

“Lacey, do you not trust me?” questioned Lily.
“We're family, and I benefit too if you make money. Do you think I would make any blunder in this matter?”

Lacey Hinton thought about it for a while before finally handing Lily the bid proposal. “Well then, thank you.”

Lily happily took it and left.

Zeke walked out from the corner. “Lacey, do you really trust her with the bid proposal?”

“She's my cousin after all, so I think she won't mess things up,” said Lacey.

Zeke smirked. “Okay.”

This girl is good at everything, but she's simply too kind and credulous.

Zeke decided to let Lacey learn some lessons about the human heart to prevent her from suffering a bigger loss in the future.

Meanwhile, after Lily had gone far from the steel mill, she took out a lighter and burned the bid proposal.

She then took out another bid proposal, which Jackson had given.

She wanted to deliver this bid proposal to the

Schneider family as Lacey's.

As far as she knew, the content inside this bid proposal was all insults to the Schneider family.

If the Schneider family read this bid proposal, they would definitely be furious and come after Lacey.

“Hmph! Lacey, the Schneider family will definitely give you a hard time even though I can't do so. You're doomed this time.”

The official public tender for the Love in a Fallen City project was held at the Schneider Tower as scheduled the next day.

The entrance of the building was jam-packed with luxury cars early in the morning.

Prominent tycoons from all over Rivermouth gathered for the occasion.

Everyone looked forward to finding out whose bid proposal could win the heart of the Schneider family.

Meanwhile, Lacey came with Zeke.

Lacey was rather low-key compared to the other bidders who were busy engaging in conversations.

She sat in the corner without saying anything as if she didn't exist.

Zeke asked, "Are you nervous, Lacey?"

Nodding her head, Lacey replied, "Yeah. Everyone here prevails over us in terms of capability and financial resources. We're no match for them at all."

Zeke smiled faintly. "Don't worry, Lacey, I think your bid proposal is very good, so you will definitely be able to win the tender."

Lacey gave him a bitter smile. "A good bid proposal isn't enough. After all, the Schneider family will not only determine based on the bid proposal but also the overall strength of a company."

"You're here early, Lacey," Lily greeted them with a smile after she came from nowhere.

Seeing Lily, Lacey was surprised. "Lily, how could you get in without me bringing you in?"

The Schneider family had stipulated that each company could only send two representatives.

Yet now, Lacey's steel mill had three representatives here including Lily.

Lily sneered, "You think too highly of yourself, Lacey. Who said you're the only one who can bring me in?"

At this time, Jackson approached them. "Actually, I

brought Lily in.”

Lacey asked with a look of surprise, “You brought her in? Why?”

Lily is my employee, so why would Jackson bring in someone other than his employee?

“Duh.” Jackson stated matter-of-factly, “Lily is an employee of my company, so of course, I have the right to bring her in.”

Lacey was taken aback. “Your employee? How can it be possible? Lily, didn't you come to work with me yesterday?”

Lily said proudly, “Work with you? Can a clerical job with 4,000 pay a month make me stay? You're delusional. I'm now an employee of the Hamilton family, and the remuneration they've offered me is so much higher than yours.”



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With a wry smile, Lacey shook her head. "Forget it. Do whatever you want. From now on, you're not allowed to set foot in my steel mill."

"I'm afraid you will lose your steel mill soon," Lily stated.

Lacey asked, "What do you mean?"

Jackson chimed in, "Let me warn you, Lacey. If the Schneider family is taking action against you later, just beg me, and maybe I can help you. Otherwise, destruction awaits."

Lacey frowned. "Why would the Schneider family take action against me?"

She suddenly thought of something as her face went pale.

"Damn it. Lily, did you do something to my bid proposal?"

Lily played innocent. "What bid proposal? I didn't see it."

Lacey instantly exploded with rage.

Damn it. She really denies it.

She must have done something to it.

She said through gritted teeth, "Lily, y-you're worse than an animal. What would you gain by making

me bankrupt?"

"What are you talking about? I don't understand you at all," Lily sneered. "Jackson, let's go back to our seats. They will surely come to beg us later."

Jackson said indifferently, "I'll tell you one thing, Lacey. As I said last time, I will make you engaged to me in ten days. It's the tenth day today. You'd better think properly whether you want to be killed by the Schneider family or to marry me."

Zeke, who had been silent all this while, suddenly said, "I'll tell you one thing too. If the Schneider family takes action against you later, you can come and beg us. Of course, I would lose if I help you, though."

Pfft!

Jackson chuckled. "Beg you? Beg you and make a fool of yourselves? Haha! What a joke. Let's go, Lily."

Jackson then left with Lily.

Lacey turned red with anger. "Damn, Lily is so cruel. To think that I trusted her so much."

Zeke patted her on the shoulder. "Now that you've seen her true colours, I hope you learn from it and not be soft-hearted next time."

Lacey sighed. "Let's go, Zeke. There's no more

hope for us in this tender. We may even anger the Schneider family as well.”

“A piece of advice, don't ever give up hope until the very last moment. Who knows? There might be a miracle!”

Lacey was speechless.

He thinks a miracle is something that we can come across everywhere, doesn't he?

Lacey repeatedly told him she wanted to leave, but Zeke insisted on staying and waiting for the miracle to happen.

So Lacey had no choice but to stay.

She was now almost dying of anxiety, as she didn't know what kind of bid proposal Lily had submitted on her behalf.

Would the Schneider family deem the messy bid proposal they received as a sign of disrespect and get mad?

Hopefully, Lily didn't go too far.

However, the truth was that Lily was cruel. She replaced the content of her bid proposal with insults to the Schneider family.

Soon, the master of ceremonies took the stage.

After a brief opening line, he got down to business.

“Next, let us welcome Mr. Evan Schneider from the Schneider family in Oakheart City.”

The initially boisterous hall immediately fell silent.

Everyone looked at the stage expectantly.

A middle-aged man in a suit stepped up to the rostrum with great panache.

Evan Schneider was the richest man in Oakheart City, and the delegate to the People's Congress in Rivermouth.

He had started from scratch and built a business empire in just a few years.

To date, his success story was still being recorded in textbooks, while many businessmen regarded him as their life goal and a business legend.

A big round of thunderous applause was given to this god-like man.

Zeke suddenly smiled.

A pawn I've arbitrarily placed has now grown to such a towering height. I'm amazed.



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Evan's eyes swept across the audience with an air of authority.

Finally, his gaze fell upon Zeke. He wore a respectful look on his face.

Zeke nodded his head slightly.

Only then did Evan clear his throat and say, "Love in a Fallen City is the most important project of my family, and it has been listed as a key project supported by the municipal government. So, to participate in this project, you must have a certain level of capability. I've gone through all the bid proposals you submitted, and I roughly know your capabilities. I'm now going to read out a list of companies that were not qualified to participate in this project due to their current financial capabilities. For those that are mentioned, please leave the venue."

After that, Evan took out a list and read it aloud.

There were a total of twenty bidders, and twelve were disqualified in an instant.

Those who left were despondent, while those who stayed rejoiced inwardly as this meant that they were qualified to collaborate with the Schneider family.

It was perplexing that Lacey was not on the list.

How could a small steel mill be qualified to

collaborate with the Schneider family?

Perhaps there's a situation.

Jackson sneered, knowing very well why Lacey hadn't been made to leave. The Schneider family must be trying to deal with Lacey in front of everyone to set an example.

Evan continued to say, "Except for one, the eight remaining companies are all qualified to collaborate with my family."

Lacey trembled with fear.

That exception must be me.

The Schneider family is really going to take action against me now.

She looked up and found Jackson looking at her with a chilling smile. It made her feel even more horrified.

Evan went on to say, "I have rated your bid proposals, and I will assign the proportions of the project according to the scores. I will now announce the scores. The eighth-place holder is the Chambers family of Oakheart City, with a score of 68. The seventh is the Hunt family of Odonvale City, with a score of 72..."

Soon, Evan had finished announcing the scores for the second to eighth place, with the highest mark

at 89 and lowest at 68.

Now, only the first place had yet to be announced, while there were only two people left whose names were not mentioned, which were Jackson and Lacey.

Everyone believed Jackson would be the well-deserved number one, while Lacey would be dropped from the project.

Everyone looked at Jackson with admiration.

Jackson was overjoyed. He never expected he would actually win first place!

The Hamilton family was about to flourish.

Meanwhile, Lacey bowed her head in silence, and clenched her fists, her palms wet with sweat.

Zeke suddenly grabbed Lacey's fist.

“Trust me, there will be a miracle.”

Lacey looked at him with a complicated expression.

“The first place goes to...” Evan was heard announcing, as everyone held their breath. “Lacey Hinton from Oakheart City! With a score of 100!”

Lacey Hinton with a perfect score!

Everyone was shocked!

The winner was Lacey, whereas Jackson wasn't even on the list!

This result stunned and shocked everyone to the core.

Jackson froze on the spot.

How can it be? How is this possible?

How could Lacey beat me?

Meanwhile, Lacey was staring ahead with her eyes wide open and tears in her eyes.

I actually got a perfect score and the well-deserved first place!

I'm 11 points ahead of the second place holder!

Is this really happening or is it an illusion?

She cried.

All the previous efforts and sacrifices were not in vain.

Evan continued, "In addition, there's still a bid proposal that was not selected."



