

Surprise 346

Chapter 346 Do You Have 20 Million Dollars?

At that moment, anyone who heard Courtney calling Alexander 'hubby' so flirtatiously would get goosebumps. Yet, she batted her eyes at him with an innocent look on her face. "Don't make things difficult for me, okay?"

All of a sudden, he froze. As he turned to look at her, his eyes were burning with desire. "What did you call me? Say it one more time," he uttered a husky voice.

"First, promise me that you'll move out for the time being."

"Sure," he replied without hesitation because he knew that stalling worked on her every time; he was already familiar with such situations.

Just when he thought it was over, she changed the topic. "I want ice cream."

"Now?"

"Yes. Could you get some for me, hubby?" She batted her eyes again.

His heart stirred after hearing her call him 'hubby' twice. Right then, he was dying to devour her after seeing how she had learned to torment him this way.

"Go get me some ice cream. I'll take a bath and wait for you to come back."

As he thought of her beautiful face after she had taken a bath, his eyes gleamed lustfully. Without demur, he turned and headed to the door. "Wait for me."

Watching as he left, she smiled complacently before changing the password of the digital door lock. Then, she sent him a text and thought to herself, Dear hubby, I guess you won't be coming back home tonight. After that, she turned off her phone.

She had to pack her things that night as she would be going to Oreus early in the morning the next day. He would be a nuisance if he stayed.

Meanwhile, he received a text message just as he reached the ground floor. 'Hubby, I was thinking, why don't we start today since you promised that we would live separately before our wedding? I just changed the door lock's password just in case you give in. I guess you'll have to drive home tonight. Sorry. I love you!'

Then, a gust of cold wind brushed the back of his neck. The enthusiasm he had just a moment ago was gone.

Then, it dawned upon him that she was up to no good every time she called him 'hubby'. Yet, he would forget and fall for her tricks again and again.

After grumbling about it for a moment, he sighed and walked toward his car.

I chose her to be my wife. What else can I do? I guess I'll just have to love her as she is.

—

...

The next day, Courtney drove to Oreus early in the morning.

As soon as Courtney reached Oreus, she bumped into the receptionist of Hostel D'Amour, Mia, who was taking the trash out. There were clinking sounds as Mia threw the broken glass from the dustpan into the bin.

Seeing this, Courtney walked over to Mia.

"Hey, you're Miss Hunter! You came to our hostel before." Mia's eyes brightened up when she saw Courtney.

Nodding, Courtney asked casually, "Why are you throwing so many shattered glass pieces? Did something break?"

Mia's face turned grim when she heard this. "Don't even get me started. The hostel's like an empty shell right now. Almost everything is broken."

Hearing this, Courtney was stunned. "What happened?"

As Mia brought Courtney into the hostel, Courtney noticed that all the windows and glass on the door were gone before she even entered. All the tables and chairs were not where they were supposed to be and were piled up in one corner with missing legs. The once vibrant common area had become empty.

"A group of gangsters turned our shop upside down and took Mr. Oliver away three days ago."

"What?" Courtney's face turned pale. "Did you call the police?"

"No," Mia shook her head and whispered. "Madam won't let us. Besides, she asked me to go home early after cleaning up. But I feel uneasy about all this. Did Mr. Oliver offend someone? Or do they have something on him? Why did they break into our shop and smash our things?"

"Where's Madam?" Courtney glanced at the second floor. "Is she upstairs?"

"Yup."

"I'll go check on her." With that, Courtney ran upstairs to Fiona's room.

Considering how she refused to call the police even when her son was taken away, I wonder how much leverage they have on her.

In the meantime, Fiona was busy packing her things in her room. All of her jewelry was on the desk. She was wearing a mauve knitted dress, and her eyes were still red from crying. Just then, she froze when she saw Courtney and quickly wiped her tears.

"Why are you here?"

"What happened?" Courtney closed the door and went straight to the point. "Who took Oliver away?"

Frowning, Fiona muttered, "Stop asking. It has nothing to do with you. Aren't you getting married to Alexander soon? Go back."

“You’re Alexander’s mother, and Oliver’s his brother. Do you think I could act as if nothing had happened and go back?”

Though Fiona had a mild temper, she was stubborn. After Courtney said this, Fiona kept quiet, as if hoping this could force Courtney to leave.

