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Coolest Girl in Town Chapter 611 - 614

Chapter 611 Exposing the Fraud

The salesperson explained, "Mr. Shaw, this customer accuses us of selling fake jewelry, and she refuses to talk it over with us. We really can't do anything about this."

"Got it. Leave it to me." Tom told the salesperson to stand aside before walking toward the woman. "Madam, I'm the store manager. How about we head for the VIP room for a nice chat over a cup of tea?"

"Who the hell wants to have f*cking tea with you?!" The woman still refused to cooperate, though. "I bought this red jade necklace here three days ago for 1.2 million, only to find out that it was a fake! Do you know how embarrassed I was at the time? How am I gonna show my face in public from now on? You're the store manager, huh? Fine, tell me how you're gonna compensate for this!"

Before anyone realized it, a bunch of reporters had gathered at the entrance while the woman was speaking, broadcasting the scene live right away with their videography equipment.

The customers in the store broke into a discussion as well.

"Red jade is Alexis' trademark product. There couldn't be a mistake here; the necklace has to be their product."

"That's right! I'm here for their red jade as well. And besides, didn't they just win the jewelry design competition using jewelry products that were made from it?"

"Red jade is as hard to come by as rare animals, but Alexis launched a whole series of jewelry products made from it. It's really intriguing to think about how many of these products are genuine!"

"Tsk, tsk, tsk. That's why people are worried while using small companies' products. Saunders Jewelry sells faux jewelry as well, but they put these products on public display with price tags attached, letting their customers decide whether or not to buy them as they

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please. On the other hand, Alexis is using crooked means to force customers into buying fake jewelry!"

"I heard that Alexis and Smith Co. belong to the same owner. Now that I've seen this, I'm gonna have to be careful while doing business with Alexis!"

A troubled expression instantly came over Tom's face when he heard the last comment. Alexis was starting to make profits very soon, so it would be a fatal blow to the jewelry brand if a scandal were to break out at this very moment that Alexis was selling fake jewelry. Moreover, now that even Smith Co. was involved, it was evident how serious the implications could be. After all, the former Shaw's Jewelry Co. had been forced to close down because of such rumors!

"What do we do now?" Tina asked Tom in a whisper.

Shooting a glance at the overbearing woman, he whispered, "Go ask Miss Sinclair for instructions."

Instantly realizing what he meant, Tina stepped aside and called Elise, telling her what had happened.

Elise had been wandering around near Alexis' store all this while. Upon receiving the phone call, she immediately hurried back to the store. Five minutes later, a loud and clear female voice rang from behind the door to the staff's break room. "What a lively scene it is today!" With that, Elise showed up in front of everyone.

Unaware of the truth of her being Alexis' actual owner, the crowd looked around them in confusion. "Who is she?"

"I'm one of Alexis' employees, of course. Didn't I just come out of the room? And besides, Mr. Shaw is my uncle, so why can't I be here?"

Upon hearing Elise's words, Tom was rendered speechless. She calls me her uncle? That's flattering me!

The middle-aged woman ignored Elise, though. Instead, she refused to let Tom off, saying, "I don't have time for your family shenanigans here. Now that you guys have sold a fake product to me, you've got to pay me ten times its selling price as compensation, or else I'm

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gonna go around telling people about this. Let's see who will dare to buy your company's jewelry products after this!"

A hint of a sneer flashed across Elise's eyes when she saw the well-equipped reporters at the entrance. What a cheek she's got, bargaining with us in such a high-sounding tone after she's gotten the reporters here! She's simply trying to appear dignified while acting like a total b*tch!

Hearing the woman's words, Tom had no choice but to turn to Elise for help.

Elise stepped forward unhurriedly. "In that case, please show us the red jade you've bought here as well as the receipt."

Obviously, the woman came well-prepared. Immediately, she took out the jewelry box and receipt, which she had prepared beforehand, slamming them on the table with a loud thud. "I just knew you guys were gonna make an issue of this. Just take a look; both the necklace and the receipt are kept well. Let's see what sort of excuses you're gonna make!"

