

UNTOUCHABLE

Chapter 411

"You're no worse than Finn Taylor? Don't you think you're thinking too highly of yourself? Don't you know what you've done?"

"What do you know about what I've done? Go on then. Why don't you tell me so we can compare who's more vicious?"

"Fine, but I doubt you'll win against him. If you could beat him, the Larson family would already be under your control, not his."

"Alright, why don't you also tell me about what he's done?"

"When he was six, he left the Taylor family and found a beggar in Chicago. That beggar was an ordinary man off the streets, but Finn Taylor managed to train him into a skilled professional fighter that eventually became his right-hand man. Then, he looked for a woman who was working as a bar hostess at that time. Under his leadership, she opened a huge company that is now listed. He did that when he was just six. What were you doing at six? I bet you were still playing with your toys or crying."

"Six? I was begging at six too. If someone supported me, I wouldn't have landed up in this state."

"You were begging on the streets at the age of six? Do you mean that you lost your family before that?"

"Have you never heard of my family? Well, it's been years, but have you really not heard anything about it? I guess not; it's been more than four decades. How time flies. I can't believe more than 40 years have passed. I was already on the way to succeeding, but Finn Taylor very unfortunately ruined my plans."

"On the way to succeeding? Why can't I tell?"

"The Larson family had four sons, each of whom was able to inherit the family. I didn't have a chance encounter with the youngest son of the family; I set it up and made him fall for me at first sight so that I could marry into the family. I bet he thought that he had met the right one he would spend his life with. Who would've thought that it was only the beginning of his nightmare? It wasn't just his nightmare, but the entire family's as well. Since they had four sons who could inherit the family, I had to get rid of all of them. I was the youngest daughter-in-law of the family, but I also had affairs with the second and third sons. I even deliberately let my husband find out about it so that he would turn against his brothers. And what did that lead to? I could then say that they killed their younger brother. Of course, I would've failed if that was all. I had to drag the eldest son in too."

"As such, I made a pact with the second son and third son to kill my husband. At the same time, I invited the eldest son over so that he would witness the scene. Can you imagine how he felt as he saw his brothers trying to kill each other? As expected, it drew waves in the Larson family, and I formed an alliance with the second son and third son to go against the eldest son."

"Sigh, the Larson family has only themselves to blame for their bad luck. There are two males and two females in the third generation, and as a traditional family, there's no way the two females will end up inheriting the family. It's obvious that one of the two males will eventually helm the family. I never liked the Larson family, so I'll never let my son helm the family. I announced my son giving up his right to the family's inheritance. This meant that Quince Larson became their only choice."

"The Old Master spent so much time and effort to raise Quince Larson, but it's such a pity that he's a useless piece of trash. I even think that he could've killed the Old Master. How interesting. Someone you spent your whole life cultivating turns around and kills you. Don't you think the Larson family is cursed? Don't you think that I've succeeded based on what's happened? Unfortunately, Finn Taylor showed up. Who would've thought that someone the entire city assumed to be a piece of trash actually has such an impressive family background?"

"But that's alright—I can still drag him down now. Do you know who's more vicious between Finn Taylor and me now? He can hold it in, but so can I. There are some things I'm capable of doing that he isn't. Do you think he'd do what I did?"

"You're like the devil's incarnate! Even I wouldn't be able to do those things, much less Finn Taylor. You're really terrifying, and I'm starting to regret working with you. You might very well turn against me any day, and I won't even be able to fight back. Now, I can't help but wonder why I even got interested in you. Were you the one who let the news out to pique my interest?"

"There's no way I'm going to answer that. You can forget about that." Hilary Stone naturally wasn't going to tell the truth, but Gremlin wasn't going to pursue the matter either.

"Alright then. How are we going to collaborate?"

"Well, I'm sticking to what I know—strike within the family and make them fight against each other. I was dealing with the entire Larson family in the past, but we're dealing with only Yvette Larson's family now. I guess our breakthrough will come with Linda James."

"It seems like you have everything planned out. You're really a scary woman. I can't help but fear for Linda James's life."

"Do you pity her? You can tell her everything then. You might save her life."

"Haha, do you think I would? You already know what I'd do. You're just using that to provoke me!"

"Since you're not going, you better shut up and not spout nonsense. We're birds of the same feather. Stop trying to put on an act.. It's disgusting."

Chapter 412

"Have you thought about how you're going to deal with Linda James? Are you going to kill her or kidnap her? She's your sister-in-law. Can you really bear to do that?"

"Why are you saying such things to me? We're all criminals anyway. Even when we die and go to hell, nobody will pity us. You make it seem as though you're so righteous and that I'm the only bad person here to be going against my sister-in-law. Aren't you the same? The Taylor family has been so good to you, but aren't you turning against them too?"

"Stop spouting nonsense and telling me about how Finn Taylor is the abandoned child of the Taylor family. The battle is already over, and the victory has already been determined. Finn Taylor has won—he's the head of the Taylor family and Master Peregrine. You should be loyal to him, but you're going against him. You're no saint either."