After calming down, Courtney tried to get Fiona to loosen up. “Madam, how about this? I won’t ask what happened. I’ll do anything to help Oliver. Anything. Just tell me. You have to. He’s like a brother to me.”

Slowly, Fiona lifted her head and stared at Courtney for a long time. Then, Fiona’s eyes welled up with tears.

Moments later, Fiona finally asked, “Can I borrow some money? I’ll use the hostel as a mortgage, and I’ll think of a way to pay you back. I really don’t know what to do right now.”

Upon hearing this, Courtney sighed in relief. “Is this something that can be solved with money? Don’t worry. I’ll think of a way. How much do you need?”

Finding it difficult to reply, Fiona clenched her teeth. Finally, she gritted, “He asked for 20 million, but I only have a million or so, and it’s too late even if I sell the hostel.”

To Courtney, 20 million was not a small amount. Courtney furrowed her brows and squeezed her hands, forcing herself not to ask further, then said, “Okay. I’ll think of something. Don’t worry.”

Courtney didn’t have 20 million dollars, but Alexander did. She trusted that he wouldn’t refuse to help in such a dire situation.

Knowing that Fiona did not want to get involved with him, Courtney comforted her before going downstairs to give him a call. “Hey, I have something to ask you. Are you free?”

“Yup. What is it?”

“Do you have 20 million?” she asked.

Then, there was silence at the other end of the phone. “Yes.”

Immediately, she let out a sigh of relief. “Let me tell you something. I’m at Hostel D’Amour in Oreus, Oliver’s family’s hostel. Something happened here, and they need money urgently. Can you help?”

After a few seconds of silence, he questioned, “Did you make me leave last night so you could go there today?”

“Yes, but that’s not important right now. Just help them first, okay?”

After a long silence, a cold voice sounded. “I’ll ask Josh to pick you up tonight. Their business is none of our business.”

On the other end of the phone, Alexander's voice was extraordinarily calm, which made it hard for Courtney to make out any emotion from him through the phone.

Courtney was stunned for a moment. "Look, Alex, I know I shouldn't even put my nose into this matter, but she is your mother after all, and our friendship with Oliver—"

"You don't need to say any more." Courtney was interrupted before she could even finish her sentence. Alexander's weirdly indifferent and calm voice that came from the phone made Courtney feel as if this matter really had nothing to do with him, and that he really couldn't care less about this.

"There's nothing left to say about this. Since she left the Duncan family twenty years ago, whatever ties she had with us ended. There is no need for me to spend all this effort to help someone who has no relations with me. You should come back as well."

Alexander's words were spoken so easily, as if he was determined not to help.

"I see Oliver as my brother, and yet you are still not willing to help?"

"I only recognize Shay as your brother."

"You..." Courtney was so livid that she couldn't bring herself to say anything further. After a while, she finally managed to continue, "Okay, fine. If you don't help him, I will. I mean, isn't it just 20 million? I'll find a way somehow. I'll solve this without your help."

After speaking, she hung up the phone.

Looking back at the facade of Hostel D'Amour, the anger in her heart began to boil even more.

She had always felt that Alexander was someone with a prickly exterior but a mushy interior. Although his biological mother did do him wrong back then, it was mostly the grievances from a time long passed. Fiona gave birth to him, after all, and she was pregnant with him for ten months. Since there was no real animosity between the two, why couldn't he just do her a favor?

The more Courtney thought about it, the angrier she became.

"Hello? Bill, can you help me check how much working capital there is that I can cash out in the finance department?"

Their conversation went on.

After the call with Bill, she made a few more calls and calculated all the funds she could withdraw. It was almost impossible for the real estate under her name to be cashed out so quickly, so no matter how she calculated, she couldn't fill the crater that was 20 million.

Feeling defeated, Courtney sat downstairs in the lobby of the hostel with a frown on her face.

In the evening, the sound of a car engine came from behind the door of the hostel, and a car with a Melrose license plate stopped right outside.

It was Josh who stepped out of the car.

“Miss Hunter, President Duncan said that it is not easy to drive on the road here at night, and he was worried, so he ordered that I pick you up.”

In the hostel, no matter how Josh persuaded Courtney, she continued to ignore him.

“Miss Hunter, please don’t make it difficult for me. If you don’t come with me, I won’t get to go back as well.”