Tom immediately picked up the receipt and the box containing the red jade necklace, which he then opened before him to take a closer look. In reality, he secretly adjusted the angle to let Elise have a better look at it. On the surface, though, he was still dealing with the woman, saying, "Madam, isn't it unreasonable to demand ten times the product's selling price as compensation? How could you demand 12 million from us after having spent only 1.2 million in total? There's no business in which you can reap such a fat profit at little cost!"

"Be reasonable, you guys! She lost face completely after going around wearing jewelry from your store. It's nice enough of her not to ask you guys to compensate for anything else. Why act so stingy now that she's only asking you for peanuts?"

"That's right! How could you have the nerve to rip her off but not the courage to take responsibility for it? Since you guys dared to sell fake products, you should've expected the consequences you're facing today!"

Having put up with these comments for so long, Tina finally blew her top, unable to restrain herself any longer. "Who told you that we're selling fake jewelry? Do you have any evidence to prove that? Keep on saying that, and I'm gonna sue you for libel!"

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This was Tom's first time seeing Tina being so furious. He hurriedly pulled her toward him to placate her, saying, "Easy, Tina. Don't be mad with such people. Those in the wrong should be the ones who feel uneasy instead."

Just then, however, the middle-aged woman mocked meaningfully, "Ha! If you're not selling fake jewelry, why would you haggle with me here over the amount of damages you have to pay?"

Thanks to her misleading remarks, the atmosphere in the store was thrown into confusion again all at once.

Just then, a curious "Hey!" rang all of a sudden, resounding throughout every corner of the room in the seemingly hopeless situation.

Everyone looked in the voice's direction, only to see Elise holding up the red jade necklace that the woman had brought with her. Studying the necklace with great interest, she said, "Uncle, this part of the red jade feels different to the touch somehow. The other pieces of red jade in the store feel much thicker!" She was referring to the anti-counterfeit label.

"Different?" Tom was startled for a moment. After looking into Elise's eyes, he finally realized what she meant. He said excitedly, "That's right! Alexis' jade products are marked with a special anti-counterfeit label. This piece of jade is different from Alexis' ones; it's not a product of our store at all!"

"How's that possible?!" The middle-aged woman raised her voice all of a sudden. She said confidently, "I've scanned the laser code on the necklace, and it shows that the necklace is Alexis' product. Don't think that I don't know anything!"

Elise's lips curled into a smirk as a flicker of disdain flashed across her eyes. It must have taken them a lot of trouble to even fake the laser code, she thought. "Uncle, with so many people watching, why don't you pick a random piece of red jade in the store and prove it before everyone to convince this woman?" She raised her left eyebrow at Tom.

Tom immediately went to the display cabinet at the center and took a jade bracelet from the corner while getting a UV lamp at the same time. Then, he shone the UV lamp on the anti-counterfeit laser code, ordering the staff, "Turn off the lights!"

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The instant the lights were turned off, a purple “Alexis” logo appeared on the jade bracelet Tom was holding where the anti-counterfeit label was supposed to be. “Look closely, everyone! This is the second anti-counterfeit code custom-made by Alexis. Alexis stands firmly against piracy and counterfeits and will never give copycats any opportunity. Facts speak louder than words, and I believe everyone has made your judgment on which of us is the wronged party here,” Tom said in a sonorous voice while expressing his inner beliefs.

Many of the customers were moved by Tom’s words. This is exactly what jewelry stores lack—a jewelry brand that’s responsible to the public!

“Looks can really be deceptive, huh? To think that this seemingly benign woman is actually a fraudster!”

“If it weren’t for Alexis being able to weather such scrutiny, another conscientious enterprise would’ve been ruined!”

“Could this woman be sent by Alexis’ rival?”

In an instant, everyone immediately directed their criticism at the middle-aged woman.

Coollest Girl in Town Chapter 612

Chapter 612 Kenneth Bailey Made Me Do It

Elise tossed the woman’s red jade necklace onto the glass display counter with a clank. She questioned with a frosty expression, “Who sent you here?!”

“Who sent me here? What do you mean by that? I don’t know what you’re talking about!” The woman lowered her head guiltily. She muttered to herself, “I bought the necklace here. How would I know that it didn’t have any UV anti-counterfeit—”

“Is that so? This jade necklace of yours can’t be equated with our store’s red jade necklace, but it’s good stuff, and it’s made to look indistinguishable from Alexis’ ones inside out. You say you know nothing and that it’s just a coincidence, but how’s that possible?” Elise began to guide the crowd in a tone similar to the woman’s tone of voice just now. “If you insist that this necklace is yours, well, it’s fine. By extorting such a huge amount of money, you’ve at

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least guaranteed yourself a jail sentence of eight to ten years. Uncle, this woman here wants to go to jail, so why not do her the favor?"