Hilary Stone looked down on Gremlin. *'He's just like me, so why does he think he can act so high and mighty in front of me? Nobody is born evil or good, but once a person goes down the wrong path, it's hard to turn back. Don't they say that a person is labeled a bad person as long as they commit one error no matter how many acts of kindness they've done? But there's nothing a sinner can do to redeem themselves. It's just like how a blank piece of paper can never return to its original form after it's been stained. No matter how much you draw over it, the fact remains that the stain is there.'*

Hilary Stone knew full well that there was no way of turning back now. *'I already expected this. How could I ever turn back after getting married to the youngest son and ruining the families of my husband's brothers? I can't possibly bring a dead man back to life. Although I didn't kill him with my own hands, I was the cause of at least two deaths. That's an undeniable fact, and that's only if you count the people who died in my hands. I probably changed the fates of so many more—perhaps the entire Larson family's too! However, I have no regrets. I'm only taking revenge for my own family. The Larson family has to pay for what they did.'*

"Alright, I won't talk about it anymore. I'm no saint either, but why don't you tell me why you bear such a deep-seated grudge against the Larson family? You said that they killed your family. Tell me more."

"Do you take pleasure in someone else's pain? I don't want to think about those memories, so why do you keep bringing them up?"

"Didn't you say that I'm a bad man? That's what a bad man does—dig up your most hurtful past. I'm really doubtful of you and whether you're on my side. Do you know how dangerous this is? How can I tell you my deepest secrets if you're not on my side?"

"You're really vicious."

"Since you know that, why don't you tell me what's going on?"

"Fine. It's been more than 40 years. At that time, the Larson family was still a vassal to the Sanders family. They were still a small and insignificant family, and they escaped from the Sanders family. They were so poor that they couldn't afford to feed themselves. My ancestors had also fled at that time, and the Larson family stole from my family."

"Famine was common in those days, and even a little bit of food could've saved one's life. Do you know how many people they killed just because they stole those rations from us? 16 people—they all starved to death! Although they couldn't have saved all 16 lives, they killed my ancestors by stealing from us!"

"16 people? That's quite a lot of people. I would want to take revenge if I were in your shoes too, so I can understand why you hate them so much. However, I wouldn't be so vicious. Of course, I wouldn't let them lead comfortable lives, but I wouldn't sacrifice my own either. You're acting as though you personally went through that experience."

"You could say that, but I guess that's not exactly true either since I was only four. Hence, I don't remember much from that time. We didn't have much rations to begin with, and it was impossible for the entire family to survive. Eventually, they came to a decision to let two to three people live so as to carry on the family line. As the youngest, I was chosen. Although I was kept fed, I watched my other family members starve to death in front of me. Besides, did you know that we didn't even have enough to feed three people? The other two eventually gave up what they were assigned for my sake."

"Although I was only four, I remember clearly swearing to myself that I would definitely take revenge for my family by breaking the Larson family up. Well, I'm sure we all knew that it was impossible for our whole family to survive on those rations alone.. However, they still counted for something. Why did they have to steal from us?"

Chapter 413

When Hilary Stone began, she had been indifferent. But as she went on, tears fell down her face. She had never wanted to revisit these memories, but Gremlin was intent on making her do so.

She had no other choice; she needed the latter to trust her.

"Well said. I think I might even applaud you. To be honest, the Larson family members are such scumbags! Their whole family should die! Finn Taylor isn't any good himself. Don't they say that one is marked by the company one keeps? It's obvious why they're a family."

"Please don't use idioms on me. You make it sound as though Finn Taylor and Yvette Larson are the good guys while we're the bad guys." Hilary Stone already had tears streaming down her face, but her lips curled up when she heard Gremlin's words. She couldn't help but feel that the man was scolding her. What frightened her even more was that the latter didn't even realize it.

"I'm not scolding us. I'm just using that phrase on Finn Taylor and Yvette Larson. Don't overthink it."

"Alright, it's your turn to tell me why you want to kill Finn Taylor."

"I'm not telling you. You can tell me another of your secrets if you want to know."

"Are you playing with me?"

"No. Did I ever say that I'd tell you my secret? Did you think we were exchanging secrets?"

"So what other secret of mine do you want to know?"

"Is your son part of the Larson family? Earlier, you said that you want the whole family dead, but you're their daughter-in-law and even gave birth to a son for the family. I want to be clear about whether your son is from the Larson family."

"Alright, alright. I'll tell you; he isn't part of the Larson family."

"He isn't?" Gremlin was stunned.

The same went for Quinn Larson. "Mom, what did you say?"

"Of course, you're not. Did you think that I'd give birth to a Larson? I want the whole Larson family to die! Don't you think I'd be an idiot to give them a child?"

"Mom, you're really scary. How many men have you gotten into relationships with?"

"Don't look at me with that gaze. I'm your mom, and I have my own reasons for doing everything. Everyone has the right to lecture me—except you! You're my son. You only have what you have because of me. Without me, you wouldn't be where you are."

"Mom, I can't accept the fact that I'm not a Larson. Who's my biological father then?"

"You don't have to know that."

"No, I must know."

"Then, I'm telling you that I don't know either."

"Mom, what do you mean? Who's my father?"

"What's so strange about that? Don't look at me like that. Did you think your mom was a saint? Of course not. I'm capable of doing anything necessary for my revenge."

"So who's my father? Tell me!"

"At that time, I went to the bar to get myself drunk every night and tried to get into bed with different men. I eventually succeeded in getting myself pregnant, and I stopped visiting the bar after that. I did as the Larson family instructed, and they all thought that you were a Larson. Not a single soul ever suspected that you weren't a Larson. To be honest, I have no idea who your father is since he was just a random man I slept with."