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“This bid proposal is interesting. It's nothing but insults to the Schneider family.”

“This bidder is quite arrogant. I would like to meet up with this cocky brat if I have a chance.”

At that, he glared at Jackson and walked away.

Jackson froze in terror instantly.

Why did Evan Schneider stare at me?

*F***! Does he actually think I'm the bidder?*

He shuddered at that thought.

After Evan left, everyone began to surround Lacey and cotton up to her.

After all, Lacey had aced the bid proposal, so she had the upper hand in this project.

In other words, Lacey would be their leader in future.

Of course, they needed to cotton up to her.

Lacey used to look up to these bosses, but now seeing all the bosses changed their stance and cotton up to her, she was truly flattered.

Unable to hide her excitement, she burst into tears of joy. She could finally be treated equally, and in fact, might be superior to the rest of them.

Zeke held Lacey's hand and walked her away from the crowd. He then led her to Jackson and Lily.

Zeke smiled, "Lily, thank you so much for your help."

"Don't forget to claim your reward after you're back."

After that, Zeke and Lacey turned around and left.

Lily was confused, "Reward? What does he mean?"

Smack! Jackson gave Lily a slap out of nowhere.

Lily Hinton covered her face in pain and asked, "Jackson, why did you slap me?"

"Screw you! You traitor!" Jackson yelled angrily.

"What the f**k are you talking about? You're the traitor, not me!"

Jackson shot her a terrifying hideous smile and said, "How dare you f*****g talk back to me!"

"I bet you have mistaken your bid proposal as the one from the Hamilton family. Not only that, you even submitted it to the Schneider family."

"Now the Hamilton family is in deep trouble, all because of you."

“Just wait and see, I will do whatever it takes to bring the Hinton family down, even if it means we will dine in hell together.”

Lily Hinton finally got her head around at what Zeke had said to her before he left.

That jerk has clearly sabotaged me!

I remember clearly that I had explicitly mentioned Lacey Hinton's name when I submitted the bid proposal. How could the Schneider family mess it up?

Jackson must have misunderstood her.

If he takes revenge against me...

“Sh*t! My grandpa and my dad are in danger!” Her face turned as pale as a sheet.

After Jackson left the Schneider tower, he took out his phone to make a phone call.

“Go and get Adam Hinton and Jeremy Hinton for me now.”

“F*****g bitch! How dare she mess with me? I won't let her off easy!”

Meanwhile, at the Hinton's residence, Adam and Jeremy showed up unexpectedly.

Daniel and Hannah sat on the sofa, looking uneasy

at their arrival.

They had been told that Lacey had offended the Schneider family.

Jackson was the only one who could save her now.

In a threatening manner, Adam asked Lacey to register the marriage with Jackson by today. He also said that everyone in the Hinton family would be doomed if she failed to do so.

However, it was a tough call for Daniel and Hannah. Lacey and Zeke were such a great couple; how could they ask the two lovebirds to break up?

They were put in a tight spot.

Adam got impatient and hit the floor with his walking stick, "Stop dilly dallying. Make up your mind now before the Schneider family targets you two instead."

"Come on, bring out the household register so that Lacey can register the marriage with Jackson."

Jeremy joined in the conversation as well, "Jackson promised that as long as Lacey marries him, he will let the Hinton family become part of the Hamilton family."

"In other words, the Hinton family can take this

opportunity to become a second-rate family in Oakheart City.”

“Look at Zeke Williams; he's just someone who lives off a woman. What else is he capable of doing?”

Finally, Daniel couldn't take it anymore. He spoke through clenched teeth, “Enough of you two! Lacey has a say in this matter, not you two. Worst comes to worst, we will leave Oakheart City for good.”

Jeremy snorted, “The Schneider family is everywhere in Eurasia. Where do you think you run to?”

Adam grew impatient, “Jeremy, don't waste your breath talking to them. I'm the father, and I have a say in this matter too. Go and look for the household registry, and pass it to Jackson so that he can proceed with the registration.”

Jeremy nodded in agreement and went looking for the household register.

Hannah was overwhelmed by anxiety, and she stepped forward to stop them.

Jeremy pushed her away, “Get out of my sight!”

Jeremy pushed her so hard that she fell on the floor and couldn't get up.

Hannah shrieked, “Daniel, what are you waiting

for? Stop him right there.”

Daniel stepped forward to stop them as well.

However, Jeremy began to use force against them.

Adam was so pissed that he kept hitting Daniel with his walking stick.

The living room went into an uproar.

At that moment, there was a knock on the door.

A gruff voice was heard from the other side of the door, “Open the f*****g door now.”

Hearing the voice, Daniel and Hannah were stunned.

Shit, the Schneider family has found us!



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Adam cursed in a low voice, “Jeremy, call Jackson right away, ask him to...”

Bang! Before he could finish his sentence, the room's door was kicked open as two burly men came in.

Jeremy quickly dissociated himself from Daniel and Hannah, “I have nothing to do with this. They're Lacey Hinton's parents, not us.”

“Get them if you want.”

One of the burly men was stunned, “Lacey Hinton? Who is she?”

Suddenly, Jeremy's phone rang.

It was a call from Lily Hinton.

Jeremy picked up the phone promptly, “Lily, quick, get Jackson for me. We're innocent...”

Lily shouted with all her might on the other side of the phone, “Dad, run! Jackson wants to get you two.”

What?

Adam and Jeremy were shocked.

The other burly man looked at Jeremy coldly and asked, “So you two are Adam Hinton and Jeremy Hinton, aren't you?”

“You two really are gutsy. How dare you two play a trick on Mr. Hamilton. I'm afraid that you two have to leave with me now.”

Jeremy was confused, “There must be some misunderstanding. Mr. Hamilton is actually my son-in-law...”

Bam! Before he could finish his sentences, the burly men knocked them unconscious with one punch. Then, Adam and Jeremy were carried away.

Daniel and Hannah stood still right where they were and looked at each other in shock.

What the hell is going on?

After a while, Zeke and Lacey Hinton returned home.

Daniel walked up to them in a panic, “Zeke, something's wrong. Jackson took grandpa and Uncle Jeremy away. Please...please save them.”

Zeke had imperceptibly become the backbone of the family. Whenever Daniel and Hannah faced any problems, they would look to him for his help.

Zeke and Lacey pondered for a moment and had a rough idea about the situation.

Zeke asked, “Mom, Dad, are you sure you want to save grandpa and Uncle Jeremy after what they've

done to you?"

Daniel sighed, "What else can I do? They are my father and brother after all."

"We cannot be as cold-blooded as the two of them. What do you think, Zeke?"

Zeke looked at Hannah for her opinion, "Mum, what do you think?"

Hannah replied, "Zeke, why don't you tell us what actually happened?"

"Daniel and Jeremy told us you and Lacey have offended the Hamilton family. They wanted to take revenge against you two. But why did Jackson take them away instead?"

Zeke sat down before he explained to them, "It was all part of their conspiracy for Lily to join the steel mill. It was a trap set up by grandpa and Uncle Jeremy."

"Lily was the one who switched out Lacey's bid proposal. She submitted the insulting bid proposal to the Schneider family and pretended it was from Lacey."

"No wonder the Schneider family was so mad at it."

"They didn't know that I was prepared for all these things to happen."

“I secretly took a video of Lily switching the bid proposal and sent it to the Schneider family.”

“The Schneider family honours faith and loyalty. If they knew that the Hamilton family was taking a short cut, the Schneider family would never want to have any business deals with them anymore.”

“Too bad Jackson didn't know that I was the one who reported to the Schneider family and exposed him. He thinks grandpa and Uncle Jeremy are the ones who betrayed him, and therefore he's taking out his anger on them.”

The Hinton family was fuming after hearing the story.

“That's too much! I never thought they would be so cruel.”

“Sigh, why did he do that to his own granddaughter? What on earth is he thinking?”

Zeke asked, “So what do you think? Do you still want me to save them?”

Daniel looked troubled and remained silent.

Hannah took a deep breath and said, “ I think we should save them as they are still Daniel's father and brother. If not, someone will talk behind our back.”

“But we are not going to save them now. We can

do it tonight or tomorrow.”

“They're so mean to us, and we should pay them back in their own coins.”

“What do you think, Daniel?”

Daniel nodded blankly. “Yeah, what you said makes sense.”

Lacey looked at Zeke gratefully and said, “Zeke, thank you for everything.”

“If the Schneider family really thought I was the one who submitted an insulting bid proposal, our family would be doomed.”

Zeke replied, “I'm just doing my part as a husband. You don't need to thank me.”

Lacey blinked her sparkly eyes innocently and asked, “Is it really as simple as you say?”

“If so, why would I get a perfect score for my bid proposal?”

Zeke replied, “Don't forget that we're a team. I do have the responsibility and obligation to help you amend the bid proposal.”

“We did put in a lot of effort on that bid proposal, so I wasn't surprised that we got a perfect score.”

Lacey was in doubt, “Really? So you do know how

to write a bid proposal? Then why don't you write one for me now?"



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Zeke was embarrassed.

He didn't know how to write one, that's for sure.

Feeling the awkwardness between the two of them, Hannah broke the silence. "Zeke, you saved our lives. To show our appreciation, I'll cook some delicious dishes for you."

"Thank you, Mom."

Hannah smiled, "Don't mention it. We're family, after all."

