

## Chapter 401 Asking The Bride To Kneel Down

Just as soon, the hall got noisy again as people began talking among themselves.

"This scandal is going to reach the capital!"

"Something feels off. Could this be the doing of the Hoffman family?"

"It could be Liam. That makes better sense. He did say he was going to be here today, didn't he? But he hasn't shown his face since the ceremony started."

The Riley family could hear most of the comments from the crowd, and it humiliated them even more.

Now that a member of the Hoffman family had seen this with his own eyes, there was no way that this scandal would remain inside the four walls of this hall.

An event that was set to be grand and the highlight of the season had now become a total joke.

Tyler couldn't take the comments anymore.

Unable to control himself, he shouted hysterically, "You! You are the only member of the Hoffman family present and you know Liam. You're behind this, are you not?"

Yolanda also looked at Liam with suspicion.

She rushed towards him and shouted, "Who the hell are you? Liam! I know it's you!"

She was almost certain of it. This man's tone, expression and everything he did reminded her too much of Liam.

This couldn't be a coincidence. It was all planned!

Yolanda was sure of herself. This man had a hand in everything that happened today.

Their words pushed the guests into another round of murmuring.

Indeed, it had to be connected!

First, this man from the Hoffman family showed up uninvited. Then,

everything else went down.

Perhaps he really was behind it.

However, the new couple could know this, but they should have kept their thoughts to themselves.

They were crazy if they thought they could talk so insolently to a man from the Hoffman family and get away with it.

Unfazed by their outburst, Liam looked at the two of them with a small smile on his lips and mused, "It's funny how you think I would waste my time on you. Maybe you're just suffering under the hands of one of the many people you must have offended."

Aikin stood up at this time and asked threateningly, "How dare you place such false accusations on Mr. Hoffman? You must be bold or just plain crazy! He could easily use his power to destroy you and the Riley family!"

People started nodding in agreement.

If the new couple had to suspect anyone for doing this, Liam was supposed to be at the top of the list.

How could they accuse a member of the Hoffman family that sacrificed his time to come here?

If he really wanted to destroy them, he wouldn't have to go through this trouble.

One single command from him and the Riley family would be done for. It was like little David fighting against the giant Goliath.

Seeing that things were getting worse for them, Cartwright stepped in before Tyler and Yolanda drenched the family in misery.

He strode to Yolanda in anger and before she knew what was coming to her, he slapped her hard across the face. "How dare you speak to Mr. Hoffman in such a way? Apologize!"

Cartwright knew the extent of the power of the Hoffman family.

He couldn't let this slide or do nothing about it.

Even if it was possible that the Hoffman family was behind this, they had no business saying it and provoking them.

Thanks to Tyler's and Yolanda's rash actions, the Riley family could

easily be wiped out.

Cartwright couldn't afford that.

Liam's lips twitched up in amusement. He was amused by Cartwright's fear.

Even if the new couple had never accused him, the Riley family had been condemned from the moment Yolanda had cheated on him with Tyler.

Liam sneered at the man that was looking at him with apology and said coldly, "You didn't just humiliate me, but the whole Hoffman family, and you think one little apology will be enough?"

Cartwright's greatest fear materialized before him as Liam said this.

He felt like those words alone had ruined the Riley family.

But no! He couldn't give up like that. He glared at Yolanda and roared, "Kneel down now and apologize properly!"

Everyone looked on in shock.

The Hoffman family was really powerful.

The bride of the Riley family kneeling down before someone from the Hoffman family on her own wedding day would be the worst humiliation ever.

Yolanda's face turned pale. She didn't move a muscle, but looked at Liam, trying to find a flaw. Any tiny thing that he might have forgotten to hide. If she could find something off about him, she would be able to prove that he was Liam.

If only she could do that, this day would take a better turn.

Unfortunately, he was flawless. The human skin mask he had on was customized and fitted him to a T. The craftsmanship was exquisite. It screamed expensive.

Yolanda couldn't find anything to sell him out.

Besides, who would believe her? The Liam they all knew had nothing on this elegant man that exuded power.

Even when Liam was the CEO of the Kingland Group back then, Yolanda never felt so intimidated by him.

In any case, she couldn't just kneel!

Yes, he was from the Hoffman family, but she was the bride and this was her wedding day.

She was normally supposed to walk on the red carpet and receive countless blessings and compliments. She was supposed to be the most envied and beautiful woman in the hall.

How could they ask her to kneel in her wedding gown?

## Chapter 402 The Best Was Yet To Come

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"Why should I kneel?"

Yolanda fought back the urge to cry, biting her lip in frustration.

As the crowd observed the scene, murmurs and whispers instantly spread among them.

"Can you believe Yolanda talking back like that? She's so impulsive," one person remarked.

"Well, she's just a small-town girl, not exactly refined or polished," another chimed in.

"But she does have this innocent appearance. Who would've thought she could be so flirtatious? I heard she cheated on her ex-husband after being seduced effortlessly by another man."

The words exchanged revealed a lack of respect that was quite unlike their previous demeanor.

Having watched the photos earlier, they had formed the impression that Yolanda was nothing more than a promiscuous woman who slept around for money.

Now, Yolanda's beauty sparked desire and lust in the hearts of these wealthy and noble individuals.

A woman so stunningly beautiful had such a flirtatious nature. It ignited fantasies in their minds. What if they could hook up with her?

"You're a vicious woman. You've destroyed the Riley family!" Emory's eyes brimmed with resentment. Just as her temper was about to explode, she felt an intense pain gripping her chest, as though a giant hand had clenched her heart.

She clutched her chest, enduring the agony, and staggered towards Yolanda, delivering a resounding slap across her face.

With a furious expression, Emory bellowed, "Kneel down! You planned the entire wedding, and now you've made such a grave mistake, offending a distinguished guest. You must apologize! Otherwise, despite today being a wedding celebration, it can easily turn into a funeral!"

The crowd, hearing these words, trembled in fear. Their eyes were filled with horror as they gazed at Emory.

How could this woman, coming from a prestigious family, be so terrifying?

How could they allow themselves to turn against each other during their own wedding banquet?

No wonder Cartwright was so dissolute yet no woman could undermine Emory's position.

Also, being the direct descendant of a wealthy and influential family worth tens of billions of dollars, Emory had likely become the ultimate decision-maker of the Riley family.

Now, both Cartwright and Emory joined forces to publicly humiliate Yolanda, their daughter-in-law, reducing her status to nothing.

Yolanda felt her face burning. She felt humiliated, but she suppressed the hatred and anger simmering in her eyes, taking a deep breath to compose herself.

She had done everything in her power to marry into the Riley family and live a life of luxury. She couldn't give up so easily.

Lowering her head to conceal the fierceness on her face, Yolanda said in a raspy voice, "Mr. Hoffman, I'm sorry. It's all my fault."

Apologizing in front of all the influential figures in Salem was an insult she couldn't bear!

The words felt like knives, cutting into her flesh and making her incredibly uncomfortable.

Seated in his wheelchair, Liam waved his hand dismissively and said with an icy tone, "It's good that you recognize your fault. I'll let it pass."

Even though Liam had received Yolanda's apology, his heart remained unchanged.

He had once loved her, but that was now a thing of the past.

His focus was solely on Julie.

The mere thought of Julie made Liam clench his fists, as an overwhelming hatred surged through his heart.

Originally, if he had revealed his true identity, he could have married

Julie and enjoyed a perfect life with her.

But it was all because of Tyler and the despicable members of the Riley family that his plan had been ruined.

Liam extended his hand and patted Aikin's hand, who was standing behind the wheelchair.

This move was discreet. The area was shrouded in darkness, ensuring that no one noticed their exchange.

Aikin quickly lowered his head, leaning in closer to Liam, eagerly awaiting his instructions.

In a hushed voice, Liam said slowly, "Release all the information now."

Though his voice was low, it resonated with a chilling intent to kill.

"Yes, sir!" Aikin responded in a low tone.

Liam's cold gaze swept over the present members of the Riley family and his lips curled into a sneer.

The best was yet to come!

## Chapter 403 Canceling The Wedding

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All eyes turned towards Yolanda, who lowered her head and mumbled an apology, hoping that this farcical situation would finally come to an end.

Now, they all wondered how the Riley family would handle the wedding. In the center of the hall, the high-profile individuals watched the Riley family on the stage as if they were watching a good show.

On the other hand, the bosses and riches on the fringe of the wedding hall began to feel a hint of nervousness.

They held a lesser status compared to the powerful people in the center. They knew that any trouble that erupted here would inevitably affect them.

Cartwright, standing on the stage, cast a disgusted glance at Yolanda and bellowed, "Get up and go backstage! Today's wedding is ruined! There's no need for you to proceed with the marriage!"

Upon hearing this, Mason and his wife hurriedly approached, wearing apologetic smiles. "Cartwright, please don't be angry," they pleaded. "This wedding is a beautiful event, and we've reached the midpoint of the ceremony. It can't be halted just like that."

Cartwright sneered, paying no attention to the couple. He addressed the audience, "Today, the wedding between Tyler and Yolanda is hereby canceled!"

Expelling this disgraceful would-be daughter-in-law from the Riley family was the only way to salvage the night's events. Then, it would be a mere scandal.

The various scandals that occurred in Salem, big or small, would eventually fade away into obscurity.

But if Yolanda were allowed to marry into the Riley family, the repercussions would haunt them for a long time.

They would be a total laughing stock in Salem!

Every time the Rileys attended a gathering, the upper-class elite would



recall today's incident whenever they saw Yolanda!

Cartwright was determined to prevent such a humiliation.

On the stage, Cartwright and Emory locked eyes, recognizing the burning intensity of each other's murderous intent.

They had resolved to erase the Lambert family from existence in Salem, for only then could everyone forget the disgraceful events that transpired.

With this in mind, Emory composed herself and elegantly approached Liam, wearing a charming smile. "Mr. Hoffman, are you pleased with this punishment?"

Liam responded with a faint smile, nodding candidly. "Yes, I'm pleased with it. But aren't you cruel to do such a thing? I must admit, the tale you told in the beginning was quite captivating. They seemed like a perfect match, deeply in love. It almost made me envious!"

Under normal circumstances, his words would have been perceived as normal compliments.

However, the context had drastically changed. There was a biting irony in his words.

This caused people nearby to suppress their laughter.

The chuckles that escaped, though, grated on the Riley family's ears, sounding discordant and unpleasant.

The faces of Cartwright and his wife flushed red, and they struggled to contain their anger.

If someone else had dared to utter those words, they would have exploded in rage immediately.

But they couldn't afford to offend a direct descendant of the powerful Hoffman family.

Cartwright's eyes turned bloodshot, his only outlet for the mounting fury being Yolanda.

He spun around and delivered a vicious kick, which he poured all his strength into.

"Ah!"

Yolanda let out a piercing scream as she staggered and crashed heavily

onto the floor. She desperately rubbed against the floor, rolling away about two meters.

The once resplendent woman in her wedding gown now appeared disheveled, with blood staining the corner of her mouth.

Her watery eyes reflected only coldness and despair.

The flames of hatred consumed every fiber of her being.

"Why do you regard me as nothing more than a mere ant? Why must you always treat me like an ordinary plaything and not as an equal?!" she muttered to herself.

It was a stark contrast to the previous reverence she had received.

A difference that she couldn't bear to accept.

Yolanda's heart roared with fury. She wouldn't let anyone present escape the consequences. They would pay the price for their actions.

Though anger coursed through her, she felt a profound sense of powerlessness. Clenching her fists, she slowly rose from the floor, disregarding her bleeding mouth.

She held up the hem of her wedding dress, like a soulless puppet, and moved forward step by step.

Bang!

Suddenly, with a loud crash, perhaps due to her unsteady footing, Yolanda slammed into a nearby table and fell again.

Yet, throughout it all, Liam never even glanced in her direction.

Everyone's gaze remained fixed on Yolanda as she stumbled dazedly out of the hall. They watched her until she disappeared from sight.

Inside the hall, Liam shifted his attention to Tyler on the stage and said with an indifferent tone, "I will forgive Yolanda's disrespect towards me. After all, she is Liam's ex-wife and a woman. But what of you? You just insulted me. How should we handle this? Tell me!"

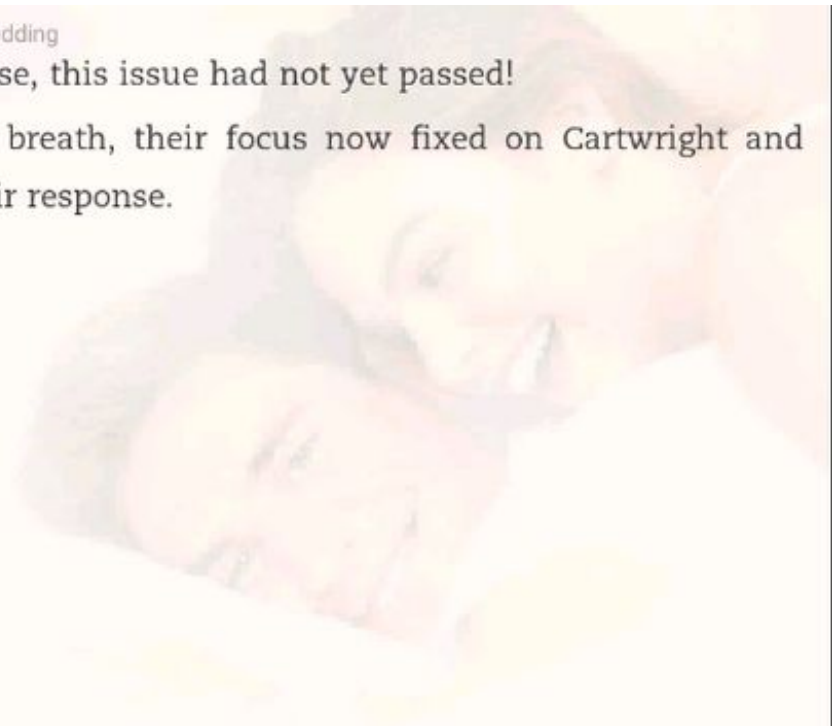
As he finished speaking, Liam cast a stern glance at Cartwright and the others.

Despite his calm and measured tone, there was an unyielding resolve in his words.

The hall fell into an eerie silence again.

To everyone's surprise, this issue had not yet passed!

They all held their breath, their focus now fixed on Cartwright and Emory, awaiting their response.



## Chapter 404 You Are Liam!

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The man standing before them was a direct descendant of a business empire worth trillions of dollars!

His power was so immense that with just a single word from him, he could wipe out an entire family.

It was downright terrifying! If they somehow managed to offend him, the Riley family would be in for some serious suffering.

They might even face complete annihilation.

But as Tyler stood on the stage, he couldn't care less about all that.

Right now, all he could feel was anger and pain consuming his heart.

"That jerk, it has to be Liam Hoffman!"

The humiliation burning within Tyler turned his eyes bloodshot as he fixed a piercing glare upon Liam.

How could a few words from Liam ruin his wedding?

And why was the Riley family bowing down to this worthless individual?

Veins popped on Tyler's neck as he bellowed in a raspy tone, "Liam, don't think that because you've changed your face, I won't recognize you! Your body, your face, even your legs, none of these can hide the truth!"

Immediately these words left his mouth, the guests present furrowed their brows, wondering what was going on with Tyler this time.

How could this person possibly be Liam?

Nevertheless, Tyler paid no heed to their doubts and continued to yell, "Liam, even if you wear a different face, your flaws are still too damn obvious! You never expected this, did you? I've been watching videos of you day and night! Every component of yours is imprinted in my mind! Others may not be able to recognize you, but not me! You're Liam, and I'd bet my life on it!"