"Mom, I hate you so much! Why did you give birth to me? I'm nothing more than a joke! What do you take me for? Am I just a cat or dog to you? Does my life mean nothing to you?" Quinn Larson couldn't take the sudden news of his birth circumstances.

"Wow, what a good show! I never thought that this would happen in the Larson family too. I really take my hat off to you, Hilary Stone. I thought that I was vicious, but I'm nothing compared to you. You're really a character!"

"Alright, I've already told you my secret. Now, even my son hates my guts. Can you finally tell me yours?"

"Sure, there's nothing much to it. Actually, I was in love with Finn Taylor's grandma. We used to be childhood friends, and we used to pretend to be a married couple when we were younger. I thought that we would grow up and marry each other. My family background wasn't any worse than hers, but Finn Taylor's grandpa made a sudden appearance. At that time, he was the most powerful man in Chicago, so it was obvious I didn't match up to him. Who would've expected them to meet? That was how I was pushed out of the picture, and Frida married Brian Taylor. They looked deeply in love, but I'm sure it was all a sham."

"Love? They married only for the sake of their families. Finn Taylor's grandma should've married me. I entered Chicago's Taylor family and joined Peregrine Hall to get close to her. I'm sure you know about what happened afterward—Finn Taylor's grandparents gave birth to two sons and even had grandchildren."

"Frida only loved her younger grandson and despised her elder grandson, so I followed suit. Of course, Finn Taylor was that elder grandson. Frida wanted to kill Finn Taylor, so I'm carrying out her wishes. Although she's dead and can no longer see this for herself, I have to do this for her. Otherwise, how can I possibly say that I love her? Talking about Finn Taylor's grandpa, I wonder if he's really dead. Everyone says that he is, but I've never seen his corpse.. Neither has anyone ever organized a funeral for him. Isn't it incredulous that nobody held a funeral for the most powerful and influential man in Chicago?"

Chapter 414

"Why don't you help me analyze it? Do you think he's still alive?" Gremlin thought that an outsider would have a more acute judgment, so he asked Hilary Stone for her opinion. He wanted to know if she thought that Brian Taylor was still alive. *'The Taylor family is on the verge of crumbling, and his favorite grandson might even die in this fight. Yet, he's never shown himself. He must be extremely cold-hearted to do that if he's still alive. However, it's impossible that he died just like that without anyone knowing. Someone must've found his body if he died. Even if nobody did, the Taylor family would definitely get some news of his death given how influential they are in the city. It's illogical that we've not found a body or even heard any news about him.'*

"I think he's still alive. He's definitely not dead."

"Not dead?"

"Why? Why do you think he's still alive?"

"It's just my intuition."

"What kind of answer is that? I'm asking you how you know that he's not dead."

"I told you it's intuition. Ask any woman, and she'll tell you that it's her sixth sense. I just think that he's still alive. You can choose to believe me or not. If you don't believe me, then don't ask me about it."

Gremlin was stunned into silence. He knew he would never be able to get through to this woman.

"Forget it. Let's talk about how you intend to trap Linda James."

"Well, that's easy. Her downfall will be her greed. I just have to offer her a chance of getting rich. I'm sure she'll grab the chance and come with me."

"Leave with you? I think you're overestimating yourself. Don't forget that she has a grudge against you."

"What kind of grudge does she have against me? I wasn't the one who did those things to their family. It was the Larson brothers. I've left the family for more than a decade. What kind of grudge could she possibly hold against me? Besides, it's always been the elder three families fighting for the family's inheritance. When has my family ever stepped in? Never. I've never been after power or money. All I want is revenge."

Of course, Hilary Stone's words would fool nobody but herself. Didn't she know best how she was a person?

"Have you thought about all the fuss you'll cause by kidnapping Linda James?"

"Yes. I know that her daughter will immediately send people to look for her. When that time comes, I'll just tell her that I have her mom."

"Tell her? Are you courting death? Do you want Finn Taylor to kill you?"

"Kill me? If he does, his mother-in-law will be done for. How would he know where I've hidden his mother-in-law then? Do you think he'd dare to kill me? He can kill me if he dares to upset his wife. I don't care."

"You're really underestimating Finn Taylor. If he really is like what you said, he wouldn't have gotten to where he is today. He even killed his own grandma. Do you think he wouldn't dare to kill you? Don't think that his mother-in-law means a lot to him. Death means nothing to him."

"What do you mean?"

"It's simple—he won't let you control him, much less because of Linda James. He'll kill you, but he won't kill you with his own hands. He'll get his men to kill you and push all responsibility to them. Then, he'll kill that underling too. That way, he'll be able to answer to his wife and get rid of his annoying mother-in-law at the same time. Don't you think that's the perfect solution?"

"Are you talking about yourself? I don't think Finn Taylor is a person like that."

"You don't believe me? He's been planning his life since he was six. Do you know how much blood he's gotten on his hands to get to where he is today? Do you think that he's ever taken an innocent life? Even if you think so, I don't believe that he's ever done it. People like you and me deserve to die, but he'll

never kill his mother-in-law. You're just a woman. What do you know? A man like Finn Taylor is vicious beyond your imagination to have gotten to where he is."

"You're the vicious one, not Finn Taylor. Do you think he's like you?"

"I'm vicious? If I was, he'd be dead."

