

The Ace at the Apex by Nine Linked Rings

Chapter 861 - 870

Chapter 861 Why'd You Accuse Them? Javier actually felt his heart drop in shock when the man said that. Fights and slashing could hurt people, and they happened frequently, even though they were not a daily occurrence. Threatening to blow the inn up so carelessly, though, was simply savage! Javier dared not act recklessly as he looked at the middle-aged man and contemplated it. Was this revenge from the person he had beaten before? As Javier was deep in thought, it felt like a silent provocation to the middle-aged man. His right hand, which had been in his pants pocket since he had come in, was slowly pulled out solemnly. His gaze was menacing, making him look like a stray dog baring its teeth. "Looks like you won't be scared if you don't see it for yourself!" Javier, who was shocked, immediately related the threat to a remotely controlled bomb. The guy was a f*cking lunatic. He had not even said a word, and the man wanted to f*cking blow his inn up!

With one hand on the bar to support himself, Javier flung himself over and sprinted. The moment he landed on the floor, he raised the pen in his hand, waiting to stab the middle-aged man with it.

However, just as his right hand, the one holding the pen, was about to swing down, the middle-aged man successfully pulled out what was in his pants pocket Three aces?!

Javier was stunned. What did the three poker cards mean? He then saw the middle-aged man pull out a fourth ace with his other hand,

"When my left and right hands go near each other, the bomb will explode and blow you up!" Javier was stupefied. He was in such a daze that it felt worse than having someone hammering the back of his head. Right after that, though, he felt tidal rage. F*ck the man! He was trying to blow up the inn with four aces?! While he was burning from fury, the middle-aged man tossed an ace on the bar and warned him fiercely. "This is my last warning to you. Stop being a busybody from now on, or I'll send three other aces here to blow your place up!

Before Javier could say anything in answer to his warning, the middle-aged man suddenly pulled the ace card on the bar back and replaced it with three other aces, muttering in a low tone, "I think this is a bigger threat..." What the heck? Had Javier really run into a lunatic?! While he remained baffled, the middle-aged man left the inn pompously.

Before he left, he even fished out a pair of sunglasses to wear, exuding the bloodthirsty vibe of a terrorist. However, maybe the sunglasses were too good quality-wise and obscured his vision, as he turned and walked into the doorframe right after that...

By the time Javier broke out of his trance and tried to go after the man, the man was long gone. He went back to the lobby glumly and recapped the pen, feeling speechless.

It was no wonder Herschel did not even have time for dinner after setting up this inn and becoming boss. It was f*cking interesting, as he ran into all sorts of weirdos. It felt almost out of this world—a sales conman and a lunatic trying to blow the inn up... It was crazy!

Javier chatted with Herschel when the latter came back and left soon. When he had a beautiful woman waiting for him at home, why would he spend any more time with a bachelor like Herschel...

The next morning, while Javier was having breakfast with Evanna, she told him that her car needed to go for a maintenance check, and Javier took the initiative to take on the task.

"I'll take you to work, then drive your car to the mechanic."

"You're the best!" Evanna gave him a sweet kiss and continued eating.

After breakfast, Javier drove Evanna to the academy, but while they were on their way, he suddenly noticed a strange occurrence happening right in front of them. A Hummer actually pulled itself up, moving forward only on its back tires while the front of it was on top of an old Suzuki Alto. The latter was already a small car, so it was obviously deformed when it was squashed by the larger Hummer.

A young man by the side of the road scrambled up and cried frantically, "Step on the brakes! Step on the brakes!"

The harder he cried, the faster the Hummer sped off, seemingly enjoying resting atop the Alto. It looked like a risky road user mistaking the accelerator for the brake out of sheer panic.

It was hard to tell if the Alto's driver was fine, so Javier asked Evanna to call the police while he stepped on the pedal to catch up to the cars. He had it figured out. If there was someone in the car, he would run the car into the Hummer from the side. Whether he could flip the Hummer off would depend on luck.

When he was parallel to the cars, he realized that the Alto was squashed, but fortunately, no one was inside. As for the Hummer, a panicked female driver was in there. The window was tinted so much that her face could hardly be made out, and Javier could only vaguely see that she was flailing her arms and her hair was disheveled.

She looked like she wanted to call for help, but what she was saying could not be heard amidst all the honking and screeching. Evanna, who was in the backseat, managed to get through to the emergency line then.

“Hello? 911? I’m at XX Street. There’s been an accident here…”

“Yes, a road accident. A Hummer has pinned a small Alto down and it’s almost f*cking through the Alto. Please hurry up and send

“Hello? Hello? The f*ck?! Why’d you hang up on me?”

Evanna was upset when her call was cut. “Goodness, what’s the meaning of this? Why won’t they accept an emergency call?!”

Javier was speechless. How could she accuse them?

Given the statement she had made, she would be lucky if the police did not catch her. Any regular person would be crazy to pay attention to her…

In the end, it was Javier who gestured for the female driver to turn off the ignition and prevented a bigger danger.

When the Hummer came to a stop, Javier wanted to get out of the car and ask the female driver how she had managed to get on top of the Alto, but Evanna claimed that she had urgent business at the academy.

Since the patrolling traffic police was coincidentally passing by, Javier left it to them and continued driving to the academy.

As Javier drove farther away, the young female driver got out of the Hummer. She was pale, and her fair hand was holding her chest, obviously still reeling in fear from what had happened just now.

She was thankful that the Passat driver had just gestured to her kindly. While she basked in gratitude, two traffic police officers came out of the patrolling car. One of them asked for her driving license and ID, and the other took care of the accident scene.

The female driver tried to calm herself down as much as she could and answered shakily, “I’m Florence Tinsley. I didn’t bring my driving license, but you can check. My license number is

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Surprisingly, it was Florence who kept trying to make a sale by using the identity of the BFA office worker. Javier would not have known, though, since he had already left.

Chapter 862 The Kerseys' Violence

Javier drove the car to the 4S shop after taking Evanna to the academy. Edna called while he was driving, asking if she could move in the day after tomorrow. "They had a meeting, and the houses will be picked according to the sequence of the demolition when we move back. That's why I'm moving in such a hurry. Please excuse me, Javier..."

Edna sounded incredibly apologetic and embarrassed when she explained. Javier did not mind, of course. He had already decided to rent the place to the mother and child, so it would make no difference whether the move took place in the morning or at night. He then asked on the phone if Edna needed help moving.

The woman said that she had a younger cousin who ran a moving company and would help them. Javier was glad that he would be free in that case.

Edna was still thankful about his kind gesture and sincerely invited him to a meal at her place at night.

"I'm so thankful that you rented the place to us and offered to help us move. I feel indebted to

you."

Javier felt like he would impose on them if he accepted the invitation, so he rejected Edna's offer politely but with determination. Edna insisted, though, not taking no for an answer. Javier could only agree halfheartedly and postpone the matter.

The day went by busily. Evanna's car did not just go through a maintenance session, but some other issues were taken care of simultaneously.

At nighttime, Javier took a walk after dinner. He just needed some time alone to think about Daniel Dennison. As he strolled along the street and reached its end, he continued walking along the riverside.

Of course, it was also a delight to admire the smooth, radiant legs exposed at night while he walked. It was a pity that the riverside seemed to have an electricity outage tonight, as the row of street lights remained unlit.

Forget about admiring shapely legs. He would be lucky if he saw the street under his feet. Javier was inwardly sighing over his bad luck when he discovered a car parked under a tree in the front.

It was not an odd sight, but something was up. The car was shaking!

“You must be in a good mood to work out by the road at night, huh...” Javier murmured, unconsciously picking up a stone from the sidewalk.

He wanted to save them. Vaguely pained moans were coming from the car, and he could not just let them suffer! Out of kind intentions, he had even decided that he was not going to leave his name after doing this good deed. He would run off the moment he threw the stone!

