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Meanwhile, Sasha had yet to get rid of the irritating man.

Andy called and asked, "Nancy, are you showing up for work today? The client has just called and insisted on having you over today."

The startled Sasha gasped out her reply, "Huh? Are you serious?"

"I think it has something to do with their current situation—they need our help to keep things under control," Andy made himself clear that Sasha needed to make her way over as soon as possible.

Unable to turn him down, Sasha made her way back to the office to realize that Andy had everything, including the ticket ready on her behalf.

To her surprise, he had gotten two tickets ready.

"Y-You-"

"Nancy, I know you're against the idea of having Mr. George involved, but we don't have time to get in touch with others. Just brace yourself through the trip with him."

Andy tried his best to console the infuriated Sasha when he figured out that she was about to lose her cool.

Meanwhile, Solomon, who had long made his way to Andy's office, brought himself up and greeted the duo when he heard their conversation, "Mr. Rind, It's my honor to be of aid. I'm sure we're going to get along with one another during the trip."

As much as she was against the idea, she had no choice but to have him join her for the trip as she couldn't afford to put her career at stake.

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Sasha, who was on her way to the airport with Solomon, wouldn't stop calling Lance as she hadn't informed him of her upcoming trip.

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"The number you have dialed is unavailable."

"The number you have—"

Where the heck is Lance? Has something happened to him? Oh god! Should I make a trip home to make sure that everything's fine before heading to the airport? Urgh!

Solomon, who was seated next to Sasha, noticed that she had her eyes glued to her phone with her face scrunched up in irritation. After much hesitation, he asked, "What's wrong? Is everything fine?"

"I-It's not a big deal, but I can't seem to reach my cousin."

"Huh?"

Solomon was thrilled as Sasha had responded to him. He asked, "Maybe his phone is out of service for the time being. Why don't you go ahead and try to reach the landline instead? If you're able to get through the landline, it's safe to assume that your cousin is currently away from home."

Out of the blue, a light bulb went on in Sasha's head when she heard him.

The call got through within a few seconds. As no one picked up the call, it was safe to assume that Lance wasn't home.

Sasha felt a sense of relief and made up her mind to give it one last try the moment they reached the airport.

Unable to contain his excitement anymore, Solomon looked out the window with his pair of eyes gleaming and a bright grin hanging on his face.

He was no longer the sulking man he had been throughout the past few days.

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Unfortunately, he was in a foul mood again the moment he saw someone as soon as they reached the airport.

Startled by her cousin's presence, Sasha stammered, "L-Lennie, what are you doing here? Did someone send you here? Aren't you—"

Unable to fathom the reason Lance was aware of their trip to Corleon, she gaped at his presence as he had reached the airport ahead of them.

What is he doing here? He had been staying in his room since his return last night. I mean, he didn't even show up this morning to send Vivi to preschool! Most importantly, how did he get here ahead of us?

Lance glared at Sasha and asserted in a callous tone, "I found out that you're making a trip abroad after getting in touch with your colleagues. Go get me a ticket as well."

Sasha was rendered speechless by her cousin's instructions.

On the other hand, Solomon couldn't take it anymore. He stepped forward and explained, "Lance, I don't think you're supposed to tag along when we're going there for business. It's extremely dangerous. Also, don't you have to look after Vivian?"

As soon as Sasha recalled her daughter, she exclaimed, "He's right, Lennie! Why don't you stay here to keep Vivi company? If she can't find us, I'm sure she's going to—"

She couldn't even finish her sentence as her cousin interrupted her by asking with his brows furrowed, "Are you sure you're not heading abroad for a leisure trip with him?"

Lance didn't even bother to choose his words. Instead, he remarked sarcastically as if he had intended to pick on Solomon.

Sasha thought she was hearing things as the rhetorical question Lance had directed at Solomon sounded more like a warning.

Am I hearing things? Lance seems so different! Has he always been such a mean person? Although I have always allowed him to have his own way, I'm still older than him at the end of the day! Shouldn't he show me some respect?

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Sasha looked at Lance in disbelief and reprimanded him, "Hello? Are you sure you're allowed to talk to me in this manner? We're going abroad for business! I need you to stay here and look after Vivi!"

To her surprise, Lance asserted in a serious tone, "You don't have to worry because I have sorted out everything before making my way here."

Once again, Sasha was rendered speechless by the domineering man's reply as she knew she wouldn't be able to change his mind.

Well, he has been acting the same way since a few days ago. Forget about it. He's only acting weird because Solomon's joining my trip.

Sasha paid no heed to Lance's odd behavior and got him a ticket for the same flight without a second thought.

