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Chapter 441 Murderer

At such a time, even the most formidable doctor in Tissote couldn't determine a result.

Maxwell looked at Elise suspiciously, and before she could say anything, he dashed into the room. Maya was seen lying still on the bed. From afar, she seemed like a body that was no longer breathing. "Maya?" He warily approached. The room was as silent as the grave, and not a movement was seen. His heart skipped a beat before he lost his balance and collapsed to the ground as his face blanched. "Daddy's so sorry, Maya! I shouldn't have sent you to this murderer!"

In the next second, a fragile voice came from above the bed. "What are you doing, Daddy?"

As if he had woken up from a nightmare, he sprung up from the ground and went to the bedside. With tears profusely shedding, he grabbed Maya's hand. "You're fine! You're fine!"

"Who told you that?" Elise stood expressionlessly at the door. She pulled out a piece of prescription from her pocket and tossed it onto the ground. "Do as the note says, for one month."

"Will do, will do!" Maxwell gratefully nodded.

Maya, on the other hand, couldn't grasp why her father would behave so courteously in front of the woman. She was about to say something but was eventually held back by her illness.

Claude briefly peeked at the prescription on the ground and let out a couple of coughs with his fist before his lips. He stared at Elise as if he was pondering. Oh, merciless Father! The sick woman's gonna lose her sense of taste after one month based on what's on the prescription.

"Don't forget your promise to me," Elise calmly said.

"Don't worry. I'll have somebody clear up some properties and transfer them to you right away!" Maxwell replied.

Coldly, Elise glanced toward the figure on the bed before turning around to walk down the staircase. Following behind her was Claude, who—despite her shady action—joyously inquired, "The building's full of doctors, Father. Don't you fear the prescription would get seen through?"

Without even turning back, Elise answered, "Do you think anybody could deny anything I came up with?" Her tone was neither light nor weighty, yet Claude couldn't help but feel a chill running up his spine.

"Cuzzie!" When they reached the first floor, Daniel was seen pettily approaching them. He seemed to want to grab Elise but didn't dare to do so. Thus, he awkwardly paused with a farewelling pose. "I see you're leaving. Why don't you take your cousin brother along with you?"

"What's that noise?" Elise didn't even care to look at him. She turned around and asked, "Since when did I have a cousin brother? Do you know?"

"Nope," Claude tacitly replied.

"Come on, Cuz! I only offended Maxwell for your sake. You're not gonna ignore me, are you?" Daniel attempted to shift the blame away from himself.

"For my sake?" Elise stared straight into his soul. "Did I ask you to rescue the patient by putting her life in danger? Did I ask you to toy with Maya's life?"

"I—" Daniel was rendered speechless. Hasty, he went on a tangent. "They're going to break one of my legs, Cuz. Do you really not care about me?"

"I do. Of course I do." Elise took out a bag of medicinal powder from her pocket with a pair of fingers and tossed it into his hand. "I mixed this myself. It's the most effective painkiller you'll ever know. Take it after they take away your leg, and I assure you won't feel any pain within twenty-four hours." Saying that, she patted Daniel's shoulder and walked out of the room. Having only taken a couple of steps, she stopped and turned around, reminding, "By the way, there's a side effect to the medication. After twenty-four hours, the pain on your leg will worsen tenfold. Do consume at your own risk!" Unlike a quack doctor, she made sure to give her patients gentle reminders.

Daniel was left thoroughly dumbfounded.

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When Elise arrived at home, she bumped into Alexander, who also coincidentally returned. They greeted each other at the doorstep.

"Where did you go?" Alexander quizzed.

"Went to buy some herbs," Elise answered.

"Herbs?" Seeing Claude, who was behind her, was empty-handed, he subtly smiled. He did not intend to expose her. "Let's go in." After saying that, instead of going back to his own house, he went into Elise's yard.

Upon entering the door, they saw Jackson and a few other uniformed police officers surrounding the yard.

At their arrival, Jackson approached Elise. "Excuse me, Miss Sinclair. I'll need you to follow me."

"Jackson." Alexander frowned. "What's going on?"

"Sorry, Mr. Griffith. Things happened so suddenly I couldn't properly greet you." Jackson orderly uttered, "Three authoritative professors from Tissote University's physics department were found dead this dawn. And Miss Sinclair's notebook was found at the scene. She's now our only suspect, so we urgently need her cooperation."

"You could use some improvements in how you run things." Alexander was visibly hostile. "Hasn't anyone told you that Elise hadn't been to class lately?"

"You should know, Mr. Griffith, that not attending class doesn't mean not going to school," Jackson calmly stated.

Ultimately, Elise and the rest were brought to the crime scene. Due to the massive number of people in Tissote University, two police cordons were set up around the area to prevent any trespassers and possible rumor spread. Walking past the police cordon, the group of people came to the physics lab building.

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Chapter 442 Can't Be Her

At that moment, Elise viciously stared into the distance and caught a familiar figure among the crowd surrounding the barricade tape. It was Addison, and she was sporting a vest that was normally worn by witnesses. She was also carrying a stack of books in her arms as she stood on her toes, trying to see what was happening within the tapes. Seeing her, Elise scowled as she clenched her fists. If Addison were to appear in that manner at such a time, the police would definitely take her away. Since she had always been responsible for Elise's notebook, a simple interrogation in the department could swiftly reach her.

Noticing the change on Elise's face, Alexander turned to where she was looking and immediately knew what was going on. Remaining composed, he pretended as if he was looking for evidence and slowly faded into the crowd. Very soon, he was already behind Addison, and no one even noticed his presence.

"Why are there so many cops? What's happening?" Addison muttered to herself. As soon as her words were voiced, her shoulder was grabbed. Subconsciously, she turned around and saw Alexander. "Al—" Before she could finish calling out his name, the man did a shushing gesture, and Addison instantly shut her mouth.

Then, Alexander signaled her with his eyes, asking her not to do anything reckless. With that, she nodded and both of them fled the scene without drawing any attention.

Seeing that, Elise heaved a sigh of relief.

All of a sudden, the forensic officer had come to a result. He walked to Jackson and took off his mask, casually informing, "We suspect they committed suicide with drugs. Possibilities of homicide are eliminated."

"Suicide?" Jackson expressed his suspicion. "There must have been some kind of mistake. Why would three professors with bright futures suddenly decide to give up on life?"

"I'm gonna need you to trust me on this, Captain Gleeman. Or perhaps you could check it out for yourself." The forensic officer obviously had his share of temper. He unequipped his gloves and handed them to Jackson.

Scornfully, Jackson flinched his neck and glowered. Is it actually okay for him to swing those corpse-touching gloves around? "Never mind." Jackson continued, "It's your job. I just need a detailed report from you. As for the rest, I'll do my job accordingly."

