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Florence and the others present were stunned into silence as they took in Dustin's righteous speech. Their faces were etched with disbelief. How dare he humiliate the highly respected third matriarch of the Nicholsons in public!

"You... insolent brat! You? Teach me a lesson? Do you know I can bring your family to ruins with just one word?" Gloria cradled her burning face as she screeched in anger, losing her previous dignified elegance.

"You can try." Dustin showed no signs of fear.

"Hah!" Gloria exclaimed in anger before dissolving into scornful laughter. "Oh, Florence, what a great family you have. I came all the way here to Swinton just to elevate your family to a higher status. And yet, you're not only ungrateful, but you dare rebel against me? I believe this letter of appointment would have better use for another person! Since you're not interested in assuming the role of Chairman at Cardinal Group, I'll have the family patriarch revoke the appointment."

As Gloria pulled out her phone, Florence panicked and fell to her knees with a thud. She begged, "Madam Gloria, let's not be rash, shall we? This punk has nothing to do with us. You can't put the blame on us for his actions."

Dakota interjected, "Don't listen to her nonsense, Grandma! This guy is their son-in-law!" "Ex-ex-son-in-law! They got a divorce a long time ago!" Florence corrected her vehemently.

"Hmph! No one cares about your complicated relationships! Since he'd already married into the Nicholsons, he's a part of your family!" Gloria continued with a dark expression, "Your family had better give us a satisfied response; otherwise, we are no longer family!"

"R-right! I'll have him apologize immediately!" Florence nodded incessantly and turned toward Dustin. She bellowed, "Rhys! Why are you still standing there? H

urry up and get on your knees!” “You can kneel all you want. I’m not about to i
ndulge her,” Dustin said lazily.

“D—
did you hear that? Did you? This brat has no manners!” Gloria was irritated to
her core.

“Bastard! I told you to apologize!” As Florence erupted in fury, she stood up
and was about to land a heavy slap when Dustin grabbed hold of her hand.

He gritted his teeth and said coldly, “Don’t involve me in your buttering—
up scheme!” He threw her aside forcefully.

Florence staggered back two steps, almost losing her balance. Her anger reac
hed a tipping point. Wow! Did you just lay your hands on me? Dahlia! Look! T
his is the kind of man you love!” “Enough!” Dahlia shot up and glared at Gloria
and her group.

“Madam Gloria, I’m not sure about your purpose for visiting. If you’re here for
a serious
matter, please get to the point. I believe it’s pointless if you’re just here to sho
w off your authority.” Even though Dahlia was grateful for the opportunity, that
didn’t mean she would let them walk all over

her.

“Dahlia Nicholson, how bold of you! How dare you use that tone with Grandm
a?” Dakota reprimanded her severely.

Dahlia replied calmly, “What’s wrong with my tone? I’m just asking for an expl
anation. If the family patriarch thinks I’m not fit for the position, I have no qual
ms for him to revoke the appointment.”

“You ...” Dakota was about to start a new tirade when Gloria raised her hand
and interrupted her. “Alright, since you wish to discuss serious matters, we’ll f
ollow the usual discourse!” Gloria backed off at the mention of the family patri
arch, but her expression remained hostile.

“Even though the family patriarch has appointed you the chairman of Cardinal
Group, there’s a
condition. You have to prove you have what it takes to assume control of Card
inal Group.”

“And how should I do that?” Dahlia asked.

“It’s simple. The company is in the midst of an important expansion and is in urgent need of funds amounting to one billion. You’ll pass the test once you manage to secure one billion in

investments.”

“One billion?”

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Dahlia frowned, for it wasn’t a small amount. In the whole of Swinton, there were only a few individuals who had one billion in liquid assets to withdraw from.

“Of course, if you’re unable to secure the investment funds needed, please step aside and make way for someone more deserving. We don’t want you hindering the company’s development.” Gloria sneered.

In truth, she was the one who set the conditions for a one billion investment fund, not the family patriarch. She didn’t wish for an outsider to hold that much authority. That was why she came up with the idea to make her step aside on her own accord. She would also be able to give a good explanation when questioned by the family patriarch.