Irritated, Courtney glared at him impatiently.

“Then don’t. There are so many rooms in the hostel now. But make sure you pay the standard room rate. After all, they don’t keep tabs in this establishment.”

“Uh...”

Josh was embarrassed. “Miss Hunter, President Duncan is only doing this for your own good, so I suggest that you work with him too. He didn’t want to say some things as they might hurt your feelings, but he mentioned that if you are willing to go back, he will spare the other party some face.”

“Spare face?” Courtney frowned. “Why? What did he want to say?”

Josh hesitated for a while, then said cautiously, “President Duncan said that they had not been in contact for 20 years, and the moment they met, a kidnapping just so conveniently happened. He also mentioned that the Duncan Family couldn’t care less about the 20 million, but to think that they thought they were able to get the money by using tricks like this was simply disgusting.”

Courtney’s face darkened as she heard what Josh said. Seconds later, she slapped the table and stood up.

“Is he crazy? Do you think they have nothing else better to do than to deceive people and go through the trouble of kidnapping? Oliver is a student of Public Security University and has a bright future. Does he even need to use this means to deceive anyone?”

Josh didn’t dare to say even half a word while he was being scolded by Courtney. Instead, he only lowered his head and let Courtney ramble on.

President Duncan is too much. Did he really think this extreme method of goading was going to make Miss Hunter come back with me? How did he think it was even possible?

While Josh was just thinking about it, Courtney said solemnly all of a sudden, “I won’t have this. I have to go back and give him a piece of my mind.”

Josh raised his head abruptly—his face was painted with an obvious look of astonishment and bewilderment.

No wonder he is my boss. His trick actually worked!

“The car is at the door. I’ll drive fast. Do you have any luggage? I’ll take it for you.”

“No. I don’t...”

As Courtney was speaking, out of the corner of her eye, she suddenly caught a glimpse of a person's figure on the second floor. When she turned her head, it had already disappeared into the room. Her heart tightened upon that.

She was afraid that someone might have heard their conversation just now.

In the bedroom on the second floor, Fiona was sitting by the desk with the album on it.

She had never been superstitious, but now she regretted it and wondered if her action of taking out her things from the past had caused such misfortune.

Knocking sounds rang on the door, which resounded distinctly in the silent room.

"Fiona, it's me."

"Come in." Fiona lowered her head and wiped away her tears.

After the door opened, Courtney walked in lightly. As if she was afraid of scaring her, Courtney walked with extra caution. "Fiona, are you crying?"

"No." The corners of Fiona's mouth trembled as a reluctant smile was put on. "I cried a lot the last two days. My eyes are all swollen now."

"You heard it, didn't you?" Courtney asked hesitantly. Looking at Fiona's pale complexion, she actually knew the answer without her needing to say anything, and she immediately explained, "Don't get him wrong. Alexander said this on purpose to provoke me to go back. It was definitely not something he meant."

"You don't need to explain." Fiona's tone was light. "It's natural for Alexander to hate me. If it wasn't for me, Jeffrey wouldn't have died. It's me who has brought misfortune to the Duncan family, so it's my own business to save Oliver—even if he were willing to help me, I wouldn't allow him."

Courtney frowned, then changed the conversation.

"Fiona, can you tell me who Oliver offended? And why can't you call the police?"

At the mention of this, Fiona's expression froze, as if she had some difficulties in answering Courtney.

"If we really can't find 20 million, we can only call the police, Fiona." Courtney frowned. "And since Oliver is a top student at the Public Security University, the relevant departments will pay extra attention to this. Compared to us waiting around trying to get the money, I still feel like it's better for us to report this to the cops."

"No." Fiona suddenly became anxious and grabbed Courtney's sleeve. "We can't report this."

"Why not?" Courtney's brows and eyes were full of doubts. "You have to give me a valid reason not to—this is a matter of life and death!"

Fiona looked as if she were wrestling with herself in her mind, and her heavy past was suffocating her; fine beads of sweat rolled down her forehead.

"What could be more important than human life, Fiona? He's Oliver, your son!"

Courtney added, trying to persuade Fiona. She watched as the entanglements in Fiona's eyes gradually turned into intense sadness, and a fountain of tears gushed out.

"Fiona..."

She was at a loss for a moment.