She then beckoned Daniel to walk into the kitchen with her.

Daniel muttered under his breath, "I don't think it's that simple, what do you think?"

Hannah nodded, "Of course it isn't. Even if Zeke exposed to the Schneider family that the Hamilton family was the one who switched the bid proposal, Lacey would have never gotten a perfect score on it."

"After all, her steel mill is just a small scale factory. It makes no sense for her to get a perfect score."

Daniel was lost in his thoughts and asked, "Do you think Zeke knows someone from the Schneider family?"

Hannah replied, "Yeah, it seems that's the case."

"How about you try to see if you can get some information from him?"

Daniel looked troubled, "How am I supposed to do that if he refuses to cooperate?"

"How about you? Maybe you can sound him out?"

Hannah said, "Nah, it will be much easier if you have a man-to-man talk with him. How about you get him drunk later?"

Daniel agreed, "That's a good idea. After all, we have a bottle of Maotai sitting in our house. We can bring it out and serve it to him."

Soon, the sumptuous meal was served.

Daniel took out a cherished bottle of Maotai and said, "Zeke, let's have a drink."

Lacey wasn't very pleased. "Dad, don't let Zeke drink too much."

"The Schneider family might ask Zeke and me to meet them up later for contractual discussions, and it won't be nice for them to see him drunk.

Daniel assured Lacey, "Don't worry, I won't let him drink too much."

Lacey told Zeke, "Zeke, my dad is a good drinker.

He has a high alcohol tolerance and rarely gets drunk.”

“Please don't challenge him on his alcohol tolerance, alright?”

“Don't worry. I know I'm not as good of a drinker as your dad. I know what to do.”

Soon, they clinked their glasses and drank happily.

After half an hour, Daniel was as drunk as a skunk. He couldn't even stand properly.

“Zeke, I was known as a loyal, brave and resourceful person when I was young. I even had seven or eight men at my disposal during my glory days.”

“Too bad mundane life has taken a toll on me. Your mother-in-law has always been nagging at how useless I am now. But deep down in my heart, I know I'm swallowing my pride and simply waiting for an opportunity to shine.”

“Now that you're here, I feel young again.”

Zeke didn't even look as if he had been drinking and said calmly, “Dad, you're not that old yet. I believe you will achieve great things in life.”

“I never thought of achieving something great, but I would like to set up my own clinic.”

“That wouldn't be a problem. Lacey and I can give you some advice; we can make it work.”

Hannah didn't know whether to cry or laugh.

What a dummy. I'm asking you to pry information out of Zeke, but you're pouring your heart out to him. Well, now what? You're as drunk as a skunk while Zeke is as sober as a judge.

As for Lacey, a mood of melancholy descended on her.

For years, Dad has been living in obscurity and silence. He never confided in anyone.

But today he pours his heart out to Zeke about how he has really felt for all these years.

Seems like Zeke does have some talent.

Hannah started to get annoyed with Daniel's nagging, and she said, “Daniel, I think you've drunk too much. Let's head back to the room and have a rest.”

Zeke stopped Hannah, “It's okay, Mom.”

“It isn't easy for dad to support the family. He's under tremendous stress, and will feel better if he gets it off his chest.”

Daniel was moved to tears. “You and I really click. I know I can always count on you.”

After a while, the Schneider family called Lacey. They invited her over to the Schneider residence for the contractual discussion.

Lacey told Zeke that it was time to leave.

Daniel enjoyed his chit chat with Zeke but didn't want to take up their time either. "Zeke, don't worry about it. Just go ahead. We can continue drinking once you're done."

Zeke replied, "Sure, Dad. I will see you soon. Then we can drink to our hearts' content!"

As soon as Zeke left the house, Daniel slumped into the sofa and started his drunk talk, "This kid, he really can drink."

"If only I was younger..."

Hannah put a blanket on Daniel while she secretly wiped her tears away.

"Why didn't you tell me you're under so much stress?"

"Sigh, it's my bad. I was too harsh on you all the while."

"Well, look at the bright side. I'm so glad we can depend on Zeke now. You don't have to work so hard anymore."



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Inside the basement of the Hamilton Construction, Adam and Jeremy were bound to the chairs with wound and bruises all over their bodies.

Jackson sat opposite them wearing a maniac smile. He was holding a bloodstained whip in his hand.

Smack! He lashed Jeremy mercilessly with his long whip and cursed him at the same time.

“Bastard! How dare you two play a trick on me. I won't let you two off easy!”

Despair and remorse washed over Adam and Jeremy.

They never thought Jackson whom they trusted the most, would treat them so merciless and cruel.

Adam opened his mouth weakly and said, “Mr. Hamilton, there must be a misunderstanding.”

“We didn't trick you, Zeke did.”

“Enough, do you think I will believe what you just said?”

There was concrete evidence showing that Adam and Jeremy were the ones who conspired with Zeke against him. Even the Schneider family had misunderstood the Hamilton family. He would never believe in Adam and Jeremy Hinton anymore.

Seeing Jackson was about to lash the whip at him again, he shouted in panic, "Stop it!"

"Mr. Hamilton, I'll fix it for you."

"You can use us as a bargaining chip and threaten Lacey. In that way, she will admit that the insulting bid proposal is from her."

Jackson sneered, "Don't flatter yourself. Do you really think it could work? Have you forgotten how you two treated Lacey in the past?"

"She probably hopes you die now. What makes you think she will help you?"

"Furthermore, I haven't heard anything from them yet. I bet they have given up on you."

Adam spoke through clenched teeth, "Bastard, I'm her grandpa. How can she do that to us?"

"If that's the case, I won't go easy on her."

"Mr. Hamilton, I know who can help us."

"Tell me."

"Lacey has a god sister named Dawn Castaneda. Although they're not related by blood, they're like real sisters," Adam suggested.

"You can use Dawn as a bargaining chip to threaten Lacey."

Jackson was stunned for a moment, “Dawn Castaneda? The name sounds familiar to me.”

“Oh yeah, a new salesperson reported for work a few days ago. Her name is Dawn Castaneda.”

He took out his phone hastily and showed the photo of Dawn to them, “Is this her?”

Adam was surprised, “Yup, that's her. Why do you have her photo?”

“Of course I have it, she's my newly hired employee,” Jackson said.

Dawn was a true beauty. Jackson had had improper thoughts towards her the moment he laid his eyes on her.

Finally, his opportunity had come...

A fire of desire flared up in his abdomen.

He threw away his whip and walked out of the basement. At the same time, he took out his phone and called his secretary, “Bring Dawn Castaneda to my office.”

After a while, Dawn came to see him in the basement.

She was confused about why her boss would want to meet her; she was just a new recruit.

Jackson locked the door from the inside and looked at her with a lewd expression, "Do you know Lacey?"

Dawn replied, "Yeah, I know her."

Jackson's smile was even more hideous, "That's great."

"If I cannot get my hands on Lacey, you will be a perfect choice too."

Hearing what Jackson had said, she tensed up. "Mr. Hamilton, what do you mean by that?"

Jackson smiled wickedly, "Take off your clothes and go down on me."

Dawn's face turned pale instantly, "Get lost, you pervert."

After soon as she finished the sentence, she turned, wanting to leave the place.

But Jackson wouldn't let her go. He quickly pounced on her...



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Dawn shrieked in terror. She quickly grabbed the fruit knife on the table and pressed it against her neck.

“Please don't come near me, I will kill myself if you do.”

Then, she cut her neck slightly with the knife as a warning.

Upon seeing that, Jackson stopped in his tracks.

He wasn't ready to see anyone die in front of him.

He clenched his teeth, “Take it easy.”

He took out his phone and dialled Lacey's number.

Meanwhile, Lacey and Zeke were waiting in the Schneider family's conference room for Evan Schneider's arrival.

Lacey felt strange to see Jackson calling her. Nonetheless, she picked up the call.

“Where are you right now?” Jackson asked.

“In the conference room of the Schneider family,” Lacey replied.

“Great. You have two choices now. Number one, sign the contract with the Schneider family, and Dawn Castaneda will be dead. Number two, admit that the insulting bid proposal was from you, and I

will let Dawn Castaneda go.”

What?

Lacey jumped in terror. “Dawn... What did you do to her?”

Jackson replied, “Don't worry, she's still alive.”

“But I cannot guarantee if she will still be alive tomorrow.”

Then, he hung up the phone abruptly.

Lacey was shell-shocked and fell on the floor.

Zeke was shocked as well. He held Lacey hurriedly and asked, “What happened, Lacey?”

Lacey started stammering, “Quick... Quick... go to the Hamilton family and save Dawnie...”

“Jackson has Dawnie.”

What?

A gleam of murderous intent flashed in Zeke's eyes.

Is Jackson asking for death?

He consoled Lacey and said, “Don't worry, I will get Dawnie out.”

“I promise you she will be alright.”

Lacey took a deep breath as she said, “I will go with you.”

Zeke replied, “No, you just wait here.”

“Isn't Jackson trying to force you to admit that the insulting bid proposal is from you, is it? If so, you can try to buy time by pretending to agree to his terms.”

“Give me half an hour. I promise I will bring Dawnie back to you safely.”

Lacey took a deep breath and tried to calm herself down.

It seemed like the best solution for now.

She nodded, “Zeke, please get her back safely.”

Zeke nodded and left the Schneider family's house.