However, after tossing the stone in his hand a few times, he ultimately threw it back at the bushes.

Javier thought that doing this was the worst. It would be bad if this somehow traumatized the

man in the car and he recalled the flying stone each time he worked out” in the future.

Javier was about to turn away and leave when he heard cries for help coming from the car. “You f*ckers, you guys are the worst! Never mind that you’re doing this live and making my life hard, but you’re making yourselves audible too. Are you trying to prove that you’re enjoying an extreme thrill?!”

While Javier grunted in complaint, kicking and hitting noises came from the car. If the cries for help earlier were assumed to be thrilling foreplay, then the kicking and hitting noises right now could barely pass as the couple getting carried away and practice-fighting in the car.

The more Javier thought about it, the more he felt that things were not right, so he made his way to the car under the tree. As he approached the car, he found it familiar, like the Hummer he had seen on the road the other afternoon.

However, the Hummer should have been retained for procedure work because of what had happened to the Alto. Before Javier could think more about it, the cries in the car grew clearer and prompted him to rush up to the vehicle.

He tried opening the car door, but it was locked. He could vaguely see a young man pinning a long-haired woman down against the car seat to force himself on her

Regarding that particular exchange between a man and woman...a small fortune spent was called prostitution and a big fortune spent was called a wedding, but to proceed with said exchange without spending a dime was too much.

Hence, the flying stone had to come into play ultimately. With a loud crack, the window by the driver’s seat was shattered.

When the door was pulled open, the young man, who already had his belt undone, looked stunned and lost. The woman he had trapped beneath him shoved him away by

taking advantage of that opportunity and scurried off the car to hide behind Javier and plead him for help.

It was dark at night, but Javier could still see the two of them when they were so close.

The young man in the car was the one who had shouted “step on the brakes” by the road the other day, while the Hummer had been dragging the Alto along, and the pretty woman hiding behind Javier was Florence, the female conman who had visited the inn for a research project.

When Javier recognized Florence, the shock on the latter’s face was enough to show that she had also recognized the man she had called a jerk that night.

While both of them stared at each other in shock, the young man’s curses came from the car.

“Who the f*ck are you to poke your nose into my business?! Do you know who your daddy is?!”

Actually...Javier did know who his father was, so...

However, that was probably not what the young man wanted to know, so Javier ignored him and got ready to leave with Florence. They had not gotten far when more curses accompanied by hurried footsteps -rang out behind them.

Javier turned to look, only to see the young man dashing toward them with a metal pipe. As the metal pipe was swung up high, there was not much that could be done. Instead of avoiding it, Javier advanced and attacked first.

A solid punch bruised the young man’s eyes immediately with a bam, and Javier snatched the metal pipe from him before he started to kick him.

The scene could only be described as “the Kerseys’ violence”. The second heir of the great Kerseys had inherited the family’s honorable tradition! His legs were swift, precise, and powerful! Javier Kersey was representing generations of the Kersey Family’s history and tradition. He was not fighting alone right now. He was not alone...

Anyway, the young man was kicked to the point of hugging his head as he fell to the ground, groaning. As a violent warrior, though, Javier did not meet a good end. A patrolling police car passed by in time, so the three of them were ushered into the vehicle and taken to the police station with the siren blaring all the way.

Javier was released at around 11 p.m. After all, the police officers were not blind. His and Florence’s statements matched, and in combination with the evidence gathered from the scene investigation, it was only expected that he would be released without any issues.

In spite of this, when he asked the officer as he was leaving, he found out that the victim, Florence, had left more than half an hour ago! This puzzled Javier. He had been f*cking captured for being brave and doing what was right, and she had f*cking left already. True, she was a conman, but she could at least have some decency as a person, right? “Ugh, so annoying...”

Javier left the police station, muttering under his breath, and hailed a cab to go home. He would never have expected that there was a reason why that had happened. It did not only refer to Florence, but also Edna...

Chapter 863 This Car Seems Familiar

When Javier arrived home, Evanna was taking a shower, while Joey had already gone to bed. He was in a good mood, especially when he saw the sexy lingerie Evanna had placed outside. He knew that this was going to be another good night.

Unfortunately, he received a call from Herschel while he fantasized about it. It was already very late, and Herschel would not call him if it was not something important.

As he'd expected, Herschel gave him some great news the moment the call was connected.

“Boss, you're awesome. Good deeds are always repaid!”

Javier did not understand what Herschel meant, but the latter explained after he asked.

He told Javier that he had received a call from his subordinate while they had been investigating Daniel and had realized that Daniel had a first love-Edna Monroe.

“Boss, you surely have no idea that this Edna Monroe is the same Edna Monroe that you saved

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Javier paused. Well, being kind had its rewards. He had just seen that as casually lending a hand, as he could not tolerate others bullying the weaker people in their community. It came as a surprise that he would reap an unexpected gain.

Something that he had done had unintentionally pulled him closer to Daniel.

Javier was inwardly delighted after he ended the call with Herschel. He believed that he could get closer to Daniel by using this new information, and the possibility of utilizing it grew bigger. With that thought in mind, Javier felt very pleased.

Then, Evanna whined in the bathroom a moment later.

“Hey, you’re so annoying! I wasn’t done! D-Don’t–”

The sounds that came after that were so suggestive that they were inappropriate for children and unsettling for adults...

When the deed was done, Evanna told Javier, “Darling, can you help me with something tomorrow?”

“With what? You want me to do it with you in the academy?” Javier asked. Evanna blushed upon hearing what he said. “No! Who’s doing it with you in the academy? Be serious!”

She whined as she brought up the matter, stating that the academy had been helping a local orphanage. She should be visiting the kids tomorrow, but she was held up by an emergency, so she hoped that Javier could step up and help her with it.

Javier agreed easily. He was happy to do it since he could help both Evanna and the children. It was just that what he wanted to do more right now was study Evanna’s supple body.

“Evanna, why are you so sexy?”

Evanna was embarrassed. “Why are you asking for some again when we just finished doing it?”

What happened next obviously was not based on what she thought, so the bed became a mess once again in the time that followed...

After Javier took Evanna to the academy the next morning, he drove her car to the orphanage. It was after he unclasped the seatbelt and started getting out of the car that he saw a woman get out of a cab next to him. She had six to seven bags of snacks in her hands and was probably there to visit the orphanage.

However, Javier’s attention was not on the snacks. It was on her pretty face, which could rival Evanna’s. Most importantly, he knew the owner of that face-it was Florence!

He hurriedly opened the car door and caught up to her. Javier was incredibly displeased with this tactless female conman. If required, he really would not mind resorting to some dirty tricks and digging a hole in the ground to bury her.

However, Javier had just caught up to her and had yet to say a thing when surprise flooded Florence’s pretty features. “Ah, it’s you? What a coincidence! I went to look for you at your shop this morning, but only your friend was there. He said that you weren’t

around.” What Florence said stumped Javier, who had been ready to get even instead. “Why were you looking for me?”

Florence looked a little embarrassed.

“I wanted to apologize to you. You saved me last night, yet I abandoned you at the police station and left. I really didn’t do it on purpose. The police car was going out to patrol, and it was already very late, so I asked them to drop me off home on the way. I’m sorry!” Realization struck Javier as he listened to Florence’s explanation and apology.

In that case, it was understandable. After all, a pretty girl could be eye-catching so late at night. In addition to the fact that she had just almost been assaulted, she could not be blamed for being smarter.

After Florence apologized by explaining, she started to thank Javier for saving her last night.

“Thank you for saving me last night. If it weren’t for you, I...”

Florence turned pink and was too embarrassed to finish her sentence. It seemed that she felt both awkward and a little abashed about what had happened last night.

Javier waved her off with a smile to tell her that it was fine and asked about the young man.