"Come, take a seat." Fiona let go of her hand while chokingly telling her to sit down to talk while wiping away her tears.

"I understand what you're saying, and I've also thought about it. If I can't get the 20 million in the end, I will really have no choice but to call the police, but the person who caught Oliver is a madman. Should he catch wind of this, he won't let Oliver go... I know that for a fact."

"Who is he?" Courtney frowned, feeling as if she was able to smell a rotten breath of the old past.

"Felipe Foster." Fiona almost gritted her teeth when she said his name. "He was the one who had been haunting me like a wretched ghost for more than 30 years. If it wasn't for him, Alexander's father would not have died."

Courtney's face changed.

Chapter 348 Later On, I Got Pregnant

As night fell, only a small lamp on the desk was turned on in the room. The light was very dim, as if it was in response to the atmosphere of this meeting, fading in and out of the distant past.

Fiona put the photo album on the coffee table and pointed to Courtney a black-and-white photo on the first page.

In the photo, a young man and woman were standing side by side. In front of the man was a child that was not even as tall as his knees, and the woman was holding a baby girl in her arms. The baby girl looked as if she had just turned a-month old—she looked almost newly born.

"I was abandoned by my parents as soon as I was born. At that time, Alexander's grandfather and grandmother coincidentally went up the mountain to pray and ended up rescuing me at the entrance of the mountain. After that day, I became the Second Young Lady of the Duncan family and Jeffrey's younger sister. That year, Jeffrey had just turned one year old, which means he was one year older than me."

Scott looked dashing back then—he was also very compatible with his wife. The only regret was that the two never had children, especially since his wife was older than him. Eventually, they finally got a son. The couple was so happy that they went to the mountain to offer a prayer to thank the heavens, but little did they know that they would end up saving a baby on the way there.

They were both precious to the couple; they named them Jeffrey and Fiona Duncan respectively.

"I didn't know I wasn't a child of the Duncan family until I was 17, and no one in the family ever told me."

Looking at the photos of the two growing up page-by-page, Courtney was surprised.

“I’m sure it’s only because they couldn’t tell, Fiona. You and Mr. Duncan looked so much alike.”

When she saw the photo, Fiona’s cold face looked like it had regained some life, and her pale fingertips gently rubbed against the corner of the photo, as if she were trying to touch the past.

No one really knew if it was because they grew up together and were raised in the same family, but though they weren’t brother and sister, Fiona and Jeffrey looked very much alike—so much so that after they had turned five, people would often ask if they were twins since they looked so alike.

Scott and his wife only regarded this as a kind of fate and never explained anything to outsiders. So, until Fiona was almost an adult, she never found out about her history.

At the time, she was like a child who grew up far from any troubles and hardships. Her days were spent with much love and kindness, which was exactly the reason why she wasn’t prepared for the cold harshness of the real world. Subsequently, she fell in love while she was in college, and it was as if the love and kindness that she had always felt was multiplied manyfold; those times were the happiest moments of her life.

She was spoiled by her parents at home; she had her elder brother taking care of her outside; and she had a lover who filled her days with surprises.

“When I was young at that time, I always thought that no one in this world would lie to me. I felt that what I had with him was love, so I gave my everything. He also said that we would get married as soon as we graduated. I really believed him, and I was never afraid that he would go back on his words...”

Speaking of this, Fiona seemed to remember something painful, and her face became even paler.

“Later on, I got pregnant.”

When she heard this sentence, Courtney’s expression froze, and her face was full of astonishment.

“And that child is...”

Fiona looked at her and nodded solemnly.

She had tasted the forbidden fruit for the first time and gotten pregnant unexpectedly. When faced with such an insurmountable mountain of pressure, even if she believed that her man would definitely marry her, she was still anxious and terrified.

So, at that time, Fiona told her brother, Jeffrey, about this.

Jeffrey, who had always treated others like a modest gentleman, actually hit Felipe. The two of them scuffled together, and finally Fiona stopped them by standing in front of Felipe in tears.

Jeffrey immediately dragged her out of the school and told her all about Felipe on the way home. That man was a total liar, and definitely not a graduate student at the school at all. He was just a hooligan who came to hook up with female college students in the name of taking classes.

And the reason why he even chose Fiona in the first place was because he had long known about her identity. In order to be with her, he even broke up with his pregnant fiancée, forcing her to have an abortion.