After he got into the car, he made a phone call to Lone Wolf.

“Lone Wolf, bring the armed forces in. We're going to the Hamilton family's house in Oakheart City.”

“The game is on.”

Lone Wolf replied, “Roger that!”

Zeke left with his car and soon arrived at Hamilton Construction.

Two security guards stopped him at the entrance, “Back off, no outsiders allowed.”

Zeke punched them in their faces.

The security guards were caught off guard by his quick punches. They fell onto the ground while blood splattered out of their mouths.

“Nobody can stop me!”

Zeke walked in the building.

Despite the pain, the security guards took out their walkie-talkies. “Mr. Hamilton, Zeke is here.”

“Did he bring anyone with him?” Jackson asked.

The security guard replied, “No, he came here alone.”

Jackson sneered, “Very good, let him in.”

“It's time to settle some old scores.”

“All of the security guards are to gather in my office immediately.”

Zeke soon arrived on the tenth floor of the building without any obstacles.

Zeke knew it was Jackson's trick.

However, Zeke was a military veteran. He wouldn't care less about the trick Jackson had pulled.

Bang! He kicked open the office's door and walked in straight.

He was stunned at the sight he saw before him.

Dawn held onto a fruit knife and pressed it against her neck. Her shirt collar was soaked in blood from her neck.

She looked pale as if she would pass out anytime.

Jackson and his men stood beside her, glaring at Zeke like ravening tigers.

Dawn fell into despair when she saw Zeke coming into the room alone.

How can he beat Jackson's men all by himself?

“Brother-in-law, get out of here.” Dawn welled up with tears as she said it.

Zeke didn't heed the warning and walked straight up to Dawn.

“Don't worry, Dawnie. Your blood will not be shed in vain.”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Dawn cried out, "Get out of here. You can never defeat them."

"Leave me alone. I don't want you to get into trouble." Dawn sobbed.

Jackson had a wicked smile on his face as he beckoned his men to block the door.

"You think you can leave this building unscathed? Your only option is to jump out of the window."

Zeke ignored Jackson and took the knife away from Dawn. He then put the silver needles on her neck to stop the bleeding.

Next, he moved a stool and let Dawn sit on it.

"Dawn, sit back and enjoy the show."

"Someday the dragon will rise, and the river will flow backwards. Someday the tiger will return to the mountain, and half of the sky will be stained with blood!"

"I will beat their asses and show them how winning is done. I'm your brother-in-law, that means something."

Dawn raised up her head in surprise.

Is this mysterious man going to show his true colours today?

What is this man capable of?

Is he able to beat off all of them?

Jackson sneered, "What a f*****g ostentatious man!

"Boys, go get him now!"

"Let's beat his ass, and let him watch how I sleep with his wife and his sister-in-law!"

The muscular men all charged at Zeke.

Zeke held the knife tight and turned around slowly, looking extremely calm.

"It's just... I felt pity for this imported wool carpet."

Looking confused, everyone wondered what this had to do with the carpet.

Dawn stared at his back in a daze.

His figure looked rather familiar to her as if she had seen it somewhere else.

Zeke finally moved his body when the men came near him.

He swung his knife at them with effortless grace.

After exactly five seconds, Zeke put the knife away. He had ended the commotion and remained

still.

As for these muscular men, they stood still as if they had been petrified and turned into a statue. Then they looked at their arms dumbfoundedly while their arms fell off onto the floor.

Blood instantly poured out from their arms and stained the wool carpet. *What a waste of a wool carpet.*

Argh!

The muscular men finally came back to their senses and collapsed onto the floor. They clutched their broken arms and screamed in pain.

A demon!

Did we just meet a demon?

In just five seconds, he has cut off all of our arms.

He's definitely a demon. How can a mortal possess such power?

Jackson peed on the spot out of terror.

His mind went blank and he felt out of breath as the smell of blood lingered in the room.

He realised he had gotten himself into deep trouble.

He leaned his back on the wall and moved towards the door slowly.

“Demon... A demon...”

Before he could reach for the door, he heard a piercing sound.

A bullet broke through the window and lodged itself in his thigh.

His legs turned into a mass of bleeding flesh.

A bullet!

Where did the bullet come from?

His fear numbed his pain for a moment.

He looked out the window in terror.

There were four military helicopters lingering outside the window.

As the rope ladder descended, dozens of soldiers with loaded guns broke in through the windows.

“Freeze! Get on your knees and put your hands above your heads!”

Before everyone came back to their senses as the office's door was kicked open suddenly.

Men with camouflage uniforms poured in, filling

the office.

“Freeze! Don't move. Otherwise, all of you will be executed!”

The army is here!

What? Why's the army alerted?

Everyone was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. They laid low on the floor and didn't dare to move.

Jackson cried uncontrollably, “Zeke, I'm so sorry, I will kowtow to you...”

“Please spare my life... Please...”

“Spare your life?”

Zeke sat down and cleaned the wound on Dawn's neck. “You've been sentenced to the death penalty the moment you laid your hands on my family member.”

Lone Wolf walked up to Zeke and saluted to him, “I'm sorry, Great Marshal. I'm late.”

Great Marshal?

Everyone was stunned when they heard Lone Wolf calling Zeke 'Great Marshal'.

The man before us is Great Marshal, the undefeated

God of War.

He's a legend.

We actually had the audacity to offend him?

We're in deep shit!

Dawn's jaw dropped in surprise.

The trashman is actually Great Marshal. This is so freaking cool!

“Great Marshal, the whole building is under our control. Please let us know what to do next.” Lone Wolf reported.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Zeke grabbed Lone Wolf's gun and threw it into the drawer of the office desk.

“Jackson Hamilton is suspected of stealing weapons and shall be sent to a military court.”

Stealing weapons? Military court? That's way worse than the death penalty!

After all, for the death penalty, the jury can only bring a charge against an individual. Meanwhile, for the court case handled in the military court, the verdict would involve the entire family!

Jackson cried out and passed out in fright.

“Roger that.” Lone Wolf said.

After receiving the order, the armed soldiers were busy arresting the criminals and photographing the evidence.

Zeke helped Dawn to bandage her wound and asked, “Can you walk by yourself?”

Dawn said, “Huh? I... I'm so dizzy. I can't walk properly.”

“Brother-in-law, can you hug me?”

Dawn wrapped her arms around Zeke's neck as she spoke.

Zeke had no choice but to carry her.

She's very light.

Dawn leaned against Zeke with her tear-streaked face.

What does it feel like to be close to your idol?

It's indescribable!

She felt as if her heart was about to jump out of her chest from beating too hard.

I can die without regrets now!

The whole building was full of soldiers.

As Zeke passed by, each and every one of the soldiers saluted him, "Great Marshal."

It was the highest honour.

As he descended to the first floor, he heard *athud* sound from the basement.

Only then did he remember that Adam and Jeremy were still inside the basement.

He walked to the basement and kicked open the door.

Adam and Jeremy quickly rushed out from the basement.

Adam's temper sparked when he saw Zeke, "You

trash! What took you so long?"

Jeremy scolded him too, "Hmph! What did you do to make Jackson misunderstood us?"

Zeke glanced at them with disdain, "Don't you dare mess with my family members ever again."

"Otherwise, you two will end up like Jackson."

Adam's neck turned red from the anger that had surged through him, "How dare you! How can you talk to an elderly like this? Who do you think you are? What a barbaric human!"

"I have no idea why Lacey would fall in love with you."

Dawn sighed, "You're the one who's barbaric."

"Is that how you treat your life saviour?"

"It's really sad that Lacey was born into your family."

Dawn's words only made Adam angrier. "Shut your mouth, you little rascal. I don't need you to teach me what to do."

"Let's go. Don't waste your breath on them," Zeke said to Dawn.

Dawn nodded and followed Zeke obediently.

Adam and Jeremy walked out of the basement while cursing at their misfortune.

When they ascended to the first floor, they were stunned.

Soldiers!

The soldiers with loaded guns have taken over the whole building!

What just happened?

Meanwhile, someone walked down the stairs.

Adam and Jeremy were shocked to death upon seeing the way Jackson was being carried away by the soldiers. Nobody knew if he had fainted or was dead. His blood dripped along the way.

Who on earth injured Jackson so badly?

Adam and Jeremy were speechless.

After Zeke left the Hamilton Construction, he made a phone call to Lacey to update her on the status.

Lacey finally let out a relieved sigh after knowing that Dawn was safe and sound.

“Dawnie, you must come straight home. Don't loiter. I'm afraid Jackson will give you trouble again.”

“Don't worry about it, you won't be able to see Jackson for a while,” Dawn replied.

Lacey insisted, “It's better to be safe than sorry.”

Lacey didn't know Jackson had been eliminated.

“Ok, I will.” Dawn gave a half-hearted reply and hung up the phone.

Then, she looked at Zeke curiously.

Zeke felt uncomfortable from the stares and asked, “What are you looking at?”

Dawn then replied, “Zeke, I never thought you would be the legendary Great Marshal.”

“In fact, you're my idol.” It was like a dream to be able to get so close to her idol.

Zeke shrugged. “It isn't a big deal.”

Dawn continued, “Zeke, since you are such a big shot, why don't you let Lacey know your identity?”

Zeke felt headache when it comes to this topic, “Well, your sister doesn't really like the Great Marshal.”

