

TECHNOLOGY 1371

Chapter 1371 - Frauds All Around Me!

What a cold and windy day.

The salty air left a stinging feeling in the throats of many. And coupled with the striking rains and winds of Spring, many could feel the changes of those young by.

The winter ice had long begun to come out, and the lands were also returning to what they initially looked like.

Several leaves were sprouting out, and the birds had long blocked back in packs, sometimes stopping now and then to dig up the freshly exposed worms on the surface of the grounds.

The roads were mushy and filled with ponds of water, and the air itself had the aroma of sprout in greenery.

Yes!

Chandon City seemed vibrant and alive now that the winter had long passed.

And this fact was evident in the way the locals smiled more often. But for some, the end of winter meant the beginning of trouble.

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--A Certain Luxurious Villa In the City--

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A body was sent flying, smashing into the moldy walls.

Bam!

A dreadful silence filled the foul dungeon, except for the banging sounds from a fallen man.

The man was covered in blood from head to toe, holding onto his sanity with all his might.

His eyes began seeing triple, swaying from side to side in horror.

It hurt! It hurt so badly!

"Please, forgive me, my lords!"

The man pleaded, lowering his head to eat the dirty dungeon floors.

From the start till now, he had been picked up and shoved into the dungeon with not so much a word or a warning.

It all happened so fast!

And all the man could say was that he had been completely blindsided!

However, this didn't mean he didn't know what crime he committed.

That's right.

Though these men hadn't spoken to him or even to themselves since capturing him, he still knew who they were.

How could he not?

The frightened man was now shaking like a leaf, seeing that the day he had long been avoiding had finally come.

"My lords! My lords! Allow this one to explain! Please, my lords, hear me out!"

Heh.

Hear you out?

The elegantly dressed man standing opposite to him squinted his cold green eyes at the low life before him.

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-silence-

A cumbersome pressure filled the air.

It was brutally heavy, making the man who had his head down subconsciously stop breathing.

~Gulp.

Sweat trickled down his back, silently praying for his future.

He wanted to beg once more but found that his entire mouth was swallowed with blood.

And by the time he spat it out, another attack caused him to lose a tooth to the ground.

The leader had stepped on his head, smashing it harder into the stone grounds.

Bam!

Hussain was not pleased.

And with a lazy demeanor, he slowly took off his feet from the lowlife's head, crouched down and held the lowlife's hair with ease.

"Timberland... You held a mighty role in stopping our deal, didn't you."

"What? No! My lords, whoever told you this is lying. How can I do such a thing?... There's no-..." Bam!

The man found his face once again planted into the ground hard before he could finish his sentence.

His nose was completely broken!

F***! F***! F***!

The pain was just too heart-jabbing.

However, no matter the heavy sounds the eerie cries coming from the man, those in the room still stood emotionless, only occasionally glancing at the man like some piece of trash.

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"Don't play with my patience. You dared to join those quacks behind our backs?"

It was a simple question.

The burly man's voice wasn't loud but still sent out waves of shivers running down Timberland's spine.

Mommy...

He regretted it.

He had been so engrossed in enjoying the benefits of what he did that he forgot how ferocious these people were.

Dammit!

The man gritted his teeth, blaming Baymard for everything.

To break things down, he was an apothecary specializing in potion-making. At the same time, he was also a healer too.

As many might know, it was common to have a variety of serious professions, mastering all these skills.

So yes. He dabbled in a lot of medical professions.

However, not many learnt to become people savers.

No! He was greedy for fame and money, wanting more and more the bigger his pockets became.

That's why since the existence of Baymard's hospital services, he had been overly jealous of many doctors there.

He hated how they always acted, rejecting all 'gratitude from the patients, saying that they couldn't take all those coins.

In Baymard, the hospitals didn't allow for one to tip the doctors or nurses. However, one could still offer them food, clothes or any material items.

Little gift baskets of thanks were indeed allowed.

But giving big stacks of money to one in the hospital was very unbecoming.

And Timberland only found the whole thing pretentious!

Why be a healer or a potion maker if not for the money?

Money! Money!... That was what made the world go round. So what's wrong with having a bit of it on the side?

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Ling story short, Timberland wasn't part of the T.O.E.P, still acted like an in-between person for A few patients in Deiferus and the Medical association in Morgany.

Though he was a healer, he was gifted with his words and was the sort of person that could market anything.

This talent was probably what led these Morgs to work with him.

Of course, not knowing about the T.O.E.P meant that he probably wasn't given the best rewards by the Morgs.

But to Timberland, he felt as though he was treated like a king. Just the fact they have him was enough for him to brag for 5 generations to come.

Anyway, with the emergence of Baymard, he was indeed tempted to devise a devious plot between Baymard and a few of these clients.

Heheheheh... As a middleman, why should he work with only one force?

Yes. There was a 1/10 chance that the Morgs would come after him.

But with the uncountable number of clients they had worldwide, losing this few shouldn't do anything to them... Meaning 9/10 times they probably wouldn't come after him, or at least that's what he thought.

It wasn't as though Baymard had ever spoken to Timberland or agreed for him to be a middleman.

However, what did that matter to him?

He was in this mess because of them, and that was that!

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Timberland gritted his teeth viciously.

'Good. Good... What a good Baymard!

Since you did this to me, then don't blame me for being rude!'

If he was going down, then they too would be going down - starting with that so-called best healer.

The title alone was an insult to the entire Morg medical association. And they wouldn't be taking it lightly.

'Doctor Gerson.... Let's see how long you can remain proud!'

Chapter 1372 - Morg Medical Society On The Move

In the deepest cell within the dark, wet and moldy dungeons, all that could be heard were the sounds of violent beatings echoing out.

Bam! Pah! Bam!

The screams and pleas were too gruesome, causing the few inmates a little further away to subconsciously step back in horror.

They stared at the dark void of a hallway, trying their best to keep their cool.

F***!

What the devil was going on here?

Pah! Bam! Bam! Boom!

Timberland's bones continuously cracked.

And all he could think of was cursing the Baymardians in his heart. Of course, he has long thought of his game plan too.

Like he said, if he had to suffer, then Baynard would too.

It was about time someone tumbled on their regime.