Florence stomped her foot in anger when the man was brought up.

“What a liar! A big fat liar! I went to work part-time for his company, and he claimed to be a financial advisor that could teach me what to say to close the deal easier.

“When we were at the police station last night, the officers realized that his ID was fake and the car was stolen and had an unregistered license plate. He’s even a wanted cybercriminal for financial fraud, so he was taken away by the criminal investigation officers.”

That surprised Javier. He had thought that the young man was someone important, as he had kept acting like a bigshot and asking “do you know who your daddy is”—only for him to be put behind bars.

While he was caught off guard, Florence suddenly noticed Javier’s car on the side and began to scrutinize it.

“This car of yours seems familiar...”

How could it not? That afternoon that the Hummer had gone atop the Alto, Javier had gestured to Florence to turn off the engine of the Passat, managing to prevent a greater danger. However, he did not bring the incident up and merely smiled.

Florence still recognized the car based on her own memories and asked in astonishment, "It wasn't you, was it? The one who made the hand gesture!"

"I remember that the last two digits of the license plate were 68, and there's also a scratch on your car door."

Javier had not expected Florence to observe such details, but since she had recognized the car, he would not deny it either. Hence, he nodded and made the same gesture he had made when he had asked her to turn off the ignition that afternoon.

Florence could not believe it. "Oh my gosh, I can't believe it. It's really a coincidence. We've just met three times, and you've saved me twice. This is really..."

"I was thinking about looking for the kind man who saved me on the road to thank him properly, and check out this coincidence. I didn't find you, yet you saved me again..."

Florence thanked Javier sincerely and profusely after that, starting to bow to express her genuine gratitude. She had already bowed twice, and a third bow seemed to be coming, but Javier hurriedly stopped her. It would feel like she was paying her last respects if she bowed for the third time...

Florence kept thanking Javier in front of the orphanage, even asking for his contact info and insisting on buying him a meal to express how thankful she was. Javier thought that there were a lot of methods to express her gratitude. She totally did not have to buy him a meal. It would be pretty nice if they could go deeper into the research project she had mentioned the other night, for example.

However, since Florence had been deceived by the conman boss, Javier did not think it was right to keep picking on her to flirt with her. Speaking of that, the woman was really naïve if she was claiming to be the BFA office worker just because her conman of a boss had said so. There was really a reason the word airhead had come about...

Chapter 864 Bunny at the Inn

While Javier complained in his mind, Florence suddenly asked about his purpose for visiting the orphanage. He made one up on the spot. "I saw an article about the orphanage previously and felt sympathetic, so I thought I'd pay a visit. But I was in a hurry and forgot to bring anything. I'm going to the mart to get some things now!"

"Oh, you're really such a kind, generous soul!" Florence complimented him with a grin and easily passed over three big bags of snacks. "Hold on to them. Just say you bought these!" Javier was slightly embarrassed. "No way, you bought them!" "Doesn't matter,

it's the thought that counts. They're for the kids anyway. It's the same no matter who brings them." Florence invited Javier into the orphanage warmly after that and briefly introduced the orphanage as they made their way inside. This orphanage was the oldest one and had once housed over a hundred orphans during its peak. There were only a little over ten children left now because the others had gone to the new orphanage.

The new place had a better environment and amenities, so the city council had decided to merge the two orphanages. To be precise, one would be the new orphanage, and the other would be the old orphanage.

"But Madam Hellman objected to it. She's been single all her life and she spends all her energy on this orphanage. The orphans here are her children. This is her home. How could she possibly agree to it! "Oh, right. Madam Hellman is the director of this orphanage. Constance Hellman." Javier had a general understanding of the orphanage thanks to Florence's introduction. After she mentioned some other situations, Javier probed, "You didn't grow up in this orphanage too, did you?"

Florence, who was amused, grinned like a blooming flower and looked enchantingly beautiful. She answered, "I did, but I'm not an orphan.

"My mom's best friends with Madam Hellman, and since my parents were busy working when I was younger, my mom sent me to the orphanage so Madam Hellman could take care of me when she went to work. Then, she picked me up when she got off work. Consider me half an orphanage kid."

Realization struck Javier, and he was impressed by Florence's mother, who had treated the orphanage like daycare. She was an oddball whose ways were really...a wonder!

When both of them went to the director's office, Constance was not in. The teacher there said that Constance had gone to meet the bureau people, so Florence took Javier to meet the children.

It was apparent that the kids loved Florence. Once they met, the children swarmed over to them and greeted her sweetly before they focused their doe-like eyes on the snacks she was holding, not at all concealing their intentions. Of course, that made them even more adorable.

When Javier gave away the snacks in his hands, the kids were polite and replied by saying "

Thank you, sir". It should not have meant much, but they addressed Florence, who was 25-26 years old, like a peer but called him sir, even though he was only 24 years old... Did he look that

old?

Maybe Florence had read Javier's mind, or maybe it was pure coincidence, but she asked for his name and told the kids, "Boys and girls, this is Javier!" The children greeted him cutely. "Javier!"

Well, it was somewhat better, he guessed...

After spending about two hours playing with the children in the orphanage, Javier and Florence left. They did not meet Constance, and Florence guessed that she was probably vehemently disagreeing with a certain higher-up regarding the bureaucracy of the old orphanage merging with the new one. "Why isn't Madam Hellman married? I saw the photos in her office. She must have been beautiful when she was younger, so perhaps she had a lot of suitors..."

"Madam Constance was gorgeous back then and did have plenty of suitors, but she didn't approve of anyone. She's an orphan too, so she empathizes with the kids here and willingly gives all her love to them..."

The two of them chatted as they walked out of the orphanage. While they did, a man suddenly came out of the guardhouse up ahead. He was around 30 years old and he was tall and fair. He was dressed neatly, like a promising young executive-level office worker, but his identity was reflected by the security guard uniform that he was wearing. The man beamed brightly when he exited the room. "Florence, you're here!"

It did not seem strange that the security guard knew Florence, as she frequented the orphanage, but the girl's reaction was off. She put on a smile that was more like a wince and did not even say a thing as she left in a hurry after a brisk nod to acknowledge the man, obviously not wanting to have much to do with him.

Javier noticed what happened but did not ask about it, as Florence did not show any sign of wanting to explain. After all, it was her private matter, and it would be tactless of him to gossip about it.

As they left the orphanage, Javier offered to take Florence back but she refused politely. There was a bus stopped at the nearby bus stop, so she went over there, waving with a smile. "You might not be going the same way, but the bus is. Thank you for offering, though. I'll buy you a meal sometime soon. Bye-bye!"

Javier plopped back into the car after bidding Florence farewell and watching her get on the bus. Herschel had mentioned that the inn lacked an administrator, and Javier had recommended Bernadetta. He wondered how she was doing at the inn, and since he was on the way, he decided to have a look.

Just as Javier stepped inside the inn, he saw Bernadetta hopping against the bar like a bunny.

“Ms. Bernadetta, how very active of you. You’re in your twenties. You’re a grown woman, yet you’re hopping around like a bunny.’

Javier teased her upon entering, only for Bernadette to roll her eyes. “You’re the bunny. |

sprained my ankle coming downstairs!” It was only then that Javier realized that the girl was actually hopping on a single leg. He went up to help her sit down and crouched down, complaining as he removed her high heel. “You’re not short. Why are you always wearing high heels? See, now you sprained your ankle.” Javier noticed Bernadetta’s ankle as he complained and removed the high heel. Goodness, it was as swollen as a baby’s fist. He tried pressing it softly and heard Bernadetta cry out immediately, “Ow, ow, ow! Softer!”