"Huh? Oh, right! I just had dinner with the chief of detectives yesterday! I'll call him over now!" Tom took out his phone and pretended to call Jackson, though he was actually calling his aged mother. She was hard of hearing, so she could hardly hear her phone ring nine times out of ten. Even if she did hear her phone ring and answer it, she would only keep repeating, "Huh? What'd you say?" so he wasn't worried about causing any misunderstanding at all. He pretended to say, "Hello, is Captain Gleeman speaking? It's me, Tom. I have a—"

"Wait a minute!" Frightened at last, the woman lunged at Tom in an attempt to snatch his phone.

However, Tom stepped back and dodged her.

"Fessing up at last, huh?" Elise taunted.

The woman fidgeted with her fingers, looking as though she was caught on the horns of a dilemma. After turning to look at the reporters and the video cameras at the entrance, she tried to negotiate with Elise, saying ingratiatingly, "This isn't a good place to talk. Can we talk it over in the break room?"

"Huh? But I remember that you just turned down our staff's invitation, and now... Your behavior keeps changing from one moment to the next. Don't tell me you're trying to stall for time." Elise purposely wore an innocent look on her face. "I think we'd better call the police."

"No, no, no! Please, don't do that... I'll confess! I'll confess to everything, okay?" The woman heaved a long sigh. "Will you not call the police if I tell you everything?"

"No, we won't!" Elise forced a bright smile on her face. Well, whether the others will call the police or not is none of our business.

"Okay, I'll fess up." The woman hemmed and hawed. "It's true that the red jade isn't mine. I-It's..."

Just when she was about to tell the truth, another commotion broke out at the door.

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“Here comes somebody from Smith Co.!”

“It’s Kenneth Bailey! To think that he would actually come in person! Alexis and Smith Co. belong to the same owner indeed.”

Amid the crowd’s discussion, the dark-suited bodyguards cleared a path for Kenneth, who then strode in with vigorous strides while wearing a pair of sunglasses. He was dressed in a black leather jacket and black leather pants, but only his gloves were spotless white. “I heard somebody’s doubting Smith Co.’s credibility, so I came here especially to see what the big deal is about,” he said while walking all the way up to Elise and the others. Then, he took off his sunglasses and darted his eyes around the whole store with a poker face.

Smith Co. was a mysterious organization in the first place, and its huge industrial chain lent Kenneth an aura that allowed no one to challenge him. Therefore, the instant he finished his sentence, the store turned as silent as a grave.

A moment later, the woman who had been on the verge of a breakdown just now suddenly pointed at him, shouting, “It was him! It was Kenneth Bailey who ordered me to come and make trouble!”

The instant she said that, everyone at the scene immediately held their breaths. They couldn’t help worrying for the woman, not because it surprised them that the incident was Kenneth’s doing, but because they were impressed by the woman’s courage. Even if Kenneth really were the culprit behind this, was she totally unafraid of what Smith Co. was capable of, exposing him in public like this? This woman probably has a death wish.

Shocked, Tom and Tina involuntarily shifted their gazes to Kenneth.

Despite the rumors about Alexis and Smith Co. belonging to the same owner, they knew that the two companies never had any business dealings with each other; it was Kenneth who had been helping them for no reason from the very start.

However, no friendships would last forever in the field of business, so who would know if Kenneth had shown goodwill toward them at the jewelry design competition for the purpose of stabbing them in the back today?

Even though Kenneth appeared to be vying for Elise’s affections, Tom knew as a man that in reality, a top dog who had achieved quick success in a short time like Kenneth didn’t really

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regard women or love as important. Perhaps he had noticed the link between Elise and Alexis, so who knew if he had approached them in the beginning to win their trust? Gods were unattainable, unfathomable, and so were men who were as mysterious as devils.