In this world, not everyone might like another.

When it came to Baynard, most people liked them since they indeed lived up to their name.

And then, there was another group that only had neutral feelings for Baymard, meaning they could switch to the enemy side or become allies with Baymard once out of the neutral zone.

These people could topple the scale, making the opposition mightier than they were.

That said, most neutral people were the ones that were likely to be 2-faced.

In retrospect, these people were those who would follow whatever rules were placed, never having an opinion whether they liked it or not.

In life, there were just some people who followed the rules because it was in the system. They didn't even know if they had an opinion or not. And they too hated arguing over such things.

To them, be it Alec's way or Landon's way, it didn't matter. What they followed were always the rules set in place.

And finally, the 3rd group would be the opposition, which was indeed not much.

In the beginning, the opposition was too great. But in such a short period, the Baymardians had miraculously conquered many.

From indirectly passing on messages during sermons to school ethics and many other opportunities... People had changed their way of thinking.

Not to talk of the fact that the Baymardians had debunked several myths for disabled or injured people, proving that they too were human and not children spawned from the devil.

In hindsight, the majority of people also loved Baymard because the majority of people were peasants, slaves and outcasts.

Before, their children would've never had the opportunity to do so many things like writing. But now, things have changed.

Again, many new job opportunities emerged, and families grew closer too.

Hey... Seeing his majesty Landon proclaim his cooking skills for his wife, many low-class men didn't think it was taboo to cook for their wives... Especially if they were sick or pregnant.

Typically when this happened, the men would go to their next-door neighbors to get some already cooked food for themselves and their wives.

Such was the way they used to know.

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A peasant woman's place had always been in the kitchen. But things had started changing bit by bit.

And in the end, the men realized that it wasn't unmanly for a man to cook for his wife.

Even carrying children on one's back or shoulder had become acceptable to men. Before Landon's influence, when can one see a man carry his child so playfully?

Impossible! It was a disgraceful sight.

But because it was normal in Baymard, loyal fans across the continent began picking up the trend.

Mind you, be it Landon, Lucius or many in Baymard, they all had their fanbase.

In the end, families grew closer, with daughters finally being able to have a voice or speak out.

Sometimes, parents have to sacrifice a child to save the younger ones. And many times, the children sold out understood their family's intentions, feeling happy to protect their siblings.

But of course, there were also cases where everything was forced against the child's will.

In short, the change across Pyno was truly a swift one that had been changing for years now.

But the opposition hated all this... Particularly, they hated the rules and how they couldn't take advantage of Baymard's system.

It was funny because people who hated Baymard still used their resources daily.

From their watches that simplified time to the alarm clocks, canned food, lighters, flashlights, beddings and many other essentials, these people didn't shy away from using them.

It was just that their greedy pockets and yearning for more fame constantly placed them on the opposite side.

They wanted nothing more than to down Baymard to the deep abyss of the seas.

And seeing this opportunity, how could Timberland let it go?

Bam! Bam! Pah!

Amidst the beatings, Timberland had a hint of joy, thinking about his plans.

Baymard vs Morgany, the victor was obvious!

(*^*)

With a purplish pig-swollen face, Timberland was at their mercy, crying his eyes out.

"My lords... My lords... Please, spare this little one's life. Those people said they were the best healers in the world, sounding very convincing. No! Even more shocking was their claim at being the better healers when compared to you all in Morgany, this conquering the hearts of many, including your patients!"

Timberland spoke in a pitiful tone, pushing all the blame to Baymard.

"Despicable! Despicable!... My Lords, it's because of all this that I ended up getting tricked by them." He said, kowtowing even more vigorously, despite his pain.

"Who would've known that these people were frauds?... My lords, I know that what I've done is unforgivable. And that's why I'm ready to make amends by taking you to them! My kids, please let me lead you to the top fraud of all... A person they call Doctor Gerson."

Timberland's eyes were red with jealousy.

"My Lord's, he is a fake!"

-Silence-

The room remained silent, only giving Timberland immeasurable pressure.

And just when he thought he was a goner, the burly lead man seemingly chuckled.

"Alright. Lead the way.. Take us to see this Doctor Gerson."

Chapter 1373 - Another New Emergence

Like so, the turbulent waves were already gushing towards Baymard, unbeknownst to many.

Hehehehe... The medical association was on its way.

And Landon, who didn't have a clue, was also a busy one - Particularly within these times.

Lying trough. With the Internet soon to be launched, do you know how many things had to be in place?

The internet was already up and running, but only for several industries and establishments to begin work on it.

Hehehehehe...

Vrrrrmmm~

Landon had a scarf around his neck, tapping his steering wheel while singing to the tune on the radio. And by his side of little Kora, who was also blabbing baby gibberish, at Landon.

Mind you, Kora was already 1 year and a month old.

With her eyes thinking excitedly, she continuously goggles at Landon's antics from the back seat.

That's right. She was strapped in the back.

And though she couldn't see the outside scenery, she still didn't feel bored... Especially when her big bro is with her.

The duo had their sibling bonding moment.

Of course, following behind them were a steady stream of security vehicles.

They were Kora's personal security team, tasked with keeping an eye on her, whether or not she was with family.

Provided she stepped out of mother Kim's private Wing, they would be alerted to follow up.

This was the little royal princess, after all.

She couldn't talk or defend herself. So what if she was kidnapped? What if a maid tried to take her out of the palace?

Though Landon didn't think such a thing would happen, security protocols must always be in place.

Additionally, with the weirdness in this world, he wouldn't be surprised if there existed a person with mind control powers.

In that way, who's to say that such a person wouldn't control the workers?

Luckily, the system had ensured him that for many with powers, they only had a few more generations to go before their bloodline abilities completely dwindled out.

Meaning such a person shouldn't be able to control many.

Thus, if others discovered the abnormality, Kora would be safe.

In the end, whether such a person existed or not, with the sort of security he had in the palace, they could forget about taking her out.

Yes! She might be missing from a room, but the kidnappers will have no choice but to play hide and seek in the palace.

In the end, leaving would be near impossible!... Especially with him having a tracker on Kora.

Do you think he would allow her to leave Baymard?

Tsk. How naive!