"Whatever." An assistant came over with a plastic bag, to which the forensic officer threw the gloves into it before smugly walking out of the barricade tape.

"The case's not done. Where are you going?" Jackson attempted to stop him.

"But my job's already done." The forensic officer, without turning back, raised his hand and waved. "See ya."

Everyone else was stunned by his behavior.

Oh well, nothing good could come from having to see the forensics anyway. As Jackson was about to walk away, a group of men in suits was seen rushing over to him. One of them was Simon, who apparently was the leader of the group. Jackson went to greet him. "Why are you here, Mayor Bull?"

"I'm here for a look-see." Simon nodded. When he saw that Elise was present as well, he walked to her and questioned, "Why are you here?"

Elise squinted her eyes and pointed at Jackson with her chin as she raised her head. With a confusing expression, she answered, "Your men suspect that I'm the culprit."

Instantaneously, Simon revealed a frown. He turned to Jackson with anger in his eyes. "Is that true?"

Despite being baffled, Jackson countered with reasons of his own, "The evidence we have on the scene all points to Miss Sinclair."

"It can't be her," Simon confidently claimed. "My men will handle this. Have your men stand down."

"That's against the law, Mayor," Jackson perturbedly replied.

"Against what law? There's a problem, and I'm here to solve it." Simon's voice was thundering. He turned away to Elise and spoke with a significantly softer tone. "You may head home."

"Mayor Bull!" Jackson agitatedly stated, "We have witnesses and evidence. According to the law, we have forty-eight hours of custody of the suspect."

Simon was visibly infuriated. "No, you're not hearing me. As I said, Elise is not the culprit. Are you doubting me now?"

"I didn't mean that..." Jackson grew glum, thinking he was about to upset a force that could easily drown him.

Regardless, Simon was a clean figure. He would never hide any secrets in the system. A man like him would aim only to eliminate any kind of crime and injustice instead of shielding them. Jackson, on the other hand, was a rigid man who knew only to follow the rules and procedure. Despite his discipline, two things he was bad at were sugarcoating his words and improvising in situations. Thus, in his perspective, Simon was hiding something. Furthermore, Jackson had always been highly suspicious of Elise, as well as Max who was beside her. And with three deceased in a case, he wouldn't let her off so easily.

"You didn't mean that, nor do you mean to follow my orders, correct?" Simon's tone was growing colder. Before Jackson could respond, he raised his head to a bystanding officer and yelled, "Where's Bart? Have him here right away!"

Bartholomew Larson, or simply Bart, was the forensic officer that left earlier. In his absence, his assistant, head lowered, timidly mumbled, "Officer Larson had left. He said the case was a suicide, and that there's nothing to look into."

"The suspects are here but he's already gone? Where's his professionalism for Heaven's sake? I want to see him in my office first thing tomorrow," Simon vexedly remarked.

"Yes, Mayor. I'll be sure to pass it on." The assistant was still lowering his face, which was full of cold sweat.

Having not the mood to care about such trivial matters, Simon apathetically turned around and gazed at Jackson in condescension. "You heard him. Bart's the most proficient forensic officer in the force. Since he had announced the result—there was no culprit, then there's no culprit. Why are you persistent on having Elise to stay? Are you trying to dig up the truth, or are you trying to avenge a personal wrong?"

"How could you doubt me, Mayor?" Jackson was stupefied when he realized he'd cast doom upon himself.

"I can doubt every single soul in the world. Why do you think you'd make an exception?" With an icy glare, Simon shouted at his assistant, "Captain Gleeman

obviously needs a break to clear his mind. Otherwise, he'll continue to forget the line between public and private matters and end up staining the force's reputation."

"You're suspending me for this woman?" Jackson stared at him in dismay.

"Think whatever you want." Having said that emotionlessly, Simon took Elise with him and left the crime scene.

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Watching as Elise escaped right out of his grasp, Jackson angrily smashed his phone.

Why is everyone willing to risk suspicion just to protect that pretty face? Just you wait. I'll dig up everything there is about you, Elise Sinclair!

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Having exited the police cordon, Simon had his assistant and men leave him, and he walked ahead with Elise.

"Don't worry about the case. I'll handle it for you. Since you're studying at the university, you should focus on doing so. No one else will come to bother you."

"I'm not worried." Elise was being rather casual with mindlessness. After pausing for a moment, she switched the topic. "Say, Mr. Bull, you summoned the best forensic officer in the force, and even came here yourself. There's more to this suicide than meets the eye, eh?"

"Though it sure met yours." Simon faintly smiled before raising his head, revealing the glower on his face. "Indeed, as you said, something's fishy about this case. In the last six months, there have already been four cases of suicide committed by physicists in this city alone. This one's the fifth."

As expected, it's aimed at physicists. Elise squinted her eyes. This must be related to the group suicides Joseph mentioned.

"Physics is one of the most complex subjects there ever are, and people who excel in this field are as rare as a pearl. A country's scientific development is closely determined by the standards of the nation's physicists. If these talented souls continue to go, physicists are going to go extinct in this country." Simon was one who truly cared about the world, and he couldn't help but let out a sigh of disappointment when he thought of that.

"So you're suspecting the culprits are from overseas, and are deliberately targeting our scientists?" Elise tacitly quizzed.

"Beats me." Simon shook his head in confusion. "Similar cases have also happened in other countries, so..."

Elise nodded in acknowledgment of his message. Rather than the techniques themselves, these countries are more interested in people who understand said techniques. There's no way they are willing to sacrifice these talents even for the sake of causing disputes.

"Okay. You shouldn't be concerned about such matters. Just focus on your own development, will ya?" Donning a senior's role, Simon gently patted Elise's head and expressed his affection for her. "Just make sure you get to live a free life."

"That's what I've been doing." Like an agile little hedgehog, she swiftly and noiselessly dodged the man's hand. She still couldn't get herself to get used to such intimate interaction. Head touching, for instance.

Seeing her reaction, Simon wasn't exactly surprised. He then departed after saying his goodbyes.

Elise, too, headed back to her courtyard house. More precisely, it was Alexander's courtyard house. When she entered the house, Miller and Addison were already inside.

At Elise's arrival, Alexander went to her at once. "Jackson's not going to let this off so easily. I'll handle him."

"Mm." Elise nodded and paused for a second before warning Alexander, "Be careful out there."

Alexander lifted his commissures and gave her an affirming gaze before leaving.

Slightly stunned, Elise stood still to contemplate for a while before entering the house. Straightforwardly, she interrogated Addison, "You went to the physics department this morning?"

"Yup." Addison innocently nodded. "The substitute said that the professor left some homework there. So I went to fetch it, only to find no one in the room. I was even bumped into, literally."

"Who bumped into you?" Elise pursued.

"I didn't see clearly. It was too early I wasn't even fully awake," Addison claimed.