“Jeffrey had just come back from an exchange abroad at that time. It took some time for him to check Felipe’s background, and when he wanted to tell me, the mistake had already been made.”

On the way home, Jeffrey gave her two solutions to this matter.

The first way was to have an abortion. He would find a way to hide it from his family, get rid of the scumbag, and let her live in the house he rented outside until the whole thing blew over.

“I refused. The silly and naive me still thought Felipe was a good person at that time. I believed that even though he was wrong in the past, he was at least sincere to me. Jeffrey couldn’t do anything about me, so he personally set up a test. If Felipe could pass his test, everything would be fine. He would let everything go, and even plead on our behalf to our parents.”

Jeffrey told Felipe that Fiona was only an adopted daughter of the Duncan family, and she would not be able to get a penny of the family’s fortune in the future, but when they did get married in the future, the family would subsidize their living so that he could treat her well.

As Fiona spoke of this, Courtney saw a self-deprecating smile on her face. It was extremely ironic.

“I thought it was nothing at all at that time, and that he would definitely not mind it. I waited for him with joy. All the while, I waited for him to come home with me to meet my parents. To my dismay, three months later, he had disappeared off the surface of Earth.”

However, three months later, Fiona had received news that Felipe hooked up with the dean’s daughter, and the two went abroad together.

At that time, Fiona was already four months pregnant. Since the pregnancy had stabilized, it was impossible for her to think about an abortion. But she was so heartbroken that she didn’t want to have this child anymore, and she tried her best to get rid of it.

“I went to the hospital, but the hospital said they would not perform the surgery on me if no one would sign the documents for me. Soon after that, I went to a smaller clinic, but Jeffrey broke in and almost tore the entire place down. I told him that my life was over, and that pregnancy out of wedlock was a sin fit to be burned at the cross.”

Fiona lowered her head, her voice dull. “But Jeffrey hugged me and said that he would marry me. Only then did I know that what Jeffrey said to Felipe was not entirely false.”

She was the adopted daughter of the Duncan family and had no blood relationship with Jeffrey.

Jeffrey took her hand and brought her home that night; he kneeled in front of their parents and told them that he was going to marry her.

Their parents were baffled. After all, they had raised this pair of children for nearly 20 years, and now, they said that they wanted to get married—how did any of this make any sense?

“Dad obviously disagreed. He wouldn’t agree no matter what. He lost his temper and was dragged into the bedroom by my mother. I didn’t answer anything when they asked, and did nothing but cry because it was all too embarrassing.”

Fiona’s voice was almost floating in the drowsy room, like a dubbing from an old movie. “Jeffrey said that I was pregnant with his child, and that he had loved me for many years...”

Scott was in the army. He only returned home to inherit the family’s hotel business after changing his career. He still retained the majestic aura from when he was in the military, and he couldn’t accept the words of his son back then. He was so angry that he whipped Jeffrey with a cane the entire night.

Jeffrey was in bed for a month, and a month later, the two got their marriage certificate and hurriedly held the wedding.

“In order to avoid other people’s gossiping, Jeffrey brought me to travel the world for a full year and a half before coming back. We only told the outside world that the child could grow better when I was well-nourished.”

Courtney clenched her fists, unable to imagine the story behind it.

Chapter 349 There Will Be a Way

This story uncovered Alexander’s unknown background—and the only people in the entire world who knew about his background were his biological parents.

Fiona was still talking about the past, her expression filled with regret.

“In the first few years after giving birth to Alexander, I would think of the unbearable past every time I saw him, and I felt sorry for Jeffrey. So in those years, I had been running around outside by myself and rarely came home, so Alexander had always been distant to me; we were alienated. But that was not the reason why I left.”

In fact, her original intention was not to hinder Jeffrey’s bright future, so she waited for a suitable time, and if he met a suitable person, she would take the initiative to file for divorce.

But soon, ten years went by, and he still stood by her side. Jeffrey didn’t change his mind, as if he didn’t care about his own love life at all.

“He loved you,” Courtney couldn’t help but blurt out. “Couldn’t you tell at all?”

Even if they had the status of brother and sister, there was no way he would keep being with her like this for more than ten years just because he couldn’t bear to see her virtue being defiled. Besides true love, there wouldn’t be other reasons.