Javier frowned. “It’s quite swollen. Come on, let’s go get it checked at the hospital!” “It’s fine. I’ll be fine after icing it. I sprain my ankle pretty often, so I have plenty of experience. And I don’t like the disinfectant scent of hospitals anyway...” Bernadetta insisted, so Javier did not force her. He went to get two bags of ice from the convenience store and wrapped them in a towel to ice the ankle and reduce the swelling.

After doing all that, he asked Bernadetta why she had been spraining her ankle frequently. Bernadetta answered, “I’m not so sure. It’s not like I grew up like this. I sprained my ankle once during PE when I was in junior high and I keep spraining it ever since. Maybe it formed a habit after getting sprained once? Who knows? It’s fine anyway. It heals in a couple of days.” Javier did not think much of it since she had already said so. Spraining an ankle was honestly no big deal.

Bernadetta then said, “Oh yeah, a pretty girl came looking for you. A nice girl. She was pretty, and I ogled at her for you. She had a perfect S shape-just slightly lacking compared to me. “But she should probably still feel nice to the touch. And her long legs too...Whoo, wonderful!”

Chapter 865 Don’t Take the Dishes Away Javier was speechless while looking at Bernadetta’s lecherous expression. He knew that the person looking for him was Florence, but he could not understand why Bernadetta was acting like a lustful thug. “Why’s a girl like you more shameless than me when commenting on the same sex? Do others know that you’re actually a lecher?”

“Pft, you don’t understand. It’s exactly because we belong to the same sex that I make more precise, direct, and to-the-point comments!” Bernadetta explained her way out of her thuggish language and asked, “Oh, she isn’t your girlfriend, is she?”

Javier shook his head in denial. “No, just a friend.”

Bernadetta looked like she had expected the answer, but there was a hint of glee in her gaze. Although she had slept with Javier, she was not his girlfriend. She seemed to be interested now, but she feigned nonchalance. "That's what I figured. How could a pretty girl like that be your girlfriend?"

"I don't mean to insult you, but look at your face-you're a budget model compared to an authentic one, and the cheapest one at that. How could she possibly see anything in you? "If you ask me, you must've saved the world in your last life or gotten extremely lucky. Why else would you see a beautiful, hot woman like me every day?"

As if! Even if the world went up in flames, Javier would just let it burn! He was about to retort when Bernadetta asked out of the blue, "How much?"

Javier was confused. "What do you mean how much?"

Bernadetta eyed him disdainfully. "Don't act dumb. Spill. Is she an employee of the reflexology spa or the nightclub? "She's a little old, but she's fine otherwise. I'm guessing she's probably at least 300 dollars a night based on the market price?"

Javier was exasperated. If Florence knew that she had gone from being a conman to being a hooker, she would have probably choked Bernadetta alive! He explained, "Cut the crap! She's not a hooker. She's just a regular-"

Before he could finish explaining, Bernadetta waved her fair hand impatiently.

"Yeah, right. And you said she's a friend. No need to be so indirect!

"You just ran into a pretty girl on the road and picked her up right from the hotel, then you came up with the excuse of using the washroom to leave after the deed was done. She came to our inn because she wasn't paid after the job, right?"

"You don't have to be shy about this. What for? We're all adults here. I can understand. It's normal to have urges!

"But one thing is certain. It's not nice not to pay someone for their services. She's working with what she has too, and you have to be fair. Remember to pay her back. Go on!"

Bernadetta added, fretting, "Oh, yes, one more thing. Remember to be safe when you f*ck

around in the future. Some STDs are for life."

The flurry of accusations bewildered Javier. He later figured out that Bernadetta was doing it on purpose to get even with him for calling her a lecher. He then grumbled in his

mind, thinking that the girl should not have sprained her ankle. She should have hurt her mouth instead. Look how sharp-tongued she was!

However, Javier did not say that out loud for fear that even more accusations would be thrown his way...

All jokes aside, Javier took good care of Bernadetta and even treated her foot personally. It was just a little odd. Logically, Bernadetta's injury should already have recovered with The Grimoire of Five that he practiced, or she should at least be able to walk, but that was not the case. Her injury only grew more serious. She had been able to hop around like a bunny previously, but she dared not even hop now, claiming that the landing would jolt and hurt the injured foot.

This worried Javier, but he did not have a particular solution, nor could he check on Bernadetta's actual injury, so he suggested taking her to the hospital once again, only to be rejected all the same. Bernadetta insisted that she was fine and they should wait a few days.

Javier was powerless against her stubbornness, so he could only go along with what she wanted.

Since there was not much to do that day, Javier dismissed Bernadetta so she could rest and sat in the inn himself. What he thought about mainly, though, was how he would approach Edna and get closer to her-not in the sense of a romantic relationship, but just so he could get closer to Daniel.

While he pondered it, someone came in. Javier was surprised the moment he looked at the newcomer, not expecting it to be Edna.

Edna was carrying a white Styrofoam box with both hands with a bright smile on her face.

Javier got up to welcome her. "Aunt Monroe, what brings you here?"

He had mentioned that he worked there because he needed a cover, but he had not expected Edna to actually pay a visit.

Edna placed the box on the bar and opened the lid, revealing delicious-smelling dishes. There were honey sticky ribs, homemade meatballs, crispy chicken tenders, oven-grilled fish, and some hearty soup.

"I've invited you several times over for a meal, but you've been refusing, so I thought I'd send the meal to you.

"It's nothing fancy, just regular homemade dishes. Eat them while they're warm if you like!"

What she said and what she did were incredibly down-to-earth. There was nothing hidden between the lines, like the way others in society behaved, which moved Javier. He had just rented the place to her, and it was not like it was for free, yet the elderly woman had kept her promise to treat him to a meal to say thanks in mind all day long. It was...heartwarming

After Javier thanked Edna sincerely, he got her to sit down with him.

“No, no. I’m just here to bring you the dishes. I should head back now.”

Edna made her way out the door, not stopping no matter how many times Javier asked her to stay.

Unable to do anything, Javier could only see her off and repeatedly remind her to ask him for help anytime she needed it. Just as Edna got on her tricycle to leave, she suddenly got down and told Javier, “Right, I almost forgot something important. “Didn’t you say you didn’t have a girlfriend previously? I know that you’re an honest and shy man, so I got someone to look for a potential partner for you.

“I heard that the girl is a decent, upright person. There’s nothing fake about her, and I gave your number to her. She might call you, so keep an eye out. That’s it, I’m leaving now!”

Edna patted Javier’s shoulder after saying that and rode her tricycle away. Javier was incredibly speechless as he watched her leave. The old woman was frustratingly innocent. He had just joked about being single back then, but she had actually made a point to set him up with someone.

As he thought about it, it seemed that the old woman was not exactly all that innocent, as he had also joked about asking her to give her daughter’s hand to him. After Javier watched Edna disappear and leave, he carried the box upstairs to Bernadetta’s room.

When Bernadetta found out how the dishes had appeared, she was impressed.

“You collect rent from them and you will also be marrying her daughter? If you do marry the daughter in the future, your mother-in-law will be like, isn’t all this money I spent on rent previously basically wedding money? Javier, you wise man! I’m impressed!” “Yeah, yeah, stop it. This good food can’t even stuff your mouth full, can it? Are you still eating it or not?”

“Forget it, I’ll enjoy it downstairs and feed the leftovers to the strays. They’ll even wag their tails at me!”

Upon saying that, Javier acted like he was going to take the dishes away. "Ah, don't! I was wrong! Please don't take the dishes away!"

Chapter 866 A Loving Young Man Bernadetta panicked, as though Javier was going to rob her of some precious gem or her own wallet, and she sprang off the bed and sprinted for the dishes like a released tiger.

As Javier took in her swift pace and lightning speed, it was now his turn to fret.

"Sh*t, you can run pretty fast, huh, you brat?! Bolt at his peak couldn't even catch up to the speed you're running at, don't you think so?"