“Why are you silent? Don’t tell me you can’t even manage such a small matter?” She taunted on purpose.

“Hmph! If you can’t do it. I’ll take on the role of chairman instead.” Dakota raised her head arrogantly. With her connections and Gloria’s help, one billion wouldn’t be hard to secure.

Dustin suddenly spoke, “Who said she couldn’t manage? It’s only one billion. We’ll get it done in three days!”

“Three days? Are you crazy?” Florence almost jumped out of her skin. “How on earth will we secure one billion in three days? That’s a huge amount! Thirty days would be more reasonable!” Dahlia’s brows knitted. “Dustin, where would I get one billion in just three days?” Securing one billion already posed a cha

llenge, but now, she had to secure it within three days. It was practically impossible.

“Not to worry. Leave it to me. I’ll make sure to get it done.” Dustin smiled reassuringly.

“Alright. You’re the one who promised. I’m giving you exactly three days.” Gloria’s eyes sparkled, and she sneered. “If you can’t do it within three days. All of you will get the f*ck out of this family!” With that, she left with the aid of her cane, not allowing them any space for a rebuttal.

“Hah, what a joke! One billion in three days? Don’t be naive, you’re not that rich!” After mocking them, Dakota and Jane followed Gloria.

It was impossible for both of them to achieve such a feat, not to mention Dahlia. They believed Dustin was only trying to show off and said so in a moment of indignance. However, that just made him appear childish to them.

After they left, Florence burst out in anger, “Rhys! What makes you think you can just agree to their conditions on your own? Do you know that once we fail, Dahlia will lose her position as chairman of Cardinal Group? Are you bringing us down on purpose?”

Dustin explained, “If we didn’t agree, Dahlia’s position as chairman would be threatened either way.”

“Hah! Easy for you to say. Even if money fell from the sky, we wouldn’t be able to secure one billion in three days!” Florence exclaimed in frustration.

Dustin responded calmly, “Since I agreed, naturally, that means I’m confident. Just leave it to me.”

“Leave it to you? Who do you think you are? You just own a shabby medical center. Do you really think you’re someone of high status?” Florence admonished him.

“Hah! If you do manage to accomplish the feat, I’ll get on my knees and kiss your feet!” James looked at him in contempt.

“Great, that’s a deal.” Dustin flashed a smile.

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Dustin walked out of Nicholson Villa and was about to make a call when his phone rang. It was from Roderick Brooks.

Dustin answered, "Hello, Mr. Brooks, I was just about to go look for you. It's such a coincidence that you called first."

"Oh? Is there anything I can help you with, Mr. Rhys?" Roderick was taken aback.

"I have a friend who got into some trouble and needs a sum of money. Would it be possible for me to borrow money from you?" Dustin asked.

"Phew, you scared me. I thought it was something serious. It turns out you just need money. Of course. I might not have much of anything else, but I definitely have money. How much does your friend need?" Roderick breathed a sigh of relief.

"One billion."

"No problem. I'll send it to you tomorrow."

"Thank you, Mr. Brooks."

"No need to be so polite, Mr. Rhys. You were the one who treated my recurring illness!"

"Congratulations again. Right, is there a reason you called me?" Dustin changed the subject.

"Mr. Rhys, didn't you have me be on the lookout for a few precious herbs? I just heard that neighboring Alorith recently put out a few treasures. Apparently, the Heliotrope you're looking for, which is also known as the thousand-year green lotus, is among them."

Roderick's revelation caught Dustin off guard. "A thousand-year green lotus? Are you sure?" His eyes widened. He only lacked three mor

the precious herbs to produce Longevitum—the flower of Crimson Gem, Cherusia, and the thousand-year green lotus. Each item was an extremely precious treasure that was hard to come by. It came as a happy surprise to him to hear news about the thousand-year green lotus in such a short time.

“It should be true. Anyway, that was how they advertised the auction. Even members of the

Stoneray Order are heading there. As for the specifics, we won’t know until we get there.”

Roderick was careful with his words, afraid of giving the wrong information.