With those words, silence descended upon the entire place.

People gazed at Tyler's unwavering determination and began furrowing their brows, thinking about the day's events.

A sense of disbelief gradually spread across many faces.

The crowd turned their attention to Liam and whispered among themselves.

"Can this actually be possible? It's obvious that someone is targeting the Riley family!"

"Could he truly be Liam?"

"Even if he isn't Liam, he must be connected to him somehow. The Riley family is in deep trouble!"

Among the crowd, those who had seen Liam before closely examined the man's face and felt an even stronger resemblance.

These individuals began speaking up.

"Truly, this man's facial structure and features are a dead ringer for Liam's!"

"Not just the facial features, even the body shape looks identical, doesn't it?"

"If his face were covered, I would certainly think he is Liam."

Each statement served to affirm the likeness between Liam and the man before them.

However, Aikin, who stood aside, let out a cold sneer and disdainfully remarked, "They're similar in height, both wearing suits and both male, it's natural for them to bear some resemblance! Besides, this guy also has the Hoffman last name, so it's not so shocking that their facial features look alike, right?"

As Aikin's words settled in, some people began to find some sense in them.

Aikin was right. This man could very well be Liam's uncle or cousin.

It was normal for family members to have similar facial contours.

"How ridiculous!"

Frustrated by the lack of belief in his words, Tyler shouted again.

In that moment, his face was ferocious and hellish, displaying an intense desire to devour his opponent alive.

Tyler pointed accusingly at both Aikin and Liam and unleashed his anger. "How can you call this natural? You have been by Liam's side

multiple times, doing everything for him in gratitude. How can we believe you wouldn't put on a show for Liam's sake?"

With a fierce look, he pointed his finger at Watkins and addressed him sharply, "Liam saved your life. Can we believe you wouldn't act out of gratitude?"

Most of the guests in attendance had no knowledge of Watkins being saved by Liam.

It was only at this moment, upon hearing Tyler's revelation, that they had a sudden realization.

Once again, their gazes shifted towards Liam, now filled with doubt.

A voice from the side of the stage interjected, "What of the car? How do you explain that? The Bugatti supercar is worth millions of dollars, a limited edition worldwide. It can't be acquired by just being wealthy. This person must also have power."

"Exactly! Both Aikin and Watkins are just regular workers," another person chimed in. "Their salaries couldn't possibly afford such a car, let alone anything else!"

"Afford it?" Tyler suddenly burst into laughter and yelled, "Why would they need to buy it? With the Rinku Group's connections, can't they find a person who would rent it out? How absurd! How utterly ridiculous that they would go to such lengths, spend so much money in orchestrating this drama just to ruin my wedding!"

With those words, the entire hall erupted into commotion.

Tyler's argument was undeniably sensible.

## Chapter 405 Unexpected Result

Liam sat expressionless on the wheelchair and just watched the others make fools of themselves.

He supported his head with one hand and tapped his fingers of the other hand on the armrest like he had absolutely nothing to worry about. "Why don't you check who owns the car instead of wasting time?" He sounded so confident that everyone paused again, wondering if they were wrong.

The first person that spoke after that was a rich man beside the stage.

"There are only ten Bugatti Centodieci in the world, and each of them belongs to one of the richest men. There has to be a record of this, so it's easy to verify."

Just as soon, a man stood up from a corner and said loudly, "I own a car firm, and I work with Volkswagen. I'll use my connections and get the information right away."

Tyler felt less tense and felt his confidence begin to rise again. He laughed, but his eyes were glaring at Liam.

He was almost certain that they had caught this scumbag lying!

He pointed a finger at Liam and cursed, "You little bastard! The plastic surgery or whatever disguise you have used won't hide the fact that you are Liam."

Just then, they heard the car firm owner gasp and look at Liam. "No way!" he exclaimed.

Both Tyler's words and the man's sudden exclamation made the whole hall jump to conclusions.

If the car firm owner reacted that way, it only meant that Liam had rented the car and nothing more.

They all glared at Liam with hatred and threw hate words at him.

Cartwright was out of it. "Bastard! You'll pay for this!"

No one, much less insignificant Liam could trample upon his family's dignity like this. His family was worth tens of billions for Christ's sake!

He couldn't believe that he had spent the greater part of his time trying to suck up to this bastard! He had done things he never thought he could do and as a result, humiliated his family in front of Liam-- the one person he wanted dead.

Cartwright was so embarrassed he felt like his heart was going to give up.

He had never felt this humiliated in his life before. This was more than his poor heart could take.

Emory too was in a bad place.

She was the direct descendant of a clan worth hundreds of billions. How could she have been fooled and humiliated this way by a good-for-nothing?

She finally unleashed her anger and shouted hysterically, "How the hell did you slip away from the Dragon Gang?"

Liam crossed his arms across his chest and looked at the hysteric couple with a small smile on his lips. He actually looked like he was having fun. He clicked his tongue and said calmly, "Don't be so quick to jump to conclusion. That man didn't even finish talking. You all talk of having money, but you're all stupid!"

Emory's eyes went wide. She couldn't bare to look at the arrogant smirk on his face anymore.

Everything that happened today slowly undid her until she couldn't even think straight anymore.

She forgot all about her elegance and shouted, "We're not fools, okay? You crazy bastard! I don't care if you are Liam or not. One thing is certain-- you are disabled! I'll kill you!"

Emory picked up her phone and dialled a number, her hands trembling in anger.

All the other big wigs didn't stay quiet.

"Liam, on behalf of the White Horse Luxury Car Company, I'll make sure that you will not leave this place!"

"The Black Flag Catering Company is now your enemy, Liam!"

"You're an enemy to us too!"



One after the other, big and powerful men stood up and cut all ties with Liam, declaring him their enemy.

The only person who was quiet, and not in a good way, was the car firm owner who had exclaimed. His face was pale, as though he had seen a ghost.

He kept swallowing, but his throat remained dry. He wanted to stop everyone, but he didn't know how to. He didn't even know how to start. They were all mistaken. After confirming the owner of the Bugatti Centodieci outside, he knew it belonged to Liam.

The man's mind was in a frenzy.

How could an abandoned member of the Hoffman family own a limited edition sports car worth more than ten million dollars?

How did he get his hands on it without connections and money?

Unless, of course... the Hoffman family had not actually disowned him.

## Chapter 406 The Most Noble Man

A rich man next to him suddenly looked up and saw how pale his neighbor looked. "Cornelius?" he called hesitantly. "Are you okay?"

Before Cornelius Vasquez could answer, his phone rang.

He was so scared and startled that the phone jumped in his hand before he finally answered.

With shaky hand, he brought the phone to his ear and stammered into it, "Yes... What?"

Cornelius couldn't breathe anymore.

The words that came through the phone felt like a thousand knives hitting his skin at the same time.

Cornelius felt like his world was crumbling around him.

He looked towards Liam in fear. Oh no! He had just offended and threatened Liam.

If Liam really was the heir of the Hoffman family, then he was done for. His career and his whole life was doomed.

Cornelius's hand shook so much that his phone fell. He didn't even realize it when it happened.

The man next to him looked at Cornelius, feeling a strange type of fear grip him.

He didn't even know what was happening, but he was already scared. He picked up the phone and asked, "Cornelius, what's happening?"

Seeing as Cornelius couldn't give him an answer, the man looked at the phone. The moment he saw what was on the screen, she shouted and covered his mouth with a hand.

His small shout pulled the attention of other big men around him.

They rushed over curiously and looked at the information on the phone.

Everyone's expression turned to one of fear when they saw the screen.

A gloom cloud seemed to have fallen over the hall and chilled everyone.

Whispers came from here and there, filling the hall. It was so tense that

it felt like a single move could break something.

"No, no! It's impossible!"

"No way! This can't be right!"

"I'm doomed!"

Each person that touched the phone seemed to be filled with unexplainable fear.

It was as though the cell phone had magical powers. It filled every person that touched it with the same feeling.

It brought out the same reaction from everyone as they passed it on from one person to another.

Faster than a wildfire, the phone and its magic spread throughout the hall until the only people that were still ignorant were Cartwright and Emory.

Cartwright took the phone from the man close to him in fear and confusion.

Seconds ago, he was raining curses down on Liam, and all these powerful people were doing the same. What the hell had filled them with so much fear that they couldn't speak?

Everyone stared at Cartwright, waiting to see what he would do.

In another circumstance, he would revel in the attention and the hundreds of eyes fixed on him. But the only thing he felt was doom.

With apprehension, Cartwright looked at the screen of the phone.

As though he had seen a ghost, his face turned ghastly pale.

The name of the owner of the car was clear.

Liam Hoffman!

Along with his name, was a picture of him when he bought the car.

This couldn't be a lie. This couldn't be fabricated. Liam was indeed the owner of the limited edition car outside.

Still confused, Emory exclaimed, "Not you too, Cartwright! What the hell is with the phone anyway? Let me see that!"

She pulled the phone away from his hand to see for herself.

Just as soon, Emory screamed and almost dropped the phone.

Her heart seemed to be beating a million times per second.

Her head became so light that she almost fainted.

This couldn't be right!

That car cost over ten million dollars.

Money wasn't enough to get it. One needed connections too.

It made no sense that Liam owned it.

Did that mean that this man in front of her was really Liam?

Worse still... Did that mean that Liam was never disowned by the Hoffman family?

The mockery that had filled the hall moments ago was all gone.

At first, they thought that Liam only rented the car and hired someone to come and pretend to be a member of the Hoffman family.

But they were wrong right from the start.

The owner of the car was Liam himself!

Cartwright swallowed loudly and shook his head nervously. "This can't be true! I can't accept this!"

He raised his head and searched the crowd with his eyes for Cornelius. "Cornelius, come here and clear this up. What does this mean?"

Everyone turned to look at Cornelius at the same time.

They all wanted to understand too. Cornelius took a deep breath and walked forward.

Finally in front, he explained, "I received a phone call from the president of the headquarters of Volkswagen."

Everyone gasped and held their breaths. The hall was so silent that a pin could be heard if it fell.

Impatient and scared, Cartwright shouted, "Yes? Spit it out!"

Cornelius stepped back instinctively and continued, "He warned me that the owner of this car is a noble man above all noble men, and that whoever offends him has to kneel and beg for mercy, or they would lose their job and status instantly. Also..." Cornelius trailed off, so scared to even say the next words. Everyone seemed to be hanging onto his every word.

He mustered some courage and looked at Cartwright straight in the eye. "The owner of this car didn't buy it. The head office gave it to him as a gift. They said it was to remain in his good graces and to be friends with him."

The dark cloud finally fell over and weighed on everyone.

They understood what Cornelius just said. They just couldn't let it sink. Because if they did, that would mean...

## Chapter 407 You Will Find Out What I'm Capable Of

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Tyler was at a loss for words.

He was completely dumbfounded.

He couldn't believe the luxury and top brand car outside actually belonged to Liam.

Liam was supposedly disowned by the Hoffman family.

How could he own such a car?

Everyone in the hall was asking themselves the same question.

However, they were too scared to say anything lest they offended the direct descendant of the Hoffman family more than they already had.

They were going to hold their tongues together and hope that they left this mess unscathed. It was impossible not to feel pity for Cartwright, though. He had gotten to a point of no return. Nothing he did now could save him or his family.

Out of frustration, he clenched his fists and shouted, "Who the hell are you?"

Liam smiled coldly.

Then he snapped his fingers, causing a sharp sound.

As if on command, the lights came on.

Aikin nodded curtly and pushed Liam towards the stage.

The crowd gave way for him without a single word.

They hung on his every move, waiting for him to finally give them an answer as to who he was.

They were all intelligent and intellectual people. They had already figured out that he was the one that orchestrated all the dramas tonight. And judging from the smirk hanging on his lips, things were going just as he had envisioned them.

Since the Riley family wasn't stopping him from going upstage, no one else saw any reason to. Or perhaps, they just didn't want to risk it.

Tyler, however, was tired of getting humiliated on his own wedding day. All he had suffered up until then was enough humiliation to last a lifetime.

Blue veins standing out on his neck and forehead, he shouted in anger, "You destroyed my wedding! You're going to pay for it!"

Liam looked at him with a striking calm and said, "You and the bride insulted me, but the bride knelt and apologized. I've decided to let it go. But now, what do I do with you?"

Liam tapped his chin pensively, as if really thinking of what to do. Tyler was so scared that he unconsciously stepped back.

However, his unconscious act, caused the whole crowd to titter.

Tyler looked at the mocking faces and felt like he was in hell. This couldn't be happening to him. Not today.

Tyler shook his head so fervently that it seemed like he had gone mad. He pointed his finger at Liam and roared, "You! This is all your fault! I'm going to kill you!"

He raised a hand and rushed towards Liam.

"You idiot!" Liam spat out, totally unfazed.

Before Tyler could get to him, Aikin strode forward and slapped the furious man across the face, knocking him to the floor.

The slap was so hard that the sound traveled throughout the hall.

In that moment, Emory forgot all about herself and decorum. She couldn't care less who Liam was or the influence he had. "Security!" she shouted. "Where is the security of the manor? The bodyguards of the Riley family? Come here now!"

She shouted and shouted, but got no response.

It was as though they had all disappeared.

Emory was going crazy. This couldn't be happening to her. No! It just couldn't!

She was the hostess of a rich family worth tens of billions of dollars. She was a woman of high status that no one dared to look down on.

She had always lived a luxurious and happy life in the Riley family.

Her life even got better after she became the direct descendant of a clan

worth hundreds of billions of dollars. She felt like life couldn't get any better.

So many people tried sucking up to her. Even her domineering husband respected and listened to her.

She felt so superior and always felt like she controlled everything.

So this new feeling of having no control whatsoever was foreign to her.

"You bastard!" she screamed. "My father is the head of the Norris family, a rich and powerful clan with assets worth hundreds of billions. I don't care who you are; Liam or the descendant of the Hoffman family, I don't care! But if you hurt my son, you will find out what I'm capable of!"

Everyone looked at Emory in absolute shock. How could she say such?

She was either very brave, or just plain crazy and stupid.

Even if this man really was Liam who had been expelled by his family, if the Hoffman family heard that she spoke of them in this manner, they wouldn't take it lightly.

And if they decided to revenge, then both the Riley and the Norris families would not survive.

To everyone's surprise, Liam laughed out loud.

While everyone watched, he laughed and laughed before cutting it off abruptly.

"Okay then. You asked for it." His expression and tone as cold as ice, Liam ordered loudly, "Aikin, break Tyler's limbs."



## Chapter 408 The Death Vote

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Without any hesitation, Aikin strode toward Tyler.

At the moment, anger was written all over Tyler's face. Many times he struggled to get back on his feet, but failed.

The fear in his heart grew as Aikin got closer and closer.

Currently, he felt as if he was a lone island amidst the sea of raging waves, just waiting to engulf him.

He hurriedly turned toward the people beside him and begged, "Help me, and the Riley family won't forget your deeds. Hurry up and stop him! That bastard is Liam! Please believe me!"

In his heart, he always felt that this group of people were just intimidated by the man's identity as a member of the Hoffman family.

When the man in front of him first appeared, Tyler merely suspected it was Liam. However, now he was absolutely sure of his identity!

That man was Liam!

As long as he could prove that that man was Liam, he would be able to turn the tables on him today.

As long as the Riley family could ally themselves with the rest of the powerful clans here, they would be able to overwhelm Liam easily.

Tyler's fear racketed up a notch as he bellowed like a madman, "Liam must have used some means to keep up this facade! Think about it! If he had truly returned to the Hoffman family, how could he have stood being bullied by the Seymour family and had his legs broken by King!"

Hearing this, everyone exchanged glances and began to hesitate.

"Well..."