Upon those words, even Claude realized what happened. "Someone just set you up, girl. Do you know that?"

"How?" Addison was absolutely clueless. "What happened back there? Is someone suspecting me for stealing a lost belonging?"

As death was nothing minor, the higher ups in Tissote University, fearing the incident would harm the university's reputation, tried to contain the news as much as possible. Even the witnesses were told to keep things to themselves. And that was also why Addison had no idea what happened within the strict, barricaded area.

"Theft is nothing." Claude waddled carefreely to her and suddenly pulled a perplexing expression, muttering, "Somebody's dead. Murder happened in the research building, and you, right now, are the biggest suspect the cops have eyes on!"

"M-Murder?" Shocked, Addison shot her eyes wide open. "How can this be? I mean, why me?"

"There are witnesses that saw you showing up at the crime scene, and that you left Elise's notebook there. Those are enough to prove that you're the biggest suspect!"

"No, it's not me!" Addison sprung up from her seat, startled, and she agitatedly grabbed Elise. "Elise, I only went to submit my assignments. I know nothing! I don't even know who died!"

"Calm down. It's nothing. Don't worry and relax." Elise softly comforted her. "You have me here, don't you? I'll look into it. Trust me, okay?"

Vaguely grasping the situation, Addison was still holding Elise's arm with her trembling hands.

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Chapter 444 Why the Persistence?

Elise informed Addison, "For now, stop attending class and just stay here. Also, stop wearing that jacket. You may pick something else in my room."

"Okay." Addison naively nodded.

She was only an ordinary girl. For her to have gotten involved in an incident pertaining to death, she had surely grown less bold and were now less likely to go on a high profile. Shortly after, she grabbed Elise and said, "Let's eat, Elise. I've been living in fear for so long. I'm starving!"

After eating, Claude clapped his tummy and collected his belongings, preparing to head out.

All of a sudden, a car was heard pulling up outside the house.

Miller, who was rather on edge, went to the top floor. And after identifying the people in the car, she turned around and shouted, "You don't have to go anymore."

"What?" Drops of sweat surged on Claude's forehead. I finally got the chance to prove myself, and she's suddenly telling us we no longer have to go?

A few minutes later, in Alexander's courtyard, Reuben, the witness who reported his sighting, was tied up and thrown onto the ground. His mouth was sealed off with a tape, and his eyes plainly reflected his dissatisfaction.

Elise knew who he was—the fellow student who stained her name by accusing her of cheating in the Mathematics Olympiad. Although he didn't reveal himself back then, she had heard things about him.

"Clement, can you please take him to the empty room inside?" Elise requested.

Without a word, Clement turned to Alexander for confirmation. After receiving Alexander's answer, he lifted Reuben up with one arm and carried him into the room, to which Elise tightly followed.

Wanting to clear things up in her mind, Addison went after Elise.

After putting the man on a chair inside the room, Clement tacitly retreated. He was like a robot that wouldn't show any expression regardless of what he was doing.

Then, Addison shut the door, and Elise tore away the duct tape covering Reuben's mouth.

"I knew it was you, Elise! Aren't you too hasty, wanting to kill off any witness?" The initial words out of his mouth were already overstepping.

"I'm guessing you're not setting Addison up solely because you're envious of me. Tell me, who gave you the orders?" Elise went straight to the point, having no interest in taking detours.

"Give me orders? Why would a man with such an excellent academic performance and a bright future like me need to receive orders from anyone else? Am I sick of life already?" Reuben revealed a scornful grin. "Besides, do you even have evidence? You don't. But I... I am the proof itself—the living proof that's gonna prove that you're a sick murderer!"

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Chapter 445 Alexander's Solution

"You know, you look pretty good yourself, but why do you gotta be so vicious?" Addison angrily added, "Don't you know that if either Elise or I end up in jail, one of us is gonna live with the infamy forever?!"

"What does that have to do with me?" Reuben apathetically continued, "I'm simply a member of society trying to fulfill my responsibilities, and whatever happens to you in the future is your own fault."

"How dare you!" Addison was left tilted and speechless. As she was about to teach him a lesson, Elise reached out and stopped her.

"So, it seems like you're not going to be upfront either way," Elise expressionlessly uttered.

Reuben indifferently heaved a sigh as he sat up straight, leaning against the back of the chair. "What is this, forced interrogation? No, more like a coercion against an innocent man. Sadly, Elise, you're underestimating me. No matter where I go, you're a murderer, and I'll tell that to anyone I see. Don't even think about changing my mind!"

"Oh, man's got the balls." Elise lifted her eyebrows and spoke in a tone that was neither light nor heavy. Slowly, she raised her arm, revealing the silver needle in her hand. "Let's see how long your balls will last you." Saying that, she probed the needle into his skin around his collar that was not concealed by his clothes.

Instantly, Reuben could feel a sting and electricity surging through his entire body. Gnawing his teeth, he forced himself not to blurt a sound as he subconsciously clenched his fist. No matter how hard he tried to suppress the torment, his agony still showed on his face. Nonetheless, because of that, Elise was reassured that his identity was not as simple as an ordinary physics student like any other.

"Pushing the limits, aren't we?" Elise revealed a cold smirk as she cruelly went on, "Oh, but this is only the beginning. I've coated the needle with some type of powder I manufactured. As time passes by, your pain will only worsen, so I'd advise you to speak up before we get there."

Reuben's body started to shiver from the pain, and he was sweating profusely on his forehead. As his vision was starting to get hazy, he began letting out whimpers. After some time, he slowly raised his head. Mustering every last trace of conscience he had left, he forcibly opened his eyes. With his eyes filled with red, tiny veins, he persistently gazed at Elise, provoking her as he gritted his teeth, "Is that all you've got? Come on, give me all you got! No matter what you do, I won't surrender what I have!"

His expression was so ferocious that even Addison, whose heart was filled with pique, couldn't help but feel shocked. Never had she seen a face as desperate as his from someone her age. It was as if Reuben was a prey that was forced to back into a corner and was putting up a last, struggling fight in its defense.

Elise took a deep breath. After a pause of silence, she took the needle out of his body before turning around to leave. After all, the reason she studied medicine was to help others. Hence, she couldn't bring herself to use it for torture.

"Elise? You're leaving just like that?" Although Elise's methods were certainly barbaric, Addison couldn't help feeling distressed as the truth had yet to reveal itself. She then chased after Elise before stopping just two steps later.

"Hehe..." Reuben feebly snickered. "Look, I haven't even started yelling and she's already feeling guilty about this."

"Shut the f*ck up!" Addison's vulgarity revealed itself. "Reuben, you're nothing but a disgrace to humanity!"

Reuben used all his strength to get himself up against the back of the chair as he slothfully raised his eyebrows, giving her a look of "whatever you say."