“Why?” Dawn asked.

“She thinks the Great Marshal and her are diametrically opposed,” Zeke replied.

“Oh.” Dawn nodded.

Zeke continued, “Oh yeah, please don't tell your sister about my real identity. Otherwise, she will surely break up with me.”

“I'm still figuring out a way to let her know the truth. Well, when the time is right, I'll let her know my real identity.”

Dawn replied absentmindedly, “Oh.”

She lowered her head and stayed silent. She looked as if she was in deep thought.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Now that Dawn was safe and sound, Lacey proceeded to sign the contract with the Schneider family.

After signing the contract, she rushed home to check on Dawn.

When she got home, everyone was watching TV.

Lacey was eager to know what happened.

“Dawnie, how did you escape from the Hamilton family?”

Dawn pointed at the television and replied, “Watch the news on TV.”

“The news?” Lacey looked at the television doubtfully.

Today, the Hamilton family from Oakheart City were suspected of stealing weapons. Their property has been confiscated, and any involved parties will be sent to a military court and shall be punished according to law. Colonel Lone Wolf personally led the team. The criminals will be brought to justice...

Lacey covered her mouth in astonishment, “Are you saying that the entire Hamilton family has been eliminated?”

After a while, she finally regained her composure.

She then realised that the whole thing wasn't adding up.

She said in a curious tone, "That's odd. The Hamilton family is in the real estate business. They have nothing to do with weapons, let alone stealing them. Unless they weren't right in their heads."

"Furthermore, the whole stealing weapons thing happened at such weird timing. I'm afraid there's something more to this than meets the eye."

Daniel expressed his opinion, "I personally think that the Schneider family is taking revenge against the Hamilton family."

Lacey frowned, "A revenge plan by the Schneider family? I don't think so. It was just an insulting bid proposal. Why would the Schneider family blow things out of proportion?"

"Besides, is the Schneider family that powerful to get Colonel Lone Wolf involved in this matter?"

Daniel said, "Rumour has it, the Schneider family from Oakheart City was just a puppet of Great Marshal."

"By humiliating the Schneider family, Jackson is humiliating the Great Marshal as well."

"It is a well-known fact that the Great Marshal will not be humiliated."

"Also, Lone Wolf is the subordinate of Great Marshal. It's highly possible that Lone Wolf was

sent by him.”

Lacey was deep in thought as she made a summary. “Well, I guess the Great Marshal is being really petty then.”

Cough! Cough!

Zeke and Dawn coughed at the same time.

Lacey looked at both of them curiously, “What happened to you two?”

They quickly shook their heads, “No... Nothing.”

Dawn gave Zeke a silly smile as she felt a sense of superiority upon knowing something the others didn't.

Suddenly, Zeke's phone rang.

He glanced at the phone number, looking serious.

The phone call was from the colonel.

He told everyone he needed to pick up a call and went downstairs.

When he got to the car, he answered the phone and greeted, “Hello, Colonel.”

Zeke had equal status with the Colonel, so he didn't have to talk to him formally.

A firm voice came from the other side of the phone, "Zeke, what you've done in the Oakheart City is quite high profile, don't you think so?"

Zeke replied, "I don't think I'm being high profile, especially since they're just a second-rate family."

The colonel said, "That isn't what I meant."

"What I meant is after that incident, all our enemies now know that you're now in Oakheart City."

"Besides, the previous ceremony was also held in Oakheart City. Our enemies would have guessed that you're residing in Oakheart City and that you won't be returning to the border anytime soon."

"Our enemies are eyeing on us, and may invade our border anytime..."

"It is best if you could return to the border before it is too late."

Zeke looked troubled as he spoke. "I'm sorry, Colonel. I'm in the middle of something back in the Oakheart City."

The colonel laughed, "I heard about it, and I knew you wouldn't want to come back."

"How about this? You can join the upcoming TCM Association Forum."

“Then I will leak out the news to let everyone knows that you're actually attending the forum in Oakheart City, instead of residing there. Eventually, you will return to the border once the forum is finished, and our enemies won't dare invade our border any longer.”

Zeke thought about it before he nodded, “Alright then.”

The colonel continued, “Since you're okay with the idea, then I will proceed.”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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The next day, a piece of unexpected news was making headlines in Oakheart city.

Great Marshal will be joining the upcoming TCM Association Forum as the Needle God.

In other words, Great Marshal would come to Oakheart City, and everyone could have a chance to meet up with him.

Everyone was excited about the news, especially the TCM Practitioners.

Not only were they able to join the TCM Association Forum, but they also had a chance to get close to the Great Marshal, the Needle God.

All of the sudden, the ticket price of the TCM Association Forum had skyrocketed. The price made it nearly impossible to get.

Daniel was a senior TCM Practitioner, and he knew the news first-hand.

He had mixed feelings about the news.

He was excited that the Great Marshal would be able to join the TCM Association Forum, as this was a great opportunity to raise awareness for Chinese Medicine as well.

However, he wasn't qualified to join the TCM forum. Therefore he couldn't be there to witness the Needle God's amazing medical skills.

He looked gloomy while he was having his breakfast.

Zeke asked curiously, "Dad, what happened? You look unhappy."

Daniel replied, "Sigh, It's not a big deal. I just feel sad because I can't join the TCM Association Forum."

Zeke took out the two invitation cards and passed it to Daniel. "Dad, I have two invitation cards here, you can have it."

Huh?

Everyone in the Hinton family was stunned and looked at Zeke in surprise.

Everyone knew how hard it was to get the invitation card.

Where did Zeke get it from?

Furthermore, he had taken those two invitation cards as if he were taking two dollars out of his pocket casually.

Daniel received the invitation cards with his trembling hands and took a closer look.

A moment later, his face flushed with excitement, "It's real...I can't believe it's real!"

“Zeke, where did you get the invitation cards from?”

“Oh, do you all still remember Susan Raynor? She's the daughter of the boss of the Grand Millennium Hotel.”

“Last time, we cured her dad's cerebral infraction. Therefore, she gave me two invitation cards as a gift.”

“Oh, I see.” Daniel looked like he was at a sudden realization.

“Even though we have the tickets, I'm afraid I still can't go.”

“Why is that so?” Zeke asked.

Daniel replied, “The TCM Association Forum stipulated that each organisation can only send two representatives.”

“There are no seats left for the Heartland Hospital.”

“Unless I quit my job at the Heartland Hospital, and set up my own clinic. Only then will I be able to join the forum as an individual.”

Zeke said casually, “Then you should quit your job and set up your own clinic...”

Daniel looked at Hannah cautiously, “What do you

think, Hannah?”

Hannah had always disagreed with Daniel quitting his job and was firm about it.

Daniel didn't hold out much hope for this.

Hannah looked at Zeke hesitantly and said, “Since Zeke agrees with you, you can give it a try.”

Daniel turned eager and excited. “Great, I can finally go all out and achieve my lifelong dream.”

“Zeke, you really are my lucky star. Come on, eat up.”

Daniel's appetite was good; he ate more than usual.

Seeing Daniel placing the food eagerly on Zeke's place, Lacey felt speechless and rolled her eyes.

“Not again. How dare he compete for my parent's attention again.”

Nonetheless, she was grateful to him for what he had done.

After all, he made her father's dream come true.

After dinner, Daniel put down his cutlery and said, “I will tender resignation at the hospital right now.”

“Zeke, why don't you wait for me at home. When I

get home, we can go and have a look at the perfect location for the new clinic, and also find out what else should we do.”

Zeke gladly agreed, “Sure, no problem.”

Daniel then left light-heartedly.

After Lacey was done with her dinner, she dabbed her mouth with a napkin and got ready for work.

Lacey assumedly would get quite busy after she got the Love in a Fallen City's project.

Suddenly, Dawn called out to her, “Lacey, please get a job for me in your company. Please take me under your wing.”

Lacey was surprised, “Dawnie, you're a PhD graduate. Why would you be interested in my tiny factory?”

Dawn flattered her and said, “Although your factory is small now, I have faith in you. I believe you will become a leader in the industry in no time.”

Are you kidding me? With the Great Marshal's help, how can her business not prosper?

Lacey said, “Wow, I'm truly flattered.”

“Okay then, I'll hire you as my secretary. Salary and benefits will be paid according to the highest

standards.”

“Thank you, Lacey.”

Zeke and Hannah were soon the only ones who remained at the dining table.

Hannah cleared the table as she said, “Zeke, Lacey's twentieth birthday is coming up in a few days.”

“According to the custom of the Hinton family, twenty years old will be one's coming of age. It's a momentous occasion worthy of a grand ceremony.”

Zeke said, “I see. We shall celebrate it grandly then.”

Hannah replied, “Great, I will inform all the relatives from our hometown.”

Zeke was shocked. He had never thought that Lacey was only twenty years old. She was ten years younger than him.

He was a lucky man.

What should I give her on her twentieth birthday?

Hmm... giving her the Hamilton Construction as a gift will be a great idea.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Before long, Daniel tendered his resignation letter and returned home.

Then, Zeke left with Daniel to look for a suitable location for the new clinic.

However, with Daniel being a doctor for all his life, and Zeke being a soldier for half of his life, they were both laymen in doing business.

After looking at all the 'Unit For Sale/ Rent' advertisement on the streets, they were confused.

It left Zeke no choice but to call Evan Schneider for his advice.