Kenneth's impassive gaze swept across everyone at the scene before eventually resting quietly on Elise. "Seems like everyone believes her story, huh?" He didn't care a damn about what everybody else might think; he only cared about what Elise would think of it.

Almost instantly, Elise understood tacitly that Kenneth's question was directed at her. In reality, she didn't believe Kenneth would use such despicable means against anyone. If someone whose mind even she couldn't read really wanted to set anyone up, they'd never give that person the opportunity to bite back at them.

However, the middle-aged woman wouldn't let Kenneth off. She complained tearfully, "Mr. Bailey, it was for your sake that I risked getting into such a predicament. You can't leave me in the lurch!"

Kenneth's chilly eyes gleamed as he slowly turned to look at the woman.

Seeing the man's dark eyes, the woman suddenly felt a chill run up her spine. Feeling guilty, she hurriedly lowered her head.

Just then, an informed customer muttered in a low voice, "What bad luck it is for Alexis. They were plagiarized during the jewelry design competition, and now they're being set up and framed for selling fake jewelry. Isn't it too much of a coincidence that Kenneth was present on both occasions?"

"Doing business is like fighting a war. Who knows if Kenneth has turned against Alexis because Alexis and Smith Co. had a falling-out or something?"

"Alexis is so tactless. Being able to collaborate with Smith Co. is equal to having a protector, so what makes them so dumb as to set themselves up against the company? Now look at the trouble they've gotten themselves into. I guess such incidents will only be a dime a dozen in the future!"

Everyone had witnessed how that woman had fought back just now, so now that she had spoken against Kenneth, the onlookers naturally wouldn't doubt the veracity of her story. Although she didn't manage to bring Alexis down, she had pulled the rug out from under his

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feet by successfully dragging Kenneth through the mire. At this point, it'd be meaningless no matter whether Kenneth defended himself or not. Unless he could produce evidence on the spot to prove that the woman had been hired by somebody else, there was no better way to clear this Prince Charming's name.

Kenneth's eyes lowered slightly. Lost in his own thoughts, he was silently wondering if he should acknowledge the woman's false accusations directly and then find out the truth later.

Just then, however, Elise made a bold decision. She said loudly, "We've given you a chance, but you don't cherish it, don't you?!"

Her words instantly drew everyone's attention. Then, they heard Elise continue, "Smith Co. has been in talks with my uncle to acquire Alexis for a long time. What reason has he to harm his own property?!"

Coolest Girl in Town Chapter 613

Chapter 613 A Doormat

Sorry, Alexander, but I can only prepare another gift for you later. At the moment, this is the only way to fix the urgent situation. Kenneth has done too many things for me, so let's take this as a favor in return, thought Elise to herself.

Acquiring Alexis? Tom was stunned; Elise had never told him before that she was going to sell Alexis. So Kenneth is being so kind to us because he really values our potential? Somehow, at the thought of this, he looked at Kenneth with a hint of hostility in his eyes. What an opportunistic profiteer!

On the other hand, Kenneth looked somewhat stunned, and his brows furrowed. Ever since he found out that Elise was planning to found Alexis, he had been aware that the jewelry brand was a gift for "Alexander." As he was well aware of her intentions, he defended Alexis at all costs—even if it caused him to be accused of "shielding" the jewelry brand. However, he didn't expect that Elise would be willing to present to him with both hands the gift she had intended for Alexander in order to help prove his innocence. Could this mean that Kenneth Bailey's identity already has a place in Elise's heart?

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"That's nonsense!" The woman's eyes widened in surprise. She pointed at Elise, saying, "Smith Co. is so powerful that it can do whatever it wants. Why would they want to buy an old store on the brink of bankruptcy like yours? This doesn't make sense at all!"

Upon hearing this, Elise became even more certain that the woman wasn't sent by Kenneth. The culprit's even able to find out that Alexis is on the brink of bankruptcy, huh? Seems like they've predicted beforehand that we'll try to clear Kenneth of the accusation by claiming that Alexis is going to merge with Smith Co., which is why they've blocked this escape route in advance, she thought. She could be certain that Kenneth had nothing to do with this, but for a moment, she had trouble coming up with a retort to what the woman had said. Indeed, no businessman would do business at a loss.