Seeing this, Tyler shouted in a hurry, "Listen to me! I've investigated everything about Liam as soon as I got back to Salem! He is living in a rental house and drives a second-hand Toyota. In fact, he was once employed as an ordinary clerk in the Rinku Group! Think about it. Every time he showed up, he merely sported a cheap suit worth hundreds of dollars! How could such a person still be a member of the Hoffman

family?!"

Everyone was in an uproar when they heard this.

What Tyler said seemed sensible!

Had they been fooled again?!

With a dismissive smile, Liam said indifferently, "But I have never identified myself as Liam, have I? That car was just a possession of Liam before he was expelled from the Hoffman family. Since then, he has transferred the car's ownership to me. Whether it's because of our relationship, or this limited edition luxury car which is worth more than ten million dollars, I should help him once."

Suddenly, Cornelius, the boss of the car company suddenly shouted, "Listen to me! The chief executive officer is calling me!"

That caught everyone's attention as they all focused their attention on him.

Cornelius took out his phone and turned on the speaker.

Everyone awaited with bated breath as they focused their attention on his words.

On the other end of the line, a masculine voice was heard saying, "Just now, the ownership of the super sports car was transferred to Mr. Maximiliano Hoffman. All the formalities have been completed. I'll send you the new photo. Don't offend him when you see him!"

Liam snickered when he saw the scene before him.

Naturally, he was the mastermind behind all these!

Previously, when the phone was being passed around by the crowd, he had sent a message to Theo to solve this problem.

After Cornelius hung up the phone, the crowd had their answer.

No one doubted whether the man in front of them was Liam or not.

That was because he was indeed Maximiliano, the direct descendant of the Hoffman family that the man mentioned just now!

Everyone heaved a sigh of relief when they thought of this.

Fortunately, they didn't act rashly just now!

Otherwise, if they offended Maximiliano, their lives would be ruined!

Tyler stared wide-eye at the crowd before him and roared, "That's impossible! He must be Liam! Are you guys fucking stupid?! Trust me!"

Liam ignored Tyler, who was almost close to madness.

He scanned the crowd with a cold glint in his eyes before he said indifferently, "In that case, Mr. Riley, let's play a game."

As soon as Liam finished his words, the phones of everyone present there vibrated.

Each of them received a link on their phones.

Following that, Liam propped his face up casually and said, "Please click on the link and vote."

Everyone was confused. However, they quickly clicked on the link.

The design of this page was simplistic. Obviously, one could tell that it was put together in a hurry.

But they didn't care about it at all.

That was because the title of the page shocked them.

It read, "Do you think the Riley family should be destroyed?! Yes! Or No?!"

With a clap of his hands, Liam cleared his throat and said with amusement, "With a swipe of your finger, you can decide the destruction of a clan worth tens of billions. Isn't it great?"

Hearing this, everyone gasped in astonishment!

For a moment, everybody couldn't hide their excitement as their hands started to tremble.

They were overcome by a wave of thrill and excitement as their hearts threatened to leap out of their chests.

Most of them came to curry favor with the Riley family!

All of them came here in the hopes that they could gain the favor of the Riley family and gain new heights in their careers.

But now?

Out of the blue, somebody had handed them the right to decide whether the Riley family would perish in this game. They did not have to beg with their tails between their legs anymore!

If power could make a person obsess, then this button would drive them

crazy.

In addition to that, the people sitting closest to the stage, who were from a more elite background than the rest of them, were tempted by this offer as well.

After all, the resources in Salem were finite. If someone were to monopolize a single resource, they would not be able to get any benefit from it.

If one of the top ten clans collapsed, just think how many resources would be released to the public?!

Who knows, anyone of them could be one of the top ten clans after the Riley family was gone!

Looking at everyone's reaction, Liam was very satisfied. He continued, "Don't worry. As the direct descendant of the Hoffman family, I can use the resources I have to destroy a clan who has assets worth tens of billions. It's not difficult!"

Hearing this, Cartwright was scared to death!

He ran to Liam in horror and pleaded, "Mr. Hoffman, I'm willing to give you one hundred million, no, one billion! Please show some mercy and let the Riley family off the hook!"

Liam sneered and asked with a sinister smile, "One billion? That's so much money!"

Seeing that there was still a glimmer of hope left, Cartwright's expression lit up.

However, the next moment, Liam changed his tone and said again, "But do you think I am lacking of money?"

Cartwright's smile froze on his face and his eyes widened in shock.

Yes!

How could a member of the Hoffman family be lacking of money? Cartwright hadn't considered it at all!

Liam drummed his fingers on the armrest of the wheelchair and said lazily, "Apart from taking an extreme liking to this car, I came here for another reason. That is my general dislike of the Riley family. Isn't that reason good enough?"

Just because he disliked them?

How could the reason be good enough?!

Everyone was stunned by his reasoning.

However, for a big clan like the Hoffman family, did they need official reasons to dispose of a small fry?

What a domineering man!

What arrogance!

Everyone's eyes were filled with dread and fear at this very moment.

They knew that they couldn't afford to provoke this man!

He was indeed mad.

Liam grinned, exposing a set of amazing white teeth. He flung his arms out wide and roared like he was teetering on the edge of madness, "Let the voting begin!"

## Chapter 409 Where Was Julie

---

Cartwright and his family on stage were the focus of everyone. They all looked on, eager and excited to see the end of the Riley family.

This wasn't an opportunity that could present itself twice. They had to grab it now that it was before them.

Meanwhile, Cartwright was in a cold sweat. He didn't feel good at all. He could feel the overwhelming sense of failure looming over his family.

He couldn't just let that happen. He would rather lose his pride than lose everything his family had built.

Without a second thought, Cartwright fell to his knees with a thud in front of Liam and cried out, "Mr. Hoffman, the Riley family will compensate you with anything you desire. Just say the word. Is it companies, shares or what? We'll give it to you. But please, spare us, Mr. Hoffman."

Emory's arrogance had long faded as the gravity of the situation finally gripped her. She did what she had never done before and grovelled before Liam.

"Mr. Hoffman, I see now that this is all my fault. I am responsible for my son's stupidity. Just say the word. Even if the Riley family can't satisfy you enough, the Norris family will pitch in. Just please, spare us this once."

The atmosphere was heavy with tension and fear. Everyone waited for Liam to say something, but the man in the wheelchair acted like he hadn't heard them and looked at the crowd instead. "Why are you still hesitating? It's anonymous. No one will know what you choose."

As though they were all waiting for that confirmation, everyone excitedly looked back at the phone and pressed the obvious option.

Cartwright looked at the excitement on their faces as they hit the buttons on their phones, fear gripping every single part of his body.

This was torture. He watched as people he once considered allies, decided on the fate of his family, and he could do nothing about it.

This was the end of the road for the Riley family.

Before they lost it all, Emory fought one last time and called the one person she thought could help them out of this mess; Fuller.

She called and called, but he never picked up.

Her hope was already running very thin when she called for the fifth time. But this time, he picked up.

As soon as the call went through, Emory felt her whole body sag in relief. Finally, a way out! "Fuller, where are you? Come here quickly!"

Her hopes were squashed as soon as they came. "I had a car accident, and I can't leave. Trust me I've tried. But what is going on?"

Whatever he said after the word 'accident' was lost on her. Her phone slipped from her trembling hand and fell to the floor with a sharp sound.

"It's really over!" she murmured.

"Accident?" she said to herself. There was no way that accident was just a mere coincidence.

Everything was planned out quite perfectly.

They couldn't escape. They were caught in a spiderweb and couldn't get out of it.

The audience, whose loyalty was as fickle as a playboy's love, had shifted sides. Since the Riley family was obviously going to be devoured, they sided with the winning team that they all hated in the beginning of the farce.

Tyler was in total shock.

He couldn't believe that this was happening. That he was over.

His glory, his wealth, all of it-- gone.

The thought of this was so scary that his insides repulsed and made him sick.

He looked up to see the man that was doing this to him, and saw the evil smile on Liam's face.

He looked so calm, as though he had won. That look on his face said it all. He could do whatever he wanted to the Riley family.

He gave the impression that he could crush Tyler and get rid of him whenever he wanted to.

But that look belonged to Tyler. He was the one that was supposed to have that power, most especially today. He was the bridegroom for crying out loud!

These thoughts gave Tyler the courage he needed. It turned his fear into anger, uncontrollable anger.

With this sudden surge of bravery, Tyler ignored the pain in his leg, stood up and laughed like a mad man.

Aikin narrowed his eyes arrogantly at him. "What's so funny? Your misfortune?"

Without waiting for an answer, he strode towards Tyler to break some more bones.

"Wait!" Liam suddenly called and stopped him. "Let him say his last words."

For some reason, Tyler cracked up even more after hearing this. "Last words? Liam, I know it's you. Even if you do everything humanly possible to disguise yourself, I will still recognize you."

Everyone stared at Tyler as though he was an idiot.

How was it that he still couldn't accept what was in front of him?

After all that had happened, how could he still think that this powerful man was Liam?

Cartwright who was already regretting his former actions shook his head desperately at his son. "Tyler, shut it! This is all your fault! Get on your knees and stay down!"

he scolded and instantly went closer to Liam, hoping that Tyler's outburst would not make things worse.

"Mr. Hoffman, we are terribly sorry. Turn a blind eye to this and forgive us, please."

Disgusted by his father's actions, Tyler spat out, "You're such a loser! How can you be kneeling in front of Liam and begging him? Open your eyes!"

Having run out of patience with his son, Cartwright got up and in a second, slapped Tyler hard across the face, shouting hysterically all the way, "Face reality, you bastard! This is what you want, right? You want



to completely ruin the Riley family!"

For a long second, Tyler didn't say anything. He cleaned the blood at the corner of his mouth, revealing his teeth covered in blood. Before long, he started laughing again.

"You can deceive everyone, Liam, but not me. I know who you are. Let's see how long you'll keep this facade up when I tell you that I have Julie. That's right! I have your bitch!"

He took out his phone, clicked on a live stream video and threw it to Liam with a smug smile on his lips.

Tyler felt like he was once again in control of everything. He laughed again, this time dryly, and asked, "I'm sure you're curious to know where Julie is, right? Well then, I'm going to tell you right now."

Aikin picked up the phone hastily and looked at the screen.

His eyes went wide in terror in a second.

Liam's face darkened when he saw the expression on Aikin's face. "Give it to me!" he snapped.

Aikin looked at Liam and held the phone hesitantly.

"I said, give it to me!" Liam roared again!

Aikin swallowed audibly and slowly put the phone in Liam's palm.

Liam was visibly shaken when he saw the screen.

Seeing this, the whole banquet hall fell in a silence.

## Chapter 410 The Desperate Riley Family

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The video bore a spectacle that chilled one to the bone.

In a room swallowed by shadows, barely discernible, faint beams of light highlighted an imposing metal enclosure at the center.

Julie was a spectacle of despair. Her clothes were tattered, her hair in disarray, and her face smeared with filth.

She seemed vacant, huddled silently in a corner, motionless.

Her figure resembled a desiccated carcass, a chilling testament to the merciless torment she must have endured.

"What happened?"

Liam's eyes blazed with a painful fury, and his lips quivered.

Fond memories of them in happier times flickered through his mind.

The more radiant the recollections, the more the current view before him stung.

The agony cleaved through his heart like a blade, flooding his being with a mix of wrath and sorrow.

He felt as though each cell in his body was under torment, the pain was so intense it felt suffocating.

A moment of stillness passed before Liam snapped back to reality.

In a moment of intense frustration, he gripped the phone in his hand so tightly that it shattered, rendering it irreparable with visible cracks.

Fragments of the shattered case dug into his palm.

He was bleeding.

Liam's gaze turned icy. Beneath the calm exterior, a seething rage roared for revenge.

His voice raspy, he barked, "Tyler! Damn you! And the Riley family! Damn you!"

"Ha, you're clearly unable to maintain composure now!" Tyler's laughter bubbled with excitement.

He pivoted towards the spectators, his countenance alight with smug

satisfaction. "Did you notice? The disabled person is none other than Liam! Who else would be so desperate for Julie? The descendant of the Hoffman family? More like a homeless mutt!"

The crowd didn't share his sentiments and merely muttered among themselves, glancing at Tyler as if he were the fool.

"Has he lost his mind? He doesn't even realize his own precarious position. He's knocking on death's door!"

"Indeed. Regardless of whether the man is Liam or not, he holds the reins of power now. No one can intervene and alter this situation!"

"It only asserts that our fate is in his hands!"

The identity of this man was of little consequence to them!

As his boasting fell on deaf ears, Tyler's expression clouded, and a surge of anxiety crept in.

A frosty voice intoned. "Do you enjoy inflicting pain? Your turn to experience it now! I want every bone in your body broken, from head to toe! I want your screams to echo through this hall!"

Liam's features twisted into a grimace of fury, his voice laden with deadly intent.

"Yes, sir!" Aikin answered.

His face turned ashen, heart pounding with fear.

As the head of Kingland Security, the absence of any clues about Julie's whereabouts was a major failure on his part!

His anxiety escalated in the face of Liam's fury.

"Tyler, you have the audacity to repeatedly offend Mr. Hoffman? You're inviting your own demise!"

Aikin's gaze held a lethal frost.

He moved swiftly, kneeling over Tyler and snapping one of his fingers with brute strength!

"Ah!"

Tyler's screams rang out like a hog on the chopping block.

Before Tyler could even process, his finger was broken.

The intense agony nearly caused him to lose consciousness, leaving his

face as pale as a ghost.

Gritting his teeth, he managed to snarl, "You bastard! Lay a hand on me, and the Norris family will never spare you!"

But before he could finish his sentence!

Another finger was snapped.

"Let's see if you make it through today!"

Aikin wore a ghastly grin and exerted more force.

First one finger, then another, then the whole palm.

And then the entire arm.

Aikin manhandled Tyler as if he were a beast.

Every bone in his arms was crushed to fragments!

Tyler, akin to a deflated balloon, lay with his arms flattened on the floor.

His anguished cries reverberated through the hall, turning the spectators ashen with terror.

"No! How could you do that, you bastard?" Emory bellowed, her eyes streaming with tears.

Her dread of the Hoffman family evaporated in that instant.

All she wanted was to protect her son!

Glaring at Liam with venom, Emory spat, "I'll slaughter you, flay you, rip your tendons, sever your limbs! I will avenge my son!"

"That's a good idea. I'm not certain if you will manage to do those to me, but I assure you, your son is up for a similar fate first!"

Liam, sitting in his wheelchair, looked at her, utterly nonchalant about her threats.

"Limb by limb, break Tyler down," Liam ordered Aikin, scoffing.

"No! Don't harm my child!" Emory cried out in despair, tears cascading down her cheeks.

Cartwright's eyes became bloodshot, his face contorted in rage, appearing as if he had aged a decade in a mere moment.

No father could remain indifferent to such horrific torment inflicted upon his son.

Cartwright looked around pleadingly. "Someone help! Save my boy!"

Everyone cast their eyes down, avoiding eye contact with Cartwright.

As he approached, they would subtly withdraw!

Realizing that no one was willing to aid him, Cartwright gave a bitter smile.

He picked up a knife from the table, his hand trembling, yet his gaze was filled with resolve.

He had made a decision for his son!

With a fierce expression, Cartwright stormed towards Liam.

To everyone's astonishment, he brandished the knife, aiming for Liam's throat!

## Chapter 411 The Riley Family Was Over

Liam had his eyes fixed on Cartwright's every move, rendering the sneak attack doomed to fail.

"Go to hell!"

Sporting a cold expression, Liam effortlessly seized hold of Cartwright's wrist.

With a surge of strength, he forcefully twisted and broke Cartwright's wrist.