Frustrated, Addison clenched her teeth in anger and eventually left the room.

Seeing the women had come out of the room, Alexander approached them. "How did it go?"

"He wouldn't talk." Elise shook her head and sighed.

"Worst guy ever!" Addison pouted her lips and yelled, "What a sight for sore eyes!"

Elise bitterly grinned. "That's not what you think it means, dear."

"What's wrong? My eyes sore just by looking at him. Nothing else sounds worse than this." Despite her proficiency in mathematics, language and literature were obviously not quite her forte.

Elise slightly frowned but said nothing more.

At that moment, Alexander extended his arm and tenderly patted her shoulder. "Take a break. I'll take care of it." Having said that, he opened the door to the room and went inside.

Reuben, having already regained his senses, was now complacently sitting on the chair. He shot Alexander a scornful gaze. "Here comes another one." After a momentary pause, he goaded, "Give me all you got. As long as I'm still breathing, I'll expose everything that has taken place here once I'm out. Every single thing!"

Alexander looked at him with a condescending leer, seemingly having no intention in participating in his debate. His ebony eyes, under the shadow of his fringes, appeared more grim by each second.

Receiving no response, Reuben lifted his head as a tinge of confusion flashed across his eyes. "What's with the silence? Are we going soft now? I'll have you

know that sugarcoating is not gonna work, so it's best that you swallow down whatever you intended to spit."

As if he didn't hear him, Alexander reached out his hand to grab a chair and sat before Reuben. He crossed his legs with his right ankle on top of his left knee before slowly raising his eyes, saying languidly, "Reuben Hunt, the youngest member of the Physics Boundary Organization. Having gained the International Physics Award at the age of thirteen, you entered the organization and swiftly became one of its core members. You then involved yourself in countless 'suicide cases' of physicists within and outside the country, and had always managed to get away scot-free."

Hearing that, Reuben became visibly nervous. "Who are you? How did you find out about Physics Boundary?"

"Not that you need to know." Alexander remained a still face, and there was not a twitch in his still eyes. "All you have to do is tell me why you made Elise one of your targets."

"I've got nothing to say." Reuben was stupefied as his eyes exposed his nervousness.

"Even if you don't tell me, do you think I won't be able to find it out? I'm only giving you a chance to live." Alexander's utterance was tranquil, as if he was casually speaking at home. Anyone outside the situation would assume he was only having a friendly chat. However, the mannerful man was, in fact, a threat to every living being.

"It seems like I'm not leaving here alive if I continue to keep my mouth shut," Reuben mumbled to himself as he lowered his head. "Since that's the case, you can go look for the answers yourself!" Upon saying so, he lowered his head as much as he could and sneakily bit his own tongue.

In a matter of seconds, when Alexander realized it, he quickly went to grab his hair and lifted his head, only to find that it was already too late. Reuben's eyes were staring ahead blankly; he was no longer breathing. There was even blood flowing on his tongue. Scowling, Alexander pressed his cheeks to force his jaw open as his eyes were filled with annoyance knowing that he could have stopped his suicide. Still, he was one step too late.

Due to his big movements, he accidentally kicked a chair over. And the loud bang attracted the rest into the room. The moment they entered, all they saw was Alexander strangling Reuben, who was dead with his eyes staring ahead blankly.

Claude's nose twitched as he was stunned. "You didn't just kill him because you're trying to get us out of this, did you?"

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Chapter 446 All Because of You!

Although Addison was always brave, she couldn't help but recoil when she saw the dead man right in front of her. Quietly, she retreated behind Elise, who was pursing her lips with a weighty expression as she was unable to determine what happened. One thing she was certain was that Alexander wouldn't kill an innocent man. So, did Reuben say something that triggered him, or did Alexander simply decide to take things into his own hands?

In the meantime, at Griffith Residence, Madeline, who couldn't reach Alexander's phone, dialed Maya's number.

"What is it?" Maxwell happened to be the one accepting the call. His voice was innately low and hoarse, so there was no telling what emotion he was feeling right then.

"Oh, Mr. Dahlen. It's me, Mrs. Griffith. I heard that Maya fell very ill, and I happened to know two pretty outstanding doctors. If you don't mind, I'll send them over to check on Maya soon," Madeline gratifyingly stated.

"It's fine." In a stiff tone, he replied, "She's recovered."

After a brief pause, he strangely added, "It's all thanks to you, Mrs. Griffith. Elise said that she was only willing to treat my daughter because of the Griffiths."

Elise treated her? She sounded as if she abhorred Maya on the phone, so why would she... After a moment of stupefaction, Madeline swiftly collected her feelings and responded with a pleasing tone. "That's great to hear! If only you knew how concerned my husband and I were. I've always seen her like my future daughter-in-law, you know?"

"Yes, yes, I know. Since you've already gotten a grasp on the situation, I have to excuse myself as there is business to attend to. Farewell."

"Thump."

The rest of Madeline's bootlicking words had yet to leave her throat, and she was already hearing beeps from an ended call. Thus, she could only hang up. After putting down her phone, she started pondering on Maxwell's words, realizing that Elise had handled the situation without her knowing. This girl, despite her uncivilized mouth, is actually that kind? Or have I been too harsh on her?

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Alexander calmly scanned outside the room before withdrawing his hands. He pulled out his handkerchief and began steadily wiping. "He bit his tongue," he serenely stated.

"We might still be able to save him." Claude dashed over and grabbed Reuben's hand to check on his pulse, only to reach a disappointing result. "He's dead," he helplessly announced as he released his hand.

At this moment, there was a commotion outside the door. The group went out and found Clement expressionlessly suppressing Jackson and dragging him toward the door.

"Sir, I caught this man attempting to break into Miss Sinclair's room," Clement coolly claimed.

"Let him go," Alexander softly ordered.

"Hear that? Unhand me!" Jackson shouted as he shook himself out of Clement's hands.

"Say, Captain Gleeman, you're one of the government's men. Why are you being so sneaky in here?" Claude curiously quizzed.

"Mind your own business." Jackson shot him a cold glare before turning to Elise. "If you're not guilty, why would you need so many men guarding the house?"

"I arranged it," Alexander sedately answered. "Elise is currently the most rightful heir to the Anderson Family, and there are too many people who want to set out and harm her. So I've arranged this only to protect her and her family."

Jackson, despite the answer, turned away with his unbelieving look.

Glimpsing at the gap between Alexander and Addison, however, he caught sight of a figure being tied to a chair in the room. Intuitively, he shoved them away and rushed into the room. He lifted the figure's head, and after identifying the man to be Reuben, he checked on his breath. Shocked in dismay, Jackson turned to the door. "You people slaughtered a helpless student?!"

"That, we can explain," Elise said.

"What is there to explain? He just reported that you are the murderer this afternoon, and now he's stopped breathing, under your roof. Tell me, what is there to explain?!"