Evan Schneider was a mover and shaker in the industry. Rumour had it that Evan was charging his clients tens of millions to give out his business advice.

Furthermore, some clients couldn't even meet him face to face despite the fact that they had paid for the counselling session upfront.

Evan picked up the phone in a dignified tone. "Mr. Williams, what brings you to me today?"

Zeke spoke, "Evan, my dad would like to start up a cardiology clinic. What location do you think to be the most suitable?"

Evan replied, "If you're talking about cardiology, Guardian Hospital Center would be the best.

However, that property belongs to the government, and it will be a bit tough to acquire it.”

“I personally recommend United Hospital Center. That's a private enterprise, and it will be easier to acquire...”

Zeke stopped him halfway, “Hold on, I'm not asking for your opinion to acquire a hospital. I just want to open a clinic, that's all.”

Evan felt sorry for him.

What a waste it is for the Needle God to work in a small clinic.

“In that case, I would suggest Merwin District,” Evan suggested.

“There are farmers working in the vegetable greenhouse in the vicinity of Merwin District. Unfortunately, due to their working environment, they're prone to heart diseases.”

“Besides, there are no hospitals in that area. Therefore, farmers have to travel far away just to visit the doctor. Furthermore, the consultation fee in the hospital is expensive, so they often refuse to get it treated in a hospital.”

“If you're planning to open a small clinic in that area, I'm sure your business will be good.”

Zeke nodded, “Hmm... then I will head over there

for an inspection.”

“Sure, Mr. Williams. I will acquire Merwin District immediately,” Evan said.

Zeke's head started aching. “Please do not meddle in my affairs.”

Left with no choice, Evan replied, “Erm... Okay.”

After he hung up the phone, Zeke told Daniel the advantages of opening a clinic in Merwin District.

Daniel's eyes lit up. “Hmm... Merwin District does sound like a great location.”

“However, it's a little bit further from our house. Anyway, I don't think it's a big deal.”

Zeke replied, “Yeah, I don't think it's a big deal either. We can buy a villa nearby. Our current house is a little bit too small for us.”

Daniel was speechless.

It will take me years of hard work to get enough money just to buy a villa.

At the same time, Emily and Madeleine drove towards the direction of Merwin District.

Madeleine asked worriedly, “Emily, are you sure opening a clinic in Merwin District would be good for the business?”

Emily replied, "Mum, don't worry about it. I've done market research. Everything is going to be alright."

"I've also sought advice from the professionals. They all unanimously agreed that Merwin District will be the best place for our clinic."

Madeleine was relieved. "Alright then."

Emily continued, "Oh yeah, mum. Have you heard that the Great Marshal will be joining the TCM Association Forum?"

"If we could leave a good impression on the Great Marshal, that would be great for us."

Madeleine laughed, "The Great Marshal is so superior. He's totally out of our league. Don't even think about it."

"The most important thing right now is to be acquainted with the miracle doctor introduced by Susan. Your dad's life depends on that miracle doctor."

Emily nodded, "Sure, I know what to do."

A dead silence followed.

Although Merwin District was a remote area, there were a lot of units for sale or rent.

Soon, Zeke and Daniel had their eyes on a particular unit.

They paid one year's rental upfront, and Daniel officially became the tenant of the clinic.

After they solved their biggest concern, next would be going through the paperwork and contact the medical suppliers.

To set up the clinic as soon as possible, they decided to share the workload. Zeke would be in charge of the paperwork, while Daniel would contact the renovation team and the medical suppliers.

Coincidentally, Madeleine and Emily arrived at the destination after they left.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Emily had recognized Zeke at first sight with her keen eyes.

She furrowed her brows, "What's he doing here?"

After inquiring with some locals, she found out that Zeke and Daniel were planning to set up their clinic on the street as well, just diagonally across the location they had chosen.

Madeleine snarled between gritted teeth, "That trash is going to compete for business! What a jerk!"

Emily sneered, "He's still wet behind the ears to be considered a match."

"Mom, don't worry. I won't let them open their clinic, at least not at this place."

Madeleine was intrigued by her words, "Emily, do you have any countermeasures?"

Emily replied, "Mom, chill. We'll let them open up. I'm just going to make them close it down during their grand opening. This way, not only will their clinic shut down, but they'll take a financial beating as well."

Madeleine nodded, "Mm, let's do it. We should have taught Zeke Williams and the Hinton family a lesson. I'm vexed whenever I recall how he dumped you on your big day and married that brazen little hussy!"

.....

With one phone call to Evan, Zeke had the shop registration certificate, business license, fire safety certificate, health and safety permit, along with everything else he needed at his fingertips.

Daniel knew the ropes in dealing with pharmaceutical suppliers as he had been working as a TCM Practitioner his entire life. He managed to clinch supply contracts and set up the supply chain for various drugs.

On the other hand, Dawn was responsible for the renovation.

Being a graduate with a PhD degree, she could put forward a decent design plan without a hitch.

Lacey contacted the construction team as soon as the blueprint was finalized.

The preparation work for the grand opening of the clinic was in full swing.

Within three days, they managed to build their Chinese traditional medicine clinic – Rejuvenation Clinic from scratch.

Daniel was stirred as he stood in front of the clinic.

It had always been his dream to own his own clinic.

Today, my dream comes true.

Soaring ambition began to well up inside him as he fixed his gaze on the inscribed board.

Today was the opening day. Hannah and Dawn had both come for the opening ceremony.

Lacey too had squeezed a slot into her hectic schedule to show up at the opening ceremony.

Daniel asked, "Lacey, have you informed all your business partners?"

Lacey nodded, "Dad, put your mind at ease. They will show up."

Daniel then turned to Hannah. "Have you notified dad and brother?"

"This is the third time you're asking the same question. Ugh, you're so annoying," Hannah answered with a sense of impatience, "They've promised to come."

"Ok... Ok... That's great." Daniel heaved a sigh of relief, "I've invited a few colleagues as well. Hopefully, they won't blow me off."

Daniel was a bundle of nerves.

He wished to have a grand and pompous opening ceremony.

Hence, he needed to make sure that that everything runs smoothly.

Zeke said with a reassuring smile, "Dad, relax. I've also invited some friends to come and show their support."

Daniel nodded, "Thank you, Zeke."

Lacey was curious, "Zeke, I didn't know you had friends in Oakheart City. Who are they?"

Lacey's curiosity was not uncalled for as Zeke had little to no contact with his family and friends. He had been following Emily around like a puppy dog for the past five years.

Zeke flashed a mysterious smile. "You'll find out when they arrive."

My friends' identity will definitely blow you away.

Meanwhile, a clinic across the street was opening for business.

Madeleine and Emily strutted out of the clinic.

All members of the Hinton family slightly frowned as soon as they saw the two women. They had a bad feeling about them.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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The Clemons family had directed their hostility towards the Hinton family ever since the groom left Emily for Lacey.

These two gatecrashers must be up to no good.

Just as expected, a van pulled up in front of their clinic where they turned up.

Under Emily's instructions, two workers carried an inscribed board out of the van and affixed it somewhere above their clinic's front door. Others unloaded party poppers and firecrackers.

The inscription – 'Savior Clinic' was eye-catching.

The Hinton family furrowed their brows.

Not only did the Clemons family set up their clinic here, but they were going to have their grand opening today.

Their intention was plain as day – to steal the Hinton family's thunder.

Daniel lost his cool, "Madeleine, are you setting up your clinic here as well?"

Madeleine snickered, "Do you own this place? Are we not allowed to open our clinic here?"

"By the way, we have had our business license registered way earlier than you."

Daniel countered, "Why didn't you tell me earlier? If I had known, I wouldn't have set up my clinic here."

Madeleine mocked, "I wouldn't have this opportunity to humiliate you if I had told you earlier."

Daniel asked, "What do you mean?"

Emily chipped in, "You'll find out soon."

With bravado, she ended her words with a throat-slitting gesture.

Daniel grew agitated. "Oh no! It seems they are scheming against us. They're determined to ruin our grand opening."

Zeke comforted him, "Dad, don't worry. I've invited a big cheese today; no one can put the Hinton family in the shade."

Daniel couldn't cast his worries away, "Madeleine Clemons has connections with some officials. I'm afraid your friends from the business industry will be of little help."

Zeke remained silent with a confident smile plastered on his face.

The officialdom? That's my territory!

Adam Hinton and Jeremy Hinton arrived soon after.

Daniel rushed to their side and welcomed their arrival. "Dad, brother, you're here! Please come in."

Adam Hinton asked coldly, "How much are you going to pay us for being a member of the clique?"

Daniel was slightly bewildered. "You're asking me for money?"

Aren't you the one who's supposed to give me money as a sign of support?

But you're asking me for money?

Adam Hinton reprimanded, "Hmph! How dare you set up your own clinic? You're biting off more than you can chew!"

His words left Daniel red-faced.

He didn't care if someone pulled him down, but he would not let anyone cast aspersions on his professionalism as a doctor.

He rebutted, "Dad, what's wrong with my medical skills? Have you forgotten that I'm the assistant director of the hospital?"

Adam Hinton sneered, "You became the assistant director through a back door method. It's nothing to be proud of."

Daniel was at a loss; he had indeed become the

assistant director with the help of Zeke.

However, the hospital authority wouldn't have let him hold the position as the assistant director if he didn't know his stuff.

