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realize the cold hard truth of the invisible caste system that governed this society. The whole network was complicated yet interconnected. It would be nearly impossible for me to gather enough evidence to free Macy all by myself.

I thought Ashton would be at one of these two places, but I guessed I was wrong about him again. His call came in while I was sitting in front of Hour Bar like a deflated balloon.

His background was noisy, but his voice was clear, "Where are you?"

"I'm in the office." I dared not tell him where I really was.

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However, I immediately came to regret the lie I just told when his voice became cold and distant. "Since when is your office in such a dump?"

Stunned, I looked up to see my own car plate six feet away from me, and there it was, the unmistakable pair of icy obsidian black eyes which were staring at me.

Uh oh... That explained the noisy background... Oh, I might as well.

At that thought, I walked over and climbed into the passenger seat. As I leaned back against the seat, I puffed out about a gallon of air and asked, "What are you doing here?"

"That should be my question for you," he retorted, sounding displeased.

Ignoring his rhetorical question, I closed my eyes and massaged my temples. "Nick from Harrison Credit said they are only responsible for Fuller Corporation's audit. They want nothing to do with Quinn Corporation."

"Let AC Credit handle it," he replied succinctly and started the car.

I was still confused. "Both companies, or just Quinn Corporation?"

Driving past a traffic light, he looked at me and scoffed, "Do you plan to breach a contract you just signed?"

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Ah, I did just sign a contract with Harrison Credit. So it's only natural that Quinn Corporation's audit is to be handled by AC Credit.

Right then, my shoulders and back were acting up again. I was trying to get comfortable on the seat when I realized we were not heading home. "Where are we going?"

"Dinner."

He had always been cold and distant, so I continued to keep my mouth shut. But as he parked the car in a shopping mall's underground car park, I could not help but ask, "We're having dinner at a shopping mall?"

*Is he taking me shopping before dinner?
That's quite... romantic of him.*

Still not answering any of my questions, we got out of the car and walked into the mall together. I never liked walking next to him. He was tall and handsome but detached, just the right combination that was bound to attract unwanted attention.

Naturally, most of the attention came from women; some were shy and inward, while others stared at him openly.

Marching behind him with my head down, I muttered, "Show off."

Abruptly, he came to a halt, causing me to bump into his back. "Ouch! Why did you stop all of a sudden?"

"Don't space out while walking." He then pulled me into a branded store and ordered, "Pick something nice. We're meeting a few people tonight."

What people?

I froze momentarily as I knew that fashion was really not one of my strong suits.

Seeing that I failed to choose something he considered good enough, he instructed a shopping assistant to come to my rescue.

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After some time, we finally agreed on a floral dress with a beige blazer. I was actually quite satisfied with the attire. In fact, it would be perfect if paired with nice heels.

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Unfortunately, Ashton rejected my request to wear heels. In his own words, pregnant women shouldn't wear high heels.

There was just no winning with him. *But 3cm heels are not tall at all!*

It wasn't until we got back into my car that I realized he took me to the shopping mall just to get an outfit.

"Ashton Fuller!" I pouted my lips and protested as he started the car.

"Yes?" This man was a serious driver. He took a quick glance at me before

his eyes were back on the road.

"I'm mad at you." I wasn't sure why I was irritated, but my anger had to be vented. I thought he was finally being nice to me and going to take me shopping.

The man raised his eyebrows, seeming bemused by me. "What are you mad at?"

What am I mad at? Err...I have no idea either!

I just kept quiet and tried to suppress my frustration. My hand was suddenly enclosed by his. A warm feeling channeled from my hand to my heart.

A dulcet, pleasant voice flowed out of Ashton's mouth as he spoke, "Being emotional is bad for the baby, so don't be angry."

Yeah, right!

Some sweet moments could really last forever. Years later, memories like this one would be the only thing that I could still hold on to.

Our car stopped in front of a lavish and elegantly designed villa. I was befuddled. "So when you said we'd be meeting a few people, you actually meant we're visiting someone?"

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Ashton gestured for me to get out of

the car and handed the car key to the valet parking driver. He then leaned into me and whispered in my ear, "Just meeting a few friends."

Why did he have to make everything so secretive!

I followed him into the villa and saw a well-dressed middle-aged woman welcoming us with a broad beam across her face. "It's been a while, Ashton."

Then, the woman turned to me and smiled politely. "And this must be Mrs. Fuller?"

Ashton nodded and extended his hand

to shake hers. "Good to see you, Ms. Anderson. Sorry that we kept you waiting."

Ms. Anderson? After sizing this woman up, I finally recognized her. She was Nick Harrison's mother, Cameron Anderson!

I wonder what Ashton had in mind taking me here.

After we exchanged some pleasantries, Cameron led us upstairs to where the dining hall was. A few people were already seated at the table. They appeared to be a few middle-aged men and their wives.

Cameron got us all seated and arranged for her helper to bring out the food, after which she turned to all the guests. "Thank you for being here today. It's been a long while since we were able to invite everyone for a gathering like this. So, let's all have a good time, and please make yourselves at home."

"Haha, hold on, Cameron. You have yet to introduce this young couple to us." The voice came from a middle-aged, slightly plump man. Although he said that with a smile, his stately demeanor was apparent.

Cameron laughed. "What's the hurry, Mr. Clinton? This is the young and

successful Mr. Fuller whom I was always telling you about. The lady next to him is his wife, Mrs. Fuller."

The hostess went on to introduce her guests to us one by one. After a round of introduction, it finally dawned on me that this was no ordinary dinner gathering. These were all prominent and powerful people in politics and business.

While we were dining, Cameron mentioned some interesting local news she had come across lately. I wasn't sure if she did that deliberately, as she was now talking about kyanine and how difficult it was for her to source some for medical use.

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According to her, it had not been seen on the market for decades.

Clinton joined in, "Speaking of which, I did come upon a case involving kyanine yesterday. But if you're only after medical use, just a few grams should do."

Cameron shook her head and quickly added, "That's the problem, Mr. Clinton. I was just sharing this with Mrs. Fuller the other day. Bless her, such a nice girl. She actually got a friend of hers to go looking for it. And guess what happened? Her friend's now being locked up at the police station!"

I was stunned for a few seconds and

then realized she was referring to me when she said 'Mrs. Fuller.'

She said we met the other day? And since when were we this close?

I turned to Ashton to gain some clarity, but he was looking at Clinton casually.

Clinton was a clever person. After all, he did not climb all the way to his position by being insensitive. He knew in an instant that Cameron was dropping hints. His weathered eyes, however, were looking for my way when he said, "I didn't know you and Cameron are so close. May I know what's your friend's name so that I can

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check on this? If it's indeed a misunderstanding, it'd be unfair to your friend."

I got up and held out my glass of orange juice toward Clinton and thanked him in my sweetest voice possible, "Thank you so much for your help, Mr. Clinton. Her name is Macy Markle, about my age. I'm pregnant, so I'll toast you with this orange juice instead. Really appreciate your help."

Clinton let out a hearty laugh and said, "I like your attitude. Cheers!"

Phew, it sounds like Macy would be okay after all.