"Uh..." Bernadetta stood rooted there awkwardly before she faked a squeal out of the blue. "No sh*t, I'm actually healed?!"

"I recovered just like that. This is a miracle!"

"Oh dear, you've done me a favor here. Just a jab from you and my foot recovered right away. You're amazing!"

Javier waved quickly. "No, I did you no favor. I've done no favor to someone like you."

Hah, a miracle? She had recovered just like that? Bernadetta was shameless! Javier was disgruntled, and rightfully so. What was this if not deception?

That was what he had thought. How could her foot not heal after his treatment with the Grimoire of Five? It was because Bernadetta had been pretending all along!

That made Javier fume, and the price of his anger was pretty great-the inn was closed next.

Bernadetta obviously realized what was going to happen as well and tried to run upstairs, but how could Javier let her escape? He caught her instantly and pinned her against the couch to yank her skirt off.

"Hey, no, don't. Please do"

That was all Bernadetta could say before she let out a low moan and shut her mouth. It was not that she did not want to finish her sentence-she was just unable to. The feeling of being filled was lethal. It was pleasure and pain combined...

When Javier and Bernadetta cuddled afterward, Javier received a call from his subordinate.

Evanna had previously told him about the academy sponsoring the orphanage, but he had just gone to take a look without making any preparations. Even though he had

brought snacks with him when he had gone there, Florence had given them to him. This time, he wanted to bring something practical.

Of course, money was the most practical of things. With sufficient money, everything else would be readily available. While Javier brought along a check, he bought some snacks at the mart on the way to cheer the children up.

When that was done, Javier appeared at the orphanage once more.

He had not had to register at the gate last time since Florence had been with him, but it was different this time. He was stopped by the security guard inside as soon as he got to the gate — the same security guard who had greeted Florence when they'd left last time.

Javier spotted the name on the guard's tag when he filled in his name to register: Hubert Ford. The name felt familiar, like an antagonist's name in some famous film.

After Javier filled in the guest log, Hubert asked politely, "Florence didn't come with you today?"

Javier shook his head with a smile and added as an afterthought, "I'm not her boyfriend."

He was there for work, not unnecessary drama. After all, Hubert looked very much like he was interested in Florence. Surprisingly, though, he later realized that he had read too much into it, as Hubert replied, "Don't think too much. I grew up in this orphanage too and I treat Florence like my baby sister. I'm just asking for the sake of it, heh!"

Oh? That would be great then. No need for unnecessary trouble.

After Javier exchanged greetings with Hubert, he went inside with the snacks and headed to Constance's office.

He met the director of the orphanage there.

Constance was dressed plainly and had ear-level short hair with some vague silver strands. Even though she was already in her fifties and time had left its mark on her, it had done nothing to conceal her beauty. It was obvious that she must have been a gorgeous woman in her youth.

Constance was carrying a small dog with snow-white fur. The dog was plump and adorable, with a tiny pink flower on its head. In dog lover's terms, this had to be a little princess. Javier could also tell it was a Pomeranian, despite his limited dog-related knowledge.

When they met in the office, Javier brought up the purpose of his visit after mentioning his visit with Florence last time. He said that he empathized with the orphans' pitiful background and had been moved by Constance's wholehearted love and care for them, so he was willing to volunteer his free time and take care of the children on top of making a donation.

In Javier's own words, "I hope I can make the kids feel society's warmth and consider it their family, as well as plant the seed of love in their young selves with my limited abilities, so they know that there are still plenty of people in this world who are willing to love, care for them, and nurture their growth."

His loving speech elicited successive nods from Constance, whose gaze brimmed with admiration.

"Rare. How rare... Young people nowadays are growing impatient and flighty. Thoughtful people like you are really rare.

"As the director of the orphanage, I'm really delighted to meet a loving young man like you. I'm very happy.

"Come on, young man. Let me welcome you on behalf of the orphanage!" Placing the white Pomeranian on the table, Constance got up happily to shake hands with Javier and warmly welcome him as one of the volunteers of the orphanage.

While she did that, the white Pomeranian on the table approached Javier, wagging its tail and rubbing its head against his wrist. It even got up like a human and tapped his arm with its furry little paws, as though it was clapping.

Javier was astonished upon seeing what the dog did. "Gosh, Madam Hellman, is this dog welcoming me as a volunteer at the orphanage? What a smart little dog! No one asked it to do

So!

Constance smiled. "It is quite smart, but it's not welcoming you. It's expressing that it likes you and hopes you can carry it." Ahh... Even so, Javier still liked the dog. Hence, he fulfilled the dog's wish and picked it up in his arms as he stroked its back gently.

The white Pomeranian looked like it was enjoying the treatment, as it closed its eyes and raised its head, looking incredibly relaxed.

It felt nice, and Javier liked the dog a little more. Then, the phone outside the office rang. "Have a seat. I'll go pick up the call," Constance told Javier before she stepped outside to answer the call.

Javier kept stroking the white Pomeranian, and the latter continued enjoying the patting. However, when Constance's footsteps were heard again, the dog struggled in Javier's arms as though it wanted to get down to welcome its owner. It was really quite smart.

Javier crouched down to place it on the floor, and the dog ran outside. It had been walking normally, but it limped on one of its legs all of a sudden and yelped painfully. It sounded like someone had kicked it and stepped on its tail. Javier was surprised. What had happened? He had put it down gently and had not injured it during the process. Why was it suddenly limping and crying in pain now?

Chapter 867 This Is One Dramatic Dog

As Javier was befuddled, Constance rushed in from outside and picked up the white Pomeranian gingerly to carefully check its injured leg.

"Oh, baby, what's the matter? Did you hurt your leg?"

The white Pomeranian whined in pain and began twitching upon hearing Constance's concerned question. This upset Constance so much that she admonished him sternly. "Mr. Kersey, I thought that you were a loving person, but I can't help doubting your motive now.

"I'm skeptical about you taking good care of the kids here when you'd even hit a cute dog!" Javier felt extremely offended. When had he hit the dog? He hurriedly explained, "Madam Hellman, I didn't do anything!"

Constance asked angrily, "You didn't do anything? Why would it suddenly limp now and whine so pathetically? Why did it hurry over to me? Give me a reasonable explanation!" Javier was in distress as well. "How would I know? It was fine when I was carrying it just now, but it wanted to get down on the floor, so I carefully placed it down. It limped out of the blue as it walked and started whining..."

As Javier talked about it, even he found it suspicious. Who else would believe that? It had begun limping while walking...what?!

Needless to say, Constance answered with a scoff, fully expressing her skepticism. "Even the youngest kid here wouldn't believe such an explanation!"

Javier winced. "I know that it sounds kind of hard to believe, but it is the truth..."

Constance waved a hand to stop him. "Alright, your lie is awful, and your character repulses me. You're extremely incorrigible if you hurt an adorable small animal like this one.

"Leave. Our orphanage doesn't need a cruel hypocrite like you. Leave now!" Javier tried explaining again, but Constance would have none of it and even threatened to call

security if he refused to leave. Feeling helpless, Javier could only make his way out. The more he thought about it after leaving the director's office, the more frustrated he felt. What the f*ck had just happened? It had been pretty decent, but the plan had fallen through. Worse even, the culprit was a dog! The thing was, he really had not laid a finger on the white Pomeranian. It was not like the dog was so smart that it knew how to frame him, right? Even if that was the case, the two of them harbored no grudges against one another. It should not have a motive to do so.

It was exasperating. Javier mulled over it as he walked toward the gate. Could he have accidentally hurt the white Pomeranian's leg when he had placed it down? After all, small dogs

bones. Perhaps he had found his action normal, but it had been harmful to the white Pomeranian?

The more Javier wondered, the more possible he thought it was, and he contemplated whether he should go back and tell Constance.

That was when a hushed greeting suddenly came from afar. "Javier!"