Devastated, Jackson glanced at Alexander as he unhanding Reuben before walking to Elise. Then, he grabbed her arm and was about to walk out. Out of nowhere, a pair of massive arms ferociously grabbed him, to which he turned around only to meet Alexander's piercing gaze.

"Alexander!" Jackson maniacally screamed. "You're willing to go beyond your limits for the sake of one woman?"

"She is my limit," Alexander emotionlessly remarked. "He died because of me. Unhand her."

"And what if I don't?" All of Jackson's beliefs shattered. Having been best of friends with Alexander for so long, he had never expected a moment where they would have to rival each other. But now, Alexander was willing to stick his neck

out for Elise and murder a witness. He couldn't idly watch as his dearest friend walked toward his own ruin. Whether as a friend or a policeman, he was obliged to bring Elise to justice.

"You have three seconds to unhand her. After that, I'll make you." Alexander's intonation was ever-intimidating. The two gazed at each other in the eyes. None of them was willing to compromise with each other. A brief moment after those words, Alexander tensed his brows and exerted force on his hands, twisting Jackson's arm before landing a kick on his chest.

The kick sent Jackson crashing into the door frame, and he felt a stinging pain on his head and back. Nonetheless, he crawled back up as if nothing happened. Raising his clenched fist, he charged at Elise. "It's all you... It's all because of you!"

Alexander, who was rubbing Elise's arm, heard Jackson's voice and immediately, a piercing light flashed across his eyes. Swiftly, he drew his leg and was about to counter Jackson.

Nevertheless, Elise's movements were quicker than his. Before he could land a hit, a needle flew past his vision, projecting forward rapidly and finally landing and probing on Jackson's neck.

As expected, the moment Jackson clutched his own neck, his legs turned into jelly as he collapsed before the rest. Despite his partial paralysis, he glared at them with his hateful eyes, obviously upset.

"Captain Gleeman." Elise calmly stared at him. "I don't mind the prejudice you hold against me. But I strongly believe that you should trust Alexander. He's no criminal nor will he become an accomplice. And I wouldn't do anything to betray his trust. Since you're so determined that I'm the murderer and have seen the truth you wanted to see, from now on, you shall stay here and observe carefully whether I'm whomever you think I am." Having said that, she turned to Clement. "Sorry, Clement, but can you clear a room out for Captain Gleeman?"

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Chapter 447 Cold Body, Sealed Lips

Clement's attention was entirely on Elise's silver needle. He was so caught up in it that he didn't respond in time. For a typical man, that couldn't have been more normal; but for a robotic man, who only responded to orders from their masters, as he was, his daze was significantly notable. It wasn't until every eye in the room turned to him did he regain his senses and carried Jackson out of the room.

"What do we do with this guy?" Claude pointed at Reuben's corpse.

"Just leave it be." Elise tranquilly stated, "I'll have an expert examine his body tomorrow." Returning to her room, she logged onto SK System and published a request announcement.

'Emergency forensic wanted. Requirements: proficient, tacit, confidential. Price doubled.'

Shortly after, a user named "guiltypleasure" sent her a private message. 'Where.'

Elise swiftly replied, 'Athesea, Tissote. When?'

The user, guiltypleasure, answered, 'Tomorrow night. Address.'

After Elise sent over the address, the user logged off.

Very soon, it was already the next day.

Three at dawn, Elise walked out of the courtyard house. After waiting for some time at the gates, she saw a figure slowly approaching from the alley. Then, the figure revealed itself under the streetlight and stopped before Elise.

Recognizing the person's face, Elise squinted her eyes. "It's you?" He's the forensic officer who was responsible at the crime scene back in the university!

"How fateful. We meet again," Bartholomew greeted with an uncontrollable grin. His forensics pass was still hanging around his neck while he carried a simple toolbox on his back. Obviously, he just came over from the Forensic Science Division.

"Why are you here?" Elise scowled.

"To solve your problems, of course." Bartholomew introduced himself, "guiltypleasure, at your service."

Elise was at a loss for words. Guy's from the Forensic Science Division, so he's at least half a cop. Things'll get troublesome if I were to let him in.

"Too late to regret now." Bartholomew read her mind and suspiciously uttered, "You're looking for a forensic scientist, which means someone here has died to unknown causes, and the chances of it being a murder is high. It's pretty obvious."

"Are you planning to report this?" Elise remained still on the outside as a pair of silver needles slid into her palm.

"Hehehe!" Bartholomew stared at her hand and knowingly clarified, "No worries. I'm here as guiltypleasure, not a forensic officer. Even if you don't trust me, you should trust in SK's security measures. They wouldn't let a cop who'd disrupt the system's equilibrium into the system, would they?"

Hearing that, Elise turned a tad relieved. Bartholomew was right. SK was able to stand this long without falling mainly because of its insanely strict security measures. Basically, even operating in a gray area had its rules, and anyone who went against the rules meant declaring a war against the entire group. SK had members of different professions all around the world. One could only anticipate death once they had broken even one rule of the system, and no one would be so dumb to oppose the entire world solely to make some extra cash.

"Okay." Elise sheathed her needles and turned around into Alexander's courtyard. "Follow me."

Bartholomew, with his hands in his pockets, followed steadily behind Elise. Walking past the courtyard, he caught a glimpse of Jackson sitting on a chair in the guest room, looking at him, begging for his help with his eyes and a sincere expression.

He halted his steps to contemplate. Under everyone's attention, he went to the door of the room that was containing Jackson. Right when Jackson was thinking that he was about to get rescued, Bartholomew swiftly extended his arm and grabbed the door handle before slamming the door shut. Turning around, he revealed a harmless smirk. "You're not exactly giving me a way out here." Since Bartholomew was working for the police force, his identity was exposed the moment Jackson caught him hanging around Elise and her gang.

"Apologies." Indeed, Elise had overlooked some details. She promised, "Don't worry. I assure you he won't expose you."

"And how do you do that?" Looking sullen, he remarked, "Only cold bodies have sealed lips." His speech was not emphasized, but it was still highly unnerving. He seemed so gentle, but one couldn't help but feel wary of him, as if he would stab them in the back when they had their guard down. After he said that, the courtyard was filled with nothing but silence. Nobody in the entire premises ever had the idea of killing off Jackson.

"Based on what you said, we should kill him first, then you, to be extra cautious, yes?" Elise questioned, her tone cryptic.

Hearing that, Bartholomew shrugged his shoulders and reverted to his mischievous demeanor. "Just kidding, heh."

"Highly unfunny." Elise apathetically ordered, "Come in. The body's inside."

The entire corpse inspection process was public. Although there were only Elise and Bartholomew in the room, the others gathered outside the room and observed the inspection.

Shortly after, Bartholomew came to a conclusion. "Suicide. Tongue bite. No other possible cause."