Liam then swung his other hand.

And suddenly!

He delivered a powerful slap across Cartwright's face.

The impact sent Cartwright flying three meters away, landing next to Tyler.

"Ah!"

An agonized scream pierced the air.

Cartwright's front teeth scattered on the floor and his mouth dripped with blood, presenting a ghastly sight.

The father and son struggled to rise but failed, crying out fiercely at the pitiful state they found each other in.

"It's time to move on to the next stage of the game!" Liam coldly addressed the two men.

Snapping his fingers, he plunged the stage into darkness!

"What's happening? Why are the lights out? Is he going to kill us?"

"Don't kill me! I'm willing to give you all my belongings! Let go of me. I don't want to die!"

Pandemonium broke out among the audience and their hearts were filled with unease.

Then, two dazzling spotlights suddenly illuminated the scene again.

The light focused on the faces of the Riley family father and son, exposing their misery.

Every detail was showcased clearly before everybody.

The two once-powerful and arrogant men now resembled wounded strays on the street, an irony beyond compare!

The audience let out a collective sigh, feeling a tinge of pity for both men.

Liam cast a stern gaze upon the people below the stage and declared, "Now it's time for you to vote! If you don't vote, you won't be leaving here today!"

As soon as he finished speaking, the doors of the hall were forcefully pushed open.

A swarm of Kingland Security guards flooded in, axes in hand, and lined up on both sides of the venue.

At Liam's command, they would unleash a bloodbath!

Seeing the tide turning in Liam's favor, Emory yelled in a frenzy, "As a direct descendant of the Norris family, I guarantee that these people won't dare to harm you! Are we going to let a disabled worthless man walk over us? So what if he's from a family worth trillions of dollars? As long as we stand together, we have nothing to fear!"

Her words failed to sway anyone.

Almost all the people present were businessmen. They were concerned solely about their own profits and not inclined to take risks with a mad woman!

In the dimly lit hall, all hesitations vanished. Heads bowed down as the voting process commenced.

After all, it was not possible for the Riley family to exact revenge on every person in that hall!

In a blink of an eye, a large number of people chose the 'yes' option, agreeing to the destruction of the Riley family.

The turnout of that option exceeded fifty percent!

The largest screen suddenly came to life, showcasing a spectacular display of colorful fireworks.

Then, the words 'messages have been successfully sent' appeared on the screen.

Everyone was dumbfounded, clueless about what had just transpired.

Liam sneered, "Thank you for your votes. The messages I just sent contain scandals involving the Riley family and evidence of their sordid deeds over the past few years!"

Upon hearing this, everyone came to a conclusion that the Riley family was doomed!

Meanwhile, Liam's messages caused a sensation online in Salem.

The negative news about the Riley family spread far and wide, attracting countless viewers who expressed their disdain.

Even some previously unknown scandals of the Riley family were exposed by insiders.

The media reacted swiftly, diving into the reportage of the dark side of the Riley family.

They fearlessly spread the scandals throughout the city of Salem, without seeking anyone's permission!

It was clear to everyone that, under the weight of these revelations, the Riley family had no chance of turning the tables!

The frenzied scene of news spreading played out on the hall's large screen.

A renowned reporter was seen delivering the report. "Today, it has been revealed that the once mighty and arrogant Riley family is embroiled in a series of scandals. After thorough investigation, all accusations have been confirmed true."

"The Riley family's companies have engaged in serious tax fraud..."

"Cartwright Riley, the head of the Riley family, attempted to coerce a female employee into sleeping with him. When she resisted, he raped and murdered her. He even abused his power to cover up his crime. The depths of his depravity were truly horrifying..."

"Tyler Riley hired individuals to murder people and bribed the police force of Ninverton to escape from the punishment..."

"As for Rileymart, the pillar industry of the Riley family's business empire, its application data have been falsified, and the market value artificially inflated to manipulate investments. It is nothing short of a



massive case of business fraud..."

These news reports were comparable to a death sentence for the Riley family!

Cartwright's face turned ashen. Lying on the floor, he cried out in despair, "It's over! Everything is over! The Riley family is completely finished! We fought so hard to achieve what we wanted, but now it all means nothing."

Having been immersed in the business world for decades, Cartwright knew the gravity of the situation.

Even if the Norris family were willing to help, it would be impossible to salvage the Riley family.

Struggling to stand upright, Cartwright swayed unsteadily. His eyes burned with hatred as he glared at Liam.

He bellowed, filled with defiance, "Why? Why did you have to destroy my family? The Riley family has thrived for over two centuries! We toiled for generations to build a clan with assets worth tens of billions. And now, you've ruined it all!"

At these words, a sardonic smile crept across Liam's lips. He jeered, "Toiled? Don't try to glorify the vile and despicable deeds of the Riley family with such grandiose descriptions! You're nothing more than sewer rats who should have perished long ago. If you had conducted business honestly, how could I have found evidence against you? You and your son have committed countless atrocities. You deserve to die!"

Thinking of Julie's misery, Liam couldn't help but feel a cruel and violent impulse coursing through his veins.

He didn't merely want to kill the father and son. He wanted them to understand the truth.

He would make living the greatest torment for them.

Cartwright raved madly, "You won't die a peaceful death! The Norris family will never allow you to get away with this!"

Seeing Cartwright's continued outburst, Aikin took matters into his own hands without awaiting Liam's orders.

He moved forward and broke Cartwright's arm!

Heart-wrenching screams echoed in everyone's ears.

This caused tremors of fear to ripple through the crowd.

Emory, witnessing the downfall of the Riley family, was consumed with rage and collapsed, foaming at the mouth. Yet, no one dared to attend to her.

Finally regaining some composure, Liam pushed his wheelchair to the center of the stage and coldly declared the end of the Riley family.

"From this moment on, the Riley family is blacklisted by me! Whoever dares to render them help shall become an enemy of the Hoffman family! The members of the Riley family shall be destitute for generations to come. They shall have but one meal a day, and all the money they acquire shall be donated to orphanages! Let their descendants bear the burden of their ancestors' sins!"

The first to reply was Cornelius of the car company.

He roared, "We, the Vasquez family, are willing to supervise to ensure that the Riley family remain beggars forever!"

Immediately he finished speaking, others began to echo his sentiment.

"I, the owner of Black Flag Catering Company, pledge to be an eternal enemy of the Riley family!"

"On behalf of my real estate company, I vow to ensure that the Riley family is reduced to beggary!"

"Count me in!"

More and more people present said their pledge.

In an instant, the situation became totally one-sided.

Everyone cast venomous glances at the members of the Riley family, going out of their way to please Liam.

When someone falls from power, their minions scatter in all directions!

Today, the Riley family lacked the strength to change their situation, and everyone wanted to crush their broken bodies a few more times.

The Riley family had officially become history!

At the same time, this development signaled a complete transformation of Salem!

## Chapter 412 The Abandoned Factory

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Noticing the rising discontent against the Riley family, Liam was poised to leave.

Nevertheless, his concern for Julie's well-being was ever present.

As Liam moved away from the stage, everyone made way for him. Their gazes bore admiration, akin to looking at the king of Salem.

The impact of Liam's assertive move that day was immense. Fear was a far more effective tool than respect!

And Liam had no use for their reverence. His sole desire was their submission!

The father and son of the Riley family were sprawled on the floor in a disturbingly sinister manner. Their eyes burned with animosity and spite when they looked at Liam.

Their bloody eyes followed Liam's withdrawing figure, as though they intended to etch his image into their souls and curse him relentlessly.

The ridiculous drama came to a close, and everyone trailed out of the estate after Liam.

As the Bugatti Centodieci sped away, all could do was watch, silenced by awe and envy.

Inside the car, Aikin stated, "Mr. Hoffman, we've found out where Miss Fiber is being held captive!"

Liam's eyes narrowed as he ordered, "Speed up!"

Aikin couldn't ignore it, not for a moment. His nerves were always on high alert. With a firm press on the accelerator, the Bugatti bolted down the road.

Five minutes later, the Bugatti Centodieci halted before the destination! It was an abandoned factory.

Anxiety marked Liam's face. He kicked the door open even before Aikin could step out to open it for him.

Opting to skip the wheelchair this time, he endured the excruciating pain in his legs and limped inside.

At that moment, a contingent of individuals from the Dragon Gang stood watch in this vicinity.

Their leader, a towering hulk of a man, was nearly two meters tall, with a ripped physique. His bare torso was a canvas of scars, one giant devil tattoo being the most prominent.

He gnawed on a roasted lamb shank.

"Who are you? What's your business here? Looking to get killed?!" one of his men barked at the approaching figure.

With Liam's face hidden behind a human skin mask, the gang failed to recognize him.

Surveying the Dragon Gang members, Liam scoffed and declared dismissively, "I'm here to kill you all!"

Spotting the incoming troublemaker, the tattooed man swiveled to face Liam, snarling, "Do you even know who you're dealing with, boy? You'll regret this once I tell you! I'm the head of the Dragon Gang's twelfth division! Dare to stir trouble on my turf? You're signing your own death warrant! Today, I'll pulverize your bones to dust! Then I'll roast you up and feast on you just like this lamb shank!"

The gang members broke into derisive laughter and started boasting.

"Why would you need to lift a finger? We can deal with this crippled fool easily."

"Son of a bitch! Our boss is a multiple-time champion of the national underworld boxing tournament. Over a hundred people have met their demise at his hands!"

The gang showed no respect towards Liam, treating him as good as dead! The tattooed brute relished his cronies' flattery and quipped, "I prefer to hunt my own prey!"

With that, he lunged for the machete on the ground and pounced like a cheetah.

A glint of cold menace flashed off the machete's blade as it hurtled toward Liam's neck!

His strike was intended to be lethal!

## Chapter 413 The Members Of The Dragon Gang

The sight made the gangsters sneer, marking Liam for death within their minds.

"What a fool. He'd likely lose his head before he even spots the glint of our boss' blade!"

"Poor disabled man. Should've been home safe, not here in the wilderness courting death!"

Suddenly, a cry pierced the air.

"Ah! My eye!"

A voice they recognized echoed with agony.

Upon closer inspection, they found the source. It was their leader. "No way! That's the boss' voice!"

The tattooed man, stepping backwards, held his eye with a firm grip.

It was then they witnessed the condition of the battlefield. Liam emerged unscathed, while their leader had a nail firmly lodged in his eye!

The mere sight sent chills up their spines, their mouths parched with dread.

In that moment, they understood that this seemingly helpless man was a death-bringer, someone not to be trifled with!

Liam, stepping forward, questioned in a cold voice, "Where is Julie held captive? Lead me there at once!"

Despite his painful state, the tattooed man's primal instincts were sparked by his injury.

He sniggered darkly. "Oh, so you're here for her, huh? Too bad, she might not last till your rescue. Ha ha ha..."

With icy murderous intent, Liam retorted, "You're asking for death!"

The tattooed man's face contorted into a savage growl. "You bastard, you only hit me because I was off guard! Attack him, boys! I'll use his eyes to brew some wine!"

Hearing this, the Dragon Gang regained their spirits. Their smiles were malicious.

Armed with machetes, they charged at Liam.

"How could this guy even stand a chance against our leader? Our leader got hurt simply because he underestimated our enemy!"

"Let me finish him off for the boss!"

Unperturbed, Liam faced the onslaught of the gang.

With a swift motion, he took out a handful of nails from his pocket, launching them with precision.

No nail missed its mark!

"Ah!"

A shooting pain in their wrists left the gang members incapacitated.

Machetes dropped, the gangsters writhed in pain, clutching their hands, their screams reverberating.

Liam advanced towards them, one step at a time.

This limping figure appeared like a demon in the eyes of everyone present!

The tattooed man, looking grim, mustered courage to threaten, "You can fight, I'll give you that. But remember, there are twenty thousand Dragon Gang members behind us. Don't be reckless! Surely, this is all a big misunderstanding."

But Liam paid him no mind.

More nails flew from his hand, sinking into the tattooed man's knees!

"Ouch!" the man cried out.

Overwhelmed by agony, his pride took a hit.

He hadn't anticipated this complete disregard for the Dragon Gang!

Liam towered over the fallen tattooed man, saying, "I'll ask you for the last time. Where is Julie?"

Overcome with fear, the tattooed man swallowed his pride.

He fell to his knees, begging, "She's on the second floor. Proceed to the innermost section, and you'll find her there! Please, don't kill me. I've told you everything!"

Just then, Aikin appeared. Taking in the scene of battered bodies, he squinted.

Without looking back, Liam ordered, "I'm leaving these scums to you. Their lives will be living nightmares." Anyone who'd harmed Julie would pay!

Aikin nodded, his face stern.

The tattooed man was a member of the underworld who had crossed paths with the leaders of various gangs in Salem before.

He recognized Aikin as the former underworld king of Salem and attempted to charm him, saying, "You must be Mr. Frazier, am I correct? We have drunk together before. Do you remember?"

Aikin paid him no attention, his inner voice scoffing.

Challenging Aikin might have left a glimmer of a chance for survival.

But crossing Mr. Hoffman? That spelled certain doom!

Aikin pulled out his phone, dialed a number, and ordered, "Tyson, we've got some trash that needs cleaning!"

## Chapter 414 Saving Julie

---

On the second floor of the abandoned factory, Liam's eyes were met with the heartbreaking sight of Julie!

Though he had braced himself for the worst, tears streamed down his face.

The situation was more grave and visually gut-wrenching than the video on the phone.

Julie lay imprisoned in a dilapidated metal enclosure. She was deathly pale, and unconsciousness had claimed her.

Her limbs and neck bore heavy chains!

Her visible skin was a canvas of blood.

As Liam bit down hard, the taste of blood filled his mouth and he muttered, "Those scums of the Riley family... Even a death repeated ten thousand times wouldn't satiate my fury towards them!"

"Who are you? How did you infiltrate this place?" An enraged guard stepped up, barking out his questions.

Liam's gaze hardened.

He had found an outlet for his rage. Swiftly, he lunged at the man, his hand wrapping around his throat.

He hoisted the man into the air!

His voice was icy.

"Hand over the cage key!"

The guard was too choked for a retort. His airway blocked, speech was beyond him.

The key was hastily flung from his pocket, and he raised his hand to signify compliance.

Seeing his beloved Julie in such a state had pushed Liam to the edge.

He snatched the key, slamming the guard to the floor.

He hurriedly unlocked the cage!

"Julie, wake up. I'm here to set you free!" Liam's voice quivered. He



tenderly approached Julie, taking in her tortured state.

Her face was drawn, her lips parched and colorless, and a brutalized red and swollen mark marred her right cheek.

Her exposed skin was a gruesome sight of either bruises or savage wounds!

It was unfathomable to consider that Tyler, that bastard, could stoop so low as to brutally torture a woman!

As he cradled Julie, remorse consumed Liam. With his eyes teary, his voice raspy, he whispered, "Julie, forgive me. I came too late. Trust me, from now on, no one will ever harm you again!"

Liam carefully carried Julie out of the cage.

He could feel her injuries, and he knew she needed immediate medical attention!

Meanwhile, Aikin was about to ascend the stairs to report, when he bore witness to Julie's pitiful state.

He bellowed in rage, "The Riley family are indeed monstrous!"

Spotting Liam carrying Julie in his arms, Aikin intended to assist him, given Liam's recent injuries.

Yet, he got no response.

As Aikin observed Liam's limping silhouette, a wave of guilt washed over him, leaving him immensely discomfited.

Suddenly, this formidable kingpin found himself on his knees!

With teary eyes, Aikin yelled, "Mr. Hoffman, I am sorry. It was because of my incompetence that Miss Fiber endured such torment!"