"No, you said earlier that you can't kill Finn Taylor because he has his master backing him."

"B*tch! Can you stop talking about his master? The mention of him annoys me."

"I can't stop you from getting angry."

"Fine. If you really want to do it, I'll support you. Go get his mother-in-law here. Let's see if you succeed."

"Hold on. Let's discuss how we're going to split the spoils."

"That's easy. Don't you hate the Larson family? There won't be anyone who can fight against you in the Larson family after Finn Taylor dies. The whole family will be yours."

"Do you think I'm a three-year-old kid? There's nobody who can compare to me in the Larson family apart from Finn Taylor, so it's only natural that the Larson family will be mine. Do you think I'll be able to kill Finn Taylor if even you can't? Why would I want to get involved?"

"What do you mean?"

"I'm not greedy. Let's split the Taylor family's assets 7:3. I'll take 30%; you can have 70%."

"What did you say? How's that not being greedy? What does the Taylor family's assets have anything to do with you?"

"Nothing. So why did you come looking for me? It's not like I sought you out. I've already taken my revenge. Yvette Larson's family is the only one left. I didn't even intend on going against them. I just wanted to live a peaceful life. I could've waited for you to take care of them.. I could've just waited to reap the spoils without doing anything."

Chapter 415

Hilary Stone was right. She had indeed gotten the revenge she wanted since she had almost destroyed the Larson family.

There was no need to interfere in the matter any longer.

Even if she stayed out of it, Gremlin would still deal with Yvette Larson's family. If he succeeded, the Larson family would be done for anyway. Then, she wouldn't even need to lift a finger.

Since that was the case, why would she still butt in? It was obvious that she stood to gain even more from doing so—the Taylor family.

"You're too greedy. Let's do a 9:1 split. You'll get 10%."

"You're so childish—even more so than Finn Taylor. No wonder you couldn't deal with him alone and need my help now. If you don't need my help, say so. I'll leave; there's no need for me to waste my time here with you. If you need my help, we'll do a 7:3 split. Not a single cent less."

"That's impossible. Don't even dream about it."

"Forget it then; I'm leaving. There's no need to discuss this any further." With that, Hilary Stone stood up and left. She didn't even hesitate for a moment.

"Hold on. Fine, 30% it is. You're such a terrifying woman. They say that women are the most brutal, and they're right."

"You better remember what you said today. Be careful that I'll rip you to shreds if you go back on your word."

Gremlin was indeed worried. After all, the woman in front of him had managed to destroy an entire family.

"Oh right, I better remind you that there's a very unremarkable person in Yvette Larson's family that you should watch out for."

"Who's that?"

"Francis Larson."

"Him? Why would I need to be careful of him? I've heard the rumors. Although he's not a matrilocal son-in-law, he's a piece of trash. He's always being scolded by his wife. Didn't you already destroy him?"

"That's just what you see on the surface. He hasn't fought back, but do you think he's a good-for-nothing just because of that? You guys might think so, but I don't."

"Hilary Stone, you better explain yourself. What do you mean? Isn't he a piece of trash?"

"I really don't understand why all of you think that he's a good-for-nothing just because he's done nothing. He's much more capable than any of his brothers. Haven't you ever wondered why I ganged up with the second son and third son of the family to go against the eldest one? Besides, have you ever considered why we've only gone as far as balancing the power even after so many years? We've never been able to secure victory."

Now that Hilary Stone had said so, Gremlin thought that she was right.

"Therefore, you better lure him away when you kidnap his wife. You'll surely fail otherwise."

"Alright, what should I do then?"

"It's quite simple. His weakness is being over-conservative. I'm sure that he'll rush over to put out a fire if the Larson family's old residence is on fire."

"Hilary Stone, are you crazy? Are you asking me to set the whole residence on fire? Do you know how many people I'll offend by doing so?"

"Are you getting scared now? I thought that you weren't afraid of anything."

"Who says I'm afraid? I'm not. I just think that your plan's unfeasible."

"So you're afraid. Why wouldn't it work out? We're both nuts, and only those who are truly crazy would be able to do what we do, so what's there to fear? What can't we do?"

"You're really scary. The more I talk to you, the more afraid I get. Why did I even decide to look for you?"

"Well, you're welcome to leave. I'm sure you don't need my help and can get rid of that family alone. Why do you need me? Of course, you could also learn from me and wait for me to destroy Yvette Larson's family. Then, you'd achieve your goal too."

"Wait for you? I might die before that happens."

"I guess you're still self-aware. Since you know that, you'd better listen to me. We'll put the plan into action tomorrow."

"Ok!"

...

Finn Taylor and Yvette Larson had intended on working out after dinner but could only return home after bumping into Hilary Stone.

Along the way home, the couple bought fried chicken for Linda James. Since she couldn't get out of the house, they would buy her favorite food to appease her at the very least.

Of course, Finn Taylor thought that his wife had bought the chicken for herself, not his mother-in-law. He had never known that the latter liked fried chicken.

However, Finn Taylor was whipped for his wife and would do as she said. Everything she said was correct in his eyes.

'Since Yvette says that her mom likes fried chicken, I'll go get it. Who cares if Linda James really likes it? If Yvette said so, it must be true.'

Yvette Larson liked this about her husband. He had a high EQ and was intelligent. He also knew when to ask the right questions.

When the couple returned home and opened the door to Linda James's room, they realized that she wasn't there!