Jeremy Hinton grew impatient. "Dad, it isn't worth our while to keep harping with Daniel. Let's go support the Clemons family; they'll pay us a thousand bucks for that."

"I bet it's a hundred to one that Daniel will be able to open his clinic today."

Daniel pumped his brother, "Jeremy, what do you mean by that?"

Jeremy gave a hint, "You have trodden on someone's toes, someone you shouldn't mess with. That girl is a true badass, ya know."

Adam Hinton and the others made their way toward the Clemons' clinic.

Emily welcomed him in high spirits, "Sir, you're shrewd enough to learn that their true motive of opening the clinic is to gain profit. You're sensible and decisive to cut ties with them in the cause of justice. I have high regards for you."

Adam Hinton gave her a slight nod before he entered the clinic.

Emily gloated, "Daniel, even your close ones have

no confidence in your medical skills. Yet you're brazen enough to persist in opening your clinic?"



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Lacey and her family turned red in embarrassment by Emily's sick burns.

They were no less than a stab in the heart.

They couldn't believe that their granddad and Uncle Jeremy would turn against them.

Are they really my family? I bet my enemy would treat me with more mercy than this so-called family.

It will be fatal to his reputation, as a doctor, if rumours that his close ones had no confidence in his medical skills spread in the city.

How can I still open my clinic with a bad repute?

Dawn, though being an outsider, couldn't help but take up the cudgel. "Lacey, your granddad and your uncle have gone too far. They're still treating your family like dirt after all these years."

"If I were you, I would definitely cut ties with them."

Lacey heaved a sigh of frustration, "It's complicated..."

Zeke patted Lacey consolingly on the shoulder, "Don't worry, Lacey. They will eventually turn to us when they realize they've shot themselves in the foot."

In the meantime, Daniel's colleagues from the hospital had arrived.

Daniel greeted them with a broad smile, “Zayne, Louis, you guys have arrived ahead of time! Thanks for coming!”

His colleagues gushed with fabricated smiles, “Daniel, congrats! You're becoming a big shot in the healthcare business now.”

“It's no different from any other job. We're all just working for a living. Please, come in,” Daniel said humbly.

However, his colleagues seemed stumped by his hospitality, “Sorry, Daniel. We still have plans later so we can't stay here.”

Daniel was disappointed, “Oh... It's okay...”

Before he even realized it, his colleagues had made their way towards the Clemons family.

“Mrs. Clemons, congratulations!”

“Wow! Mrs. Clemons, your clinic is larger in scale than I thought.”

“With Madeleine's top-notch medical skills, I believe it's just a matter of time for you to expand your clinic and knock spots off Heartland Hospital.”

Madeleine's smile grew wider, “Haha, you guys are flattering me. But making a profit isn't my intention with the clinic, I'm just fulfilling my duty as a

doctor to save lives.”

The colleagues were impressed, “You're an exemplar of the healthcare industry.”

Madeleine invited the group of people into the clinic and flashed Daniel a snotty smile.

Daniel stood stock-still in embarrassment.

Madeleine was ruthless in poaching his guests before his very eyes!

Hannah was disgruntled by Daniel's wimpiness. “These are your so-called buddies? They've just slapped you in the face. No wonder people look down on you.”

Daniel was provoked. “Shut up! At worst, I'll just close down the clinic. It's no big deal.”

Hannah snapped, “All you do is to take it out on your family whenever you get offended by other people. You're such a wimp.”

Zeke placated them to prevent them from having a row, “Dad, mom, calm down. They will kick themselves for what they've done.”

The Hinton family heaved a sigh of despondency.

Will they really come back? It seems more likely that we will be the ones to beg them to set foot in our clinic.

In the meantime —

A flashy black Audi pulled up in front of the clinic and a man dressed in his suit got off the car.

Daniel brightened up as soon as he saw the man, “Is that Wilber Watchinski? The section chief from the Drug Administration? Why is he here...”

Daniel greeted him with respect, “Section chief Wilber, your presence brings light to my humble clinic.” He unconsciously assumed that Wilber had come to support him.

Wilber nodded distantly, “I was just passing by here so I decided to drop by.”

“Section chief, please come in. Lacey, bring the section chief some tea,” Daniel said.

“Alright! Section chief, do come in for some tea.” Lacey complied and led Wilber into the clinic.

Daniel whispered at Zeke, “So he's the big cheese you invited. I didn't know you had connections in the healthcare industry.”

Zeke shook his head, “No, I didn't invite him.”

He's not worth for me to invite personally.

Daniel mumbled to himself, “That's strange... I don't have a close relationship with him either. I wonder why he would come and support me.”

“Daniel Hinton! Get in here!” Suddenly, Wilber yelled from inside the clinic; the fury in his voice was obvious.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Daniel's heart dropped at once and he rushed into the clinic. "Section chief, what's wrong?"

Wilber was pointing at the heaps of traditional medicine as he reprimanded, "These are controlled-drugs for specific purposes which ought to be registered at the Drug Administration."

"It is against the law to sell or administer these drugs before registering at the FDA."

"According to the regulations, we will have to shut down your clinic."

What?

Daniel's blood ran cold as he processed Wilber's words.

His career in the healthcare industry will be doomed if they shut his clinic down on the first day of its opening; his livelihood would be destroyed.

Daniel immediately explained, "Section chief, I have registered these medicines. You're the one who helped me with the registration, don't you remember?"

Wilber curled his lips into a cold smile. "Did I? I don't recall doing it at all. You must have remembered it wrongly."

Daniel's face was full of despair and a thought

struck him when he saw Wilder's cold smile.

Damn it! Madeleine must have colluded with Wilber to tamper with the controlled drugs' registration procedures.

It assured him that his suspicion was correct when he recalled Madeleine mentioning just now about his clinic closing down.

Hannah hit the panic button when she offered Wilber a stack of money under the table, "Section chief, it's all Daniel's fault. Please forgive him. We will complete the registration; would you please kindly make an exception for us?"

Wilber glanced at the stack of cash and poured scorn on Hannah, "Hmph! Do you think I'm a beggar who you can get rid of me with this petty sum of cash?"

Then, he added, "Ten thousand, and I'll turn a blind eye this time."

Hannah fell into silence because she grudged every hard-earned penny to be spent on Wilber. Daniel would need to work day and night in his clinic to earn ten thousand.

Wilber took the silence as a 'no' to his offer so he gave them an ultimatum, "Shut down your clinic immediately, or you'll find yourself in court and ultimately in prison."

Court... Prison...

Daniel was fretted by Wilber's warning, "I will shut it down... I will shut it down right now."

He would rather have the clinic shut down than go to prison.

Wilber sneered and was about to head toward the Clemons' clinic when Zeke suddenly let out a chortle, "Section chief Wilber, I see that you're adamant with your swagger. However, you're simply digging a hole for yourself. I'll give you a chance to apologize now and I'll forgive you for your rudeness."

Wilber was puzzled. "Who are you?"

Zeke replied, "I'm Lacey's husband."

Wilber jeered at him, "Oh... I see... you're Daniel's son-in-law, the offender under probation reform. How dare you be so disrespectful to an official? You better behave yourself, or else I can send you back to prison."

"Great, you asked for it!" Zeke feigned a smile and said, "Well, looks like the Drug Administration is corrupted that it renders a petty section chief like you to act with such a swagger."

Lacey rushed to his side and held Zeke back with a slight tug on his shirt. "Zeke, don't."

Wilber will definitely take legal action against them if Zeke continues to provoke him.

Madeleine greeted Wilber who was strutting toward her, "Section chief, it's an honour to have you here. Please come in!"

Wilber nodded, "Madeleine, you have my full support. I have high hopes for you and your clinic compared to those who go out of their depth trying to compete with you."

"I'm glad to have your words. Section chief, come on in." Madeleine led Wilber into her clinic.

Emily mocked, " Daniel, your clinic is going to be shut down on the first day of its opening. It must be the most short-lived clinic in the world. Haha... I'm going to die laughing... Hahaha!"

Daniel gritted his teeth, "Emily Clemons, so this a conspiracy of your family? You guys are ruthless..."

Emily snapped, "You're nothing but a two-faced hypocrite. Wasn't your daughter ruthless towards me when she took my ex-fiancé away from me? But I need to thank her anyway for recycling my cast-offs, or else my mom would still be a galley slave of the hospital."



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Emily sashayed her way back to the Clemons' clinic to entertain her guests.

“You... You...” Daniel stuttered. He was foaming at the mouth.

The Clemons' clinic was bustling with noise and excitement. The workers hired by the Clemons were lighting firecrackers and the commotion of their grand opening drew the townspeople to their clinic.

In comparison, the Hinton's clinic was deserted; they had already put up the shutters.

The townspeople rubbernecking on the street were intrigued by the stark contrast between the two clinics.

Daniel was so embarrassed; he wished he could dig a hole and hide.

“Let's get out of here!” Daniel said with a lump in his throat.

Lacey comforted him, “Dad, it's no big deal to shut down the clinic. You don't need to worry about livelihood costs. I'll take care of you.”

“You're such a good daughter.” Daniel forced a smile.

Actually, he didn't open the clinic for profit but to fulfil his dream — a dream he had been pursuing

his entire life.

Today, his dream was shattered into pieces.