"You're right." Kenneth's magnetic voice resounded throughout the whole room just then. "Both the present Alexis and the former Shaw's Jewelry Co. are of little value. What I truly have eyes on is Mr. Shaw's niece, a graceful and fine young lady whom I desire to be my bride, which is why I'm spending big bucks to please her. Anybody here has any objection to that?"

No one at the scene dared to refute him. Well, what he said does make sense.

"How is that possible?!" yelled the middle-aged woman. "The person you like isn't this lady surnamed Shaw at all! It's said in the magazine that you fancy Yoona Anderson, the Anderson Family's younger daughter, and that you even went to the Anderson Residence personally to ask for her hand in marriage!"

"Sorry for interrupting." Elise purposely put on a cheeky and haughty demeanor. She continued nonchalantly, "But I think I have to introduce myself. I am Yoona Anderson. Thank you, everyone."

"Y-You..." The woman was at a loss for a retort.

"I what?" Elise raised an eyebrow and narrowed her eyes with a cheeky grin. "I look familiar, huh? You've seen me on TV, and I don't carry the surname Anderson on TV. Is that what you're trying to say?"

"That's right!" the woman replied with certainty at once. The next moment, however, she was startled. Why is she so well-meaning as to blow her own cover? She smacked her lips. When

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she looked at Elise again, she noticed the malice that lay behind the latter's smile, which instantly gave her the creeps.

Then, she watched as Elise's rosebud lips parted again. "Didn't anyone ever tell you that Yoona Anderson went missing as a child and grew up under the identity of Elise Sinclair? Elise Sinclair and I are one and the same. Got it?"

Got it? I got confused, okay?! "J-Just who the hell are you?" The woman looked at Elise in despair. Just who is this woman? Is she Tom Shaw's niece, the Anderson Family's daughter, Elise Sinclair, or some other woman Kenneth Bailey fancies?

"It doesn't matter who I am. In any case, your scheme to play us off against one another has failed. If you've got anything to say, say it to the police," Elise said while taking out her cell phone. Then, she dialed a number, saying, "I know you're nearby. Come in. I've got you another person on your list of achievements." With that, she hung up.

Half a minute later, Jackson pushed past the crowd and entered the store, looking at Elise with loathing.

"That's very quick of you." Elise was somewhat surprised to see the man. She teased, "Captain Gleeman, you've been tailing me more and more closely now."

"Get straight to the point!" Jackson replied grumpily with a sullen expression.

"This woman tried to slander us and extort money from our store using counterfeit jade. Captain Gleeman, please take her back to the police department for interrogation," Elise replied.

Jackson turned to glance at the woman. Then, without another word, he took out his handcuffs and frogmarched her away. As he walked out of the store, he grew more and more irritable. How did I, the chief of detectives, end up becoming Elise's exclusive errand boy now? Doesn't that make me a doormat?! Well, whoever likes this job can do it. I'm not coming here anymore. This is so damn frustrating! "Hurry up!" he urged the woman fiercely.

Frightened, the woman held her breath in fear while skipping and running ahead of him.

As soon as they left, there was nothing more to watch, and the customers in the store dispersed. Not only that, but those customers who had originally been on the sidelines

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immediately bought jewelry from Alexis by card as Smith Co.'s relationship with Alexis was now established.

While Tom and Tina took care of the customers at the front, Elise and Kenneth entered the reception room together.

Elise heaved a heavy sigh as soon as she sat down. At first, she had wanted to keep her distance from Kenneth, but today's incident had made their relationship even murkier. Now, in the eyes of outsiders, her relationship with Kenneth had become too tangled to unravel. Furthermore, Alexander had yet to visit Alexis himself.

"You don't look very happy, Miss Sinclair. What's the matter?" Kenneth asked in a soft voice.

Elise raised her eyes without the slightest hint of a smile in them. "I've paid off what I owed you."

Kenneth lowered his eyes with a half-smile. "There's no way you could pay off debts of gratitude."

Elise averted her eyes without refuting him. How could she not understand this? But now that she already had Alexander, she didn't want to give anyone else a chance, nor would she give herself a chance either. However, it seemed that things weren't going according to her will.

"Let's talk about something else." Kenneth diverted the subject. "Seems like somebody wants to play us off against each other, Miss Sinclair. But it's too bad that they've underestimated our IQ."