Regardless, Liam remained undeterred, as though oblivious to his surroundings. He descended the stairs, step by step.

"I apologize!" As Liam receded from view, Aikin lowered his gaze, his voice a whisper of remorse.

Downstairs, Kingland Security's forces had arrived and were dealing with the gangsters of the Dragon Gang.

As Liam made his way to the exit, Tyson approached him. "Mr. Hoffman, is Miss Fiber okay?"

He was met with a pair of bloodshot eyes radiating murderous intent.

A terrified Tyson recoiled, feeling a bone-chilling fear which made breathing seem like an uphill task.

With Julie securely in his hold, Liam brushed past his men and continued his limping journey.

Behind him, he could hear Aikin and Tyson conversing.

"What should we do with these gangsters?"

"Ship them to a poor country to toil in the mines! They get one meal per day. They aren't to be freed until death takes them!"

Liam didn't spare it a second thought. He stumbled towards his car, carrying Julie.

Even as his wounds reopened, staining his pants red, he paid it no heed. His heartache overshadowed any physical pain, leaving him feeling numb.

An hour later, the hospital had concluded their resuscitation efforts on Julie.

As Liam watched her lying on the hospital bed, guilt stabbed at his heart. He could only feel her warmth through his hand.

"As long as you're unconscious, I will never leave your side!"

Liam maintained his vigil at Julie's bedside.

Only on the following morning, did a hint of color return to Julie's ashen skin.

Her fingers twitched, immediately alerting the slightly dozing Liam.

"Julie, are you awake?!" Liam gently inquired, rushing to her bedside, while containing his overwhelming joy.

Julie sluggishly opened her eyes, perplexed, and responded timidly, "Who are you?"

Liam's pupils constricted, a horrifying realization washing over him.

## Chapter 415 Her Loss Of Memory

---

"How could this be? Is it..."

Despite his unease, Liam forced himself to smile and said, "Julie, stop joking."

However, Julie still looked confused, and her eyes showed no hint of recognition for Liam. She asked carefully, "Do we know each other?"

The smile on Liam's face froze.

There was no denying now that Julie had lost her memory. After their talk, Liam concluded that Julie could only recall events that happened before she met him.

Having read numerous medical books, he knew that there were two distinct causes for her amnesia.

Julie was either suffering from selective amnesia or dissociative amnesia. Based on recent events, Liam had a good idea of what was going on. It was possible that the sorrow associated with remembering him was why Julie would not bring herself to do so.

Her memory loss might also have been exacerbated by Tyler's abuse, the brutality of the Cortez family, and the immense amount of pressure she was under.

A self-mocking smile spread across Liam's face. Every part of him whimpered as a wave of resentment swept through his veins.

As he recalled everything that he and Julie had gone through, a surge of self-doubt rose in his heart.

Did his existence truly bring her so much pain?

After all, if he had not turned up, she would still be Ninverton's respected female CEO.

Liam's eyes began to redden slowly. He clenched his fists hard until blood oozed out of his palms.

Realization dawned on him. It seemed that his appearance brought Julie nothing but trouble.

Memories of the past began playing like a movie in his head

He remembered how they became acquainted, fell in love, and then drifted apart.

Tears started streaming down his face.

After some time had passed in silence, Liam finally spoke, mumbling an apology. Julie had no idea why he was doing so, though.

His voice was hoarse and sorrowful as he kept saying the same thing over and over.

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

In between sobs, Liam choked out, "You've gone through so much just to be with me, and I didn't realize that until now.

This is all my fault. I didn't look after you well and caused you a lot of pain.

Maybe it would've been better for you if you hadn't met me."

At that very moment, Liam stripped away all of his masks and revealed the most vulnerable aspect of himself.

As the heir of the Hoffman family, he received various trainings and educations. He had gained exposure to life that most people never got.

He was no stranger to the cutthroat competition of the business world or the horrors of the battlefield.

Not even being kicked out of the Lambert family, whom he had been living with for three years, could bring him down to tears.

However, he blubbered and cried like a baby in Julie's presence.

In the hospital room, he was neither the all-powerful King of the Dark Night Organization nor the virtuous scion of the powerful Hoffman family. He was merely an unqualified boyfriend at that moment.

"Hey, stop crying. What happened? Did I do something wrong?"

Suddenly, a sweet voice spoke, and a soft hand patted Liam on the back.

It was Julie.

She felt bad for Liam, so she instantly moved to console him.

Even though she could not remember him, she still treated him with such kindness.

## Chapter 416 The Arrival Of Ulises And Yesenia

Inside the radiology room, Liam had Julie undergo a thorough check-up. The steady glow of the MRI machine constantly scanned her frame.

Julie had no memories of Liam, but there was a residual warmth and closeness for him in her thoughts as if they had been close companions for countless years. She had faith that Liam would never bring her harm.

When the check-up concluded, she saw Liam's worried expression and reassured him, "Why so glum? I'm alright. Even if I can't recall a part of my past, I'll still regard you as a cherished friend."

"Just a friend?" Liam echoed, his voice low and tinged with bitterness.

Their shared moments from the past were indelibly etched into his memory.

To him, these moments were divine gifts that allowed him to savor the sensation of love.

Yet now, these memories had morphed into an ache he couldn't shake off.

The more joyous the past, the more painful it was in the present.

The current unfamiliarity and detachment between them were like a dagger to Liam's heart.

Just then, Ulises and Yesenia, having been notified by Liam, made their appearance.

"Doctor, how is my daughter? Will she suffer from any after-effects?" Ulises queried anxiously.

"The patient's state is yet to be fully determined. As per the current diagnosis, she's experienced amnesia and must avoid any shock," the doctor relayed before departing.

Upon observing his daughter's pallid face, Ulises couldn't suppress his sorrow.

He sat at the head of her bed, his hand enveloping hers, a reddish hue forming around his eyes.

His lips moved as if to utter something, but words failed him. All he

could do was gently caress her face.

"Dad, I'm alright now. You don't need to be so worried," Julie consoled him tenderly.

Witnessing this heartwarming exchange, Yesenia pulled Liam into the corridor with a stern expression.

All of a sudden, a harsh slap landed on Liam's face.

Disgust in her gaze, Yesenia scolded, "How many times have I warned you to keep your distance from my daughter? You just didn't listen to me! Now my daughter is hospitalized because of you! You only bring her endless misery! Now Julie remembers everyone except you. Isn't that proof enough? Leave this place immediately, and never show your face to us again!"

If nothing had happened to Julie, Liam would have shrugged those harsh words off easily.

Being the heir of the Hoffman family, he believed he could offer Julie the very best.

Yet, Julie remained confined within the ward, blissfully unaware of their shared history.

Yesenia's words stung like a knife, leaving him speechless.

Liam seemed lost. Perhaps he really shouldn't have intruded in Julie's life. If he hadn't caused her distress, she wouldn't have forgotten him only.

Would it truly make her happy if he stepped away?

Dejected, Liam apologized quietly, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Fiber. I failed to protect Julie!"

With that, he pushed the wheelchair and he left!

His silhouette, cast by the sunlight, appeared desolate and lonely.

Observing his resignation, Yesenia smirked triumphantly. "You're nothing more than a pauper with designs on my daughter! Even if the Riley family is wiped out, it's not your turn!"

In reality, Yesenia had been ousted from the Cortez family and was aware of all the hardships Julie had endured.

Regardless, she harbored significant resentment towards Liam.

In her mind, he was the one who had ruined her prospects of a luxurious life!

To her, it didn't matter who Julie married. Yesenia's only concern was to reap as much benefit as possible from her daughter's marriage!

In the ward, Ulises noticed the commotion and stepped out.

He rebuked, "Is this your idea of being a good mother? Go inside and look after our daughter!"

"Why are you scolding me? Do you think I can't survive without you, just because the Cortez family has disowned me? You just wait and watch!" Yesenia retorted reluctantly but followed his command.

Ulises exhaled heavily, leaving his wife, Yesenia, alone.

He hurriedly rushed towards the direction Liam had taken.

## Chapter 417 Decided To Leave

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In the park next to the hospital, Liam propelled the wheelchair, wandering in solitude.

Once, he'd frequented this park with Julie, but now its familiarity felt distorted.

He eyed a pair of butterflies waltzing over the blooms, an echo of envy in his gaze.

There was a time when he and Julie, too, shared such a bond here, a time when they kissed and embraced.

The surroundings hadn't changed, but the people within them were unrecognizable.

As Liam sank into his memories, Ulises arrived, huffing and puffing, saying regretfully, "Liam, don't let the harsh words of Julie's mother get to you. You know, she has quite a spiteful tongue."

After a moment of silence, Ulises released a heavy sigh, a complex look etched onto his face.

Taking a seat on a nearby bench, he locked eyes with Liam. "Liam, you've been Julie's savior time and again, and for that, I've been forever grateful. I once backed your relationship, but Julie's memory loss has led me to reconsider. So now, I implore you to distance yourself from Julie's life!"

Ulises was originally open to Liam becoming his son-in-law.

However, after what happened to the Riley family, his perspective shifted.

He felt that Liam's character was like a flame attracting enemies like moths.

The fear that his daughter would be snatched from him was too overwhelming.

"Mr. Fiber, I..."

A bitter smile spread across Liam's face. Ulises had trailed him all the way here, just to share these words.



"Can you assure me that you'll refrain from disrupting Julie's life?"

Ulises persisted, imploring him to part ways with his daughter.

With a dull look in his eyes, Liam bobbed his head in a numbed agreement.

Without the approval of Julie's parents, staying with her would not end up well. It would be best to grant her some much-needed rest.

He had made up his mind.

Maybe departing was indeed the better decision.

At that moment, Julie's mother, Yesenia, arrived, her face twisted in scorn. "Ulises, you left me with the task of caring for our daughter while you chattered with this good-for-nothing? Humph! Return and tend to our daughter. Don't squander your time on this brat. I've a game of cards waiting!"

Ulises's face turned icy. He wanted to unleash his wrath.

But for his daughter's sake, he swallowed his fury and retreated to the hospital.

Then, Yesenia turned to Liam and scoffed, "Still here? Are you still thinking about my daughter? Mark my words, it's a fool's dream. Get out of here!"

Liam grimaced but stayed silent, steering the wheelchair towards the roadside, alone.

With disgust marring her face, Yesenia thought that she hadn't expressed her anger enough.

She pulled out her phone, recording a video of Liam, her words filled with mockery.

"Look at this, friends! This broke, disabled failure dares to chase my daughter. What a joke!"

As her words ended, a Bugatti Centodieci, an emblem of prestige, pulled up in front of Liam.

A crowd immediately gathered, their screams piercing the air.

A handful of car enthusiasts accurately identified the car.

"This is the Bugatti Centodieci and there are only ten of such in the world! It's worth over ten million dollars! Never did I imagine I'd get to

witness its grandeur up close!"

"That's not all. Even if you've tens of millions of dollars, you can't easily own it. It symbolizes immense wealth and high status!"

"Does that imply that the man in the wheelchair is a top-notch tycoon? Incredible!"

Whispers and excited screams buzzed through the crowd. They gazed at Liam with newfound respect.

At that point, Aikin emerged from the driver's seat, bowed respectfully, and said, "Mr. Hoffman, shall we proceed?"

The crowd erupted again, everyone eager to befriend Liam.

Especially noticeable were the young, beautiful women ogling Liam coyly, as if being acquainted with him was a stroke of luck.

Meanwhile, Yesenia, who'd been filming the event, stood in disbelief.

Her phone slipped from her grip, hitting the ground.

She could hardly believe what she had just heard. She stammered, "This car... it belongs to Liam?"

## Chapter 418 The Visit Of Kohen

---

Yesenia's expression was a mix of surprise and urgency as she dashed back to the hospital.

Grabbing Ulises' attention, she blurted out, "I just saw Liam getting into a Bugatti supercar, worth ten million dollars!"

"What?" Ulises was dumbfounded, mouth hanging open.

Going on, Yesenia suggested, "Imagine, if Liam has returned to the Hoffman clan and become the successor of a family with assets worth trillions of dollars! Wouldn't we hit the jackpot if he married our daughter?"

Just then, Kohen brought Beatrice into the hospital.

His face wore a soft, kindly expression, a stark contrast to his former malicious demeanor when hurting Julie.

He appeared to be an ordinary elderly gentleman.

But it was all a farce!

He was here for a reason, acting on information he had gathered.

The downfall of the Riley family was entirely due to Maximiliano, a direct descendant of the Hoffman family.

The trigger was Maximiliano seeing Julie being hurt, which sparked his fierce wrath and led to a domino effect of vengeance.

The Riley family was ruined because of Maximiliano's fury.

Remembering the insights shared by Theo before, Kohen had a sudden epiphany, like waking from a deep sleep.

He firmly believed the Hoffman family wouldn't pay attention to his granddaughter without good reason. She must have attracted Maximiliano's interest.

The high-end sports car was likely just a clever ruse employed by Maximiliano to eliminate the Riley family.

To someone with his riches, luxury vehicles were nothing more than playthings.

Having pieced it all together, Kohen was quietly thrilled. Despite his rocky relationship with Julie, she was still his granddaughter.

He would not lightly pass up the chance to forge ties with the Hoffman family.

That was why he had brought Beatrice and rushed to the hospital to make peace.

"Why are you here? You're not wanted here. Leave!" Ulises barked angrily at the sight of the newcomers.

He believed that his daughter's current predicament was somehow linked to the Cortez family.

Yet Yesenia was more diplomatic and reasoned, "Why are you being so rude? He's still Julie's grandfather. He's realized his error and come to see his granddaughter. Don't be so harsh!"

With Yesenia smoothing things over, Kohen started his act.

He rubbed his eyes roughly, managed to squeeze out a tear, and thumped his chest in a show of guilt and regret.

Kohen lamented, "It's all due to my stupidity! I trusted that rascal Tyler and ended up hurting Julie. I'm to blame!"

With that, he even slapped himself.

His Academy Award-worthy act left Beatrice dumbstruck.

Ulises, seeing Kohen's apparent remorse, also softened his attitude and wasn't as confrontational as before.

Kohen proposed, "Here's the plan. I will invest one hundred million in Ulises' company without any strings attached. In addition, the Cortez family will offer business support to ensure your family's rapid growth! I must mention that I am growing old and soon won't be able to manage family affairs. Yesenia has endured significant hardships throughout the years. I've selected her to assume leadership of the Cortez family. I have faith that both of you, as a couple, will take excellent care of Julie in the future. Take this as a token of reparation for this child!"

Kohen seemed earnest as he presented this carefully crafted offer.

This proposition stunned the Fiber couple.

It was a generous offer!

It hit Yesenia hard, and her quivering lips showed her keen anticipation. The high life she'd been craving was within her grasp.

She didn't care about anything else.

"Dad! We'll abide by your words. We are family, after all!"

Having led the Cortez family for over three decades, Kohen knew Yesenia's desires all too well.

A smug smile flickered at the corners of his mouth as he readied to visit Julie.

However, with a loud crash, Ulises forcefully closed the door.

He prioritized his daughter's safety over any material wealth.

Ulises said in a frosty tone, "My family doesn't need your charity. We can hold our ground in Salem by ourselves! Get lost!"

Slap!

Yesenia yelled in a frenzy, "You heartless person! Just think about the countless hardships we've endured together over the years! You're nothing but deadweight! Do you want our daughter and me to keep living in hardship? Don't forget what your sister, Tami, did. Do you want history to repeat itself?"

A deafening silence ensued. Ulises stayed quiet for a long while, then forced a bitter smile.

Images of the past flashed before his eyes, casting a haunting, permanent shadow over him.

Perhaps only when the Fiber family rose to become a wealth family could they shake off it.