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Vrmmm~

The siblings bonded with one another over the drive. And at times, Landon would also tell short stories when the music stopped.

Kora might be a 13 year old at heart, but she was still a child who had never heard some of these stories.

So her attention was quickly captured by the excitement of this adventure tale.

And by the end of the drive, her body had defeated her mind, causing her to close her eyes going back to sleep.

'No! No! Cure this small body! It's bad enough that I keep wetting myself as an adult. So why is it that this body makes me sleepy after every 5 or so hours?'

Kora was feeling teary when thinking of her predicament.

As a 13-year-old adult, who can stand this?

Moreover, she found that whenever there wasn't a pacifier in her mouth, she would suck her thumbs instead. All this was just so embarrassing and very addicting.

How shameful!

(:YπY:)

Tilda sucked her pacifier, leaning her head to the side after the sandman sprinkled his magical powder on her.

Zzzzz~::~

Landon chuckled after watching her sleep helplessly.

She was the one who grabbed him, not wanting to let him go. Her every action said she wanted to follow him and see what he was doing.

Little did she know that she would be KO'd by her body before they could even arrive at their targeted destination.

Very carefully, he took her out of the vehicle, gesturing for her lead guard to come over.

"Rogue! You and your team will watch over her until she wakes up. When that happens, bring her back to me. Understood?"

"Yes, your majesty!" Rogue responded with a firm salute.

"Good." With that, Landon stepped into the bank, with the rest following behind him.

They would be taken to another room lest the noise from the meeting wakes or disturbs the little princess.

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Stepping in, Landon couldn't help nodding satisfaction whenever he saw the bank.

Heh... This wasn't one of the bank banks.

Nooe! It was the central bank headquarters, including public bank services on the 1st floor.

Above that, till the 5th floor was all office space.

However, anyone seeing the bank would know of its great expansion over the years.

And now, the bank's width alone was far wide and long, making more space for vaults and other bank necessities.

The bank had grown into a major building that took a vast amount of space.

Back then, Landon had acquired the entire estate location, marking it as bank property for this reason.

And of course, with such a massive building, the security in place was ruthless

Landon glanced at the vast and open ground floor, feeling its luxury oozing out.

It looked even better than many resort front entrance lobbies.

And a present, there were 30 bank representative stations, all evenly spaced, focusing on dealing with customers.

So this alone should tell one how broad the bank's main hall was.

From the waiting lineup cues to the long voices around, followed by the statues and exquisite marble flooring, anyone would have an appreciation for it all.

Of course, stationed around the building were also several long box-like items, still wrapped away from the public's eyes.

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"Your majesty!"

Landon awoke from his stupor, smiling at the customers and workers who saluted him.

And soon enough, a very handsome middle-aged man in a well-trimmed suit approached them, followed by others.

It was Central Bank Manager Dionne.

"Welcome, your majesty! Please, right this way." He said while giving a deep bow.

Good.

Now that his majesty was here, he could adequately explain that thing to them again.

Dionne and the rest were perplexed.

Debit cards... Debit cards...

What exactly was it?

(?~?)

Chapter 1374 - A New Banking World

"Welcome, your majesty!"

Several men and women all stood from their seats, saluting Landon deeply.

The group consisted of a few ministers, a few prominent high-ranking bank executives, and their secretaries.

This was indeed a new dawn for the banking world.

And wouldn't you know it, his secretary Brian was already here and had long distributed bottles of water and the agenda for today.

(*□^□)

Brian pushed his glasses, pulling his majesty's seat.

"Your majesty. Everything is set in place."

"Good... I can always count on you."

"Yes!" Brian responded, watching Landon take his seat.

He had always strived for perfection; thus, he truly felt satisfied whenever he got praises from his majesty.

Well, there were still 15 more minutes before the meeting started. So he decided to go over everything one last time, ensuring that it was all in place.

Hm...

The atmosphere was very chatty, with Landon and the rest diving into all sorts of recent news. Sometimes personal, sometimes public.

Everyone had dealt with one another on multiple occasions over the years, so once they started talking, time really flew by.

And in a blink of an eye, Brian tapped the musical triangle.

First Alert. Meaning they had 5 more minutes to readjust themselves.

Many though still talking, had begun to lean away from the conversation, taking in the proper meeting posture.

Their documents to the side and their secretaries all seated behind them, everyone was gathering their thoughts for the meeting ahead.

And soon, the final bell responded out.

Ding!

The meeting officially began.

Landon's eyes moved from left to right, introducing/doing a mini-roll call to see who was absent and who wasn't.

And after the brief introduction of why they were here, things finally became serious.

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"As many of you know, banking is an essential part of Baymard's livelihood.

When foreigners come, they open bank accounts and exchange their heavy coins for Baymardian paper.

And when it comes to the citizens, banking itself is involved directly or indirectly with everything they do.

From payrolls, loans, savings and many other aspects, it can be clear how important banking is."

Everyone nodded in agreement.

Whether it was to get a new house or vehicle... Everyone stored money in the bank for future purchases.

Landon glanced at them with a calm expression on his face.

"Ladies, gentlemen... It's because of how valuable our banking system is that many trust and rely on it.

However!... That's not to say that we don't have our own issues.

Now, I'll hand the floor over to Chief Bank Manager Dionne to delve into the matter." Landon said, gesturing at Dionne seated on the left side of the rectangular table.

Dinner was a very skinny man with a smooth baby face that looked 10 or 15 years younger than his actual age.

With his deep brown well-trimmed hair and green eyes, Dionne nodded to Landon's words, calling everyone's attention to the matter.

"Your majesty has said it all. With how vital banking is, we have always strived to do our best. But, there have always been a few more concerns we noticed after customers gave their feedback.

Everyone, before I continue, please turn to page 5."

The atmosphere suddenly grew heavier.

~Flip. Flip.

Pages turned, revealing several words and charts for all to see.

Dionne held his document in his hands with a stern expression.

There were indeed a few major concerns that had constantly been coming up.

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First, looking at the pie chart, the most common concern that eats up the space by a whopping 68% was that of limited tellers.

Yup!

Even with the many bank tellers scattered around the place, it was just never enough.

And people stood for hours without end for simple tasks.

That's why the banks, be it branches or this main headquarters, were always full to the brim.