“How could I possibly not tell?” Fiona’s eyes showed a faint self-mocking look.

“When you love someone, you can’t hide it. Every time I went home, no matter how busy he was, he would always pick me up at the airport or station. My favorite meal was always cooked at home, and even if Alex was not close to me at all, he would still always address me as Mommy.”

“Then why?” Courtney was puzzled.

“At first, it was because I despised myself. Jeffrey was the best man in the world. His temperament, character, and family background were first-class. While me, on the other hand, I gave birth to someone else’s child, so I don’t deserve him.”

Looking sad, Fiona slowly let out a sigh of regret.

“When I finally figured it out later, it was too late.”

Both of them fell quiet.

Though the story seemed to be over, Courtney was very uncomfortable hearing it, and she didn’t dare to ask any more questions and just sat there quietly while looking at the photos in the album. As Fiona was telling her story, they had finally turned to the end of the album. Sitting on the last page was a picture of Fiona holding Jeffrey’s arm as they stood at the top of the mountain. Both of them were smiling very happily, while Jeffrey only kept looking at her with nothing but tenderness in his eyes.

In the lower right corner, there was a gold-imprinted date. Seeing that, Courtney was stunned for a moment. If she remembered correctly, Jeffrey died unexpectedly not long after that day.

As it turned out, it was really as Fiona said—it was too late when she finally figured everything out.

Fiona stroked the old photo and said with a bitter tone, “I remember when this photo was taken. He told me that when Oliver was born, he would take Alex with him when he went back and take a family portrait with Dad.”

But it seemed that the heavens wouldn’t allow even this for our family.

After a long silence, Courtney suddenly thought of something Fiona said when the story began.

“Fiona, do you think Felipe killed Mr. Duncan?”

Hearing this, Fiona clenched her fists. Her clear eyes were instantly blood shot.

“It was him. One year, he got divorced and came back to look for me, but I didn’t go with him. In order to avoid him, I even made up excuses to go up to Mount May. I didn’t know then, but he followed me up the mountain. If Jeffrey hadn’t arrived in time, I would have tried kill myself along with Felipe, but he managed to run away. Unfortunately for Jeffrey, though, his car failed to brake on the way down the mountain; it hit the guardrail and rolled down the cliff—the police report identified that someone had done something to the brakes. I know that nobody other than Felipe would’ve done that.”

“Did you tell the police what happened?”

“Of course I did, but there was no evidence. Besides, Felipe ran away again at that time, and the police couldn’t even find out where he was, so it became a cold case just like that.”

Courtney knew what happened next.

Alexander told Courtney that he was thirteen years old that year. During the summer vacation, he saw a man come to talk to his mother. Later, his mother left with the man, and he followed. He overheard

something about someone being pregnant in their conversation. He didn't understand it at the time, but after his father died and the police checked it, he finally made sense of it all—or so he thought.

Thirteen-year-old Alexander contacted the hospital and found out the fact that his mother was pregnant. He was indignant, so at his father's funeral, he kicked his biological mother out of the house.

After hearing the whole story, all the puzzles were solved. However, at this point, Courtney didn't know what to say.

She originally knew that Fiona had her reasons, but no matter how big it was, she thought it could not compare to the pain Alexander felt from being shunned and ignored by his own mother since he was a child. In fact, she used to stand on Alexander's side and felt that his mother was wrong.

But now, she was feeling sorry for Fiona. Her life had been too unfortunate. She was just a fair lady who was spoiled and pampered like a protected flower. She was deceived and gave birth to a baby, but after two days of happiness, her love was gone, and she was misunderstood by her own son and kicked out of the house by him, leaving her to survive with a child on her own. Courtney couldn't imagine how much suffering she had endured all the while.

"So that man used Alexander's background to threaten you, didn't he?"

Fiona nodded and muttered, "I know you are a good person. I don't want Alexander to know about all these. He has not had a mother by his side and was brought up by his father since he was a child. He had a deep relationship with Jeffrey, so if you let him know that Jeffrey was not his biological father, I don't know how he would take the news. And as for my dad, he is too old, and this information will only do him more harm than good."

"You think so much about others, but what about yourself, or Oliver?" Courtney frowned. "If there is really nothing you can do in the end, would you still not ask them for help? After all, Oliver is the child of you and Mr. Duncan."