"Hey, where is she?"

They then spotted Francis Larson at the door. "Dad, don't tell me that you let her out?"

Francis Larson nodded. "That's right. I was the one who let her out. She's your mom. How could you lock her up? You're in no place to do that to her."

"Dad, I know you love Mom, and I know that you mean well, but do you know that you'll hurt her? Do you know how many people are waiting to kidnap her?"

Chapter 416

"Hilary Stone, where are you taking me? Are you lying to me?" Linda James couldn't help but feel uneasy as she sat in Hilary Stone's car.

"Linda, why do you doubt me? I'm not like Franklin or Frederick. Have I ever tried to fight with you for power over the years?"

Linda James gave it some thought. *'She's right.'*

"I have a friend who got into business and needs some help. The pay is quite high, but I told him it doesn't really matter. Think about it. I'm sure you would want someone you can trust to manage your business and be sure that the person will never betray you. I think you're a good choice because you're such a generous person. I told my friend that you'd help him out in exchange for 5% of the company's shares. Will that do?"

"Do you think 5% is too little?"

"Linda, don't think that 5% is a small number. It'll give you a five-figure sum every month!"

"What? Do you mean I'll get at least 10,000 dollars every month?"

"Linda, I'm telling you that the factory is just starting out. It won't be a five-figure sum in the future. It might very well turn into a six or even seven-figure sum!"

"So much?"

"Do you not trust me?"

"Right, right. I trust you. You're not like Franklin or Frederick; they're always trying to gang up against my family. You're different though. I remember that you gave me 500 dollars when I gave birth to Yvette. That was quite a huge sum of money back then."

"There's no need to mention that. It was just 500 dollars; it wasn't much. We are still family after all. Although we always quarrel amongst ourselves, we are still part of the Larson family."

Linda James was completely taken in by Hilary Stone's words. "Are we heading out of the city?"

"Yes, the factory is outside the city. You know that these industrial businesses always produce wastewater, so they aren't allowed to develop within the city."

"Right, right. That's true. I know that they have to be built outside the city. I'm not a fool; I always watch the news. Don't underestimate me."

As Hilary Stone brought her sister-in-law out of the city, Gremlin arrived at the Larson family's old residence.

The Larson family was a traditional family, and the ancestral shrine was housed within the residence.

Gremlin immediately spotted the shrine after pushing the door open and walking in. He was shocked because he hadn't expected the sight. "F*ck! Hilary Stone is such a b*tch! How could she ask me to burn this place down? I'm going to be haunted by ghosts at night if I do so!"

The Larson family was traditional, and so was the Taylor family. As such, Gremlin held great respect toward his ancestors.

He was naturally terrified upon facing the shrine in front of him. *'I'll get struck by lightning if I burn this place down! I'd rather just die!'*

"No way. I can't listen to Hilary Stone. The most I'll do is set the yard on fire. There's no way I'm going to tempt fate by setting the house on fire." As such, Gremlin set fire to only the yard, which didn't have much apart from some useless and worthless tools.

Of course, Finn Taylor had already installed a fire alarm system in the residence, and he was immediately informed of the fire.

He quickly made a call to his wife, informing the latter about the situation.

Yvette Larson was stumped. *'Why would there be a sudden fire there? Nobody even lives there anymore.'*

"Do you know why the fire started?"

"Someone must be up to something. Hurry up and call Dad; we'll go put out the fire together. It isn't very serious, so don't worry about it." Afraid that his wife would get too anxious, Finn Taylor reassured her.

"Alright, we'll go over soon. Be careful."

Yvette Larson then made a call to her father.

"The Larson family's residence is on fire. Let's go put it out." Yvette Larson didn't waste any time and cut to the chase.

"Why would that happen all of a sudden? Don't worry too much about it. Let's go over now. Is Finn there?"

"Yes, he's already there trying to put out the fire. Finn says that the situation isn't too serious and that we don't have to be too worried." She conveyed whatever her husband had told her to her father.

This was a crucial detail, and details often gave away how sincere a person was.

But of course, if one deliberately tried to pick at another's faults, it would be obvious too. For example, if one were to ask someone else to guess what they saw, a normal response would be to reply with the same question. Those who deliberately picked at others' faults, however, would definitely blame the other for not knowing anything.

It was obvious that something was wrong if your mind immediately drifted to that instead of simply asking what the person saw.

Chapter 417

Just as Francis Larson and Yvette Larson were about to arrive at the Larson family's old residence, they each received a text message: "Do you want to save a life or extinguish the fire?"

The pair was still trying to figure the message out when Francis Larson's phone rang. He glanced at the number. *'It looks familiar. I didn't save it, but I'm sure I've seen it before. I can't put my finger on it though.'*

'However, it isn't the time to think about it.' Francis Larson picked up the call. *'Who could be calling me at this time? They probably have something to do with the message.'*

He was greeted by a familiar voice. "Francis, do you know who I am?"

"Hilary Stone, it's you!"

"They all say that the Larson family's eldest son and daughter-in-law are idiots and good-for-nothings, but I've never thought that way. Look, our three families have ganged up against you for so many years, yet we've never gained the high ground. Three families can't even bring one family down, and that was before you guys were even established and well-known. What have you really been up to all these years? You're obviously a very talented and skilled person, so why haven't you shown yourself? What are you doing?"