"Uh-huh," Elise mumbled impassively. "Perhaps this is directed at me, and you're only being dragged into this. Now that we're in the same boat, we have to work together."

"So you mean that I can come to you anytime from now on?" Kenneth resumed his flippant tone of voice.

Elise turned to look at him, and her eyes narrowed in a sly smile. "Yeah, you can. Not only can you come to me, but you can also go to my husband."

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"What do you mean?" Kenneth had a bad feeling.

"I'm ready to introduce you to Alexander." Elise was certain that she was incapable of dealing with Kenneth at the moment. Well, since that's the case, let's leave this guy to Alexander.

Kenneth replied, "...I don't want to meet him."

"That isn't up to you!" Elise slapped her thigh and stood up before walking out of the room. "It's decided!" What a genius I am! she thought.

Coollest Girl in Town Chapter 614

Chapter 614 What a Dumb Thief!

Meanwhile, at the Saunders Residence...

Today was the last day before Edwin had to pay off his debts, but he only had less than 600,000 in his bank account, with the divorce compensation offered by David included. In other words, he was still 1.9 million short. Early that morning, he quietly came downstairs carrying a big traveling bag before the servants even got up.

However, just as he reached the gate, Mrs. Woods suddenly called out to him. "Are you leaving the house so early in the morning, Master Edwin?"

Edwin nervously gulped a mouthful of saliva before turning around to face her with a forced smile. "Yeah. I enrolled in a postgraduate course, so I have to go to college early to do some studying. I've got to improve myself so that I can take better care of Nana in the future."

For a second, Mrs. Woods' eyes rested on the big traveling bag Edwin was carrying. Then, she replied meaningfully, "I see. That's very ambitious of you. In that case, come home early this evening. I'll make you something delicious and nourishing."

"Thank you, Mrs. Woods. I will." Edwin gave her a polite smile. Then, he turned around, opened the gate, and walked out in haste.

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However, no sooner had he left than Mrs. Woods headed for David's room upstairs...

As soon as the pawn shop opened for business at 8:00AM sharp, Edwin rushed in. "Sir, please take a look at how much these things are worth!" he said while putting the traveling bag on the counter. Then, he unzipped the bag, revealing its contents.

The pawnbroker had a discerning eye for gemstones, so he noticed at a glance that the jade ornament in the traveling bag was out of the ordinary. He asked in surprise, "Are you serious about selling these?"

Edwin replied with a straight face, "Yes, I am! To tell you the truth, my company has run into some financial difficulties, so I have no choice but to pawn these family heirlooms. You've got to offer me a reasonable price!"

Upon hearing Edwin say so, the pawnbroker could no longer restrain himself. Immediately, he picked up the jade ornament and examined it carefully, saying, "Such a large ornament must've been made from fine-quality materials. Just look at how translucent and vibrantly-colored it is. What a top-quality piece of ornament..."

Edwin didn't have time to listen to the pawnbroker's babble, though. Cutting to the chase, he said, "Just tell me how much you can offer me for this."

Upon hearing his words, the pawnbroker hurriedly put the ornament back into the traveling bag. A stone of such weight and quality has to be worth at least 1 million, even if it's just freshly out of the quarry. And with such extremely fine craftsmanship and carving techniques, the ornament has to be worth at least ten times greater than that! he thought. He rubbed his chin while staring at Edwin with shrewd eyes, asking cautiously, "Is this really an heirloom of your family? It'd better not be stolen from somewhere else. I don't want to get in trouble for this!"

Feeling guilty, Edwin gave a gulp, but he still put on a dignified front. Raising his voice deliberately, he replied, "How could you say something like that? Do I look like I don't deserve to be in possession of a family heirloom? I'm telling you, even if you take this thing, we've got to sign an agreement so that you won't sell it within the next five years. I'm gonna come back to redeem my pawn!"

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The pawnbroker let his guard down at once. With a nod, he raised his hand and gave Edwin an “OK” gesture. “This is the price. I’ve got to take risks, after all. If I offer you a price higher than this, and you don’t come back to redeem it later, I won’t be able to sell it.”

Edwin protested, “300,000? That’s too low an offer!” He had walked around the Saunders Residence before settling on this ornament. 300,000 plus his savings were nowhere near enough to pay off his debts!