Outside the door, Claude shot a logical inquiry. "He should still live for a brief moment after he bit his tongue, but he died instantly. You sure there's no other cause?"

In response, Bartholomew turned to him, feigning the arrogance he once did to Jackson. He took off his gloves. "Wanna see for yourself?"

"Tsk." Claude rolled his eyes. We're all doctors here. Who do you think you are, being so cocky, huh?

After contemplating for a bit, Elise commanded, "Check his lungs."

"No need." Bartholomew clapped his gloves. "There were no signs of poisoning. Dissection will only be a waste of time."

"You've accepted the job, so it's your obligation to satisfy your client. You know that, right?" Elise coldly replied.

Bartholomew turned around and met her piercing gaze. After a moment of silence, he re-equipped his gloves as he claimed, "I do not want the presence of anybody while I'm dissecting the body, and that includes the client herself."

"Fine." Without debating more, Elise exited the room and shut the door.

Once the door was shut, Claude immediately ranted, "God damn. You could've told me if you wanted a corpse inspection. Why do we have to take punches from him?"

Ignoring him, Elise wordlessly stood still.

About one hour later, the door was opened from the inside. Bartholomew took off his mask and declared, "It was as you said. The lungs' nerves deteriorated quickly under the effect of a certain drug. The moment he bit his tongue, his breathing stopped, and the two combined caused his instant death."

"Can you determine what kind of drug it is?" Elise inquired.

"I'll need a further look in the lab." After saying that calmly, he looked at her. With an inexplicable tone, he questioned, "This is not your first corpse inspection, is it, Miss Sinclair?"

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Chapter 448 First to Renege

"I don't have experience in inspecting corpses," Elise perfunctorily answered.

"You don't? How did you know his lungs had issues, then?" Bartholomew persistently interrogated.

"I checked his pulses when he was still alive. I sensed it then," she replied.

"Really?" Bartholomew lifted his leg to walk over the doorsill. Standing before Elise, he ambiguously quizzed, "I once met a woman in Africa. She, too, had pointed out the error in my inspection. She goes by the name 'Eliza.' Do you perhaps know her?"

"I don't," Elise countered without even blinking her eyes. "Your task is complete. You may go now. I'll transfer the payment over as soon as possible."

Bartholomew stood up straight, revealing a look as if he had gotten his answer. Swiftly, he took off his latex gloves and turned back into the room to grab his toolbox before walking out of the house. When he passed by Elise, he halted his steps and suggestively stated, "See you soon, then."

"I'll see you out." Alexander sneaked up noiselessly like a ghost.

When they reached the gates, Alexander stopped in his tracks. "Stay away from her."

Bartholomew slowly turned around and crossed his arms before his chest. "Why, we have a fiancé intending to strip his bride-to-be of her rights to socialize."

"Cut that crap." Alexander's inky eyes grew deeper under his lashes. "Pull anything funny and you'll be the one inspected the next time we meet."

"Wow, scary man." Bartholomew pouted his lips, showing no signs of fear on his face. "Almost everyone's trying to make a move on her. Will you be able to kill us all?"

Alexander narrowed his eyes and wondered before flaunting his intimidation. "One by one. Two only makes a pair."

Bartholomew nodded and gave a thumbs up. "Strong man, scary man." After a pause, he added, "Anyone could do one or a pair. Though you should save your threats for when you finally realize what you're truly facing." Having said that, he turned around and walked into the night, slowly fading into the darkness.

After standing idly for a while, Alexander eventually walked back into the house.

The next day, the sun had only risen while Clement was helping Jackson wash up when Danny barged into the room. As soon as Danny saw Clement holding Jackson's face, his eyes instantly glistened, as if he had discovered an ultimate secret.

Clement, meeting Danny's eyes, was stunned for a second before realizing what the latter was thinking about, and he sneakily withdrew his hand that was supporting Jackson's face.

Regardless, Danny remained nosy. He hunched over and tiptoed into the room. Once he was in the room, he grabbed Clement by the shoulder and interrogated, "My man Clement, spill the tea! Since when did you guys get together?"

While he was at it, he winked at Jackson, giving him a knowing look, to which the latter rolled his eyes at him. Is this dumbass really Alexander's brother?

"Young Master Danny, you're misunderstanding—"

"Aww, don't need to feel embarrassed. I'm an open-minded man." Right when Clement was about to explain, Danny quickly interrupted him as he patted his chest, "Now, who's the pursuer here?"

Rendered speechless, Clement let out a sigh before patiently explaining, "Young Master Alexander had me in charge of Captain Gleeman's well being. Nothing more." His utterance was as calm as usual and bore no intention of jesting. Clement had no sense of joking, and that was pretty much a common knowledge.

Awkwardly, Danny let out a fake cough before withdrawing his hand that was on Clement. Deliberately, he went on a tangent. "I mean, Captain Gleeman here seems fine to me. Why are you looking after him?"

Clement courteously clarified, "He does look healthy, but it seems like Miss Sinclair has messed with his meridians, and now he can't move." Despite his reluctance to believe that Elise had such a great ability, Clement couldn't deny it with the facts presented right before him. He saw it for himself that Elise had brought Jackson, who was bigger than himself, down with just a needle within one second. He couldn't help but to fear such a needling technique. And that was when he decided he had to reassess the things he knew about Elise.

"Ah, is that it?" Danny nodded as if he was contemplating.

Taken aback, Clement glanced at him. Is that it, he says? Is he not surprised at all? Is needling even something a normal person can easily do?

Meanwhile, Danny was wondering, After such a huge misunderstanding, Jackson wouldn't come looking for me after Elise fixed his meridians, would he? Having thought of that, Danny thought it was best that he disappeared from Jackson's sight. "Please take good care of Captain Gleeman, will you?" Danny patted Clement on the shoulder before hopping out of the room like a wild hare, leaving Clement stunned, as if he was completely disregarded.

In a flash, Danny was already with Alexander to keep himself updated. "What did Captain Gleeman do to upset Elise that he ended up that way?"

"Don't ask something you shouldn't," Alexander, highly perturbed, impatiently blurted before walking out of the room.

Realizing he'd brought that upon himself, Danny scratched the back of his neck, thinking the number of secrets in this house was larger than the amount of sand in an hourglass. Besides the addition of Jackson, something told Danny that Joseph's presence made Joseph a more complex character than met the eye. Having no desire to remain oblivious, Danny decided to pick a room to live in. There's no way I can't figure out what happened if I were to stay here the entire day.

Unfortunately, there was no entertainment around the courtyard house, so he grew drowsy guarding his surroundings, and his drowsiness was followed by a shut-eye.