"Hilary Stone, I don't really understand what you're trying to say. I guess you have my wife. What do you want to do to me, or what do you want from me? Power or money?"

"I used to tell others that Francis Larson was the most impressive among the four brothers. Look, you're so clear-headed, Francis. You know well that a person only ever does things for a few reasons—money, power, and influence. Why don't you make a guess? Which do I want, or do I want them all?"

"Hilary Stone, I already found out about your family background a long time ago. It's true that our family let yours down years ago, and that's why I've never said anything no matter what you've done to the Larson family. Neither have I ever tried to get back at you for that. At that time, many of the other

family members said that it would be easier to just kill you. That way, we'd put a stop to all those rumors. I was the one who saved you and let you off. I did that as atonement for my ancestors' sins. I'm begging you, don't hurt my wife. Return her safely, and you can have whatever you want."

"Really? You'll give me whatever I want? How about Number One Pacific Heights?"

"Sure, as long as you let my wife go."

"Francis Larson, do you think I'm a toddler? You might be smart, but you have no say in the family. Do you think that your words will mean anything after I let your wife go?"

"Of course. My daughter is sitting right beside me. Why don't I make her give you her word?"

"Don't try to play tricks on me. I'm not interested in things like that."

"Tell me what you want then."

"That's simple—a life for a life. You have three choices: you, your daughter, or your son-in-law. I just need one of you to commit suicide; then, I'll let your wife go."

"Hilary Stone, you're inhumane. Can't you say something feasible? Don't you feel guilty saying something like that?"

"Guilty? How interesting. You're the first person to talk about that with me. Do you think I still care about my conscience? I threw that out of the window the moment I got into an affair with your brothers. Don't you know me well enough? I'm a promiscuous woman who doesn't care about her dignity! I've slept with three men."

"Three? Did you really sleep with three? Others may not have realized, but did you think I'd be fooled too?"

"Well, that's interesting. Francis Larson, I never thought that you would see through me."

"What, did you think it would be that difficult? It was obvious from how you didn't allow your son to even try to inherit the family. Did you think I'd be a fool like Franklin and Frederick?"

"They're indeed fools. They don't even understand what's going on even now."

"I think you had better offer us another solution. We're definitely not going to do as you said."

"Why not? If you want your wife safe, you can sacrifice yourself. If you can't, ask your daughter to do it. If she can't do that either, get your son-in-law to do it. How's your relationship with him? Hasn't your daughter already divorced him? You're not a family anymore, are you? I know your wife hates him too. If not for you, your son-in-law would probably be dead by now. If your son-in-law sacrifices himself for her, she might be grateful to him in the future. Why not do one last good deed before dying then?"

Click!

Hilary Stone was about to say something, but the call ended. She was dumbfounded. *'They cut me off?'*

"What's going on? Why do people always hang up on me?"

'Who does Francis Larson think he is? How dare he hang up on me? Doesn't he know the consequences of doing that? His wife will be done for!'

"Dad, why did you hang up on her? Won't Mom be in danger?"

"Don't bother about her. Let's go to the Larson family's residence."

"Can we really just ignore her? Will she really not kill Mom?"

"Don't worry about it. She'll get more arrogant and cocky if we do as she says. Anyway, what can she do if we go against her?"

Yvette Larson couldn't help but feel that her dad was suave, yet she knew that he would definitely pay the price for it after his wife was released. *'He'll probably even be beaten up by Mom!'*

Chapter 418

"Dad, have you thought it through? You'll lead a difficult life in the future if you do that."

"I know, but my life has never been easy. This decision is good for everyone—for you and Finn. We can't just live for ourselves. Do you know how much Finn has suffered?"

For some reason, Yvette Larson couldn't help but feel that her father was behaving differently today. *'He's not as useless as he usually is. He's never been domineering, but he seems like a new person today. It even seems like he was only putting on an act in the past.'*

"Dad, can I ask you a question?"

"Go ahead."

"Finn had his own reasons to keep his identity a secret for the past three years, and even I knew nothing about it. Do you think some people would hide their identities for decades, even from their wife and children?"

"Are you talking about me?"

"That's right. You're acting strangely today. Don't tell me that you've been hiding your own identity too. Why?"

"Well, there's no need to hide anything from you anymore. Do you know why your great-grandpa chose to let you marry Finn Taylor amongst all the other beautiful girls in the family? Do you really think it's because he liked you? I think that the other girls had sweeter tongues and would probably have gained more favor from him. It would make sense if Finn was a piece of trash, but he isn't. Your great-grandpa knew that too, and that's why he definitely would've chosen someone he liked very much—not you."

'Dad is right, so why was I chosen in the end?'

"Have you thought about something else? Your mom would never have agreed to let you marry Finn, so why did she agree to it in the end?"

Yvette Larson realized that there was much more to this than she thought. *'Mom hates Finn and has always targeted him after our marriage. She had even convinced her son-in-law to divorce her daughter, so why had she agreed to the marriage at that time?'*

"Finn is the Taylor family's eldest son and also Master Peregrine. I already knew about this because I'm part of Peregrine Hall too."

'Dad is part of Peregrine Hall?' Yvette Larson was stumped. "Are you serious? Don't lie to me about such a serious matter."

