Never Say 399

Cornelius let out a yawn and glanced at Hannah, somewhat irritated.

"What do you want?"

Hannah presented her phone to him, displaying a girl's picture.

"Did this girl happen to be at the bar last night?"

"Nope, didn't see her. The place is swarming with folks at night.

How am I supposed to keep track of everyone?"

Retrieving her phone, Hannah rose to her feet.

"If you can't recall, then never mind."

Angela's Library

As Hannah began to make her way out, Cornelius said, "You asked a few questions to him, and he walks away richer. Why should I get nothing for my trouble?"

Hannah paused, turning back to face him.

"If you can tell me where she is, you'll get 5@ thousand dollars. Know something relevant?

That's 10 thousand dollars. The more you can provide, the more you'll earn."

Realizing Hannah had deep pockets, Cornelius's demeanor shifted instantly.

"I know where she is. How much will you pay me?"

Facing him icily, Hannah inquired, "What's your price?"

Cornelius flashed an open hand, then closed it into a fist.

"A hundred grand!"

"Locate her and ensure her safe return, and you'll get 200 thousand dollars," Hannah offered unflinchingly.

Two hundred thousand dollars? The offer was too alluring to resist.

Cornelius quickly agreed, "Alright, let's go right now!"

As they left the bar, Cornelius became chatty, possibly due to Hannah's evident generosity. He talked as though accustomed to students frequenting their bar seeking "employment opportunities."

"Sometimes, female students find alternative ways to earn extra cash.

I distinctly remember the girl you're asking about. She left the bar with a man and another woman, likely heading to a nearby hotel. I can certainly help you locate her."

Beside the bar stood a lavishly appointed hotel. Entering, Cornelius courteously greeted the receptionist.