After acquiring his ticket, Lance's expression finally softened.

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When the trio was about to board the plane, Lance noticed that Solomon's seat was next to Sasha's. Irritated, Lance snatched Solomon's ticket away from him without hesitation.

"Here's your ticket!"

Solomon couldn't stand it anymore and asked, "Why?"

However, the young man in front of him dismissed his question and showed the woman the way to their designated seats.

As soon as Lance took his seat next to Sasha, he asserted, "It's because I don't want you anywhere near him."

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"Y-You-"

"Alright, shall we stop getting worked up over such a trivial issue? Solomon, can you please let him take your seat? It's not a big deal, isn't it?"

Sasha, who was brought to her seat against her will, stopped the duo from bickering with one another since they were in the middle of a packed flight.

Oh god! I don't think I can take this anymore!

Thankfully, Solomon stopped making a fuss and made his way to Lance's seat after he took the latter's ticket.

Sasha thought it was about time to give Lance a lecture, but he turned around and closed his eyes before she had the chance to say anything.

What the hell? Since when did he turn into such an arrogant brat?

Sasha could only let him off the hook for the time being. As soon as she sorted out everything in front of her, she reached for her laptop to work on the contract of the project.

Halfway through her work, she felt something heavy on her shoulder. When she turned around, she found out that Lance had fallen asleep on her shoulder.

Why is his cheek so cold? Has he fallen ill?

As a doctor, Sasha figured out that something was wrong with Lance.

However, when she reached over in an attempt to touch his forehead, the young man opened his eyes and asked, "What are you doing?"

His glare sent a chill running down her spine, and she stuttered in return, "I-It's nothing! I-I'm just trying to check on you and see if you're sick!"

Sasha couldn't stop her heart from racing.

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Oh god! What the heck is wrong with me? Why am I afraid of him when he's my freaking cousin?

Sasha tried her best to regain her composure. The moment she turned around to check on him, he looked languid again, and she started to suspect that she had been hallucinating.

Slouching against the seat, the seemingly exhausted young man answered, "I'm perfectly fine."

"Are you sure? If that's the case, why is your body so frigid and sweaty? Have you caught a cold or something?"

Once again, when Sasha tried to place her hand on his forehead, he shrugged her off and insisted, "I'm fine! You know what? Just mind your own business and leave me alone!"

Lance's frustration and indifference were written all over his face.

What is wrong with him? Is he irked by my presence? Has he forgotten that I'm his freaking elder cousin! He needs to learn to show me some respect!

Initially, Sasha wanted to teach the arrogant young man a lesson, but she changed her mind when she surveyed her surroundings and noticed that the passengers around them had fallen asleep.

Thus, she had no choice but to keep her rage to herself for the time being. Then she continued perusing the contract.

A few hours later, they finally reached the airport of Corleon.

"Nancy, things are quite complicated around here. I have reserved our accommodation for the trip upon touching down. Shall we head over to the hotel and get in touch with some reliable locals before heading over to meet the tycoon?"

Solomon approached Sasha and told her their upcoming plan when it was about time to alight from the plane.

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As it was Sasha's first visit to a warzone, she couldn't help but worry about what awaited them.

Thus, she agreed without a second thought, "Alright, I think that's the best thing to do as well."

Lance wasn't particularly against the idea. After sleeping throughout the entire flight, he was no longer as exhausted.

However, he remained silent while alighting from the flight. When he noticed that Solomon was about to help Sasha take her things, he got ahead of him and snatched them away.

Solomon was at a loss for words at the young man's odd behavior.

On the other hand, Sasha urged, "We need to get going since it's getting late. As soon as we reach the hotel, we'll get in touch with the client and see if everything's fine on his end."

She got ahead of the duo and alighted from the flight shortly after she made herself clear.

Solomon had no intention of wasting his time picking on Lance, so he paid no heed to the young man and went after Sasha.

Forget it. He's just a meddlesome brat.

Once they exited the airport, they hailed a cab and made their way to the hotel Solomon had reserved.

In order to prove himself a reliable man, Solomon suggested getting in touch with their client on Sasha's behalf. To his surprise, the arrogant brat finally stopped getting in his way.

Instead, he brought their suitcases to their rooms and started indulging himself in doing

Nothing.

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The anxious Sasha started pacing back and forth in the room. She asked, "Lennie, are you sure he's going to be fine on his own? Will anything bad happen to him?"

Lance, who was lying on the couch, furrowed his brows when he heard Sasha's question. His abysmal pair of eyes flickered as he answered her query in a sarcastic manner, "If you're worried about him, why don't you hail a cab and go after him? I'm pretty sure you'll make it in time if you depart immediately."