Javier did not have to look up to know that it was Russell, one of the orphans in the orphanage, when he noticed how personal that greeting was. As he looked up at the source of the voice, it was who he had expected-Russell. He was holding a sage plant and calling out for him, hiding at a short distance away. He looked like he was hiding something.

Javier went over to the boy and asked, "Why are you being as stealthy as a thief?" Russell looked around nervously and finally said secretively, "Javier, I'm not trying to be a thief. It's just that this orphanage is haunted. It's scary. Can't you see that I'm holding a sage plant to ward off evil?"

Javier was speechless. The orphanage was haunted and he had a sage plant to ward off evil? Very well! In that case, he should not be holding a sage plant. He should be holding a condom. That could ward off evil — and pregnancy! Javier did not even have it in him to mock the boy. He just wanted to leave, but the boy kept a death grip on him. "You've got to believe me. I'm not lying. Liar, liar, pants on fire. This place is really haunted!" Russell's anxious expression did not make it look like he was lying, so Javier asked him what had happened patiently. Instead of answering, Russell hit Javier with the sage plant, causing the latter to snap at him, "What are you doing?!"

"Exorcizing you, in case you're possessed and the ghost hears our conversation," Russell replied in all seriousness.

What the heck? This young child was really superstitious, was he not? After the "exorcism", Russell whispered next to Javier's ear, "I got up to pee last night and saw a

white-haired female ghost in a white dress. She was over two meters tall, and her eyes were green like lightbulbs. It was so scary!”

Russell rambled on, and Javier thought that the child might have seen something wrong, but Russell said that when he had screamed in fear later on and woken the dorm teacher up because of it, the teacher had resigned the very same day.

“This doesn’t make sense...” Javier muttered softly. Even though he had experience with supernatural things, he remained skeptical about divinity and ghosts. He thought that someone was probably pulling a trick.

Florence had mentioned previously that the merging of the new and old orphanage would be happening soon. It could be someone coming over to pull tricks like this to scare them, with the intention of sabotaging this old orphanage. See, one teacher had gotten scared off already.

It did not have to be often. Just two more times and kids like Russell would be scared away. By then, when the new orphanage sent their people to recruit the children and the bureaucracy set up the arrangement, this old orphanage would be done for.

“Oh yeah, I think there’s something else that’s kinda strange about this too.” While Javier was mulling over this, Russell brought up something else. He said, “When you left that day, a stray dog came.

“It had fun with us initially, but it somehow went to play with Madam Hellman and clung to

her after that, ignoring all of us. It’d even bare its teeth and snarl at whoever approached it, just like Clover.”

“Who’s Clover?” Javier asked in confusion.

Russell looked embarrassed right away. “My lover.” Uh, wait, what? How old was he if he had a lover?! “No, no, it was a slip of the tongue. I was too nervous. She’s someone I love...” That was more like it. Javier then gestured to Russell to continue. Russell said, “Clover’s just like that stray dog. Each time snacks are given out, she’s super nice to me and she even says that she wants to marry me and become my wife when she grows up. But after I give her my snacks, she ignores me....”

Russell was still talking about Clover with a long face, obviously holding a grudge against her, but Javier was no longer interested in it. All he had in his mind was the dog. What Russell meant by “strange” was probably that the stray dog was human-like and had gotten closer to Constance by pandering to the kids and forgetting all about them and ignoring them once it had successfully gotten to Constance. This was, at its core, similar to Clover cheating Russell out of his snacks.

A human-like dog that could get up and ask to be carried, limp when it wanted a pity party, and get closer to Constance by playing with the children...Was it even a dog? It was a f*cking drama queen!

Chapter 868 Miss Material Gurl

Javier's suspicion turned to Constance Hellman's white Pomeranian. He turned to the director's office and met the dog's eyes. With its paws on the windowsill, it hoisted itself up to look out of the window.

Seeing the dog cracking a lopsided grin and baring its fangs-beaming as smugly as a teacher's pet who had managed to subdue everyone through the power of being the boss's favorite-made it look both amusing and chilling. It would have been had the dog not caught Javier's gaze, suddenly dropped the smile, and put on a face that seemed to be saying, 'I'm just your average dog! Nothing to see here! And then it feigned-yes, feigned-a yawn as its one last measure to cover up the fact that it had been laughing smugly to itself.

'What. The. Actual. F*ck?!' Javier thundered in his mind. 'B*tch's a natural actress! What's it

instead of being interviewed on a talk show after becoming viral on TikTok?'

In combination with Russell's report, the incident inside the director's office, and what he had just witnessed with his own damn eyes, Javier could reach only one conclusion: This goddamn four-legged liar had fooled him! It was not a conman-it was a con-dog! Corn dog?

No normal dog could possibly exhibit such a high degree of sapience. This was abnormal. But now that Javier thought about it, his powers and his father's words might shed some light on this mystery. Humans were not the only ones experiencing this dramatic change. Animals were subjected to it too.

When a volcano erupts, humans are never the only ones bearing the effects. The Storm was the same too. Regardless of whether it was a calamity or an evolution in disguise, all lives were susceptible to it.

Javier could never live with this. No one had ever made a fool out of him before! No one-and no dog either! It was payback time! "This con-dog is gonna get it from me. Mark my words!" He shoved the snacks in Russell's hands, and the kid immediately ran. The kid had really come to Javier for this, had he not? All that effort to gain his sympathy had been really just so he could get those chips. Still, who was to say he would enjoy his ill-gotten snack? Maybe he would get seduced by Little Miss Clover and, suddenly, the bag of chips would be all hers...

Javier mused over the schemes he could concoct against a dog while he was walking to his car from the orphanage. He came up with a plan as soon as he got in the car and immediately called Herschel to do the dirty work. He drove the car a little farther away from the orphanage before pulling over, reclining as he waited for Herschel to initiate their dog-trolling operation.

Something else happened instead. Someone sent a friend request to him on Messenger. The message said: 'At Edna Monroe's recommendation.'

Well, no mystery there. This had to be the girl the woman had wanted to introduce to him, though he almost hoped whoever this was could treat the start of their conversation with a little less...bot-like formality. It almost made Javier feel like a madame had sent one of her girls to him...

Javier accepted her request nonetheless. Before half a minute had even passed, she began messaging him properly. "Are you Javier?"

Okay. So, she was someone who went straight to the point. So straight to the point that she did not even think she should use words like "hi!" or "sup?"

Javier wanted to reply "yes", but even in his imagination, he could see how robotic and mechanical it would make him look. He should answer her in a more yes-you-are-talking-to-a-human-and-not-a-bot kind of way.

The girl just went ahead. "Aunt Edna claims you're a man with an ocean of charm."

Now that was what Javier wanted to hear-his proudest achievement! If there could only be one thing in history books about him forever, then it would be his amazing ability to charm women! His sweet lips were practically unstoppable! "Not to brag but, yeah, it's pretty much true. My sweet lips are practically unstoppable. There's a man with an ocean of charm right there!" A few minutes passed. For a girl who texted quickly, she sure took quite some time to craft her next answer.

... There was no answer. Javier was baffled. It was not like he had just pulled an impossible bluff! He read back their conversation and realized he had spelled something wrong.

Instead of "charm", he had written "c*m". As in, "My sweet lips are practically unstoppable. There's a man with an ocean of c*m right there!"

Sh*t! F*cking autocorrect – Javier swore that one day, autocorrect would kill a man and make newspaper headlines! And why the hell had his autocorrect picked this word out of so many?!

Now, Javier had no problem botching his possibilities with this lady. He only humored her because it was boring to wait for Herschel to act. But then again, he thought about

the sort of complaints she could make to Edna and could practically hear them in his head already! “Why did you make me talk to that guy, Aunt Edna?! He’s a creep! He just went straight to sexting foreplay...”