It didn't matter whether it was the early hours of the morning or closing time; the bank always had guests in large quantities.

Of course, this was all because of the Capital's massive size.

Each District alone was like a town or small city of its own.

So imagine the population that stayed within these places on a daily basis. And then combine these with the massive inflow of tourists.

Again, it was necessary to note that the bank branches were only located in 2 districts; District D and District G.

District D had Luxury hotels, a go-kart racing site, Arcades, Zoo, Sea world hotel, several small and specific clinics, Car stores, Main mall, Main Bus station, etc.

And District G had Regular hotels for visitors, a Ski resort, Baymard national park, Bars, clinics, another arcade center, stores and so on.

These 2 entertainment regions were the only places where one could find these bank branches.

Of course, the bank headquarters was in district C... Which was the central location for most headquarter buildings, the main hospital, schools & academies, etc.

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Anyway... All other districts in Baymard rush to these banking locations to do simple banking transactions.

And to simplify things, only those who already have bank accounts could use the branch banks.

With a simple phone call, the branches could confirm their identity with the many standby representatives in headquarters before doing simple transactions like withdrawals.

But even at that, this meant that after the job was done, a specific group of people would have to input or change the customer's information in their accounts books within headquarters.

That is, they had long been taking the place of computers.

And now, the tellers would be able to input the information in the computers, making withdrawals or other simple operations a breeze.

Oresbetky, their biggest feedback was there not being enough tellers at sight.

The bank branches always had 15 tellers, all evenly spaced out, attending to everyone going in and out.

And, the main headquarters had 30!...

That's 30 tellers!

However, with the working storm of people in and out of Baynard, it was still not enough with the Capital's size.

But now, all this is about to change!

Chapter 1375 - The Solution

One by one, Dionne listed their current issues.

'Not enough Tellers' was at the number 1 spot.

As for the rest of the issues, they were all more or less linked to the first concern... Such as petitions for more bank branches to be made.

In the end, all customers wanted was just for the bank to solve the issue of time.

They didn't want to spend so much time on the Mine's whenever they arrived... Especially if one was just making a simple withdrawal or putting more money into their accounts.

Everyone nodded in understanding, as they too were customers of the bank as well.

Dionne finished his brief segment, allowing Landon to continue.

In his mind, he was still thinking of these issues.

It sure would be good if this issue could be nipped in the bud once and for all.

Because at the end of the day, it was they, the bank, who worked twice as hard behind closed doors to ensure everything was in place.

Well, he had to admit that today's situation was far better than in the past when they had to count gold, silver and copper coins one by one over and over.

Yes. Even though there were still a few Baymardian coins like 1 or 25 cents being used, it was still better with counting machines on their sides.

Sigh... They had indeed come a long way. But the journey was far from over.

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Landon smirked, gearing up for the big reveal.

"Ladies and gentlemen, you've heard it all, both customer and employee concerns.

And that's why, this year, Baymard will begin its launch of banking cards!"

You look at me; I look at you.

Banking cards?

Everyone was bewildered.

Was this the surprise project that his majesty personally funded?

It's said that he worked daily over the winter to create 50 samples.

Landon chuckled, seeing their faces filled with curiosity.

He had been diligently training a particular team to create these babies.

The team he worked with came from the Currency Manufacturing industry.

That's right.

This was initially a small department within the Printing Industry that focused on printing and manufacturing money.

But a year and a half ago, Lanson separated the department from the printing industry, having them become an independent Industry involved with every 'money' in Baymard.

The printing industry is now solely focused on making IDs, badges, books, etc... While they did their own thing.

Anyway, he had planned for this day ever since looking forward to the internet.

With the newly created Industry, Landon got to work, training a specific department to develop samples of today's big reveals.

And once the meeting and conclusions were finalized, his team would get mass-produced for everyday banking.

This was just the beginning!

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Bubuum.

Hearts trembled with expectations as many subconsciously leaned towards the edge of their seats.

What is it? What surprise has his majesty prepared for them this time?

Landon glanced at the already excited group with a broad smile on his face.

"Ladies and gentlemen, on your right, you'll see a brown envelope. Please, open them."

~Track! Track!

Like children receiving Christmas gifts, they ripped the envelopes, revealing its contents.

Dionne held the thinly cut card in his hand, squinting his eyes as much as though wanting to bore a hole into it with his 'laser-vision.'

This... This...

Eh?

Your majesty, what is this?

Blink. Blink. Blink.

-Silence-

The blue card was sleek with beautiful 8 bold numbers printed on its front.

And above that was the National Baymardian Bank's logo or mascot symbol... As well as its Initials - NBB.

Of course, there were several other strange symbols on the card that he didn't recognize.

But just below, he saw the words: 'Expo. Date: 00/00' and 'CardHolder Name' too.

But that wasn't all.

At the back, there was a long black bar, followed by another white bar below it with 3 digits to the side.

In short, there was a lot to take in with this strange card.

The most concerning thing was that he just couldn't make heads or tails of what he should do with it.

Erm... How was this supposed to solve their problems?

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Landon grinned, seeing many scratched their heads in confusion.

"These cards in your hands will soon replace physical money."

Boom!

An explosion went off in everyone's mind.

Impossible!

How can it do such a thing?

Why... this was defying everything they knew!

Everyone's hands trembled, tightening their grip on their cards.

Could it be that this card could spit out money like magic if they flicked it hard enough?

His majesty had made man fly and had even created swift trains.

So this time, could it be that he had successfully created a magical card?

(°?°)

The expressions on their faces were rich!

And for their imaginations, if Landon knew, he wouldn't know either to laugh or to cry.

'Aren't you all being a little too ridiculous now? Do you think this is a Wuxia mythical storage space where one could just pull things out from a card at will?'

Bank Manager Dionne smacked his lips together in disbelief.

"Your majesty... Are... Are you serious?... Can this card truly replace money?"

"Yes." Landon nodded. "Customers can take this to the stores or other establishments when paying for items. But to further understand its use and importance, it's time to introduce you all to another major banking breakthrough."

Snap.

With the snap of his finger, Brian calmly walked towards the massive 6 feet box just behind Landon, fully cloaked with a thick grayish sheet.