“Alright, I hope it won’t trouble you to accompany me to the venue.”

“It would be my honor!”

Since Alorith was neighboring Swinton, the journey wasn’t far, and it only took two hours by car. As they made casual conversation in Roderick’s car, it didn’t take long before they finally arrived at their destination.

The venue was an underground auction house, and the place teemed with a diverse crowd and a vast array of treasures. They had almost everything one desired, albeit at a higher price.

“Mr. Rhys, after you.” Roderick led Dustin personally as they headed inside the auction house.

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At the moment, the venue was a roaring hubbub of voices. Prices rose rapidly from the intense bidding as items were brought on stage one after the other. It was clear that Roderick had made preparations in advance since they both took a seat in the front row.

“Mr. Rhys, we’re in luck. It seems like they haven’t started the bidding for the thousand-year green lotus.” Roderick silently breathed a sigh of relief.

“It’s always best to come at the right time instead of coming early.” Dustin smiled.

“Hey! Are you two here for the thousand-year green lotus too?” At that moment, a young woman seated beside them suddenly spoke. She was wearing a baseball cap and had a lollipop in her mouth. She was also dressed in branded items from head to toe and had a beautiful appearance. However, she seemed to carry a hint of rebelliousness within her

“That’s right. A thousand-year green lotus is a rare find. Naturally, we wouldn’t miss it for anything.” Dustin nodded in response.

“Hmph! Let me tell you, I already have it in my bag, so it’ll be best to give up!” The woman in the baseball cap said coldly.

Roderick plastered on a smile. “Miss, aren’t you too confident to declare it as our item when the bidding hasn’t started yet?”

“Confidence comes from power. As long as it’s something I want, I will definitely get it. You two, don’t say I didn’t warn you. You better not challenge me, lest you humiliate yourselves.” She cocked her head to one side.

Roderick chuckled. “You have a rough temper for your age.”

He had seen his fair share of wealthy daughters like her, who thought they could show off all because of their minuscule wealth.

How naive!

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“Don’t believe me? Let’s see what happens!” The woman in the baseball cap pursed her lips in disdain, while Dustin and Roderick only smiled back in response.

As time went on, the auction neared its end, and the remaining highly prized items were brought up on stage. Among them, was the long-awaited thousand-year green lotus everyone coveted.

“Ladies and gentlemen, our next item on auction is an extremely rare, precious herb that has thrived for a thousand years. This item is known as the thousand-year green lotus!”

With a wave from the auctioneer, a wooden box was brought forward with great care. As the box opened, one translucent and gleaming green lotus was revealed. While its petals were colored green, its core shimmered gold. It appeared to be the epitome of perfection, resembling a delicate work of art as its beauty captivated everyone present. Under the illumination of lights, its colors shone brilliantly. It was truly a sight to behold.

“It really is the thousand-year green lotus. I’m taking this baby home for sure!” The woman’s eyes sparkled, and she looked excited. Not only she, but the rest of the bidders had a similar look on their faces.

“Now that everyone has seen the precious item, I believe you have a sense of its value. The

starting bid for the thousand-year green lotus is 100 million, with subsequent raises of not less than 5 million. Let’s begin.”

As soon as the auctioneer announced the start of the bidding, the scene erupted into a frenzy.

“120 million!”

“130 million!”

“No one gets in my way! 150 million here!”

Bidding calls drowned out each other as a growing number of wealthy individuals eagerly joined the fray. Equipped with sizable funds, they had come prepared. That was because it was widely understood that the thousand-year green lotus held immeasurable value and that whoever won the bid would be able to receive substantial returns just from reselling it.

In a world abundant with wealth, precious herbs like these that could prolong life were highly favored, especially by the elderly tycoons. It didn’t matter, even if that meant staking their entire fortunes.

“500 million here!” A man in a long-sleeved shirt suddenly raised his paddle. His commanding voice reverberated through the room, instantly overshadowing the voices of the crowd.

“This thousand-year green lotus belongs to the Stoneray Order. Don’t try to take it from me!” The man scrutinized his surroundings, his gaze menacing.