Alright, what the heck is wrong with him? Why won't he stop picking on me?

Instead of starting a fight, she got herself something to eat to make the most out of her limited time.

"Lennie, grab something to eat! I'm sure you're starving after such a long flight!"

"Thanks, but no thanks."

Lance, who was seated on the couch, had his eyes glued to his phone with a frown as though he was occupied with something important.

Sasha wondered if he was in the middle of another game. In the end, she placed his favorite sandwich and a cup of milk in front of him.

In order to get herself ready for the appointment with her client, she headed into the bathroom to take a shower.

Buzz! Buzz!

All of a sudden, the phone she left behind started ringing.

Lance looked up and finally strode over after a few seconds since the caller showed no signs of giving up.

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"Hello?"

The moment he picked up the phone, Solomon asked, "Lance? Where's Sasha?"

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Lance looked in the direction of the bathroom and queried with a serious look, "What do you want from her?"

"Can you get your cousin over at once? I need her to—"

Solomon couldn't even finish his sentence as Lance brought the conversation to an abrupt halt by hanging up the call.

What the heck? Did he just hang up my call? What on earth is wrong with him? Is he out of his mind?

I'll let it slide if it's something trivial, but I'm in the middle of something serious that requires Sasha's attention!

On the other hand, Sasha, who had just made her way out of the bathroom, noticed that someone had accessed her phone without her consent.

She looked at Lance and asked, "Did anyone call me?"

Lance had no intention to keep Sasha in the dark, so he answered with a deadpan look, "There was a call from Solomon."

Solomon?

Sasha, who had put on a bathrobe, continued drying her hair and asked, "Has he mentioned anything? Is everything fine on his end?"

Initially, Lance had his eyes glued to his phone, but when he caught a whiff of Sasha's unique scent, he instinctively raised his head and looked in her direction.

He stared at the woman in front of him with his mouth agape while she asked, "Hello? Has he mentioned anything?"

Sasha seemed to be unaware of Lance's odd expression as the only concern she had in mind was the progress on Solomon's end.

To their surprise, they suddenly heard someone unlocking the door from outside.

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Before she could come to her senses, Lance, who was seated on the couch, dragged her into the bathroom against her will.

He instructed, "Get dressed now!"

"Huh?"

Sasha was utterly dumbfounded while the young man handed her a few garments as soon as he finished his sentence.

Has he always been such a control freak? What's wrong with wearing a bathrobe?

Meanwhile, Solomon had made his way into the room. When he saw Lance strolling on his phone languidly with his legs crossed, he couldn't take it anymore.

He yelled, "Lance, what exactly are you up to? Why did you hang up my call? Weren't you aware that I needed to reach Sasha urgently?"

"Well, she was still in the middle of her shower. Should I have handed her the phone instead of hanging up the call?"

"Y-You-"

Solomon was on the verge of losing his cool. Although Lance had a point, Solomon couldn't help but wonder if the young man had been trying to get on his nerves.

He took a deep breath in an attempt to regain his composure.

I have handled all sorts of clients! There's no way I can't deal with a brat like him!

As soon as he regained his composure, Solomon marched toward Lance and said, "I think we need to talk."

Lance responded with a nonchalant look and asked, "About what?"

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"What else can it be apart from your attitude toward me? Lennie, I know you're holding a grudge against me for lying to your cousin previously. However, I won't repeat such a mistake in the future."

"Are you sure you're not trying to deceive me?"

"Yes! Otherwise, why would I even tag along on the trip in the first place?"

Solomon knew he had to patch things up with the young man, even if it would come at the cost of his dignity. Otherwise, the latter would get in his way in the future.

Lance finally put his phone aside and responded with a smile when he heard Solomon's explanation.

"Indeed, your effort is quite commendable, but are you sure this isn't part of your plan to prove yourself worthy?"

"What do you mean?"

"You should know that. I mean, why did Andy choose you when he could have sent others to join Sha on the trip? I'm sure you volunteered yourself, didn't you? That's quite a commendable effort, Mr. George!"

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Solomon couldn't see the young man's expression due to his fringe and his thick-framed glasses.

Nonetheless, the sarcasm in the young man's remark was evident.

Upon hearing the innuendo in Lance's words, Solomon turned pale as if he was slapped in the face.

He stuttered in return, "Lance, y-you-"

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"That's enough! Just give me a break!" Sasha, who had finally come out of the bathroom, yelled at the bickering duo with her face puckered in irritation.

Lance responded with a smirk and stopped picking on Solomon. After that, he retrieved his phone and continued with what he was doing.