Right when he was falling asleep, a turmoil could be heard from the courtyard next door. Sensing the thundering noises, Danny still assumed that he was only dreaming. While his eyes were closed, he suddenly remembered he was in Alexander's place. Forcefully, he opened his eyes and sprung up from bed. He stormed out of the door, only to hear wails echoing throughout the yard.

"Oh Heavens, the pain on my leg! Pay me a leg, Elise!"

"Somebody, save me! I'm dying! Someone's completely ignoring her cousin! Lord, why did this happen to me?!"

In that instant, Daniel was lying on a stretcher as he hugged his broken leg, screaming out of pain as if he was living in between life and death.

Accompanying him were a couple of nurses who carried the stretcher and about eight bodyguards escorting him. Standing innermost within the group was Russell, who rested his arms behind his back while revealing a frown that was most bitter. Seeing Elise, who had just returned from the backyard, Russell eagerly went up to reprimand her.

"Look at what you've done, Yoona! You went to the Dahlens. Why didn't you bring your cousin back with you? The Dahlens literally broke his leg!"

Hearing that, Elise glanced at Daniel, who was lying on the stretcher on the ground, and swiftly withdrew her gaze. Then, she lowered her head and pulled out her phone to check on the balance in her bank account.

Yup, same as yesterday. Maxwell has yet to send the money over. Good job, Maxwell. You're the first ever person to renege on me.

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Chapter 449 Clearing the Place

Seeing that Elise wasn't paying attention to him, Russel lost his temper at once. "Hey, what the hell is on your mind? Didn't you hear what I said? Didn't you see

how much pain Daniel's in? What the hell are you waiting for? Hurry up and cure him now!"

Elise tapped on today's financial news in silence while still ignoring Russell. As she had expected, Maxwell wasn't only unwilling to pay the money; he was also secretly plotting to deal the Griffith Group the finishing blow at the moment. He had even stretched his claws toward the Anderson Family; only he hadn't been found out for the time being since he had done so in a covert way. After pondering for a moment, Elise picked up her phone and dialed a number.

"Who is it?" Nathan sounded quite irritated as he was roused from sleep.

Just as Elise was about to respond, Russell daringly made a lunge at her and snatched her phone away directly. He said testily, "I'm talking to you! Did you hear me?"

As soon as he took her phone away, though, he met her eyes, which had appeared delicate and beautiful to him at first glance. At this moment, however, her eyes were dark and gloomy and gleaming with a strong murderous desire, as though she would go on a killing spree at any time.

Elise was half a head shorter than Russell, but she naturally projected a commanding aura even when she wasn't looking angry. Seeing the look in her eyes, Russell unconsciously gulped a mouthful of saliva and silently put her phone back in place.

Elise shot him a chilly sidelong glance. Then, she went on and said to the other end of the line, "I've found you a fun job to do, Nathan."

Russell's cloudy eyes instantly widened with astonishment when he heard Nathan's name. Nathan?! Is that the Nathan York that I know about? So the rumors are true that Elise and Alexander have a close relationship with Nathan York! If the Andersons manage to establish a relationship with him, we'll have a divine hand in opening up the global market in the future, won't we?

Unaware of the old devil's scheming, Elise pressed her lips together, waiting for Nathan's reply.

Nathan got out of bed and found a bath towel to wrap around his lower body. Then, he poured himself a glass of wine and drank it. After breathing in with a hiss, he asked leisurely, "What's the job?"

"Buying out the Dahlens' family business," replied Elise.

"No problem." Nathan responded to her request without hesitation, but he bared his fangs soon afterward. "As long as you give me the word, making any business in the country go bust or lose all its capital is never a problem for me. Still, I can't keep doing business at a loss, right? And besides, I've got to answer to my clients."

Elise seemed to realize what he was getting at. "What do you want?"

"That's exactly what I like about you. You're always so straightforward." Nathan walked over to the French window with his wine glass between his fingers. Looking down at the ground below, he continued in earnest, "I want to meet with A in person."

Elise didn't want to take advantage of him, though. She reminded him kindly, saying, "Are you sure you'll be able to answer to your clients after meeting with A? However capable A is, she's just a human being."

However, Nathan replied with conviction, "Well, just as no one will turn down a dinner with Warren Buffett, I believe that a meeting with A will be worth more than its price."

"Alright then. I'll help introduce you to her when this matter is over," Elise replied.

"Okay." Nathan threw his head back and gulped another sip of his red wine. After smacking his lips, he said confidently, "It won't take long."

Elise hung up right away without continuing the conversation.

"Yoyo?" Russell called ingratiatingly in a whisper.

Elise turned her head away in disgust. "Who are you calling Yoyo?"

"You, of course!" Russell stared at Elise, his eyes sparkling brightly. Then, he realized that he had called her by the wrong name. Correcting himself at once, he said, "Oh, sorry, I was wrong. It's Elise. Elise, were you talking to Nathan York—the outstanding investment broker—on the phone just now?"

"What does that have to do with you?" Elise replied snappishly while raising an eyebrow.

Russell replied in a groveling manner, "How could that have nothing to do with me? We're a family, after all. From what I heard just now, you're going to arrange a meeting between Nathan and your friend. In that case, how about you reserve a place for me?"

"D-Dad..." The ignored Daniel sat up, baring his shoulder. With a look of resentment, he asked Russell for help, urging, "Don't forget about me. My leg can't wait another minute!"

Only then did Russell come to his senses. He cleared his throat, saying, "Ahem! Well, uh, Y... Elise, since you've started taking action against the Dahlens, why don't you treat Daniel's leg while you're at it? After all, he got himself into such a state after going to the Dahlens with the best of intentions to cure Maya for you."

Elise turned to look at Russell coldly. "For me, you say?" she asked. Then, she retorted, stressing each word, "Did I tell him to take a bunch of quacks with him

to diagnose her? Or did I tell him to administer medicine and treatment carelessly despite knowing nothing about her illness? Are you sure I was the one who told him to do all that?"

"Well..." Russell was instantly stumped for an answer. After being speechless for a long time, he finally forced out an excuse. "B-But it was you who told Daniel to treat her! He only made the desperate move because he had no other options left!"

"Oh," Elise murmured in acknowledgment with an expressionless face.

"Oh?!" Russell's lips twitched. "Is that all? Your cousin risked his life without hesitation for your sake. Aren't you even gonna say thanks to him?"

"Well, I'm not as good with words as you are." Elise locked her phone's screen and put her phone in her trouser pocket. Then, with her hands in her pockets, she looked straight ahead, saying as if nobody else was around, "I'll cure the patient if I can, but if I can't, I'll admit that I can't cure them. I won't show off my superiority or try to be a hero for the sake of trying to make myself look good. Besides, those who end up hurting themselves by pursuing their own interests under the excuse of doing good to someone else don't deserve sympathy either."