"No, it's the truth. I didn't want to fight with my brothers for the family's inheritance because I've experienced so much more. My name in Peregrine Hall is Thunder. Of course, I had to say that I didn't know Finn. Peregrine Hall is so big, and not everyone gets close to someone as important as Finn. He's the eldest son of the Taylor family, and I'm naturally not on that level."

"But Dad, why did you come back here if you're part of Peregrine Hall? Shouldn't you be in Chicago instead?"

"Well, that will have to do with Finn. Your great-grandpa supported Finn and sent me to Peregrine Hall in hopes that I'd rise up the ranks and become his right-hand man. Unfortunately, he later went missing. Your great-grandpa was forced to return, and I returned with him. Because I wasn't given a role back at home, everyone thought that I was a good-for-nothing."

"That didn't really matter to me. After being in Peregrine Hall, I realized that there were many more men much more impressive than me, and I was indeed like a piece of trash when compared to them. That's why I let others say whatever they wanted about me."

"Dad, you're really blowing my mind today. Never in my life would I have thought that my dad was so amazing!"

"Amazing? If I really were amazing, you wouldn't have gotten to know Finn. Because I wasn't good enough, I wasn't promoted to a position high enough to allow me to get close to the Taylor family. I didn't even get a chance to meet Finn, much less help him. However, who would've thought that he would become my son-in-law?"

"Actually, your great-grandpa told me that he wanted to matchmake you. When I asked more about the man's background and family, your great-grandpa didn't answer me. He simply told me that the man was a powerful man and that the Larson family would do well if you were to marry him. I pretended to be anxious about it, but of course, I didn't dare to refuse his orders. However, I didn't agree to it either. The one who calls the final shots at home is your mom, not me. All I could do was persuade her so that you could eventually get married. I guess my efforts paid off after all. Look at how loving you and Finn are now? If not for my support, do you think you would've made it so far? You better thank me for it."

"So you've been pretending to be a good-for-nothing?"

"Not really; I just didn't put in any effort to prove myself. Other people might think that I'm a piece of trash, but they don't know anything because they haven't experienced the world. There's nothing I can do about that since they judge others based on their own standards."

Yvette Larson now viewed her father in a whole new light.

Chapter 419

"Dad, let me ask you something. If you had managed to make your mark in Peregrine Hall, would you still have returned to San Francisco?"

"Yes, of course."

"Why? You probably would've risen quite high up in ranks in that case. Perhaps you would marry someone there and settle down too. Why would you come back to San Francisco?"

"That's different. You always have to return to your hometown. Did you think that your great-grandpa was a nobody in Peregrine Hall? I'm telling you that he was quite a respected man there, but he returned to his hometown too."

"Dad, did Great-grandpa bring you to Peregrine Hall?"

"Yes, there were many boys in the family at that time, but your great-grandpa eventually chose me to inherit his position in Peregrine Hall."

"How did you get chosen? I think Uncle Francis and Frederick are quite smart. Although I don't really know your youngest brother, I've heard that he was quite acute."

"You're right. Logically speaking, your uncles should've been chosen instead of me. However, your great-grandpa chose me exactly because I'm not as smart as them."

"What do you mean? Did Great-grandpa choose you because you're dumb?"

"Yes, Peregrine Hall is too complicated, and it's hard to even protect yourself there. Some people die even faster just because they pretend to know what's going on. On the contrary, they usually ignore foolish people, and these fools are the ones who last the longest."

"I don't really understand. Can you explain it to me?"

"Just think about it. What kind of people are the most pitiful in this world? The kind that is scheming and pretends to be smart but isn't. If you're truly intelligent, you'll be able to see the moon and get there. But if you're a fool, you won't even be able to see the moonlight. However, the scariest is pretending to be smart. Even though you can see the light, you'll never be able to reach it."

"I get it now. Are you saying that my uncles aren't really that smart but have lofty ambitions?"

"Yes, that's right."

As the pair chatted, they quickly arrived at the Larson family's old residence. The fire had already been extinguished by then, and they were only there to tidy up the loose ends.

"Finn, Mom has been kidnapped."

"By whom? Melanie Taylor?"

Although Melanie Taylor was his enemy, he didn't think that she was capable of doing such a thing. She was too proud to do that. In fact, she didn't even think that he was worthy of being her opponent, much less someone around him—especially Linda James. If Melanie Taylor wanted to, she would've dealt with her when she visited last time. There was no need to wait until now.

"No, it's Hilary Stone."

"Her? Why would she do that?"

"It seems like she kidnapped my mom just as this place was set on fire, so she must have an accomplice. Who do you think that is?" Francis Larson was the one who asked this question.

Yvette Larson had not even thought of that.

"So she has an accomplice. Let me think about it." He racked his brain for an answer, and a name suddenly flashed past his mind—Gremlin!

"Why do you think of him and not Quince Larson?"

"It's exactly because I thought of Quince Larson that I think Gremlin is the culprit."

"What do you mean?"

"Think about it. Didn't Quince Larson already lose? But he managed to rise up again and strike back at us. It's because he had Gremlin's help. Hilary Stone had nothing to do with us, but she's suddenly going against us. It's obvious that someone is fanning the flames. When Yvette and I went out of the city the other day, we ran into Hilary Stone. She seemed to be waiting for someone there. Quince Larson would never meet someone there since only people who aren't from San Francisco would ask to meet outside the city. That leaves us with only Gremlin then."

"Based on what you say, it seems like Gremlin won't be an easy one to deal with unless we get some help from your master."