The pale-faced Solomon, who had just embarrassed himself, started stuttering, "N-Nancy, I-I—"

"Why don't you tell me the outcome of your visit? Has the client made up his mind to carry on with the transaction?"

"Yes! We'll be heading over to meet him at the casino at 8 p.m.!"

Solomon shared the great news with Sasha immediately.

However, Sasha arched her brows in confusion when she heard that they would be heading over to the casino.

Although she had never been there, she knew it was a place with an intricate network since it was a casino in the middle of a warzone. In short, there were a lot of variables associated with their upcoming session.

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"Nancy, are you worried? It's fine! I'll get everything sorted out!"

"Mr. George, thanks for the offer, but that won't be necessary since Lance is around to keep me company. If there's nothing else, why don't you make your way back to Moranta first?"

Nancy brought up her suggestion in a callous tone as if he was just another stranger.

Solomon felt lightheaded, for his worst fear had become a reality.

Indeed, he had shown up at Andy's company using Prime Cloud Corporation's bankruptcy as an excuse just to return to Sasha's side.

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Initially, he thought things would go according to plan since Sasha was a simple-minded woman.

It's that rascal's fault—he has ruined my flawless plan!

While he was on his way out of the hotel, Solomon started emanating a menacing presence, intimidating those around him.

Unable to keep his curiosity in check, his assistant asked, "Sir, we have executed the plan discreetly. Have you accidentally exposed yourself? How did Ms. Nancy figure it out?"

Gritting his teeth in the car, Solomon answered, "It's not her. It's the rascal who has tagged along with her!"

Lance?

His assistant was taken aback when he realized that the one who had ruined their plan was a fresh graduate.

"What are we supposed to do next? Are we really leaving?"

Staring at the bustling crowd on the streets, Solomon answered nonchalantly, "Get me a room for the night and send someone over to keep an eye on them. When they're on their way to the casino, I want you to carry out our backup plan."

His assistant immediately knew what he was supposed to do. Soon, the car departed and disappeared amidst the busy streets.

Meanwhile, Sasha and Lance, who were in their room, got themselves ready for the upcoming meeting.

"Lennie, have you gotten me another attorney?"

"Mmm!"

Lance was no longer in a foul mood since Solomon was gone.

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Similarly, Sasha felt a sense of relief when she knew that Lance had acquired the aid of another attorney.

Nonetheless, she couldn't help but feel anxious prior to their departure. She wouldn't stop surveying their room when it was time to leave.

Seeing that, Lance came to a halt and asked, "Is there anything else you need?"

Sasha retracted her gaze immediately and stuttered in return, "H-Huh? O-Oh! I-I was wondering if we need to bring along a knife or something else to defend ourselves just in case things spiral out of control?"

Lance's lips started twitching when he heard Sasha's suggestion.

Is she trying to pull my leg or something? Is she not aware that we're not allowed to bring any weapon into the casino? If we do so, we won't even be able to enter the casino, let alone defend ourselves!

Lance took a few seconds to gather his thoughts. While he suppressed his urge to make fun of Sasha, he asserted, "That's not going to work. However, if you're afraid, we can get someone from the mafia to keep us safe."

"A-Are you sure we can get someone like that to help us?"

"Well, it depends if you have enough to offer!"

"How much is it going to cost us?"

"About a million for a night."

When Sasha heard him, she sprinted toward their room instantly. "What are you waiting for? I don't mind spending a million to secure a deal worthy of ten million. After all, I still stand to gain nine million at the end of the day!"

To his surprise, she didn't even flinch and made up her mind in a split second.

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With that, the speechless Lance made his way back to the room and gathered the required sum.

As soon as they had the money they needed, they took a detour to an alley and acquired the aid of a renowned hitman. He happened to be the best in the industry since no one had been able to defeat him.

"What do you think?"

Thrilled, Sasha didn't even hesitate as she declared, "I think he's the right candidate for the job since he's the best! I'm just glad that we'll be able to make it out of the casino unscathed!"

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Half an hour later, the duo departed and made their way to the casino.

It was a place with an intricate network since people from all walks of life had gathered there with different agendas.

As soon as Sasha alighted from the car, she was stupefied by the lavish casino in front of her, where all sorts of luxury vehicles could be seen parked at the entrance. But the thing that took her by surprise the most was the door that was made out of gold.

Oh god! Is this some sort of gold mine?

As Sasha swallowed hard, she heard Lance asking, "What's wrong? Are you afraid?"

Lance, who had been walking behind Sasha ever since they reached the casino, stepped forward and stood next to her when he noticed she stopping in her tracks.

Sasha shook her head and rebuked, "That's not the case! Come on! I'll show you the way around!"