He grudgingly said, "I hope you will honor your promise and do everything you've said. Moreover, I warn you, don't compel my daughter to do things against her will. Otherwise, even if it costs me my life, I will drag you down with me!"

"Enough, enough! You're already old, yet you try to act tough. Just step aside!" Yesenia scoffed disdainfully.

Then, recalling her earlier suspicions from the park, she queried Kohen, "Liam isn't going back to the Hoffman family, is he? I just saw him step into a Bugatti supercar!"

Kohen, privy to the "backstory," smirked contemptuously and scoffed, "Going back? As if that good-for-nothing would be so lucky! That car was his once, but it's someone else's now. I highly doubt he'll ever be able to afford it again!"

"I knew it! How could a penniless brat afford such a vehicle? Turns out he was just trying to flaunt before me. Thank heavens, Dad, you saw through his act!" Yesenia followed with a volley of sarcastic comments, donning the same scornful smile.

Truly, the father and daughter were the same kind of people.

In reality, Liam had no intention of boasting. It was Yesenia who happened to stumble upon the scene.

But in her eyes, everything turned into a plot by Liam to be reconciled with Julie!

## Chapter 419 Liam's Return

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As they prepared to step into the ward, Yesenia turned to Kohen with a heavy warning, "Bear in mind, Dad, Julie had a trauma. She's lost her memories of the past year. She might not recognize you, so brace yourself and forgive any unfamiliarity."

"What?"

Kohen was taken aback by her words, and in that very instant, his final concern disappeared completely!

A wave of relief washed over him, instantly lifting his spirits to such an extent that he was on the verge of bursting into joyful cheers.

Meanwhile, Liam was making his way back to the edifice of Kingland Group in Salem.

The facade of the building had been masterfully completed and stood resplendent. From a distance, it looked on par with, if not superior to, the headquarters of the top ten companies in the city.

Only the elite members of Kingland Group had been transferred to the office in Salem.

The majority of lower to middle-level employees in Ninverton were remotely managed by the office in Salem.

Nevertheless, operations proceeded with seamless efficiency and a sense of organization prevailed throughout the business.

It was a day of great importance for the skeleton crew, for the Kingland Group was on the brink of greeting a new CEO!

The meeting room buzzed with anticipation, filled with senior managers who had weathered numerous battles together in Ninverton.

They stood together, ready to experience their shared triumphs and setbacks!

They all held their breath, having heard whispers of a new CEO assuming office. A sense of tension electrified the room as they waited.

"Think the new CEO is from the Hoffman family?"

"Honestly, I couldn't care less who it is, as long as things keep running

smoothly."

"I wish he's an attractive man who'll fall head over heels for me. I'm tired of breaking my back here!"

"Get real! I bet the new CEO will be a fat and lewd man who will occasionally invade your personal space. In the end, it's safe to assume that anyone who can become a CEO must have accumulated years of experience in the business realm."

"Who knows? He could be as striking, wealthy, and proficient as Mr. Hoffman!"

There was a mix of expectation, uncertainty, and longing for the days when Liam had been by their side.

The accomplishments made under Liam's watch still resonated with them.

"Apologies for the delay!" A voice suddenly reverberated across the room.

All eyes darted towards the entrance, disbelief etched on their faces.

Then, they froze in their seats, taken aback.

Aikin ushered Liam through the doorway. Liam greeted the gathering with a warm wave.

"Mr. Hoffman!"

"You've returned!"

"Are you the new CEO?"

The executives leapt to their feet, echoing their astonishment, respect, and elation.

The brilliance of the past shone brightly, as fresh as if it had occurred just yesterday.

Funbuy app's launch captured the hearts of many, leaving them in awe!

The room was ripe with emotions and queries for Liam.

"Mr. Hoffman, are you back with Kingland Group?" Vivian asked incredulously.

By then, her injury had recovered, and upon reuniting with Liam, she experienced a thrilling mix of anticipation and jitters.

Hearts pounded in the room as everyone eagerly awaited a confirmation



This was the answer to the silent prayer they had all harbored!

They were confident only Liam could steer the Kingland Group towards a brighter future!

Under his leadership, they believed, they could scale new heights!

## Chapter 420 Acquiring The Riley Group

Under the watchful eyes of the executives, Liam gave a confident nod and declared, "I've returned to Kingland Group!"

An excited cheer filled the room, quickly followed by a flurry of queries from the attendees.

"Mr. Hoffman, can you shed light on your unexpected return?"

"Mr. Hoffman, does this mean you've rejoined the Hoffman family?"

With a wave of his hand for silence, Liam flashed a grin and revealed, "I spent some money and bribed the members of the Hoffman family. Once they were satisfied, they granted me permission to return to the Kingland Group promptly. As for rejoining the Hoffman family, that might require more time and money than I currently possess."

His jesting remark brought the room closer to him, making him feel more approachable.

However, the senior executives remained skeptical of his claims. They were convinced that the Hoffman family allowed Liam to return to the group because they had acknowledged the accomplishments of Funbuy, a shopping application conceived by Liam himself.

At that time, Liam's determination to override objections and stay true to his principles had created this wonder!

This was the only plausible explanation for the change of heart from the Hoffman family.

The man who created the legend of the Kingland Group came back at this moment!

"Let's discuss our current operations. How is the group doing?"

Vivian was the first to rise, stating seriously, "Mr. Hoffman, thanks to your previous work, the group is performing solidly. The recent scandals hitting the Riley Group have led users to abandon their app and flock to Funbuy, granting us a commanding 83% market share in Salem! We are now securely the leading shopping app in Salem! I believe it's your accomplishments that led the Hoffman family to welcome you back,

isn't that correct?"

Liam responded with a knowing smile, confirming Vivian's statement.

A cheer swept through the room once more.

The room fell quiet, all eyes turning to Liam.

Without any prompt, everyone stood up, one by one, to voice their thoughts.

An excited Vivian pleaded, "Mr. Hoffman, we've anticipated this moment for ages. Please guide us!"

Next, the HR manager, a charismatic woman in her forties, called out, "Mr. Hoffman, we're ready for your command!"

"Your orders, please, Mr. Hoffman!"

Their words sparked a surge of enthusiasm, uplifting everyone present.

A chorus of voices echoed, filling the conference room.

Everyone's gaze was fixed on Liam, filled with hope and anticipation!

The scene evoked memories of when Liam was the head of Kingland Group in Ninverton.

Tears welled up in many eyes, voices quivered, but they still voiced their support to Liam!

The pain and longing from their separation were unleashed in this moment!

Liam's eyes swept across each face, engraving their images into his heart. A wave of warmth washed over him, soothing the invisible scars in his mind.

There was a lingering sadness in his heart.

It was such a shame Julie couldn't see this.

His emotions of sorrow and affection intertwined, causing a brief disturbance within him.

After a long silence, Liam inhaled deeply, endured the sharp pain in his legs, and strode to the podium.

Confidence shone on his face once more, as if he was in control of everything. The feeling he gave others was so familiar that it made them deeply believe in him.

Clad in a sleek black suit, Liam exuded determination and conviction.

A strong voice echoed across the room, delivering the leader's directive.

"My first order of business after returning to Kingland Group is to acquire the Riley Group at a low price!"

In the past, the Riley Group held a monopoly over the online shopping market and enjoyed a stellar reputation in Salem. Their rising rival, Funbuy, was often side-lined and scandalized by them.

Due to its emphasis on affordable and budget-friendly items, Funbuy was once labeled as an app for the less fortunate.

Some Riley Group app users even scorned those who preferred Funbuy. But now, tables had turned. Funbuy emerged as the titan of shopping apps in Salem, while the once-dominant Riley Group had been dethroned!

## Chapter 421 The Lambert Family Were Shocked

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The news that Liam had made his comeback to the Kingland Group swiftly swirled around Salem.

The audacious proposal to acquire the Riley Group left everyone stunned. A whirlwind of speculation arose. Was Liam truly back in the Hoffman family?

At the hospital of Salem.

"Mom, are you feeling alright?"

In the ward, Vera from the Lambert family was the center of attention, surrounded by worried family members.

Despite her being in a hospital bed, her vitality seemed untouched as she devoured her meal, not at all appearing like a sick person.

The Lambert family members' confused faces were a sight to behold. They were clueless about the situation at hand.

After Vera had her fill, she delicately wiped her mouth and uttered in a deliberate manner, "Oh, I'm absolutely fine. I only came to the hospital to pretend to be ill. I figured out that the descendant of the Hoffman family came to the wedding to stir up trouble. If he unleashed his fury upon our family, wouldn't it be a disaster for our family? That's why I pretended to be ill."

Of course, it was a lie!

She felt embarrassed that she had collapsed from overwhelming anger. The humiliation was overwhelming, threatening to tarnish her reputation as the wise figure within the Lambert family who seemed to see through everything.

Hearing her words, those surrounding her let out a collective sigh of admiration.

She truly was a shrewd and clever old fox!

Yolanda sat isolated in the corner, her eyes reflecting emptiness.

A sense of desolation washed over her as she silently dwelled on the intense humiliation from the wedding, a wound still fresh in her heart. Was she merely a puppet in others' hands?

Yolanda chuckled in self-deprecation. Bitter resentment lingered in her heart, but after departing the manor, all she was left with was a sense of powerlessness and uncertainty.

The unbridgeable divide in social standing left a profound mark on her heart.

In contrast to those prominent and influential families, she felt like a mere speck of duckweed floating on the water's surface. With a single gentle sweep, she could easily be stripped of any semblance of security or protection.

How could she even consider retaliation?

Noticing her granddaughter's distress, Vera felt a pang of unease.

After all, Yolanda's efforts were crucial for the future prosperity of the Lambert family.

Vera tried to console her, "Yolanda, the incident with the Riley family was indeed a severe setback, but you must persevere! Beyond the Riley family, there's the Evans family and other influential clans. You're the most stunning woman in Ninverton. Marrying a wealthy man isn't a difficult thing for you."

Yolanda's face remained ghostly pale. The recent events had unveiled a harsh reality. Even if she wedded into a powerhouse like the Riley family, she could still be heartlessly cast aside when interests came into play.

And she would be ravaged and even crushed underfoot!

Dignity seemed like a far-fetched dream.

It dawned upon her that respect and power could only be earned through personal strength.

Suddenly, Andrew burst into the room, gasping for air, stuttering, "Quick... turn on the TV!"

"Good heavens! Maintain some poise even in unexpected situations, understood?" Vera chided softly.

"L-L-Liam... He..." Andrew stuttered nervously.

At the mention of this name, everyone's focus instantly shifted to him. This man, whose life was so entangled with the Lambert family's fate, always brought a sense of upheaval with each appearance.

One of them implored, "Hurry up and tell us! What about Liam?!"

Even Yolanda, who sat in the corner in a bewildered state, displayed a hint of concern on her countenance.

Seeing this, Vera displayed her dissatisfaction, deriding, "Why are you so bothered about that failure Liam? He's a mere brawler who's now disabled. Why even mention him?"

"Liam, he's rejoined the Kingland Group!"

Andrew finally caught his breath and delivered the shocking news!

## Chapter 422 Dennis

---

"What?"

The whole Lambert family were taken aback. Their eyes were glued to the television screen where the unexpected news of Liam's return to the Kingland Group was being broadcast.

"Liam Hoffman, the former CEO of Kingland Group, made a grand comeback today at the newly constructed Kingland Group building in Salem. He also announced his ambitious plan to take over the Riley Group..."

The members of the Lambert family were dumbfounded, finding it hard to believe, but the news report already provided all the details.

Liam had truly made a comeback!

Emotions swirled within them, ranging from confusion to astonishment. The once proud Riley family had fallen into bankruptcy, and now their prized possession, the Riley Group, was on the brink of being taken over. Yet, Liam, the man they had underestimated and looked down upon, had once again reached the pinnacle of his career!

Life had turned upside down like a wild roller coaster ride, leaving the Lambert family feeling dizzy and disoriented.

Vera even clutched her chest tightly, struggling to catch her breath.

She said with trembling lips, "Liam is as resilient as a cockroach! Every time he faced adversity, he managed to make a comeback with a new identity! I truly underestimated him!"

Frustration and unease crept into the hearts of the whole family.

Now, as the Lambert family's fortunes dwindled, Liam stood tall as the CEO of Kingland Group, with a net worth exceeding ten billion.

And he might have gotten back to the Hoffman family!

Could it be that this time he would effortlessly crush the Lambert family, just like squashing an ant?

As the Lambert family sank into silence, a familiar voice suddenly broke the stillness at the door.



"Long time no see!"

All eyes turned towards Dennis, who had disappeared for a long time.

Dressed in an elegant Armani suit, he gracefully entered the room.

The Lambert family were immediately stunned.

After the severe retribution from the Hoffman family at Vera's birthday party in Ninverton, the Caldwell family had vanished completely.

They never expected to encounter him here today.

Ignoring their shock, Dennis wore a self-assured smile, reverting back to his noble gentleman demeanor.

Glancing at the TV report, he mockingly sneered at their expressions, "Do you really believe that Liam returned to the Hoffman family and reclaimed his heir status? Let me enlighten you. He merely managed to make a comeback by accomplishing some petty achievements and bribing a direct descendant of the Hoffman family. In the end, he's just a senior employee."

Vera's face flashed with suspicion when she heard this. She cautiously inquired, "Has the Caldwell family settled in Salem?"

"Yes!" Dennis boasted, a smug smile adorning his face. "You all know how my family had fallen. My father came to Salem to explore business opportunities, just to give it a shot. Initially, our company faced stagnation. But my father made a bold decision and invested all our savings into buying shares of Kingland Group. Within a few months, the market value of Kingland Group skyrocketed more than tenfold, turning it into a dominant force in Salem, and my family regained some of our former influence. Now, my father's company is a major retailer for Funbuy, with assets exceeding one billion!"

Mixed emotions swirled within everyone.

Fate, indeed, had a strange way of playing its hand.

The Caldwell family had been ruined by Kingland Group, yet now it resurrected as a prominent clan because of it!

Regret seeped into the hearts of the Lambert family. If only they had foreseen it, they would have invested in Kingland Group shares as well.

"Dennis, you didn't come here just to visit me, did you?" Vera's

countenance transformed into one of kindness as soon as she heard about the Caldwell family's resurgence.

She stole a glance at Yolanda.

Dennis said eagerly, "I'm here for Yolanda. I've heard about the hardships she went through. Now that the Riley family has crumbled, I believe it's time for me to return and free her from this ordeal!"

His gaze fixated on Yolanda, the woman he had always been concerned about.

Since leaving Ninverton, Dennis hadn't been able to erase Yolanda from his mind. It wasn't love per se, but more of an obsession and an insatiable desire to possess her!

One always longed for what they couldn't have.

Especially when it came to a woman who was taken away from him!

As Dennis witnessed the Lambert family's current state of despair, a sense of delight filled his heart.

The opportunity had presented itself!

## Chapter 423 Meeting Again

---

As these words reached the ears of all Lambert family members, all eyes turned towards Yolanda.

The sunlight poured through the window, casting a warm glow on Yolanda's stunning profile.

Her white dress clung to her skin, accentuating her attractive figure and adding a newfound maturity to her allure.

It was the beauty born out of a series of life experiences.

Dennis couldn't help but gaze at her shape, captivated by her presence.

"Now that Liam is back at Kingland Group, and Funbuy has become the Caldwell family's money-making application, aren't you worried that Liam will dispose of you?"

Yolanda didn't display any warmth towards her ex. Instead, she appeared indifferent.

The members of the Lambert family held a grudge in their eyes. At the Riley family's wedding, they knew that if Dennis hadn't interfered, the Lambert family would have already been connected to the Hoffman family, worth trillions of dollars, through marriage!