Now, Oliver was actually the only bloodline of the Duncan family's generation.

But Courtney felt that in the minds of Fiona and Jeffrey, Alexander's status was no less than that of Oliver. They were two people with very pure hearts, and the contention of the rich and powerful was probably nothing to them; she bet they had never even thought about it before. Otherwise, Jeffrey wouldn't have taken Alexander in as his son in the first place.

"There must be a way."

Fiona pursed her lips, as if she suddenly remembered something. "Yes, indeed. There is a way." Her eyes lit up immediately as she thought of something, and she took Courtney's hand. "Courtney, do me a favor. Go to The Rune Pawnshop at Melrose tomorrow. I have something for Mr. Quinn for valuation."

"The Rune Pawnshop?"

"Yes." Fiona quickly walked to the closet at the end of the bed. She opened the hidden compartment in the closet to bring out an ebony box and opened it in front of Courtney, revealing a pair of jade bangles inside.

“This was given to me by Alex’s grandma. Originally, I wanted to give one to you and another to Oliver’s future wife, but now, I can only give it to you, and you have to sell the other. The market value of this bracelet was 10 million decades ago, and I’m sure it will not be worth less than 15 million now.”

Courtney looked at the transparent bracelets and took them into her hands carefully.

“This was what Alex’s grandma left to you; are you willing to let it go just like this?”

“This is a small price to pay to save a life. I’m sure Alex’s grandma will understand.” Fiona was obviously reluctant to give it up, and instead only pretended not to care. “It’s been in that secret compartment for many years now. If I hadn’t suddenly remembered about it, I would probably forget to bring it with me after I sold the hostel.”

Chapter 350 This Is a Fine Emerald

“Find Mr. Harvey Quinn of The Rune Pawnshop and give him one of these. As long as he sees this jade bracelet, he will definitely be willing to buy it.”

Fiona’s tone was extraordinarily confident.

“Is this Mr. Quinn your friend?”

Fiona shook her head. “He was Jeffrey’s friend, and I’ve only met him a few times. I wore this pair of bracelets when I got married. He came to the wedding and saw it. He borrowed it for valuation and later joked that if we didn’t want it anymore in the future, we could just sell it to him.”

Upon that, Fiona’s tone was full of helplessness and bitterness.

Who would have thought that such a day would come?

Courtney couldn’t refuse, so she accepted the pair of jade bracelets. As the money-raising was urgent, she had to rush back to Melrose overnight.

Fiona told her that Felipe called and said that 20 million must be handed over to the designated location within a week. It had been three days, so she had to make haste to get the money.

When they finally arrived at Melrose, it was already dawn.

Courtney rummaged through the room before she pulled out a safe that was piled up in the innermost utility room. She then took a deep breath and seemed to have finally mustered up her courage before pressing the password to open it.

The crisp beeping sounds were particularly clear in the twilight of the morning sun.

In addition to some deposits and real estate certificates in the safe, there was a necklace placed on these documents.

Courtney took out the necklace and stared at it under the morning light for a long time. The emerald gemstone shone in the sunlight, and the diamonds surrounding the gem were extremely dazzling. No

matter how one looked at it, this necklace was worth more than the pair of bangles Fiona gave her. And this necklace was also the only token that guided her to find Alexander in the first place.

It was held in Courtney's hand like a newborn baby.

She originally wanted to confess everything before getting married, but now, she had to use the necklace for another purpose.

The Rune Pawnshop was located on Lotus Road, among the two rows of ancient buildings built by the Europeans in the last century. It was formerly the largest pawnshop in the area before it was transformed to an antique auction house.

"Miss Hunter, please wait a moment. I just took a picture of what you brought and showed it to Mr. Quinn—he said he would be with you in a while."

"Okay."

Courtney nodded and sat while drinking tea.

She didn't wait for too long; after about ten minutes, a man about 50 years old with a head of graying hair walked in. He was wearing a black coat and a pair of black canvas shoes. He gave out a simple vibe with a face filled with smiles.

"Miss Hunter, right? What is your relationship with the owner of this pair of jade bangles?" Harvey and Courtney were separated by a high coffee table. The staff quickly hurried over to serve them tea.

Courtney looked calm. "She's my fiancé's biological mother."