Hell, no! That was not the image Javier wanted Edna to have of him! Determined to salvage his reputation, he quickly added, ‘Uh, that’s a typo there. I meant “charm”, not “c*m”.!’

No dice. The other side seemed to have blocked him altogether. However, since the girl had linked her phone number to her Messenger account, he tried to get to her through that. A sincere apology and guarantee later, the young woman finally forgave him and unblocked him.

Javier was about to express his regret a little more when the young woman spoke again, this time confirming Edna’s opinion of the girl’s pragmatism. ‘Look, let’s get straight to the point. I’m not some kind of virgin either,’ she wrote. ‘Got a job? Do you own a house and a car? What’s your financial situation?’

Javier was baffled. This was pragmatism cranked up to eleven! He had never been in a conversation with someone like this, and now he was not even sure how to go on from there. It was like being stopped by a gorgeous lady in broad daylight while he was trying to get some coffee, only for her to drag him to an alley and say, “300 dollars and I’ll let you lick this c*nt!” He would then say, “Naw, I can’t afford that. How about 30?”

The girl would stomp her feet and say, “Sh*t, got me a broke college kid! But whatever. Open

wide!”

Who would enjoy a conversation like that?! Not that Javier had a choice. She had asked some

questions, and it was his job to answer. Uh.

“Yeah. I have a job. I own a car and I have a place to stay and everything.” “Sounds underwhelming, but I’ll take this over broke men inflating their p*nis size over the internet from their parents’ basement. What kind of car? What kind of place?”

He had to give details too? Damn, this girl meant business. “Uh, the car’s a little underwhelming, but it’s green. Climate change, you know? Gotta do what we can to save the only home we got. I technically got it on sale, and it’s actually a secondhand-seventh-hand, to be exact -car, but it works. I mean, when you’re stuck in the traffic, not even a Ferrari could overtake my car.

“As for my place... Well, I live comfortably. It’s 500 square meters, I think The place where I live is bustling, though. It’s fully furnished. Some rooms cost more, and some

rooms cost less. Oh, if you pay an extra 50 bucks, you get a man for a companion. It's like a free gift!" Naturally, Javier got himself blocked once more. Boo-hoo! His sincerity had not been appreciated! "Oh, but I have so much more gibe and jeer to offer, Little Miss Material Gurl!" he moaned to himself. He had only humored that girl for this long because she was someone Edna knew. Was he really interested in her, though? F*ck no. A little while after that, Herschel arrived. Great, time to get started!

Just you wait, you lil' con-dog! You're gonna get it!

Chapter 869 That's Just How Generous I Am! Herschel was dressed quite sharply today. It was the full ensemble-black leather shoes, black slacks, a white collar, and last but not least, the good old oil-slicked hair. The typical look of a high-ranking office worker, just as Javier had requested. Ordering him to get in his car, Javier asked, "You brought all the stuff I told you to?"

"Yo, I would never forget the stuff my boss told me to bring. I've got all the preparations down pat. You can check 'em if you don't trust me," Herschel replied. He fished an ID and some documents out of his leather bag. "See? All the documentation a journalist in the most important room of a news agency would have."

After a round-check and some instructions, Javier sent Herschel on his way to complete his mission. The man was strangely reluctant, though. "Boss, you told me you decided to work in that inn, right? Does that mean, you know, that you're gonna call me 'boss' while you're there?"

Javier had almost forgotten he had mentioned this. It was all part of Evanna's idea to "get him employed"! Since the woman had zero inkling about her husband's real identity and wealth, Javier had fibbed about owning a newly-established inn. It was all just a fib to throw her off his scent, of course, and there was no real substance to it.

"Quit yapping and get moving. Not in the mood to waste precious time on you!" Javier snapped before he booted the man out of his car.

The gatekeeper, Hubert Ford, briefly stopped Herschel to ask about his intent, which gave the man quite the chance to showcase his acting skills. He opened his bag and handed his journalist ID. "Good day! I'm a journalist from the Key News Network, KNN, and I'm here to do a special report. We heard from the local townsfolk about all the good work Mrs. Constance Hellman has been doing for the orphans in her charge. Word is that she cares for them as though they are her own flesh and blood! Such selflessness is an inspiration to us all, especially in our darkest times, so we decided to interview the famous director of the orphanage."

Documents? Check. A report that would drum up the orphanage's reputation? Check! Hubert was not going to stop a boon like that. In fact, he immediately escorted Herschel inside with an abundance of hospitality, including a can of a cold drink and a comfortable seat.

Herschel followed Javier's playbook and gave some noncommittal soundbites about the surprisingly small number of orphans in the building. Finally, he mentioned merging the older building with the new one.

"Our editor-in-chief's directive is clear on this one: I am to direct public opinion in the correct direction. We can't let an orphanage-especially one founded on love, charity, and selflessness, as well as a witness to the history of this area-be buried in unjust prattling and untrue accusations. We cannot let good folks like you and Mrs. Hellman suffer due to baseless, fake claims!" Herschel declared. "Don't worry. This is more than just about the merger. This has become an education issue. An issue about children, those who are blessed with parents and those without parents! This is about what kind of society we wanna be-whether we want to be a society of altruism! The journalists of KNN have a duty to report important, relevant issues to the public. We have a duty to shape the people's sense of justice!"

Herschel almost sounded like the owner of the news agency himself. The authority in his voice was so genuine that Constance could feel tears welling up in her eyes. As she thanked him profusely, Herschel told her to grab "the necessary documents" and got her out of the room.

Herschel shot a glare at the Pomeranian lying languidly on the desk. He snorted and bit the edge of his palm as hard as he could.

The dog stared at him, its head askew and questioning. It seemed to be wondering why this idiot would bite himself. Its inquiry was answered as soon as Herschel yelped at the top of his lungs, "Owww! Stupid dog-why are you-argh! This hurts! Let me go! Let me gooooo!"

When it came to setting someone up, humans would always be infinitely better at it than dogs. This little b*tch thought it could set Javier up, huh? Then Herschel could do the same. It was fair game! This dog might be sapient, but was it capable of human speech? Ha!

Javier was a master of setting people up. He had never lost to a human-let alone to some four -legged tail-wagger. Step aside, con-dog! Humans are just built differently-and Javier was the most different and special of them all!

Javier had zero qualms about the feasibility of his scheme, which was why he waited peacefully in the comfort of his car. An hour later, Herschel emerged from the door, accompanied by Constance and the surfeit of smiles on her lips. He took some detours before finally climbing into Javier's car, announcing, "Done and done!"

"After I screamed my *ss off about being bitten by that damn dog, the director went nuts! She kept apologizing to me. Then, she saw the bitemarks and slapped that four-legged b*tch hard! Ahahahah!" He laughed as he described what had happened. "I told 'em what you said to me, boss. 'No wonder local authorities and the folks around here want

a new orphanage. This dog is a menace! It's a hazard to the orphans! Maybe the orphanage should have been demolished and replaced after all...'

"I didn't manage to kick the dog out of the orphanage because the director tied it to a tree. I didn't know how to convince her to kick the dog out of the place altogether after that, so it stayed there."

Javier was speechless. "Couldn't you just claim you needed to take the dog for some kind of vaccine? Jesus! That way, you could have brought it out of the orphanage and sold it off to some pet store or whatever! You could have made money out of that!" He bemoaned. "Jesus, no wonder you're maidenless. You have sh*t for brains! If I crack your skull and cook the thing inside, its nutritious value will be roughly the same as a piece of cheese rotting under the sun!"

Poor Herschel had not expected to be slapped with a diatribe instead of a compliment, but he could not shake off his regret. Why had he not thought of that?

No. The only reason he seemed stupid...was because his boss was just too good at setting others up! His boss was an insurmountable standard himself!