Suddenly, he heard Zeke's voice, "Dad, our guests have not arrived yet. It's not yet time to leave."

Daniel spoke in low spirits, "We have shut down the clinic, it will change nothing even if your guests arrive. You should inform your friends that they need not come."

Zeke shook his head and said, "It's too late, they've arrived."

They have arrived? Where are they?

The Hinton family was clueless.

At that moment, a procession of flashy black cars stopped in front of their clinic.

It was a motorcade comprised of luxurious cars in which the 'cheesiest' among them was a Mercedes-Benz S-class that cost more than a million.

A group of men in suits got off the car with Evan Schneider taking the lead.

Behind him were the Schneider family's business partners — they were all big wheels in the business world.

“Is Mr. Schneider here for a site investigation for one of his projects?” Daniel muttered as it was unthinkable that they're here to support him.

Evan Schneider cast a glance at his surroundings before he made his way towards Daniel and clasped Daniel's hands with zest.

“Mr. Hinton, my apologies for arriving late. I hope you didn't hold up the opening ceremony because of me.”

“Huh?” Daniel was stunned, “Mr. Schneider...you are here to support me?”

Evan nodded, “Yes.”

With a sweep of his arm, his subordinates walked toward them while holding a towering stack of gifts in his arm.

“A monetary gift of ten million, a grand flower stand and a gift basket from Evan Schneider of the Oakheart City.”

“A monetary gift of eight million, a flower bouquet and a gift basket from Tim Walker from the Oakheart City.”

“A monetary gift of six million, a flower bouquet and a gift basket from Lambert Johnson from Risco City.”

“A flower bouquet and...”

The jaws of the crowd dropped.

It was a huge honour to have the richest man in Oakheart City show support at the opening ceremony of a small clinic.

On top of that, they had brought millions worth of monetary gifts. The earnings from running a clinic were nothing compared to the monetary gifts received during its opening ceremony.

In addition, the opportunity of receiving a flower stand from the richest man in Oakheart City was priceless.

Finally, Lacey managed to pull herself together, "Dad, why don't we invite Mr. Schneider inside for some tea."

Daniel returned to his senses and started stammering, "Mr. Schneider... please... please come in."

Zeke was so kind to remind him, "Dad, I'm afraid we can't enter. Our clinic has been shut down; don't you remember?"

Evan Schneider's heart skipped a beat when he saw the latched roller shutters.

Damn it! Who's the moron who dares shut down Mr. Williams' clinic? He's digging his own grave!

Daniel was at a loss when a few cars stopped

nearby.

There was nothing special with the cars, but the car plate numbers were tell-tale of the high social status of the passengers on board.

Those were official state vehicles.

Daniel was stirred up when he saw Liam George, the director of Industrial and Commercial Bureau, get out of the car, accompanied by other officials.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Daniel was about to greet Liam George when he remembered he still needed to keep Evan company. He was stumped.

Evan seemed to have noticed Daniel's worries so he said, "Mr. Hinton, feel free to go greet them. I can manage myself."

Daniel nodded and then trotted towards Liam George, "Oh... Mr. George, welcome! What brings you here?"

Liam was modest in demeanour as he shook hands with Daniel, "Mr. Hinton, I hope you won't mind me showing up uninvited."

Daniel quickly responded, "Of course not! Mr. George, it's an honour to have you here. Please, do come in."

Liam smiled faintly, "No hurry. Lewis, fetch me the gift."

His secretary brought over an inscribed board. "Mr. Hinton, here is a gift for your grand opening."

The words 'Humanity Clinic' were engraved on the board with "Industrial and Commercial Bureau" clearly carved at the bottom.

It was an authorized recognition by the state government that could build his reputation.

Daniel was thrilled. He could hardly contain

himself because he knew clearly that a good reputation was of the utmost importance to a clinic.

Liam George handed Daniel a pennant as a sign of honour. "Mr. Hinton, this is a little gift from me."

Daniel accepted it with his trembling hands, "Mr. George, I... I... Ermm... please come in."

Daniel was at a loss of words when he received the inscribed board and the pennant.

Zeke reminded him, "Dad, you forgot our clinic has been shut down."

What? How dare someone shut down the clinic of the Great Marshal!

Liam George's face turned pale as he glanced at the entrance of the clinic.

Then, he asked, "Mr. Hinton, who shut your clinic down?"

Daniel replied, "Section chief Wilber from the Drug Administration. He said that our controlled-drugs were not registered, but I'm sure I did complete the registration procedures."

"Wilber? I have no memory of this person, but Leo Kingston, the director of the Drug Administration will be arriving soon." Liam assured him, "Don't worry, I'll ask him to check on his subordinate

officers. He should have kept an eye on the integrity of his subordinates.”

Soon, another two groups of people arrived. Among them was Dylan Dickson, the head of the Merwin District Police Station.

Daniel would fret if he met Dylan Dickson on any other days, but not today.

He managed to grip his composure when he saw Dylan Dickson after meeting big shots like Liam George and Evan Schneider.

Dylan was astute enough to walk behind them as one of their entourage after he greeted Daniel.

The other group of people was led by Leo Kingston, the director of the Drug Administration.

Daniel swallowed his greetings when Evan suddenly reproached Leo. “Leo, how dare you show up.”

Liam too bombarded him, “Look at what you've done today! You're so disappointing.”

Leo was bewildered. “Erm... Are you guys not satisfied with the opening gift I've brought? Actually, I've prepared another...”

Liam interrupted him, “It's nothing to do with your opening gift. It's your subordinate officer, Wilber! He has shut Mr. Hinton's clinic down.”

What?

Leo was infuriated, “Wilber! He's such an idiot! I have confirmed that there's no issue with Mr. Hinton's registration before I came. How dare he shut down Mr. Hinton's clinic!”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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“Mr. Hinton, I'm so sorry. My ignorant subordinate officer has caused you a lot of trouble. I will hold Wilber accountable for his mistake. No one can stop you from opening your clinic. You have my words!”

Daniel was incredibly grateful. “Thank you, Mr. Kingston. I appreciate your understanding.”

Then, he unlatched the roller shutter and led his guests into the clinic.

Lacey halted Zeke who was about to enter and said, “Our guests are all big shots. Aren't you going to explain to me why they are all here?”

Zeke replied with an innocent face, “They're just here to support dad.”

“Of course I know they're here to support dad.” Lacey prodded him for an answer, “I mean, why were they willing to come and support him?”

Dawn approached the duo and said, “Lacey, come on, the guests are waiting. You guys can talk later.”

Lacey nodded. “Mm, I'll help to receive the guests.”

Dawn turned to her back and winked at Zeke as she rushed Lacey into the clinic.

Brother-in-law, I just got you out of big trouble. You owe me one.

The Great Marshal owes me a favour! I can brag about this for my whole life!

Inside the Clemons' clinic.

Emily had seated her guests before walking out of the clinic. She needed to give an order to the restaurant to serve the dishes.

That was when she noticed that the Hinton's clinic remained open.

She flashed a devious smile, "Hmph! You guys asked for it! Don't blame me afterwards for being ruthless."

She retraced her steps back into her clinic and found Wilber, "Mr. Wilber, it seems like people don't take your words seriously."

Wilber was clueless, "Emily, what are you talking about?"

Emily replied, "The Hinton family has opened their clinic again despite your warning. I think they're challenging your authority."

Wilber slammed his fist down on the table, "Those f**kers... I'll teach them a lesson!"

Wilber then marched toward the Hinton's clinic, his eyes glinted with hostility.

The remaining guests had lost interest in their tea.

They swarmed out of the clinic and were prepared to have a good laugh at the Hinton family – the laughing stock of the day.

Wilber approached the Hinton's clinic and yelled, “Daniel Hinton! Come out this instant!”

He heard footfalls and the next moment a group of people showed up. They were all dressed in suits and posed an intimidating aura.

The Clemons' guests gazed in awe as they put their fingers on their identity.

Evan Schneider – the richest man in Oakheart City!

Liam George – the director of the Industry and Commerce Bureau!

Leo Kingston – the director of the Drug Administration!

Dylan Dickson – the head of the Merwin District Police Station!

.....

Good lord, all these big shots have traversed around the city to converge in the Hinton's clinic.

Each and every one of them was big fish in their own realm. They were no doubt the most prominent and influential people in Oakheart City.

The Clemons' guests were shabby when compared to these people.

To them, Daniel was just an ordinary doctor. It struck them like a bolt out of the blue that Daniel was so skilled at networking.

They all wished they could travel back in time to stop themselves from supporting the Clemons.

Daniel was poised as he confronted Wilber. "Section chief Wilber, what's the matter?"

Wilber was on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

Leo Kingston, his superior, was powerful enough to crush him like an ant, not to mention the other influential present.

"Daniel... I mean... Mr. Hinton, congrats on your opening," Wilber said, his voice trembling.

He fished out a stack of cash from his pocket and shoved it towards Daniel. "This is my small gift, please accept it."

However, Daniel turned it down, "Section chief Wilber, I remember you being the one who closed down my clinic just now. Why are you suddenly giving me an opening gift?"

Wilber was soaked with sweat. "That was a joke. I...I was just kidding around."

Leo Kingston scolded him harshly, “You idiot! How could you be so irresponsible!”

“Wilber, you will be charged for abuse of authority and negligence in your duty. You'll be put under investigation. Now, get lost!”



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