Upon hearing Edwin’s words, the pawnbroker nearly laughed out loud. Turns out this guy has no idea what this is really worth, eh? Seems like this thing is indeed not some family heirloom, but now that he’s presented it to me, how can I not take advantage of it? “An offer of 300,000 is high enough. I reckon you’ve done some asking around before coming here. Just go somewhere else and ask the others. If there’s anyone who offers a price higher than this, I’ll quit this trade!” he said confidently while beating his chest.

“Can’t you raise the offer a bit more?!” Edwin argued irritably.

The pawnbroker paced back and forth, pretending as though he could do nothing about it. “No, I can’t offer any higher than that.”

Feeling that the pawnbroker was deliberately beating down the price, Edwin picked up the jade ornament and pretended to leave. “In that case, I’m not gonna sell it!”

“Hey! Wait a minute!” The pawnbroker hurriedly stopped Edwin. He advised him in a kindly manner, “How could you be so impulsive, young man? I’m still open for negotiations...”

Edwin narrowed his eyes. As expected, businessmen are all wily old foxes. “It’s 400,000 or no deal!” He pulled a long face in a fiercely determined manner.

“Well... you’ve got to let me make some money, right? I can’t offer you more than 380,000!” the pawnbroker replied with a sincere expression.

Edwin agreed at once. “Okay, but I want to have the money transferred right now!”

“Okay, no problem! I’ll transfer the money to you right now!” The pawnbroker was overjoyed. This stuff could’ve been sold for millions, and yet I got it at the price of 380,000! What a dumb thief!

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Soon, the money was transferred to Edwin's bank account. Looking at the balance on his account with satisfaction, he immediately put his hand on the pawnbroker's shoulder and started to get all buddy-buddy with him. "You're quite an accommodating person, only that you just had to insist on haggling over the prices. I consider us friends as of today. If I come here with good stuff again next time, you've got to give me a more reasonable offer. Don't behave like you did today again!"

"Sure, no problem..." The pawnbroker was grinning from ear to ear. To think that there's really someone who's dumb enough to thank the person who duped him! Well, since he wants to be made a dupe, I'm more than happy to grant his wish. After all, who would turn away a golden goose, right? "Well, the moment I saw you, I could tell at a glance that you're a man with a promising future. I believe it won't take long before you rise high in the world..." He heaped flattery on Edwin while seeing him all the way to the door.

However, as soon as they reached the door, Edwin saw David standing by the roadside with Mrs. Woods and a few bodyguards; he was glowering at him in a towering rage. "Dad, why are you—"

"I shouldn't be here, huh?!" David questioned viciously. "How much did you pawn that jade ornament for? How much of it are you gonna spend on Nana?"

Edwin's face turned ashen at once. Unconsciously, he relaxed his grip, dropping his traveling bag to the ground with a thud. David found out about it! How did he find out about it?! "I... I..." He trembled all over. For a long time, he was unable to say a complete sentence.

David ground his teeth in exasperation. He chided, "Edwin, oh, Edwin! Did I provide you with a comfortable life only for you to bite the hand that fed you? I kept my guard up against outsiders at all times, but I never imagined a thief had been living inside my house!"

Edwin clenched his fists as words failed him.

"Enough of this. You don't have to say anything; just go back and sign the divorce papers. We Saunderses have been kind enough toward you. Let's not get in touch anymore from now on," David said before turning around to leave.

Edwin caught up to David and slumped to his knees with a thud. Clutching the man's trouser leg, he begged for mercy, saying, "Dad, I was wrong! I'm really sorry for my mistakes! Please

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give me one last chance! I only stole from our family because I had no other choice. I promise that I won't do so anymore!"

"Your promise is worthless to me!" David kicked Edwin away, though. "I'm giving you two options right now. Either I'll send you to the police department and have you sentenced to prison for the rest of your life, or you'll divorce Nana and leave our family with nothing to your name. Make the choice for yourself!"

"No... I'm not gonna make any choices. I can't; who's gonna take care of Nana if I'm gone?! Dad, you can't treat me like this!" Edwin burst into tears in a panic.

However, the more David looked at Edwin, the more he found the latter an eyesore. He took out his phone immediately to call the police, saying, "Save your excuses for the police later on!"

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