Those who caught his gaze instinctively lowered their heads, not daring to look him straight in the eyes. Not many dared to offend the Stoneray Order, as they were Millsburg’s most influential group. Even though the item on auction was a precious treasure, it paled in comparison to their lives and wealth.

“Are the Stoneray Order all that? I’m bidding 800 million!” In the face of the silent crowd, the

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woman in the baseball cap suddenly raised her paddle. Her arrogant demeanor clearly showed her lack of respect for the members of the order.

The man’s expression turned grim. “Little brat, who do you think you are? How dare you challenge the Stoneray Order!”

“My name is Jayla Grant. I’m Tyler Grant’s sister!” She declared coolly.

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“Tyler Grant?!” The crowd erupted in an uproar with her reveal.

Everyone in Southern Province knew of Tyler Grant. He was the rising new general of Dragonmarsh. A true prodigy, he had recorded numerous military achievements at a young age and was given the nickname General Lionheart, holding the third-highest rank in the military. Among the younger generation in the entire Southern province, he stood as the leader.

Some influential figures even proclaimed that his achievements in the future would rival those of the God of War, Adam Spanner! The Grant family was already known for being part of the Tremendous Three, and now, with his status as the exceptional genius of the family, his name soared to even greater heights. For the past few years, he had been someone everyone did not dare

Cross.

When Jayla revealed her identity, everyone present was stunned. The man from Stoneray Order especially looked upset, but he was unable to utter another word. Although Stoneray Order possessed significant power, they were ultimately not comparable to them. Their power could never compare to that of one of the families of the Tremendous Three. Not to mention, Jayla had Tyler personally backing her.

“Why are you silent? Weren’t you being all haughty just a moment ago? Why did you stop showing off in front of me?” Jayla looked at him in contempt. She silently laughed at their attempt to show off their background, for she had never lost in that regard.

The man in the long-sleeved shirt remained silent with his head lowered.

“Hmph! How disappointing.” The corner of her lips twitched.

“Ms. Grant bids 800 million. Are there any further bids?” The auctioneer said perfunctorily. He knew from the moment Jayla revealed her identity that the thousand-year green lotus would be hers. After all, who dared challenge the Grant family?

Suddenly, a voice rang out unexpectedly. “One billion.”

Everyone’s head turned toward the voice, only to find a plump middle-aged man with his paddle raised. It was none other than Roderick.

“Huh?” Jayla’s brows knitted, glaring at the two men beside her. She had not anticipated their audacity to challenge her, especially after she had revealed her background.

“Who’s the fatty? His bravery is comparable to his size. He actually dared provoke the Grant family’s daughter.”

“He looks familiar. I think it’s Big Buck Brooks.”

“You’re right! It is Big Buck Brooks. I can’t believe he’s here!”

“So what if it’s Big Buck Brooks? He’s just filthy rich. He’s a nobody to those who hold power. If he offended the Grants, they could just annihilate his family for a simple reason.”

The crowd murmured in discussion as voices of surprise, astonishment, and disdain were heard. Even when he was extremely rich, they knew he wasn’t strong enough to challenge the Grants.

“Hey! Are you sure you want to fight me on this?” Jayla turned her head to the side, giving them a

threatening glare.

“What do you mean? Since it’s an auction, naturally, we should follow the rules, where the highest bidder wins the item. Isn’t that so?” Roderick showed no hint of fear.

Tyler Grant was indeed formidable. Under normal circumstances, he would never dream of offending him. However, it was different now. This man beside him was like a brother to Adam Spanner, and he had a prince for a father. What was there to fear when he had Dustin to back him?

“Alright, since you want to play this game, let’s play till the end!” Jayla’s expression hardened as she raised her paddle once more. “1.2 billion!”

“1.3 billion.”

“1.4 billion!”

“1.5 billion.”

“Two billion!” Jayla’s voice increased by a few octaves. It was obvious that she was unnerved.

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Even as the daughter of the Grant family, two billion dollars in cash was a stretch. Any more than that, and she would need to ask for money from the family.

“2.1 billion dollars.” Roderick was calm.