Dionne and everyone looked at the item with curious gazes.

One should know that over the last couple of days, these massive items had been brought and placed in various corners of the bank without them knowing what it was.

So how can they not be excited about this grand reveal?

Landon slowly stood, gesturing to the cloaked item behind him.

"Ladies and gentlemen... I give you, the A.T.M.... The Automated Teller Machine!"

Chapter 1376 - The Perfect Combo

The item underneath the cloth was finally unveiled right before everyone's eyes.

Whoosh!

It was a very strange-looking and big machine that still caused waves of confusion for them.

Dionne gazed at it deeply, suddenly getting enlightened.

"Your majesty, could this thing be similar to the money-changing machines all around Baymard?"

"Well, not quite."

"Eh?"

Now, many were still even more confused than before.

Landon chuckled, seeing them struggle to make heads or tails of the situation.

"For A.T.M's, you can think of them as money dispensing machines, very different from currency exchange machines.

In these machines, you will need to input your card. But in the latter, you input money to get it back in a different currency or a different form of the same currency."

On the ships, the currency exchange machines can change silver coins into smaller bits of copper coins for those leaving Baymard.

And for those arriving who already have a good understanding of Baymard, they would use the specific machines that change coins into a few Bays.

Likewise, there are machines around Baymard and aboard the ships that also change big Bays like the 100-Bay paper into smaller Bays like 25s, 10s, 5s, 1s.

In the end, all these machines scattered around worked on the vending machine principle.

But ATMs didn't.

Landon clasped his hands, moving towards the machine.

"Ladies... Gentlemen... Please gather around and let me explain."

Say no more.

They had long wanted to move closer and see the machine rather than stretching their necks like ducks.

"Everyone, some of you might notice that you have very different prominent colored cards, either blue or gray.

The blue represents what I'd like to call a debit card, and the gray represents a credit card.

Subconsciously, everyone peeked at the cards in their hands thoughtfully. .though there were many strange coloured logos/symbols on them; the most prominent color would be the card's base color.

Dionne narrowed his eyes profoundly.

Debit cards... Credit cards...

He still wanted to know more about them.

.

With everyone's attention piqued, Landon decided to give a very brief explanation to it all.

"As I said, this machine is an Automated Teller Machine, which can do a variety of jobs and basic operations that tellers do.

Typically, the ATMs would be connected to the bank's systems, recording and monitoring all actions that occurred to a customer's account.

However, with these sample cards, today's visual representation will show no accounts." Landon cautioned.

Well, the internet had already been up and running. And as soon as he finished that meeting with Tim a while back, the specific industry tasked with connecting several establishments with the internet was quickly dispatched to the bank.

He had waited for them to finish up before this meeting began.

Over a year and a half, they had long been building internet towers and connecting cables all around Baymard for the day when both wireless and wired Internet would finally be available.

Thus, with the emergence of computers, how can there be no internet?

Anyway, the team he had down at the lower region should now be seated by the computers, monitoring that whatever he did worked.

After all, he was using sample cards on this specific machine tester.

The other ATMs around the building were official ones for official use. But this one wasn't.

.

Pap.

Landon inserted his card, and everyone's eyes bulged, almost coming out of their sockets.

"Look! It's asking his majesty to insert a pin. Bravo! Bravo! This way, security will be kept in place!"

"Quickly! Take a look at the screen. There are 4 main boxes highlighted: Deposit, Withdraw, Account Balance, Transfer."

"Amazing! After opening the deposit tab, the money his majesty sent in was added to his account after checking the balance. And in the end, there's even an option to print a receipt... So does that mean that there's a printer inside?"

"This is good! Do you know how many people line up for hours to deposit money? Imagine these A.T.Ms scattered all over Baynard. Think about it. The banks will no longer be saturated!"

"Exactly! And to make matters better, look at the 'transfer' situation. When he clicks on the transfer tab, it's merely a tab for those with 2 or more accounts. Let me tell you that as someone with 3 bank accounts, this is a dream to be. Hahahahaha~... No more standing in line for simple money transfers from one account to another."

"That's right. Even depositing money and checking one's accounts balance can be done with the simple use of the cards. Tsk! No wonder his majesty said that the cards would replace physical money."

Dionne shook his head thoughtfully: "Not quite. Though these are all good, it's still far from enough to replace physical money. Think about it... The cards seemed to be only usable in the banks... So why should many mean towards them?"

Landon grinned, listening to everyone's thoughts.

For now, they still didn't see the whole picture, thinking that cards must only be used in the bank.

Whoosh!

Brian appeared beside Landon, opening up what seemed like a large sealed envelope.

And in it was what many modern people would recognize.

Sigh... As expected.

This was the complete package to the card and A.T.M combo.

Yup!

He was talking about a Point-Of-Sale (POS) machine.

That's right.

He was talking about the card machines that taxi drivers, superstores, cafes, restaurants and every other store in modern times used when a person wanted to purchase an item.

You know the drill... Insert your card, tip or not, type your pin and punch the enter button.

This machine was the baby that made the trio combo work.

Though he introduced the A.T.M and Card system, he planned to make it public a month after the internet and computers became public in May.

Meaning by late June or early July, he expected the bank to finally make things known once they were fully ready to go!

Chapter 1377 - The Good And The Bad

Landon nodded in satisfaction when thinking about his plans.

This was still early April, and they still had quite a lot of time before late June.

He wasn't just giving the banks time but also providing other businesses with ample time to understand it all.

Just like the case back on earth, Landon had long worked hand-in-hand with a team to create various Retail Software.

There were payment processing software, inventory management software, POS software, Retail Management Softwares, Retail ERP software... And many more.

In the stores, when employees use the machines, everything would be made easier if they all had particular software for what they wanted.

Luckily for them, they weren't the ones creating the software. So all they had to do was hire 1 or 2 specialists from the lower realm to set up these software systems in the computers and teach them how to use it all for 2 or 3 weeks of intense training.

Mind you, computers in general will be new to them as well.

That's why he felt it necessary for them to get trained on properly using these systems.

There would also be guidelines on what they should do when they run into a few stumbling blocks.

All this was part of the learning process, ensuring Baymard's growth.