Javier was not as upset as he might have sounded. The stupid Pomenarian was all tied up now and could hardly cause any more trouble. There, one less problem.

He waited until Herschel left and called Florence. That b*tch had stopped Javier from entering the orphanage last time, let alone given him the chance to study it. To make his way back inside, Javier had to regain Constance's trust. Since Florence was Constance's favorite...

The young woman told him she was still at work and needed half an hour. "How about this?"

"I'll treat you to dinner tonight to thank you for saving me twice out there," she suggested. "We can talk about other things too-oh, I'm kinda busy right now. See ya!"

Javier had already known about Florence's actual job. Her job as a scammer was just her attempt to earn something on the side to provide for the orphans. Well, if she wanted to talk about it during dinner, then Javier would oblige. He was in no rush.

He went home, took a bath, and changed into something presentable instead of his usual "denim jeans + t-shirt + open-toe shoes" combo. His sartorial choice immediately improved his overall look and feel, so much so that Bernadetta remarked, "You used to look like you'd bottom 10 times for 1 buck. Now, you just look like you'd get 10 bucks for jizzing in others. It's an upgrade, I guess." Javier glared at her and tossed her a stack of ten-dollar bills. Bernadetta was upset. They had slept with one another more than 10 times! "And do keep the change. That's how generous I am!"

Chapter 870 I Did Not Hit It! I Did Not!

Florence called half an hour later to tell him where they'd be having dinner. After leaving the inn in Bernadetta's care, he hurried to the venue. Florence had picked a newly-opened Yuzuian restaurant.

Javier had never liked Yuzuian restaurants, but since Florence had invited him, courtesy stopped him from asking the woman to change their meeting venue. He found Florence quickly enough and sat across from her. They placed their orders, and Javier began his performance: He started sighing and doing his best to look forlorn. It intrigued Florence enough to ask what was wrong, and Javier told her about his unfortunate beef with Constance that day. "It's so unfair, man! Why would I bully a dog for no reason?" he moaned.

"I'm sure Aunt Constance misunderstood. You're a knightly, heroic, kind man! How could someone like you possibly get off on hurting a dog? I'm sure Aunt Constance was just too worried about the dog's welfare to think things through. She didn't mean it. I can vouch for her on that!" Florence replied. "Don't worry. We'll visit the orphanage again. I'll talk to her for you!"

Great. Since Florence had offered her companionship, Javier's work was done.

A waitress in a traditional Yuzuian dress waltzed over to them with two plates of lily-shaped, greenish desserts. Javier cut out a small bite. He tasted it and tightened his lips. Tears then began to flow from his eyes. Florence was baffled. "Hey, what's wrong?" "I miss my mom," Javier said, choking back tears. "She never had something this good while she was alive. I miss her... This taste really made me think of her..."

"Hey, hey! It's alright." Florence's heart ached. She had not expected him to be so soft deep inside! She passed him a tissue to wipe his tears away while wondering how good the dessert must have been. Was it truly so good that it had reminded him of his mother?

She took a big chunk and put it in her mouth. Her eyes watered too.

Javier wiped the tears from his eyes. "Hey, are you okay?" Florence choked back on her own tears. "I thought of your mother too! Specifically, why did she have to give birth to an *sshole like you?"

The waitress stepped in. "I, uh, did not expect both of you to be fans of wasabi! I'll be glad to get two more plates—they will be on the house!"

Javier drove Florence to the orphanage after dinner. He kept striking up a conversation, hoping to see if Constance had been experiencing anything strange lately. His companion,

strangely enough, would not say. He could not tell if there was simply nothing there or if she was dodging the question.

Javier was inclined to think the latter was the case. Florence kept staring out of the window with an almost resigned gaze. Still, if she refused to talk, then Javier should not force her to

spill.

The car sped up. They stopped by a supermarket halfway there and bought nearly 50 dollars worth of snacks and junk food before heading to the orphanage's entrance.

Javier peered out of the window and saw no one manning the well-lit guardhouse. He honked, and the guard materialized outside Constance's office before pacing toward the gate. A guard in his 30s and a woman in her 50s? Hmm...Nah. They had probably come across him giving the director a work report or something. While they waited, Florence suddenly spoke up. "You really shouldn't have bought so much."

"C'mon. Seeing kids smile always brightens my day..." - Florence, hello! Great to see you!" Hubert declared enthusiastically, his voice interrupting their conversation. He quickly opened the gate and beamed at her, his grin so wide that it had to be sincere.

Florence nodded and said nothing. She seemed to reserve some...repulsion for the gatekeeper, Javier realized. God knew why, though.

Florence led him to the director's office. No sooner had he stepped inside when he saw his nemesis-that four-legged, *ss-raising, tail-wagging literal b*tch! That con-dog even had a little pink flower pinned to its head, as though it had just been on a trip to a tropical island! Sure, it was tied to one of the table's legs with a rope about 4 to 5 meters long! What kind of "tying up" was this supposed to be?!

Maybe Mr. Herschel, the "journalist" of KNN, needed to learn about the dark sides of society a bit more often. For now, though, his focus should be on earning Constance's trust. Luckily, he had Florence by his side to do all the heavy-lifting.

Florence did her job splendidly. She mentioned that Javier had saved her on the road and how he had rescued her from a terrible tragedy while she had been stuck in a dangerous, dark alley. "He's a heroic knight in shining armor if I've ever seen one! How could someone like that possibly hurt a dog?"

She picked the Pomeranian up and cuddled it, scratching its head with her fingertips. Javier watched the little sh*t enjoying itself, rubbing its head against Florence's well-endowed breasts. B*tch thought this whole place was its cushy wonderland now, did it?! "I'm so sorry for the misunderstanding, Mr. Kersey." Constance apologized sheepishly. "To be honest, I did wonder if you accidentally pressed against its hindleg when you were hugging it. That's why it whimpered, I guess.

"I haven't been in a good state of mind lately either. The new building has really put me on edge, so I guess...I guess I accidentally vented my frustration on you. I'm sorry," she said, her voice almost cracking from sincerity.

Javier quickly appeased her. It felt weird to be getting such a heartfelt apology from a senior citizen who had devoted her life to orphans. She felt like the bigger person there, and that made being the receiver of her admission of guilt really uncomfortable.

Constance was still sure that Javier had somehow "hurt" the damn dog, though, so maybe there was no changing that no matter how hard he tried. Best just admit it and act like it was true

He spied the mocking laughter in the dog's eyes as it cracked its lips, and it looked like it was laughing at him!

"Oh, it's on, you little b*tch. You think you're safe under this roof? I can make sure you get kicked to the lawn, you pest!" Javier thought. With a scheme in mind, he took the dog from Florence's arms and held its belly with one hand, combing the hair on its back with the other.

"You poor little thing. I'm sorry for hurting you accidentally the other day," he cooed. "You alright?"

He sounded so tender and loving that no one would think he was anything other than a dog lover. "See, Aunt Constance? He really likes it!"

Constance smiled, nodding. "You're right. He really likes it." Javier seized the moment and squeezed the dog's belly hard. The Pomeranian squealed before glaring at Javier with flames in its eyes. It then bared its fangs and lurched at him.

Javier tossed the dog aside in feigned shock and horror. "W-What the...I was just combing your hair and petting you! Come on, I didn't even hurt your leg this time! Why is it trying to bite me again?!" He turned to the director. "You saw it, right? I didn't try to hurt it...I didn't hit it! I did not!" "Oh, son, I saw it all!" Constance thundered, her expression stormy. She stormed toward the Pomeranian, lifted it from the floor, and began slapping the dog multiple times while it yowled. "I only brought you in because I couldn't bear to see you alone outside! God, have you learned nothing? You can't bite someone for no reason! That's it-you're staying in the garage!" After saying that, she dragged the dog to the door.