Jayla exclaimed with gritted teeth, “2.5 billion!”

She had a murderous gaze. Even if she had to borrow money, she would regain her dignity today!

With a smile still plastered on his face, Roderick raised the bid, “2.6 billion.”

His nickname, Big Buck Brooks, was not merely a nickname. The sum of money truly held no significance to him.

“Three billion!” Jayla was seeing red. She looked like a lioness about to tear into her prey.

“Three ...” Roderick raised his paddle, about to continue bidding when Dustin pulled his hand down.

“Forget about it. Just let her have it.

“What?” Roderick was surprised. “Mr. Rhys, isn’t this item something you need? Why are you giving it up? If it’s because of the price, there’s no need to worry. I can deal with it.”

“It has nothing to do with money.” Dustin shook his head. As he stared at the precious item on stage, his expression was filled with regret. “The item on auction is not a thousand-year green lotus. It’s of no use to me.”

“What? Are you saying that it’s a fake?” Roderick failed to contain his shock. Almost no one dared to auction off fake items due to the consequences that came with it.

Dustin shook his head again. "I won't call it fake. It's just not old enough. I've taken a good look at it. Even though it's a remarkable green lotus, it's only 900 years old. It'll take another hundred years to mature into a true thousand-year green lotus."

Even though the only difference between a 900-year green lotus and a thousand-year green lotus is a hundred years, their effects were vastly different.

He only had one opportunity to refine the Longevitum, and any incongruity would lead to an astronomical difference in its effects. While a thousand-year green lotus was an invaluable treasure, a 900-year green lotus was vastly inferior to it.

"So it's only a 900-year lotus. What a pity." Roderick sighed, his enthusiasm fading instantly. He had hoped to utilize this chance to leave a good impression. It was a pity that fate had other plans. At that moment, the auctioneer suddenly asked, "Ms. Grant bid three billion. Is there a higher bid?" Roderick frowned, choosing to remain silent. However, Jayla interpreted his expression as a sign of embarrassment due to his inability to afford it.

"Hmph! Why are you silent? Just continue challenging me! I'd like to see just how capable you are!" A delighted smile formed on her face.

"It's okay. Since you like it so much, Ms. Grant, we'll allow you to have it," Dustin said coolly.

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Spending three billion to buy a subpar item was foolish, even for the rich.

"Allow me to have it? Hah! If you can't afford it, just say so. You sure have the thickest skin I've ever seen!" Jayla mocked.

"Suit yourself. Whatever makes you happy." Dustin didn't bother arguing further, but that made Jayla feel like she was throwing punches in the air. What she desired was to see him submit to her and show remorse. His indifferent attitude was making her extremely vexed, but she didn't have a good excuse to challenge him.

In the end, Jayla won the bid for the 900-year green lotus on stage at a sky-high price.

“Next, we have another precious treasure. This item is a natural, uncut red gemstone, and hasn’t gone through any processing whatsoever. Its cut and clarity are of unparalleled quality. Please have a look!” As the auctioneer spoke, a palm-sized, blood-colored gemstone was brought forth onto the stage.

“What?” The moment Dustin’s gaze landed on the gemstone, his pupils constricted. While he was filled with regret just moments ago, it was now replaced with renewed vigor and excitement.

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“That gem!” Dustin was full of excitement at the appearance of the red gemstone. He had resigned himself to leaving empty-handed today, but as luck would have it, he chanced upon another treasure.

“Hmph, what a country bumpkin. What’s so exciting about a red gemstone?” Taking in the excited look on Dustin’s face, Jayla looked at him in contempt. “I’ve got plenty of those at home. Only a country bumpkin like you who hasn’t seen the world will think it’s special.”

Dustin ignored her and focused his gaze on the red gemstone on stage. Its surface was colored a blood-like deep crimson, and its shape was similar to a calabash. On the surface, it looked ordinary. However, its desirability lay in its size, and after some processing, it would undoubtedly turn out to be invaluable. In the eyes of a professional jeweler, this was definitely the finest red crimson.