Harvey was stunned for a moment, and looked at Courtney in surprise. "Are you the fiancée of the eldest Young Master of the Duncan family?"

Harvey's reaction made Courtney a little surprised. The relationship between Courtney and the Duncan family was almost widespread all over Melrose, and no one in the circle didn't know about their relationship. In addition, there was a lot of news circling her, so even if he wasn't from the circle, there were not many people in the business circle that didn't know her

"Please don't be surprised." Harvey seemed to have seen through Courtney's thoughts as he smiled lightly.

"I like to practice meditation, and I'm often not in the city, so I'm not that sensitive about what happens here. But I didn't expect that the eldest Young Master of the Duncan family would get married so soon."

Recently, all the old wealthy people had been getting into eccentric meditation practices. Most of them were just trying to pick up sophisticated hobbies and make themselves seem more impressive, but in fact, only few could really avoid the pleasures of the material world—there were simply too many temptations in the world. After all, who could really let them all go? In the end, they were only just trying to avoid their problems for a while.

Courtney saw through it but still nodded in agreement. After all, she had to ask him for a favor.

"I really fancied this bracelet back then, and the market price is of course higher now after 20 years. Miss Hunter, how about you name your price?"

"Well, Mr. Quinn, don't take offense to what I said, but in fact, I'm not here to sell the bangles."

Courtney carefully studied Harvey's face. "It's just that I know that if I didn't bring out the possession of your old friend, you, a person who is cultivating outside, may not be willing to come to see me—it's really my last resort."

As expected, Harvey's expression changed, and a bit of displeasure floated between his eyebrows.

"But I do have something else that I would like you to take a look at."

Courtney took the box containing the necklace out of the bag and put it on the coffee table between the two of them. "Can you see how much this is worth?"

Harvey glanced at the necklace and couldn't move his eyes away since.

"This is a fine emerald..."

Courtney drank her tea with her head down. Although she didn't understand a thing about gems, she had indeed brought this necklace with her to many jewelry shops at home and abroad while looking for Jordan in the past few years. The design of this necklace itself was custom-made. Therefore, it was a one-of-a-kind design on the market, and there was no way to estimate the design price, but the gems and diamonds inlaid in it were already expensive as they were.

In the middle of the necklace lay a rare emerald, and the platinum necklace was inlaid with eight diamonds, four of which were very rare pink diamonds. Even if they were taken out and sold separately, they would be of high value.

"How much would you like to list this for, Miss Hunter?"

"20 million." Courtney looked at Harvey. "What do you think of this price?"

Harvey was taken aback for a moment. "The price..."

"Do you think that it's too low, Mr. Quinn?"

A necklace that had so many precious stones would never be worth only 20 million. Courtney didn't look like someone who didn't know the goods, so even though Harvey had doubts in his heart, he didn't want to ask further; he didn't expect that she would say it out herself.

"Yes. It's quite low indeed." He nodded. "Miss Hunter, what exactly are you trying to do?"

"I know that The Rune was a pawnshop before, so I wanted to ask if I could use the original method to let me temporarily pawn this necklace to you. I don't want much—just 20 million for a period of one year."

Harvey looked at Courtney, and his gaze gradually became calm. "What if you can't pay it back within a year?"

"Of course, according to the rules, this necklace will belong to you."

Neither humble nor arrogant, Courtney smiled slightly.

After a long time, Mr. Quinn slowly spat out, "Okay."

Pawning this necklace with a one-year period was the best way Courtney could think of at present. In fact, Fiona had a lot of unspoken grievances in the past, but she was unable to tell anyone. Since Alexander was a hot-blooded young man, he could not understand her. So using his things to do this could be regarded as making up for his past mistakes.

However, she knew she still had to pay it back. After all, it was so valuable and was not her own. In fact, she had also figured out a way out. After the matter was settled, she would have time to sell the villa on Lotus Road for 20 million. By then, she would be able to make the money back.

At the president's office of Sunhill Enterprise at noon, Alexander had just returned from a meeting.

"President Duncan, it looks like there will be no problem with the team formation of the acquisition case, and the project can be officially launched after the mid-winter holidays."

Alexander flipped through the documents behind his desk, but he had stayed on the same page for a long time.

"President Duncan?"

All of a sudden, Alexander regained his senses and stood up out of the blue. "Let's go to the military hospital."