Suddenly, she thought of Alexander, and she lowered her head and smiled in self-deprecation. "Moreover, my sympathy's limited. I can't afford to take care of every Tom, Dick, and Harry, right?" Well, I have to avoid some risks and protect myself for somebody's sake, after all, she thought. After a moment's thought, she said under her breath through her thin lips, "Throw all these people out."

"How dare you do this to me, Elise?! I'm your uncle!" Russell protested as he struggled.

However, Elise merely plugged her ears with her index fingers. She said impassively, "What a racket in the early morning!"

Daniel was left alone in the center of the yard. Seeing Russell being thrown out in a curve through the air, he gulped a mouthful of saliva in fear and crawled outside, dragging his broken leg.

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Chapter 450 An Irrejectable Phone Call

It took Daniel forever to crawl through the gates. The instant he finally did so, he held his broken leg and whimpered through clenched teeth like a hurt puppy.

The Anderson Family's servants hurriedly rushed to him and Russell. After helping the father and son up, they took to their heels and ran away swiftly.

Danny was baffled at the sight of the scene. "What's going on, Elise? That spoiled rich dandy of the Anderson Family, isn't he your cousin?"

Instead of answering his question, Elise walked out and entered Joseph's room in the yard next door.

Joseph was working on his computer. Upon seeing Elise, he heaved a sigh of dejection. "I still can't reach Xavier."

Elise asked, "Don't you have a way to bypass the internal communication tools and contact SK Group's members directly after running the group for so many years?"

Joseph shrugged his shoulders. "As you said, I'm in charge of running the group, not of developing softwares. Perhaps we should contact A, the mysterious hacker, for this. But A's gonna charge us... and SK Group has a limited budget."

Elise fell silent for a moment. Then, she took over the computer, working briskly on it with a speed that took Joseph's breath away. Soon, lines of code appeared on the computer's screen.

Joseph noticed that Elise was working on two monitors, which were running different programs simultaneously. As SK Group's leader, Joseph had seen many talented people, and the top hackers he had seen before were too numerous to enumerate. All of them, however, paled in comparison with Elise.

Five minutes later, Elise struck a key on the keyboard. "Alright, it's done. In ten minutes from now, only you can reach Xavier by phone. Hurry up!"

"Okay." Before Joseph could marvel at her skills, his body had reacted first by taking out the phone and dialing Xavier's number.

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Meanwhile, in Lithium City, Xavier arrived at the periphery of Timothy's dwelling place by following up on recently obtained information. An incredibly patient hunter, he wasn't in a hurry to catch his prey. He lay in ambush outside, waiting for the safe period to be over before he went into action.

Lithium City had very sparse vegetation, so the only place to hide was the yellow earth. Luckily, Xavier came fully prepared. At this very moment, he was in a pit that he had dug on the spot. It was covered at the top with straws and soil. There was only an opening, which was only big enough for a pair of binoculars to poke through for spying.

When Xavier's phone rang, he was standing behind his binoculars, spying on the legendary physicist and his wife with a grave expression. Dressed simply and spectacled, the couple were typical high intellectuals; even their haircuts had a bland feeling about them. However, no amount of soil could hide the scholarly vibes that emanated from their souls.

The hiding period had already ended. Tonight, he would show himself and take the couple away. Otherwise, he would be beaten to it by other people who got here after learning about the information.

Just then, however, his phone began vibrating like mad with a continuous buzz.

Xavier picked it up and took a glance at its screen. It was a phone call from an unfamiliar number, but he didn't intend to answer it. Before his mission was complete, he would block all incoming calls on his phone to avoid being affected by the outside world. At the thought of this, he pressed the 'Decline' button.

However, what happened next surprised him. His phone kept vibrating, and he couldn't reject the phone call no matter what.

Involuntarily, he pressed the 'Answer' button, and the phone's screen was instantly taken over by the call interface. Speechless, he expressionlessly put his phone to his ear and asked in a cold voice devoid of human feeling, "Who are you?" Apparently, the caller was aware of his habit, which was why they'd had a bug installed so that he couldn't reject the phone call.

"It's me, Joseph. Something's happened within the organization, and you're now being used. The information this time is very likely to be a trap. Never show yourself easily!"

Upon hearing the man's words, Xavier fell silent for a very long time. Then, he replied unhurriedly, "If you really were Joseph, you should've known that I hate nothing more than being disturbed while carrying out a mission. And besides, I don't think Joseph would still assign the mission to me if he thought I was a weakling who couldn't even see through somebody else's petty tricks." After that, he warned, "Whoever you are, don't call me again. Otherwise, I'll have you die a horrible death when I find you."

With that, he hung up right away without waiting for the other party's response. After switching off his phone expressionlessly, he returned to his binoculars and continued with the spying.

Meanwhile, in Athesea, Joseph handed the phone, the screen of which had gone back to showing the list of contacts, to Elise. "Seems like Xavier's not gonna escape his fate."

Elise let out a heavy breath. "Well, we all learn from our mistakes. It's not a bad thing for him to run into some trouble. Let's hope that he'll come back safely."

Joseph let out a sigh as well. "Yeah, I hope so."

"Have a good rest and be sure to take the medicine I've prescribed to you on time. When you recover, you have to go back with me to seize the headquarters back," Elise urged. Then, she stood up and went to open the door.

However, as soon as the door opened, she saw Danny leaning sideways in an eavesdropping position. Upon seeing her, he froze all over.

"Eavesdropping isn't a good habit, Danny," Elise said.

Her voice brought Danny to his senses. Turning his face toward Elise with hindsight, he pushed her aside and walked straight up to Joseph, his eyes shining with excitement. "A-Are you Joseph Fuller? I mean, the Joseph Fuller who heads SK Group?!"

Joseph's expression froze for a moment before he looked over Danny's shoulder at Elise.

With a look of resignation on her face, Elise gave Joseph a reassuring look. Danny was a bit of a drama queen, but he was good at keeping secrets, so letting him know about it wasn't a big deal.

Joseph gave her a slight nod before nodding at Danny impassively. "Yes, I am."

Danny gave a loud gasp before managing to compose himself. Then, he let out a scream, staring at Joseph like a beast that had discovered its prey.

Feeling uncomfortable under the boy's stare, Joseph cleared his throat and took the initiative, asking, "Is there anything you want to talk to me about?"

"No, nothing. What can I talk to you about?" Danny blurted out with a cheeky grin. Then, he immediately realized that he had said the wrong thing. He corrected himself at once, saying, "No, wait a minute. It seems I really have something to talk to you about!"

"Shoot," Joseph replied calmly.

"Could you take me in?" Danny asked in an earnest tone. He had spent a lot of manpower and material resources these days in order to get recruited into SK Group. But so far, he had only been running around like a headless chicken without getting any closer to the group. Now that SK Group's supreme leader was sitting right before him, how could he not take the shortcut?