Roderick was confused. “Mr. Rhys, do you like it?” Dustin didn’t seem like someone who would covet precious stones, especially with his status. It was just an uncut gemstone. Although it was a precious treasure, it didn’t particularly stand out.

“I must take this item home.” His answer was simple, yet full of resolution.

“Alright! As long as you like it, even if I spend my entire fortune, I’ll make sure to get it for you!” Roderick spoke candidly. This was a rare opportunity for him to impress Dustin, and he was determined to seize it.

“This is an extremely rare gemstone that was recovered from the deep sea. The starting bid is 50 million dollars. Every subsequent raise must not be less than one million. Let’s start!” After a short introduction, the auctioneer declared the start of the bidding. In less than no time, the atmosphere returned to its fiery state.

“55 million!”

“60 million!”

“I’m raising it to 68 million!”

A flurry of wealthy individuals eagerly raised their paddles, igniting fierce competition. Considering the size of the gemstone, a conservative estimate placed its value at no less than two to three hundred million. As a businessman, Roderick was naturally well aware of its worth. In order to discourage other potential bidders, he promptly raised his paddle and declared, “300 million!”

The previously bustling atmosphere instantly grew heavy as Roderick’s words reverberated through the room. Many shook their heads and sighed in resignation. They knew that challenging Big Buck Brooks would be futile when he had his eyes on something. No one present possessed the wealth to surpass him.

“Mr. Roderick has raised the bid to 300 million. Is there anyone willing to offer a higher price?” The auctioneer scanned the audience, but the potential bidders had all quieted down.

At that moment, Jayla suddenly raised her paddle. “I’ll raise it to 400 million.” Her eyes gleamed with provocation, clearly trying to start another fight with them.

“500 million.” Roderick didn’t back down.

Jayla flashed a smile. “600 million.” She knew they had their sights set on the gemstone and intentionally raised the bid, planning on taking them for their worth.

“700 million.” Roderick was expressionless.

“800 million.” Jayla tilted her head up, seemingly ready to fight till the end.

“900 million.”

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Roderick continued bidding.

“One billion.” Jayla showed no signs of letting up. As she was deliberately targeting the gem, the price of the red gemstone hit the billion-dollar mark, which had far exceeded the valuation of the gemstone. It would be a great loss for the winning bidder.

“It seems like they’ve come head-to-head with each other.”

“I have a bad feeling something is going to happen to Big Buck Brooks for offending Ms. Grant.”

“He’s just wealthy. How does he have the guts to challenge such a prominent family?”

The crowd pointed and gossiped fervently, clearly enjoying the farce.

“1.5 billion dollars.” Roderick raised his paddle again, boldly increasing the bid by 500 million dollars.

“1.6 billion dollars.” Jayla continued challenging him head-on.

“Two billion dollars!” Roderick then told her in an impassive tone, “Ms. Grant, if you raise it again, I’ll let you have it.”

Jayla was about to raise it when she froze. She wasn’t interested in the red gemstone. It would be disadvantageous for her if she continued increasing the price.

ice and ended up stuck with an item she didn't need. She knew it was time to end her game.

"Forget it. Since you like the gemstone so much, I'll be the generous one and let you have it," Jayla said with a mocking smile. She had raised the price of a two- to three-hundred million-dollar gemstone to two billion dollars, forcing the other party to pay ten times the price. She was

satisfied.

"Mr. Brooks has placed a bid of 2 billion. Any other contenders? Going once, going twice... sold!" The auctioneer struck his hammer, signifying Roderick as the winning bidder of the red gemstone at the staggering price of two billion.

After they received the item, Jayla mocked them, "Hah ... One look tells me you are from new money. You don't have any sense. You just had to pay two billion for something that could be bought for 200 million. What an idiot."

She deliberately showed off the box containing the thousand-year green lotus and taunted, "See this? This is a real, invaluable treasure."

A scoff escaped from Dustin's lips. "Ms. Grant, you sure are overconfident. Take a good look at it. Is your green lotus really a thousand years old?"

She raised her brows. "What nonsense. This precious item is pure, and delicate, and emanates a

characteristic smell. Of course, it's a thousand-year green lotus!"