"There's no way my master will help me. He's already told me to deal with it alone. Otherwise, he will disown me and not allow me to return to Chicago."

"What are you afraid of? Even if your master doesn't want to help, didn't he find two people to help you?"

"Two people?" Finn Taylor was slightly confused by what his father-in-law meant, but he quickly realized that the latter was talking about Lancelot and Guinevere. They had spared his life and had even changed their minds to help him afterward. *'So that's the reason. Master defeated them and forced them to help me.'*

"Hey, you're behaving strangely today, Dad. Why do I feel like you know a lot about me? Besides, I've never told you about things in Chicago. How do you even know about my master, Lancelot, and Guinevere?"

"I'm from Peregrine Hall too; it's just that I'm just a small fly there. I was sent there to protect you. I wanted to work my way up so that I could support you, but I unfortunately failed and had to pack my bags and return to San Francisco."

"What? You were part of Peregrine Hall, and you were even supposed to help me?"

'Everything feels like an illusion. Has the world been turned upside down?'

"It's not just me—there are many more like me. Did you really think that this is just a fight between you and your brother? Do you know how many families are involved?"

Finn Taylor sighed helplessly. *'Everyone has gone mad.'*

So many people were getting involved in the affairs of the Taylor family—a family that he didn't even care about.

Chapter 420

"Dad, I'm asking you a question! Are you really on my side?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Some time ago, I met two young girls. They wanted to help the weaker party in the fight because they felt that they would be able to get some credit for helping the weaker party at their lowest. Helping the stronger party wouldn't help them in any way."

"So you think that I'd think the same way? That I wouldn't get any recognition even if I were to help Donovan Taylor win this battle since he has too many people around him? On the other hand, I'd be rewarded and recognized by the Taylor family if I were to help you, right?"

"I actually do think that you had that intention, and it wasn't just you. Only your own interests matter in life, so there's nothing inherently wrong in thinking that way. In fact, I have to thank all of you. You have actually been of help. It's only because of you guys that the Taylor family doesn't dare to come against me so easily."

"I'm glad you think that way. I was afraid that you'd think of us as useless fools and good-for-nothings. Although we failed and you succeeded, I'm sure we helped you in one way or another. Every single bit

counts, and nobody is absolutely useless. Perhaps you might not have succeeded without even just one of us."

"You're right, Dad. But let's not talk about this; let's think about how to save Mom."

"My recommendation is not to save her."

"Dad, have you thought it through? What will happen to you if Mom hears of this?"

"I've already said this to Yvette, and I don't mind saying it again. I'm sure Gremlin is waiting for us to save her so that they can do something to us. If we do nothing at all, there's nothing they can do either. I don't believe that they'll dare to kill Linda."

"What if they do? You can't use logic to determine what they'll do. They might very well kill Mom."

"No, I'm sure they won't. We don't just have the few of us on our side. There's someone we don't see, but Gremlin will definitely think of them."

'Gremlin...'

"Are you talking about my master?"

"That's right. Maximus Brugel is really not one to be trifled with. In fact, he played a major role in my decision to support you. At that time, we thought that you'd win against your brother because of your master."

"My master is indeed amazing. I've only lived until today because of his help. I bet the Taylor family would've already killed me if not for him."

"And your grandpa. He's even more terrifying than Maximus Brugel, but is he dead or alive?"

"Hey, you know about Grandpa too?"

"Well, everyone has been discussing this behind your back. It's just that nobody would dare to say this explicitly in front of the Taylor family. To be honest, we don't think that your grandpa is dead either. How could someone as powerful as him die without anyone knowing?"

"I won't hide it from you any longer, Dad. I've already sent my men to look for my grandpa, and we've made some progress. But I can't say for sure if we'll be able to find him."

"Tell me more."

"Have you heard of Mars? Not the planet, but a very mysterious place here on Earth."

"Yes, I've heard of it. Rumor has it that it's a prison where nobody walks out of."

"Yes, my master said that it was possible that was where my grandpa is. That's why he hasn't been able to contact us for so many years."

"We've thought about that too, but we could only give that thought up since we couldn't find Mars. Are your men reliable? What if they're actually on your brother's side?"

The Taylor family was a prominent family, and the assets involved could cause one to lose sense of reality. As such, who was to say that people by Finn Taylor's side were truly rooting for him? Francis Larson was simply reminding his son-in-law not to trust others too easily.

"Don't tell anyone I said this, but although the four guardians look like they're on your side, who knows if your brother planted them here? But don't tell anyone I said so."

"Don't worry, Dad. The two men I sent are definitely with me."

"Alright, they should be good if you trust them. Yvette, don't you ask Finn anything about this. Don't forget that you were the one who told your mom about Finn's plans and that she went to look for Melanie Taylor after that." Francis Larson had been enraged when he had first learned of the matter. On the one hand, he hated his wife for doing such a despicable thing. On the other hand, his heart ached for his daughter's immaturity.

Yvette Larson had always been a source of pride for him because of her maturity. Who would've thought that she would reveal such an important secret to her mom?

Everyone knew exactly how Linda James was as a person and what she was capable of. Did Yvette not know that telling her mom a secret was no different from announcing it to the whole world?

"Dad, I was wrong. I won't ask him anything about it this time."

"Ok!"

Just then, Finn Taylor's phone rang.. It was from Hilary Stone.