They wouldn't have been in such a predicament now!

And, Dennis's return was accompanied by an air of superiority that made the Lambert family uneasy.

In truth, Dennis was already aware of the Riley family's wedding before he came.

He smirked and shook his head as if he had the whole situation under control.

"You Lambert family really underestimate me. A lot of people envy the success of Funbuy. Do you really think it can be handled by a disabled man who has been disowned by his own family? To be honest, someone has reached me secretly lately, seeking my help in dealing with Liam. That person is from a clan with the assets worth trillions of dollars!"

Yolanda's interest was piqued. She inquired, "The Norris family?"

But the Norris family only had assets worth hundreds of billions of dollars. Families with the assets worth trillions of dollars were shrouded in mystery, and one needed connections to inquire about them.

Clearly, the Lambert family lacked such connections.

"For now, I'll keep it a secret." Dennis maintained an air of mystery.

This action left the Lambert family members in suspense, eager to know the answer.

When they looked at Dennis again, their eyes brimmed with passion and enthusiasm.

At that moment, they finally realized one thing.

Dennis had emerged as a powerful figure once more!

He had a powerful clan backing him, so it was only natural that he wouldn't fear Liam.

With this realization, Vera swiftly changed her attitude and became very enthusiastic.

She grabbed Dennis's hand, brought Yolanda's hand forward, and declared, "Dennis, I'm handing Yolanda over to you from now on!"

Vera's swift change of attitude and shamelessness disgusted the Lambert family members, challenging their values.

However, Dennis was very pleased. He knew the true colors of the Lambert family members. As long as he retained his current status, they would unquestionably cater to him, including Yolanda!

Whether their actions were sincere or not, he didn't care in the slightest.

It was just because of his possessiveness!

Outside Furi Hospital, a Toyota slowly halted.

It was Liam's current car. He found the Bugatti too ostentatious and disruptive to his peaceful life, so he returned it to Theo.

Besides, the Toyota's performance was good, albeit a bit worn-out.

Liam had grown fond of it and had no intentions of changing it.

Regardless of his wealth, his own happiness had become far more valuable.

After a few days of quiet rest, Liam's injuries had mostly healed, though

his legs still showed a slight swelling.

He could manage to walk with the aid of a walking stick.

He had come to the hospital not only to have his stitches taken out, but also because... On that day, Julie would be discharged from the hospital!

Liam had thoroughly inquired into the details and deliberately chose to visit the hospital on this particular day.

For him, even just one more look at her would give him some level of satisfaction!

In a tumultuous state of mind, Liam hobbled along, pretending to casually stroll past Julie's ward.

But lo and behold!

The room was already empty.

Feeling a pang of loneliness, Liam mustered a self-deprecating smile and let out a sigh. "Perhaps God no longer wants me to disrupt her peace."

After a brief pause, tears welled up in the corners of his eyes.

After being lost in thought for some time, Liam wanted to turn to leave.

However, at that very moment, a familiar voice came from behind.

"What a coincidence! What brings you here?"

Liam was suddenly struck by astonishment, his body trembling.

All the suppressed longing and emotions burst forth like a river breaking its banks, coursing through every fiber of his being.

It was her voice!

## Chapter 424 Investigation

---

Liam's body quivered as he fought to steady his breathing.

He attempted to regain control of his emotions before daring to meet Julie's gaze.

Mixed emotions churned inside him, but he could only manage a simple greeting. "Julie, you can finally leave the hospital. Take good care of yourself."

With that, Liam turned on his heels and left.

Julie hastily chased after him. "Wait! You said we were friends, right? Why are you leaving so coldly after you just laid your eyes on me?"

A bitter taste welled up in Liam's throat as he recalled the promise he made to Ulises.

Besides, he had already resolved not to disrupt Julie's life any further.

Liam forced a smile, meeting her gentle, clear eyes. "It's because I have some urgent matters to handle at work. I'll come visit you another day, okay?"

With those words, he hastened his steps.

He was scared that if he lingered, his strongest emotions would overpower him.

"Why am I feeling so sad?"

Julie's eyes, profound and filled with unspeakable sorrow, remained fixed on Liam's retreating figure.

Tears threatened to well up in her eyes.

In the past few days, thoughts of Liam had occupied her mind, yet the memories of their time together remained hazy and incomplete.

After a moment of thinking, Julie sent a message to her former secretary, Vivian, seeking clarity. "What exactly is my relationship with Liam? Are we really just friends?"

"Of course, Julie. Have you probably fallen for Mr. Hoffman? Well, you can't be blamed for that. He's quite the charmer and has built a legendary business empire with his own knowledge! Once you recover,

you can come back to Kingland Group and we can work hard together again. There will be chances to get closer to Mr. Hoffman," Vivian responded half-jokingly.

Julie sighed as she put her phone away, reflecting on the twists and turns of life.

Vivian, who was her secretary just a year ago, now occupied her former position. Life truly held surprises and ironies.

Julie had also done some digging into Liam's past achievements and recognized his capabilities.

Julie used to look down on such a person who married into the Lambert family for three years.

But everything changed a year ago when Liam suddenly emerged as the CEO of Kingland Group.

He had created the Funbuy app and built a business through his own efforts.

This showed that Liam was not an unproductive person who was dependent on the Lambert family's power.

It also added a layer of mystery to his identity.

Lately, Julie had been consumed with thoughts of Liam's uneasy demeanor when she first woke up.

Coupled with his enigmatic aura, it left her utterly charmed.

Letting out a heavy sigh, she attributed it to the lingering effects of her amnesia.

Just then, Yesenia ran over, panting heavily.

Displeasure flashed across her face as she saw Liam. She then told Julie, "Julie, you should have less contact with people like him! Don't just stand there, Mr. Norris is waiting downstairs!"

Julie averted her gaze and said nothing. She walked out of the hospital with Yesenia.

Once they were gone, Liam came out from around the corner.

He had been silently watching Julie.

Just catching a glimpse of her brought him comfort.

Leaning on his walking stick, he slowly made his way to the window.

Outside, the person he cherished the most stood by the roadside, waiting for a car.

Intense distress surged through Liam's heart. He yearned to run down and hold Julie in his embrace.

He wanted to express all the longing in his heart with the most affectionate words.

But he was unable to!

Ulises's and Yesenia's rejection, coupled with Julie's amnesia, had become an undefeatable obstacle in his heart.

"Julie, I hope you find happiness," Liam muttered, finally quelling the nearly instinctive urge.

In that moment, a luxurious Ferrari costing three million dollars pulled up in front of Julie.

A handsome gentleman stepped out of the car with an air of elegance.

A playful smile graced his face as he warmly greeted Yesenia and Julie, inviting them into the car.

"What is Yesenia up to this time? Does she want the history to repeat itself?" Liam's heart ached at the sight of this, causing him to narrow his eyes in fury.

It was not just because another man was getting close to Julie, but also because Yesenia was still thinking about pimping out her daughter!

Liam saw Yesenia smiling, eagerly trying to satisfy that man.

It reminded Liam of how she had fawned over Tyler.

The anger inside him surged uncontrollably, and he fiercely struck the wall with his fist.

He paid no mind to the pain coursing through his fist. His gaze remained fixed on the departing Ferrari.

And his eyes slowly turned bloodshot.

"Julie, I won't let you be hurt again," he muttered under his breath.

Liam brought out his phone.

Based on his fleeting impression, he diligently drew a sketch of the face of the rich gentleman.



The portrait he created exceeded the skill of numerous art masters, and anyone knowledgeable would be amazed by its quality.

With the completed portrait in hand, Liam sent it to Theo and simultaneously dialed his phone number.

"Theo, I need you to help me investigate this person."

## Chapter 425 Clarence Norris

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Even Theo, a man who had seen the world in all its complexities, was taken aback by the icy tone in Liam's voice.

Quickly, he managed to gather all the necessary details and relayed them to Liam.

The man was named Clarence Norris, a direct descendant of the affluent Norris family, with a net worth reaching hundreds of billions.

He was the nephew of Emory and the son of Fuller.

At first glance, he appeared as a gentleman, but beneath that facade, his thoughts were twisted and distorted.

He was obsessively territorial, particularly towards possessions and women, and exhibited a violent streak. His sexual preferences were notably peculiar.

He had caused suffering to countless female celebrities and renowned models.

Those who resisted faced his vindictive wrath.

Some victims, unable to endure the torment, had chosen to end their lives by jumping off buildings.

If not for the Norris family's influence, which helped him wipe clean his messes, he would have been imprisoned long ago!

"Despicable creature! Wanting to do the same to Julie? He's practically begging for death!"

Liam stared at the information on the screen, each word like a blade to his chest.

His gaze bore a glint of murderous intent.

"Mr. Hoffman, have the Norris family crossed you? Shall I take action?" Theo called him and asked.

In a raspy voice, Liam declared, "No, I want to savor every moment, playing with him slowly."

Theo nodded. He would follow Liam's orders and wouldn't interfere in it rashly.

He proceeded with his report. "Additionally, the Cortez family have reached out to me many times recently to inquire about Maximiliano and cautiously ask if he has any feelings for Julie. I dismissed them. Mr. Hoffman, your disguise seems to have stirred the pot. Many seek to exploit it for a connection to the Hoffman family."

Hearing this, Liam instantly comprehended the situation.

A smirk tugged at his lips. "The Cortez family never strays from their profit-chasing instinct. They assumed Maximiliano fancied Julie and intended to use that to build bridges with the Hoffman family. Now they've turned their attention to the Norris family since their initial plan has failed. How opportunistic!"

At that moment, his resentment towards the Cortez family skyrocketed! If not for their association with Julie, Liam would have obliterated them long ago!

Suddenly, a news notification caught his eye.

Liam clicked on the alert and glanced at the Facebook news page.

There were many pieces of news about the Riley family.

The contents of those reports were captivating and attention-grabbing.

"The Riley family in ruins, the father and son now behind bars!"

"Norris family, worth hundreds of billions, set to take control of Riley Group and revamp its management."

"Norris family, worth hundreds of billions, splurges on special offers to regain the trust of Riley Group's app users."

Liam saw through the fabricated reports instantly. They were the handiwork of paid posters.

The Norris family paid them!

The objective was to spice up the Norris family's determination of taking over the Riley Group.

"Humph! The Norris family, so audacious they're trying to grab my thing! With the Riley family in ruins, they dare to provoke me further. Very well, there's a valuable lesson they must learn. I will definitely take over the Riley Group!"

Liam scoffed and turned away from the news. His fists were tightly

clenched, his nails turned white from the force, and his fury was at its peak.

However, what truly ignited his rage wasn't the Norris family's audacity to challenge him for the Riley Group.

It was because of Julie.

His most cherished woman.

Liam whispered to himself, "Julie, I will never let you become the bride of such a monster. I won't even allow you two to spend time together!"

## Chapter 426 Yolanda's Visit

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In Kingland Group, Liam returned to the CEO's office.

Vivian, dressed in a business suit, walked in and reported respectfully, "Mr. Hoffman, the Norris family have already acquired the Riley Group. With the investment from the Norris family, it will be difficult for Kingland Group to proceed with the merging and acquisition."

As she spoke, her words were filled with worry.

However, Liam remained calm. He smiled confidently and said, "I have already started acquiring the shares of Riley Group in secret. The Norris family only holds thirty-five percent of the shares of Riley Group. Currently, I own thirty percent of the shares. With this, whoever acquires the rest of the scattered shares will have a guaranteed chance of success. And I have already arranged for someone to handle this matter. You have nothing to worry about."

Vivian's face was filled with astonishment when she heard this. And that familiar feeling surged in her heart again.

He looked at Liam in front of her.

Confidence, strategic planning, and decisive actions. He had them all.

This must be the strength that created the glory of Kingland Group, right?

He returned and planned everything early on. It was as if the Riley Group was already within his grasp.

Vivian could no longer hide the admiration in her eyes.

She also remembered when Liam rescued her from the Dragon Gang before. He was like a heroic figure.

No one else could give her such a sense of security. Only him.

And Vivian longed for it. She greatly desired to be protected by Liam forever.

She suddenly remembered Julie. She didn't mean to hide the truth from Julie, but she thought perhaps this was her only chance to win Liam's favor.

Guilt surged in Vivian's heart, but it was immediately overshadowed by Liam's images.

At this moment, she decided to admit the fact that she had a crush on Liam.

Vivian blinked her big watery eyes and praised affectionately, "Mr. Hoffman, you are amazing! With you here, there is no doubt that Kingland Group will surely become better and better."

Liam didn't notice this strangeness in Vivian. He waved his hand, hinting at her to leave.

At this moment, the receptionist at the front desk called. "Mr. Hoffman, someone named Yolanda Lambert is here. She said she is your friend, and she wants to discuss a deal with you."

Liam's brows furrowed. He had no idea why Yolanda suddenly came. But he still said, "Let her come up."

After a while, the click-clack of high heels on the floor echoed in the corridor.

With graceful steps, Yolanda, in a long red dress and black high heels, entered the office.

She straightened her chest to unabashedly showcase her perfect curves to Liam.

The vertical groove in the middle of her chest was exposed, and her long slender legs radiated maturity and sexiness.

Her exquisite makeup, coupled with a charming smile, made her look more elegant. She exuded an indescribable aura of a high-class lady.

No wonder she was the number one beauty in Ninverton.

"Long time no see." Yolanda confidently greeted Liam.

Liam picked up the teacup on the table and took a sip while looking at her.

Although the scene in front of him was tempting, he wouldn't be moved even the slightest.

With an indifferent expression, he said in a magnetic voice, "Get straight to the point. What kind of deal are you here to discuss with me?"

Yolanda parted her red lips sensually and slid her fingers along the

strap of her dress, lingering in the groove.

She pointed at herself confidently and said, "The deal. Well... it's me. Don't you want me? We had been married for three years, and you haven't had the pleasure with me yet."

The expression on Liam's face didn't change at all. He replied, "I actually find it distasteful. Get out of here. I am not interested in you. And don't disturb me again in the future."

However, Yolanda didn't intend to give up.

After all, she came here with determination.

And she had already expected Liam would react this way.

Yolanda twisted her slender waist and leaned closer to Liam.

She used her finger to lift Liam's chin. Her red lips parted slightly, and she exhaled a warm breath on his face.

Then she said in a coquettish voice, "Don't be so absolute with your words. Countless people desire to have me, but they will never have the opportunity. And as long as you agree to marry me, I will tell you a shocking secret that will threaten the existence of Kingland Group, as well as your position as CEO."

## Chapter 427 The Calm Before The Storm

---

Having uttered those words, Yolanda fixed her gaze upon Liam.

Words had the potential to deceive, but the sentiment mirrored in one's eyes couldn't lie.

Yolanda yearned to see his gaze soften, to morph into anticipation, possibly even longing.

Nevertheless, Liam's eyes still harbored nothing but alienation and coldness.

It was declaring the distance between the two!

Yolanda felt as though she'd been stabbed in the heart, her voice shaky as she pleaded, "Liam! Can't you find it in your heart to love me? After being married with me for three long years, how can you be so devoid of compassion?"

A wave of sorrow and indignation surged within her towards this man who was supposed to be hers, yet was now blatantly disregarding her.

Yolanda could not fathom that her allure didn't even create a stir in Liam's heart.

She'd put efforts into her attire that day, and it wasn't lost on the onlookers who passed her by.

Many admirers had even attempted to get her number.

However, before Liam, she was met with nothing but his frosty gaze.

This crushing defeat led her to question her charm.

Regardless of her efforts, Yolanda's attempts to pique Liam's interest proved futile.