"A thousand-year green lotus has ten petals and ten seeds. Count them. Does it have enough?" Dustin asked with a smile.

Hearing him, Jayla started to count. Soon, her expression changed. No matter how many times she counted, there were only nine petals and nine seeds. She never managed to count to ten!

“Hey! I’m warning you, you better not lie to me! If I find out you are, you’re not leaving this place!” Jayla warned coldly.

Dustin shrugged his shoulders. “If you don’t believe me, why don’t you ask the experts from Stoneray Order? They’re well-versed in various herbs. They’ll definitely be able to tell.”

“Hey! You there! Come here this instant!” Jayla turned around and shouted at the man in the long-sleeved shirt from earlier. “Take a good look at this. Is this green lotus a thousand years old?”

He stared at it, and there was a shift in his expression. “It’s a pity... What a pity! Ms. Grant, to be honest, this green lotus is only 900 years old. It’s on the verge of reaching maturity.”

Her eyes widened. “What? 900 years old? Doesn’t that mean it’s still short of one hundred years?”

Even an idiot understood the difference a hundred years made. Whether in value or effectiveness, the disparity was immense.

“Ms. Grant, even though this item is slightly inferior, it still holds significant value as a collector’s item.” The man in the long-sleeved shirt smiled apologetically.

“It is indeed a valuable collector’s item. You just need to hold onto it for another hundred years, and you’ll undoubtedly earn a great fortune.” Dustin flashed her a cheeky smirk.

“You...” Jayla’s face puffed up in anger with his words, looking like she had just ingested a load of shit. She would be rotting in the soil in a hundred years! A great fortune, her ass!

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Jayla finally realized she had been miserably deceived. However, she only had herself to blame for her mistake. Of course, with the power the Grant family held, she could demand a

refund from the auctioneer. But if she did that, she would be badly criticized. She couldn't afford to be humiliated as such. For the sake of her reputation, she could only swallow her resentment.

Roderick added insult to injury. "Ms. Grant, it seems like the item that cost you a fortune isn't that precious after all."

"You can't say that. Even though it's lacking a few years, it's still considered a precious treasure." The man in the long-sleeved shirt attempted to diffuse the situation.

"Did you hear that? Even if it's lacking, it's still precious!" Color returned to her expression.

Dustin smiled. "I'd like to ask. What's the value of a 900-year green lotus?"

He looked troubled and answered with difficulty, "Based on its effectiveness and age, it should be around three to four hundred million."

"What? It's only worth three to four hundred million?" Jayla was stunned. She bought it for three billion! That was a massive loss of ten times its price!

Roderick chuckled teasingly. "Ms. Grant, with your power and wealth, that amount of money is just a small change."

Jayla was speechless. Her eyes twitched, and her expression turned sour. In the end, it turned out that she was the loser.

The man in the long-sleeved shirt chimed in, "Mr. Brooks, I don't think you are in a position to mock her. While Ms. Grant incurred a significant loss, your purchase isn't exactly a good buy."

"That's right!" Jayla's eyes brightened. Pointing at the gemstone in his arms, she said, "Even though my treasure lacks in age, at least it's much more useful than your item! Just look at yourselves, you idiots! You spent two billion for a meager gemstone. Anyone can tell that it's just a processed stone."

Roderick responded coolly, "It's difficult to put a value on happiness. As long as we like it, what's a few billion?"

“That is why you two are idiots!” She sneered. “I forgot to mention. The Grant family was the one that recovered this red gemstone. In other words, the two billion you just spent went into my pockets. Surprising, huh?”

Roderick’s brows knitted with her words. It didn’t matter if he’d just incurred a small loss. However, he was also played by his opponent. Not only did he suffer a loss, but he was also humiliated and called an idiot. It didn’t feel good. In a heavy voice, he commented, “Ms. Grant, you intentionally raised the price with malicious intent.”

“What about it? Go sue me if you can.” She shrugged.

“Whatever the case, I’m taking this two billion dollars. I’d like to see what you can do if you’re not happy about it!” She pursed her lips; her expression was smug.