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Just as Landon had said, though the launch was in late May... ever since his meeting with Tim, the various establishments had already begun ordering computers and connecting with the Internet.

This was their training period before the stores officially used these devices during checkouts.

And during this time, he expected them to master many management systems that concerned customers and staff management.

Checking inventory and many other behind the scene operations would be made easier by these systems.

He wanted them to master these bits first. And sometime during May, he would issue the use of the POS machines.

Following that, these businesses would then master the POS software system and use it during checkouts.

Landon had planned it all.

And that's why late June or July, the A.T.Ms, banking cards and POS machines will all be publicly launched.

Everyone crowded around Landon, looking at the small but strange machine in his hands.

"Your Majesty, what is this?"

Landon raised the machine.

"This, my friends, is a card machine!"

" "

With Landon's explanation, everyone soon saw the full potential of the cards and the ATMs!

Dionne was in too much shock that his mouth continuously hung open.

Wait! Wait! Just wait a damn minute!

Was his majesty saying that these cards will be used everywhere and in every store or area where services can be paid for?

(+0+)

Awesome!

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Dionne's lips trembled with excitement, wishing that he could have his card now.

F***!

He had thought that the cards were only to be used in the bank. But now, he realized just how short-sighted he was.

The more he listened, the more in awe he was.

"Your majesty... I think I'm getting to see just how powerful this card truly is. And what makes it more amazing is how easy it is to use."

Landon smiled slyly.

"Hmhm... Cards will more or less replace physical currency. But it's important to know that these cards are still linked to the bank's systems."

Let's say you go shopping with your debit card. A straightforward process occurs.

You insert your card into the card machine (POS), and a signal gets sent to the bank.

The bank checks the card is valid and that the account exists.

And if all is well, a signal is sent back to the shop, asking you to prove that the card is yours."

"And that's when we put in our pins. Right, your majesty?"

Landon nodded at one of the ministers: "Correct. If you enter the right pin, the bank will pay your bill for you and debit your account directly.

However, if you use a credit card, the machine will contact what I call a 'data office' that requests credit card transactions.

There, the account will be verified and checked to see if one has exceeded their credit card limit or not before releasing the money if all is well."

All information concerning the cards gets stored on the black magnetic strips at the back of the cards.

From there, things got too technical, and Landon didn't want to confuse them even more.

All in all, they now understood how the cards worked.

And what made them even happier was that the computers already had systems to do most of the work.

Of course, they would have to hire and contract computer and I.T specialists to work with them for 2, 5 or maybe 10 years, overseeing various aspects of it all.

Customers might never know, but a lot went into using a card.

Landon was also glad that he took so long in doing all these.

Gosh... It's been so long since he last completed his previous main missions.

But he didn't regret taking his time perfecting it all.

And now, since again, there would be a major outburst of several new technologies all at once.

Phew!

Landon wiped his invisible sweat away.

And the excited people around him were now focused on the various cards.

Everyone once again took to their seats.

It was time to round up the meeting with a few key points.

It was time to dive into the Pros and Cons of both cards.

Of course, one thing that Landon changed were the few key aspects concerning credit card uses.

He had placed a few clauses on the whole credit card charade, trying his best to limit people from going into debt.

Credit cards were there when times were rough, Like not having enough for tuition, health or other services.

Of course, one could use their credit cards to make essential everyday purchases and build credit, but he still made various guidelines and measures to ensure that people don't start going crazy with it.

After all, he wouldn't want his people to go into debt that easily.

Of course, even without cards, many people in this world still go into debt from borrowing from others or biting off more than what they could chew.

Hence the many scenarios where people would ship their daughters to pay off gambling debts or any other debts.

Others had their farms, life sticks and homes seized. Many also turned into slaves because of their debts.

So going into debt wasn't anything new.

However, if one was inviting a large debt, it better be worth it and not over something silly.

Either way, with his current brain strength, modifying this much wasn't tasking.

Credit cards could be both bad and good.

However, he wouldn't allow a person to keep taking and taking, going more and more into debt.

Landon drew the line clean.

He changed over 30% of all policies back on earth.

This was his empire, and he could bloody hell do what he wanted to!

Chapter 1378 - Losing Face!

--Hidden Fortress, Tenola--

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~Shahhhh~

The rains were hard today, unlike the case with the other days.

Once again, the spring rains began washing away the layers of snow residue left from the harsh winters.

The buds of greenery within the ancient and towering fortress soon began to dance to the beatings of the rain.

And within the fortress, no creature or person could be seen lurking around the zone.

The quietness of it all only made the place seem even more mysterious.

Cold stone walls, gloomy buildings... Everywhere one looked, it seemed as though they had entered an abandoned ghostly site.

However, appearances could be deceiving... Especially when the seemingly abandoned fortress was protected by thousands, all hidden in various spots.

Any intruders who dared to cross into the territory would die an excruciating death!

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~Shahhhh~

The rains continuously fell.

It was like meditative music to one's ears.

And in a grand room within the tallest towering building, a certain person sat on her desk, cold tapping their fingers against the table.

It was the soon to be 41 years old Jimila!

That's right.

She was the current Head Witch!

Looking at the secret documents she received a day ago, Jimila's entire body was on fire with rage!

"How dare they?"

Bam!

She smashed her fist against the table, damning the consequence.

And almost immediately, the temperature in the room dropped even more.

~Gulp.

Those standing before only felt cornered like animals the more vicious her expression and aura changed.

They looked at the documents in her hands, wondering what was on it that would make their Head Witch so furious.

Taking in deep breaths, Jimila forced herself to calm down.

She was only halfway done with the reports. So there should be more to it.

Particularly, she was hoping for some happy ending in this long tale.

However, the more she read, the angrier she became.

Until finally, she had read them all.

Son of a b**ch!

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Like a fire-breathing Dragon, Jimila huffed and puffed, wishing that she would've been there in person to take care of those bloody sons of b**ches that had the guts to touch her witches!

"Leave!" She ordered.

And even before replying, those in the room felt their legs had long betrayed them, moving faster than their mouths could talk.

"~Aaaah!"

Boom!

A chair flew across the room, smashing itself into the walls.

The entire scene was chaotic, with Jimila turning her entire office upside down in hopes of relieving her irritation.

