?” asked Douglas as he tapped his foot.

Douglas was feeling slightly irked. To think that the owner of this second-hand car shop was actually Gerald’s close friend! There was no way he was going to be able to make Gerald suffer a loss now!

“Oh? Who’s the seller? Are you the one?” said Xeno as he smiled while looking at Douglas.

“Oh, I’m not the one you’re looking for. I’m just helping Gerald sell his Mercedes Benz G500! He’s

been driving it for a while now so... I'd say one hundred and fifty thousand dollars should do the trick!" Douglas replied.

He then immediately looked at Gerald before saying, "Gerald, this is your buddy right? Don't you feel bad selling your car to him at such a high price? After all, it would already be great if you could make some profit!"

He wasn't even going to wait for Gerald to reply.

Xeno on the other hand, was taken aback. "Gerald... this is your car?"

"I'll explain it all to you one day. For now, just know that I'm glad that you're the one I'm selling the car to," replied Gerald as he smiled.

Xeno simply nodded before slowly walking around the car as he inspected it. He then opened the hood of the car to have a look at it from the inside. "This car costs three hundred thousand dollars. It doesn't seem like you've driven it for more than a month. Gerald, honestly, why are you even selling this car? What more, you're planning on selling it for only a hundred and fifty thousand dollars? And who's this kid anyway?" asked Xeno as he looked at Douglas.

He knew Douglas was up to no good the moment he mentioned selling the car for just one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

“He’s in a hurry to sell the car because he wants to get himself a house, a wife, and also a job. With that amount, Uncle Jung and I can make all the necessary arrangements for him! He’ll have a stable job that he’ll never lose in his lifetime! Haha!” replied Douglas smugly.

“Oh? Is he telling the truth? This Uncle Jung guy can really secure a stable job for you as well as a wife?”

Xeno looked at Gerald with a pleased expression on his face. If Gerald could get all that just from selling the car, then this transaction would be very much worth it.

He couldn’t help but feel happy for Gerald, his dear buddy.

Gerald could only reply with a wry smile on his face. 1

He couldn’t just tell him that he was just doing all this to help his father repay a favor!

“I’d love to buy it off you right now, but I don’t have that much money on hand. Also, do you smoke? I’ll have to trouble you to take care of my brother’s affairs!” said Xeno as he took out a cigarette and passed it toward Douglas’s direction.

Douglas however, didn’t take the cigarette. He instead took out his own and lighted it.

“Oh? So you don’t have the money to buy the car from us? Why even bother opening a second-hand car shop then? Forget it then, let’s just have a look at the second-hand car shop just opposite the street! You can see it for yourself right, Gerald? Your buddy just doesn’t have the cash to buy this car!” said Douglas with a grimace as he looked at both Xeno and Gerald.

“You don’t need to give me a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. You know what, I’m just giving the car to you. I don’t need to drive this car anymore anyway!” said Gerald calmly with a faint smile on his face. 1

“F*ck! Gerald, are you crazy?” 1
It was Leila, of all people, who shouted at Gerald’s proposal. She had an astonished expression on her face as she looked at Gerald. 1