Roderick narrowed his eyes, looking irritated. However, he didn’t utter a word in fear of her family

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background.

Dustin suddenly asked, “Ms. Grant, are you saying this red gemstone is from the Grant family?”

“That’s right! I’m the one who sent it here personally to be auctioned off. Why? You’re not happy?” She taunted arrogantly.

“Of course I’m happy! If it wasn’t for your help, how would I be able to purchase this treasure for a mere two billion?” He smiled.

“Hey! Are you out of your mind? What treasure? You spent two billion on something that’s only worth two to three hundred million. What gave you the courage to say that?” She bellowed in laughter, looking at him like he was an idiot.

“Young man, is it that hard to admit you lost? Do you need to be so stubborn?”

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Chapter 380

“That’s right. Only people like you would foolishly spend two billion on a red gemstone like that.”

“I like to call them rich airheads.”

The crowd pointed and murmured, gossiping among themselves. It seemed to them that Dustin was a prime example of a stubborn man who couldn’t accept defeat. It was clear that he had suffered a loss but was still trying to show off without merit.

“Do you hear that? I’m not the only one who thinks you’re an idiot. Everyone else thinks the same.” Her lips curled up into a smirk.

“Really?” Dustin smiled faintly. “It seems like no one has realized this is not an ordinary red gemstone. It’s an extremely rare Crimson Gem.”

“What’s a Crimson Gem? I’ve never heard of it.” Jayla pursed her lips in disdain.

“That’s fine. Allow me to enlighten you today.” As he said that, he smashed the gemstone with his palm. Everyone present heard two cracking noises as two visible crack lines formed on the surface. In the blink of an eye, the cracks spread across the whole gemstone.

His actions ignited a frenzy among the crowd.

“That’s insane! That punk’s gone insane!”

“Even if he incurred a loss, that was no reason to destroy the gemstone!”

“Ms. Grant was right. He’s an idiot!”

The crowd was filled with astonishment and regret as they voiced their disapproval and admonishment. They recognized that it was still a remarkable treasure, and it was such a waste for him to destroy it like that.

Jayla was initially taken aback, but soon, she couldn’t stop howling in laughter. “Hey! Did you get water into your brain? You spent two billion to buy that, yet you smashed it? I’ve never seen anyone as stupid as you!” She continued laughing, but it wasn’t long before she went silent.

That was because after the gemstone shattered, a crimson flower emerged from the shattered pieces. The flower, translucent and blood-colored, glistened with a mesmerizing radiance. It embodied the essence of nature in itself, looking perfectly flawless.

Upon closer inspection, it appeared as if a slow, graceful flow of red liquid was flowing within it. Illuminated under the lights, the crimson flower shone beautifully, resembling an artful masterpiece that captivated those present, leaving them awestruck.

“Could... Could it be? Is that the legendary Flower of Crimson Gem?” After a momentary daze, the man in the long-sleeved shirt suddenly exclaimed out loud.

The crowd erupted into a frenzy at his words.

“Flower of Crimson Gem? That’s a Flower of Crimson Gem? I never thought I would be able to see such a treasure in my lifetime!”

“It’s rumored that the Flower of Crimson Gem can not only prolong life but revive the dead. When taken by ordinary people, they would be reborn, and even achieve greater things!”

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“It’s a priceless treasure! It’s definitely a priceless treasure!”

“Damn it, that punk spent a mere two billion for a Flower of Crimson Gem. Lucky bastard!”

The crowd looked at the Flower of Crimson Gem with tremendous greed and envy, like a beggar who chanced upon gold. A few daring individuals had even started concocting a plan secretly.

“Flower of Crimson Gem? How is that possible?” Jayla was dumbfounded as she looked on in disbelief.

A Flower of Crimson Gem was an extremely rare treasure that could only be chanced upon once in a blue moon. It was much more valuable than a thousand-year green lotus. Who would have thought she could encounter it in a place like this?

At the heart of the matter, the Grant family was the one who discovered that red gemstone, and she had delivered it personally to the auction house. In other words, she had given away that priceless treasure!

The realization left her feeling light-headed.