'Why? Why is this happening now?'

The Full Moon Festival was only a month and a half away.

And for the festival, everyone was looking forward to the big sacrifice.

However, the star of the show hadn't arrived yet. And from the reports, she wasn't going to anytime soon.

Jimila took her seat once more within the chaotic room, thinking about all the face she was going to lose.

'I blame that b**ch! Because of her, I'll definitely get mocked by witch Edna and her bloody goons!'

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Dammit!

Jimila was about to die in frustration.

What? Do you think because they're witches, they don't have internal conflicts and struggle for power?

Over the years, she had been fighting a long battle. And her opposition wanted to hurriedly replace her with the 34-year-old old Edna, a rare genius with innovative ideas for their future.

A witch can only be a Head Witch until the age of 45!

After that, they were to step down and join the sacred council tasked with assisting the next head witch.

However, it's not all the time that they will be eligible to join the council.

One wrong step during one's reign as Head witch could make their retirement into the council living hell.

At the same time, one Gloria move could also make them live in paradise above the others.

Mind you, in summer; she would be turning 41.

This means she only had 4 more years to enjoy her position.

The moment she and many high-ups heard about the traitor's daughter, it had been long decided that they would have to bring her in.

In the end, if she, Jimila, could do it in her reign, appeasing many with the traitor's blood, then she would go down in Witch history and be a beacon and a symbol of awe to the many generations of witches.

However, things didn't go according to plan.

And now, the sacred festival was upon them with no sacrifice!

The festival was a big deal, with Witches coming in from various cities and empires within the vast continent of Tenola.

This was their main headquarters. And the esteemed and high-ranking witches overseeing the other fortresses would all be here.

It was going to be big.

And for such a festival, they had captured over a thousand men, giving them their secret poison, called Bone-chiller.

Once taken, the victims will only feel cold and wet day by day, not even having enough strength to shout.

It was a poison they dared say was only known to their Society.

Of course, they also made the antidote, just in case one of the witches accidentally ingested the ghastly poison.

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In the end, the food and spring water given to the prisoners were all laced with the poison.

And even if these prisoners knew they were being poisoned, what could they do about it?

Could it be that they were to stare here for weeks and weeks without eating or taking a single drop of water?

Sure... They could live off of rat flesh and blood running about the dungeons.

But in this winter, where the body was fighting against using fat to keep them alive and not starve, relying on rats alone wouldn't do.

Plus, in the winter, rat activities in these dungeons errant that high.

The dungeons were cold, and the rodents typically focused on warmer regions within the fortress to survive.

Like so, many of the prisoners were given small doses of the dastardly poison, prepping them for the big day!

Chapter 1379 - Jimilas Plans

Elbows on her desk, Jimila held her head frustratedly.

Why?

Why must everything go wrong in her reign?

Sure.

They may have a thousand men ready to be gutted and used for the grand sacrificial ceremony.

But in her eyes and that of many others, the traitor's daughter alone was worth more than 100,000 people combined!

The turnout for the upcoming festival was expected to be high because of the appearance of the traitor's daughter.

The traitor was a legend and, to many witches, their biggest enemy ever!

Even younger generations also studied the traitor in the various classes taught out. Though popular negatively, the traitor was still known to all witches.

So imagine many showing up and not seeing the star they were waiting for?

F***!

Though many wouldn't dare to voice their opinions, the seeds of hatred and disappointment would end up getting planted in their minds.

And with a little push, her opposition would be able to take advantage of the matter.

Jimila's pupils danced maniacally.

'No! I have to keep this information hidden for the time being. Edna cannot know about this for now!'

For sure, the information had to go out to the council and the higher-ups.

Luckily, over 8 out of 12 council members were all out and should be back in another week or so.

This was the perfect excuse for her to find things off.

She just needed more time to put things in motion and secretly ready a team that would move out almost immediately once a final verdict on the matter had been issued.

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Heh...

Jimila massaged her chin thoughtfully.

She decided that 'with the seriousness of the matter,' she would only reveal the information once ALL higher-ups and council members returned.

So even if she had to wait for 3 or even 5 weeks before they all arrived, so what?

Mind you, the big festival is 6 weeks from now. So if they came just before the big day, what about it?

The matter was too critical and needed the votes and thoughts of everyone on what they should do.

That was her excuse, and she was sticking to it.

Other times, such an excuse might be incompetence.

But with the information she archived, no one would feel that she was dragging things along.

First, there was the matter of many high-skilled witches dying.

From the list that went, she knew that they were all 2nd and 1st rated talents, with one of them being blessed with by the Goddess of Witchcraft to have the power of controlling iron/metal.

So for almost all of them to perish in the hands of the traitor's daughter alone meant that they had very much underestimated her.

From the report, it's said she was also blessed with super strength by the Goddess of Witchcraft.

This again confines that she had witch-blood running through her.

Too bad she was the enemy.

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The one thing that Jimila regretted was underestimating this seemingly ordinary girl.

Before dispatching the team to Baymard, the reports stated that this girl was a very naive one with little to no combat skills.

In short, the moment they mentioned being married to a young monarch, the witches all felt that she should be one of those ladies in the harem, fighting for a man's attention when it should be the other way around.

Men were born to lick the feet of women.

Like dogs, they had to remain on all 4's when next to a woman.

They were spawned from the wombs of women. And should therefore die in the hands of them, the women.

After all, without them, how could men come into this world?

Tsk!

Almost immediately, everyone was more disdainful of Lucy because she married and pleased a man.

And even if that man was giving her the best in the world, so what?

Men were already supposed to do that while remaining in lower positions.

So what was the fuss about that?

Still, they didn't believe that Lucy's partner truly loved her.

They had their suspicions right from the start.

And reading the secret letters, Jimila had confirmed this matter in her heart.

Yes!

Number 5 specifically said that Lucy's partner was only for her because of her intellect.

Hmm...

She was very familiar with the deceit of men.

They could shower one with sweet words and keep one in a bubble of commentary boss, all to fulfill their greed and achieve their dastardly plans.

Looking at it, this traitor's daughter was just as foolish as her mother.

Because of a man, she killed off her fellow women as though gutting fish.