In response to her pleas, he scoffed, "Every single Lambert is the same. When I was at my lowest, you scorned and tormented me. Now that I've reclaimed my position at Kingland Group, you scramble to win me back. Do you take me for a fool? Is it because the fall of the Riley family left the Lambert family without a protector that you're trying to reel me back in? Did you really think I'd welcome you with open arms?"

His words echoed with bitter derision, revealing his deep-seated



resentment.

Yolanda was taken aback, her anger flaring, shame tinting her cheeks, and her lip bleeding from her biting it in frustration.

She pointed an accusatory finger at Liam, her voice bordering on hysterical. "I never expected such humiliation from you. But mark my words, you will regret this! You will beg for my mercy, on your knees!"

"Someone! Come and see the guest off!" Liam ordered calmly, not bothering to hide his disdain.

"There's no need. I can find my way."

As the sound of high heels resonated, Yolanda's silhouette vanished from sight.

When Liam's gaze followed her retreat, it was filled with icy amusement, a smirk playing on his lips.

He had a pretty good idea what kind of secret Yolanda was talking about.

"You think you can control me, but the joke's on you, Yolanda," Liam scoffed under his breath.

Not too long ago, he received a report from Theo.

The Funbuy application was growing at an impressive rate, catching the attention of influential families worth trillions of dollars. They recognized its potential and were eager to invest and compete for a slice of the pie.

These affluent families had repeatedly tried to undermine the Hoffman family, only to be met with stiff resistance.

Liam chuckled, thinking these vultures circling his successful app could only operate from the shadows.

He had taken precautions, having his trusted confidantes look into all the collaborators.

As expected, something was wrong.

It was an unremarkable retailer, and the boss behind it was actually Jerry!

Now, the actions of the Caldwell family in Salem were under Aikin's watchful eyes.

Liam was well aware that Dennis had paid Yolanda a visit at the hospital.

"I initially considered sparing you for Andrea's sake. But if you insist on making trouble, don't say I didn't warn you," Liam muttered to himself, his eyes narrowing menacingly.

With a smirk, he dialed Aikin's number. "Take action!"

"Understood, sir!"

Meanwhile, Dennis had just arrived at the Royal Hotel and promptly made his way to the lavish conference room on the top floor.

A number of individuals, all nursing grudges against Liam, were already assembled.

Kevin, Emerson, his son, Colette and others sat in tense silence.

Dennis' arrival immediately drew their attention.

With a stern expression, Kevin approached Dennis and demanded, "Identify yourself. What's your background?"

## Chapter 428 Gathering

A flicker of annoyance crossed Dennis' features as he was halted. He declared haughtily, "I belong to the Caldwell family, possessing assets worth over a billion. Step aside!"

Suddenly, a swift slap sent him sprawling on the floor.

Kevin's gaze was laden with malice as he delivered a kick to Dennis' body with his leather shoe.

A scornful laugh echoed.

"Weren't you trained to act modestly when you lack real strength? Are you trying to convince me that an ant dares to roar at a titan, much like that bastard, Liam?"

Ah!

Dennis' eyes flared with anguish. He demanded indignantly, "Who on earth are you? How dare you assault me? You're courting death!"

Kevin chuckled, his gaze as dismissive as if surveying a beggar.

Just then, Colette, positioned behind him, approached gracefully, her slender waist swaying with elegance.

"Can any insignificant person attend the meeting? Observe closely, this is Kevin Evans of the Evans family! The Evans family ranks first among the top ten families of Salem, with a whopping fifty-billion-dollar fortune!"

She proceeded to introduce Emerson. "Meet the leader of the Dragon Gang, a force to reckon with, with its twenty thousand strong members, wielding significant power across several cities. He's the real underworld king!"

Finally, she ignited a cigarette, expelling a grey smoke ring in Dennis' direction. She taunted, "I am but a member of the capital's Hopkins family. Not overly wealthy, merely worth fifty billion! Do you now understand your standing before us? You are a total fool!"

The others present joined in the mockery.

"Colette, how ruthless you are. What if he ended up wetting his pants,

all because of the information you gave him? That would spoil the atmosphere, wouldn't it?"

"My bad. I was only berating a dog when it unexpectedly lunged at us." Listening to their ridicule, Dennis sat straight up from his spot on the floor, his body rigid with dread.

In his profound fear, his complexion had turned ghostly pale.

He finally came to realize his own foolishness and ignorance.

This was, after all, Salem, a big city, not some tiny city like Ninverton.

A fortune of over a billion was peanuts before these heavyweights.

Any one of them could crush him effortlessly.

Upon this realization, Dennis' lips quivered as he apologized, "I'm sorry. I'm nothing but a dog. I'm here on Mr. Norris' orders. Please don't make things tough for me!"

Kevin grunted, his smile cruel.

He crouched, gave Dennis' cheek a pat, and warned, "Since you're Mr. Norris' dog, behave accordingly and refrain from yapping. If it happens again, I might just step on your head and squish your brains! Explaining it to Mr. Norris might be a nuisance, but I'm not one to shy away from trouble. Care to test it?"

Dennis believed every word and shook his head frantically.

Just then, a sardonic voice echoed.

"Mr. Evans, I wouldn't have expected your refined demeanor to conceal such a fiery temper."

Clarence stood at the entrance, attired in a custom-made suit, studded with sizeable diamonds on his chest, oozing luxury and class.

Entering the room, he barely glanced at Dennis whimpering on the floor.

Instead, he made his way to the podium, stylishly drew out a highly prized Zippo lighter, lit a cigar, and took a long puff.

Wearing a sinister grin, he solemnly declared, "My father has accompanied my aunt to the hospital. Thus, he couldn't attend, and I'll be representing the Norris family today. We will delve into the specifics of taking over the Funbuy application!"

## Chapter 429 Clarence's Secret

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Everyone was shocked to hear this.

Clarence asked them to gather here, and they thought it was for business cooperation.

They didn't expect Clarence wanted to make a move against Kingland Group.

The Hoffman family was behind Kingland Group. This family had assets worth trillions of dollars.

At the thought that they would offend the Hoffman family, they were so pressured that they felt uneasy.

Kevin was the first to oppose. "Mr. Norris, I'm afraid we are not strong enough to defeat Kingland Group. Excuse me, I'm leaving now."

Fear filled his heart after he heard what Clarence said.

What happened to the Riley family was known to all of them.

The Riley family was very powerful in Salem.

But a descendant of the Hoffman family uprooted them effortlessly.

Wasn't he too terrifying?

In fact, all the families in Salem were afraid to talk about the wedding held by the Riley family.

Although they knew the whole story, no one dared to discuss it in public. They only talked privately.

They were too scared to offend the Hoffman family.

So Kevin thought of leaving.

"I also think it is inappropriate,"

said another one.

Of course, almost everyone was afraid of the Hoffman family. Colette also stood up and said, "Although the Funbuy app is indeed enviable, our family is too small to covet it. If we offend the Hoffman family, I'm afraid we will have no way out. Please find someone else."

Among them, only Emerson was on Clarence's side. With a fierce look

on his face, he pushed his wheelchair out and snapped, "You are a bunch of cowards! If you don't dare, then I do. As long as Mr. Norris gives an order, I will chop that mother fucker Liam into pieces."

Emerson and his son Drummond had just been discharged from the hospital. And when they received Clarence's message, they immediately rushed over.

In fact, they were both in wheelchairs at the moment.

And they were the ones who wanted to kill Liam the most.

Especially Emerson. His eyes were full of killing intent. As soon as he mentioned Liam, he was so upset that the wounds on his legs hurt.

The hatred in his heart had been tormenting him day and night, giving him sleepless nights.

Now that there was a chance to deal with Liam, he would naturally not let it go.

When Clarence heard Emerson's words, his expression finally softened a little. He praised with satisfaction, "That's exactly the attitude I want. It seems that only you and your son still have backbones. Of course, the Hoffman family is not easy to deal with. But this time, there are also families on their level who want to deal with Kingland Group. They will make sure the Hoffman family don't interfere. But I want to make it clear in advance. No killing is allowed this time. Otherwise, if things get out of control, justice will not be on our side. And it will easily trigger a war among those families with assets of trillions of dollars."

It was only then that everyone understood the situation.

The Norris family was just a family with hundreds of billions of assets. How could they have the ability to go against the Hoffman family?

It turned out there were some other families at a higher level supporting the Norris family.

At this time, Emerson frowned and asked, "Mr. Norris, do you mean we can only initiate a trade war?"

After Emerson got a positive answer, everyone who heard it fell silent.

After all, they were used to using their power and connections to defeat their opponents.

Now that they knew they could only do a trade war, they felt restrained and uncomfortable.

After some more discussions, Kevin suddenly pointed at Dennis and sneered, "Since we will do a trade war, why do we have this loser here? Assets worth one billion dollars are totally useless here."

It was only then that the others realized it was indeed quite abrupt for Dennis to join their group.

The corners of Clarence's mouth curled up. He explained, "Since I asked him to come today, of course, he has some special use. Don't underestimate him. He cuckolded Liam and caused a sensation in Ninverton. We will let him and that obscene woman constantly harass Liam. It can pester our opponent, right?"

Everyone looked at each other and smiled wickedly, acquiescing in Dennis' presence today.

"But Liam already has another woman, right? If I'm not mistaken, her name is Julie Fiber. We can also use her against Liam," Kevin said again. When Clarence heard this, his smile became perverted. He licked his lips and said disgustingly, "Yes. That woman is very wonderful, and she is Liam's most cherished woman. But after Tyler tortured her, she lost her memory. It's a good chance for me to control her. I can't only fuck her, but I can also use her as a trump card to deal with Liam."

With Clarence's strong assurance, everyone no longer feared the Hoffman family. They began to actively give suggestions.

It was a long discussion. The crows only dispersed when it was already very late.

Dennis was the last to leave. As soon as he walked out of the door, he unexpectedly bumped into a cleaner. He shouted, "Are you fucking blind?"

"Sorry, sir. I didn't see you," the cleaner immediately apologized.

When Dennis clearly saw she was only a cleaner, he didn't bother to argue. He just left angrily.

But he didn't see that as soon as he walked away, the expression on the cleaner's face immediately changed.

She took off her disguise, and the corners of her mouth curved into a

smile. A mini recorder appeared in her hand. She plugged it into her phone and sent the audio to Liam.

Then she sent a message, "Mission accomplished."

Her actions were smooth. It was an apparent sign that she was a professional.

In Kingland Group, Liam was in the CEO's office when he received the recording.

He was so overjoyed that he praised generously, "Job well done, Annie. I'll give you a ten-thousand-dollar bonus. Have a good rest tonight."

After sending the message, Liam took out his headphones and played the audio.

"Julie... Wonderful... Fuck her..."

The harsh words instantly irritated Liam.

His smile faded away, and his expression became ferocious.

He was so angry that he clenched the glass in his hand tightly.

It shattered into pieces.

With a fierce look in his eyes, Liam roared, "Clarence, you deserve to die a terrible death!"



## Chapter 430 Rowdy Retailers

Suddenly, Vivian knocked on the door and walked into Liam's office.

"Mr. Hoffman, there is a supply problem with the retailers of the Funbuy APP. They have formed an alliance with the Sugar Nest Retail as the leader and are demanding a reduction in the commission of the platform. They also ask that we reveal the analysis of user data and let them use it for free. They claim that the high advertising costs of the Funbuy APP are unreasonable and have greatly affected fair competition. Apparently, they are losing more than they are gaining. They threatened the company. If these problems are not resolved, then the supply will stop, and all contracts will be terminated."

Liam snorted and shook his head.

Of course. He had seen this coming.

He looked up at Vivian and said, "Inform the senior executives that we will be having an emergency meeting in the conference room in fifteen minutes."

As soon as the executives got the message, they dropped everything they were doing and rushed to the conference room.

That was just how powerful Liam was in the Kingland Group.

In no time, the conference room was filled with the senior executives.

They had a pretty good idea of what this was going to be about. They had all heard about the issue with the retailers.

They weren't worried though. With Liam as the head, a solution would soon come up.

Liam stood at the head of the table and said in his deep voice, "I'd like to hear what you all plan to do about this."

Just as soon, the executives started talking and giving proposals. Of course, they all had different takes on the matter.

Each person was so sure of their solution that it got into a heated argument.

At the end of the day, most of them thought it was wise to compromise

with the retailers.

"Mr. Hoffman, the Funbuy APP is developing very quickly, and so far, there are no problems in sight. In my opinion, it won't penalize us if we have to sacrifice a few interests and give in to some of their demands."

"I agree, Mr. Hoffman. If a large number of retailers end up cancelling contracts, it will not only ruin the image of the group, but the user activity will suffer too. That won't be good for the development of the Funbuy APP."

"Let's give them what they want now to take back more later on. It's not a good idea to fall out with the retailers now. We can bear with their arrogance for a little longer, and get rid of them when they least expect it."

The executives expressed their opinions one after the other.

Liam only listened to them without uttering a sound.

Then, he looked at Vivian and asked, "How about you? What do you think?"

"Me?" Vivian blinked several times in surprise. Joy welled up in her heart. This meant that Liam valued her opinion. There was reason to be glad.

She toned down her excitement and said, "I think the retailers have gotten too arrogant. Funbuy APP has helped them grow so much. Now, they want to raise funny conditions and bite the hand that fed them. If the Kingland Group gives in this time, who knows what else they will ask for? And we will have to keep compromising."

Liam listened to her.

A long silence followed before he smiled and announced, "I've heard each and everyone of you. I will think it over carefully again and make a decision. The meeting is over. You can go back to work."

The room was silent for a moment. They were confused by his decision. But then, after thinking about it, they all came to the conclusion that Liam would compromise with the retailers.

Not long after the meeting ended, the details of the meeting were on everyone's tongues.

Even the retailers who had gathered at the Royal Hotel heard about it. They were already celebrating their victory, believing that they had won. When they started this fight against the Kingland Group, they were all very nervous, scared of what the outcome might be.

But now, it seemed that it was the best decision they could have made. They had succeeded.

Dennis stood as their representative and gave a passionate speech.

"The Funbuy APP provides us with a platform, but let me mind you, they are the real vampires! They sit back and enjoy all the benefits, while we barely get the scraps. What we are asking from them is nothing. We're not going to stop here. We will continue fighting, and we will resist all their attempts to stop us. This is the only way for us to get what we deserve. We need to fight for our best interests!"

The retailers applauded him. With this first supposed success, they all believed in him and looked up to him as a role model.

They agreed with him to fight against the exploitation of the Funbuy APP and even suggested that they form a federation of retailers with Dennis as president. "Mr. Caldwell, what do you say? This way, all of our interests will be protected."

Dennis smiled triumphantly and accepted the honour. This was exactly what he wanted.

He enjoyed the feeling of being respected, of being at the top of a movement.

This was just the first step.

He was not going to stop until he completely brought Funbuy APP to the ground.

He was still standing in front of everyone when his phone rang.

"Is this the one leading Sugar Nest Retail?" asked the person on the other end of the line. "Can you make it to the Kingland Group for a meeting?"

Dennis agreed and hung up with a smile on his face.

He raised his mobile phone for everyone to see and said, "That was the vice president of Kingland Group, calling us in for a meeting. It seems

that they are ready to compromise and give us what we are asking for. When we get there, stay quiet and watch me. Let me do all the talking and fight for your best interests."

The retailers hooted and applauded him again.

"We trust you, Mr. Caldwell."

"The Kingland Group must have contacted us because they were getting anxious. Let's not hesitate to ask for more."

Dennis led the very joyful and confident group into the Kingland Group. When they walked into the conference room, Dennis finally saw Liam again.

The anger he had buried in his heart surged up, his handle on it broken. He walked towards Liam with pride and arrogance in his steps, and asked in cold voice, "Mr. Hoffman, remember me?"