Jimila sneered in disdain, forgetting that they were the ones who initially attacked and threatened Lucy.

Not only that, but they also wanted to kidnap Kora, taking her back to the Fortress to hold as hostage.

So, where was their compassion towards fellow women then?

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Jimila leaned into her chair, feeling that the council wouldn't take her decision of waiting for them to heart.

The matters written in the reports were all too severe for just a few of them to debate on.

They all had to be present to reach the final verdict because it was truly an eye-opener.

The key point was that this Lucy girl was a very intellectual being... (Probably a blessing from their goodness.)

According to Number 5, she had created wonders in Baymard, allowing her partner to take all the credit while she just sat in the background.

Looking at the ripped-off magazine pages showing many beautiful Baymardian sceneries, Jimila had to admit that this Lucy girl was a genius.

Apart from these 3 or 4 ripped magazine papers, there were still 2 pamphlets there.

Those delivering the message couldn't very well carry thick books while fleeing.

Thus, they only carried turn-off pages and other lighter papers.

Jimila looked at the many strange papers with trembling hands.

Just what sort of paper was this?

The quality was something she had never seen before.

It was nothing like their brown parchment paper!

The more she looked at the strange but beautiful images shown on the papers, the more determined she was in bringing Lucy in.

How can such a clever mind be buried behind a greedy man?

Yes!

If she brought in Lucy and extracted all this information from her, wouldn't her reign go down in history as the best of them all?

(*?*)

Jimila's eyes twinkled.

Before her reign was up, she would get Lucy here to make up for this matter, be it by hook or by crook!

Chapter 1380 - A Tough Beginning

Call!

Jimila flapped her cape, walking out of the room with a frosty loom in her eyes.

Lucy, Lucy, Lucy...

'If I can't bring you back in my reign, then don't expect to love longer!'

Like so, Head Witch Jimila was ready to unleash her wrath and make a name for herself in Witch History!

And just as she had the burning zeal to complete her goals, back in Baymard, quite a few others were now burning energetically as well.

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--The Capital City, Baymard--

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Late. Late. Late!

A young girl leaped past the hallways running at top speed with a sandwich in her mouth.

"Miss Dina, slow down... You're going to fall at this rate!"

The young girl swiftly threw her head behind her shoulders, peeking at the suited maid holding beddings behind her.

"Thanks, Aunt May! I'll be sure to pay attention!" Tilda had a hint of helplessness in her eyes, talking past the slice of bread she firmly held in her mouth.

That's right. Tilda, A.K.A Dina was now running late for her lectures.

And what was even more ironic was that unlike Linda and the others who had to leave the palace for lectures, she was 'homeschooled' and yet always arrived 1 or 2 minutes before the class began.

It wasn't that she was last or anything, but that she genuinely had a poor sense of direction, running through these many halls.

Can you believe that she has lived here for 7 whole months and still couldn't master every nuke and cranny of this place?

This could not be blamed on her.

In District A, the only thing one could see is the Royal Palace.

If modern people came here, they would no doubt feel as though the palace landmass was similar, if not bigger than Walt Disney's.

And bear in mind that there was always expansion in the palace.

The Palace was divided in many sectors, some for public tourists and fun activities, while others for public government or civilian visits.

And then there was the sector only private to those staying in the palace.

To not cause any suspicions, Dina and Paige (Grandma Paula) all lived in the guest buildings.

But the thing was that Dina had her classes always scattered around various locations within the private sector.

Landon had done this to keep her schedule always moving, lest someone suspicious tried to master her movements.

She was fluid and always on the move, changing her class location once every week or 7 days.

But the issue was that, though she would personally bring her to her class location on the first day of the week, for the other days, she sometimes got lost.

Sigh... Brother Landon had said it was all part of her training, allowing her to sharpen her sense of direction and her eyes.

If she can't even master how she got here or there, then if she were out on a mission, wouldn't she get lost in someone's estate or home if it were her first time there?

As a future Monarch, she had to do better when doing simple tasks.

She was already 14 and a half.

And though she had come of age in Veinitta, here, she was still a minor until 15.

She was homeschooled for this period, focusing on the basics and foundations.

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When she was first assessed, Landon was shocked that her father didn't even allow them to teach her simple addition and subtraction.

F***!

Even the children of Barons here in Pyno knew of simple arithmetics.

Say no more. Even ordinary guards knew this much.

And from what Paula told him, he was sure many in Veinitta knew these simple basics.

For Tilda, she seemed to know only how to spell and write.

Even her language knowledge was very poor, making several mistakes here and there.

Thus, all this time, she had only been focusing on the basics.

If the foundation of a home were poor, then the house would eventually collapse, not being able to hold more weight.

And unlike the others who had long and short holidays between each semester, Tilda's case was different.

She had no long holiday periods.

Instead, her schedule gave her ample time within each week for a holiday.

She had 4 days a week for classes, Mondays to Thursdays.

During these days, Ethics, Nobility & Leadership Courses, Sword fighting, hand combat, math, languages, both Roma and Pyron, were taught diligently.

After Thursday, She could do what she wanted.

Notably, on Thursdays, her class schedule daily was less than average, allowing her to do her homework on this day if she was competent to catch the drift - Might as well do it and enjoy your 3 days of fun.

Don't think that she didn't have friends of her own.

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When she first arrived, she began her journey of seeing the most pillar Baymardian sights.

Sometimes, little Ren, Linda and Momo would accompany her with their friends.

And on other occasions, she would only go with her Nana.

However, what was ironic was that she made her friends when she went out alone.

And since then, they had been close, with her visiting their homes often.

It was a big accomplishment for her to have her own set of friends.

Thus, she cherished her free days very much

However, no matter how free she was, she still practiced her swords and stance because every Saturday morning, Landon evaluated all royals in the private underground gym.

Whether one had slacked off or not would be fairly easy to tell.

To wield a sword, being good in hand combat, and many others also meant discipline.

And as a future monarch who will subdue her enemies, how dare she slack off?

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Tilda glanced at her watch with a pale expression.

No. No. No!

'I can't afford to be late, or else the consequences will be dire!'

Be late? No way!

Tilda picked up her pace with a firm expression on her face.

And as she rushed, a faint green glow at the back of her neck.