Afraid of startling her younger cousin, she tried her best to put on a strong front.

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Are you kidding me? How am I supposed to close the deal if I chicken out now?

After pulling herself together, she strode toward the entrance.

Unfortunately, as soon as they approached the entrance, the bouncer, who had never seen them before, rushed over and stopped them from entering the casino.

Subconsciously, she tapped on Lance's shoulder and assured, "Don't worry!"

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Lance, who had been surveying the surroundings, looked at the hand on his shoulder when he felt someone grasping him out of nowhere.

Sasha shared the reason for her visit with the man at the entrance. "Hi, we're here to see someone!"

"Someone? Who are you talking about?"

"We're here for Mr. Coyle! He has asked us to meet him in person here!" Sasha reached for Dickson's name card and handed it over to the bouncer.

I'm sure he has heard of this filthy rich tycoon since he's a bigshot around here!

"Mr. Coyle has been anticipating your arrival. Please head upstairs and meet him in Room 303."

Sasha secretly heaved a sigh of relief when the bouncer greeted her in a courteous manner and showed her the way upstairs once he saw the name card.

Immediately, she marched into the casino with Lance.

While they were making their way into the casino, she muttered, "Is it necessary to make a fuss out of everything? Lennie, you need to keep up with me, okay? If you're lost, I might not be able to find you!"

She had no idea that the young man behind her couldn't move his eyes away from her hand that was gripping his wrist.

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It wouldn't be an exaggeration to consider her hand miniature as it was merely half the size of his gigantic palm.

Afraid of losing him, she refused to loosen her grip. Despite being anxious herself, she showed no signs of setting him free at all.

Along the way, she repetitively reassured him that things would turn out just fine.

Silly woman!

Despite having that thought, a smile crept up on Lance's face.

As soon as they reached the first floor, they found the designated room within a few minutes.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

"Who is it?"

The duo could tell from the sound of cards being shuffled that the people inside the room were in the middle of a game. Immediately after they heard the knock, someone rushed over to answer the door.

The moment Sasha saw a blondie answering the door, she introduced herself, "Hello, I'm here on behalf of Andy from Wall Street! I have an appointment with Mr. Coyle!"

"Andy? You acquired the service of a third party?"

The blondie responded with a frown and directed another question at those inside the room.

Sasha, who had always been observant, figured out that something was wrong the moment she heard the blondie's question.

Did Dickson approach several companies at the same time?

"Luna, please don't blame me since I'm just trying to make the most out of the deal. Isn't that how business works?"

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The moment Sasha pieced the puzzles together, a man with a bandana came to the door.

He had no intention to keep Sasha in the dark and rushed over to wrap his arms around the blondie when he saw that she was irked.

Sasha's mind was all over the place as she was equally frustrated.

What the heck is wrong with this man? No! What the heck is wrong with Andy? Why did he collaborate with this man in the first place?

Sasha had no intention to join the intimate duo in the room. She asked, "Mr. Coyle, if you're going to collaborate with this gorgeous lady over here, allow me to excuse myself."

Having said that, she turned and left, which took the man by surprise.

He didn't expect Sasha to be such a bold woman.

"Ms. Nancy, is it? I'm impressed! I'll make you another offer since I like your attitude! How about two billion? What do you think?"

Two billion? That's a few folds of his initial offer! Damn!

Tempted by the tycoon's offer, Sasha brought herself to a halt.

Standing behind her, Lance's lips twitched involuntarily upon seeing that.

In the end, Sasha joined the man in the room and found out that there were a few other guests as well. The moment she entered the room, they shifted their gazes to her.

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One of them approached her and exclaimed, "It's such a rare occasion to have an Astorian with us today!"

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"Actually, she seems quite young! Andy is quite a big shot on Wall Street, isn't he? Why did he send a pretty young thing on his behalf? Has he a new kink or something?"

The next moment, they felt someone behind the woman glaring at them.

All of a sudden, they felt a chill running down their spines and went dead silent instantly.

"Come over and join us, Ms. Nancy! Luna over here is trying to seal a deal with me as well! We'll just see if you're a match for her! If you're able to outmatch her, I'll seal the deal with you!"

"What exactly are we supposed to do?"

Sasha was confident that she would stand a chance against the blondie if she could help the tycoon gain a higher profit.

Unfortunately, he suggested something else instead, "Since we're at a casino, of course we're going to gamble. They're all my friends, and I'll seal the deal with the one who's able to outmatch them!"

Has he lost his mind or something?

Sasha stared at Dickson with widened eyes and retorted, "Mr. Coyle, don't you think you should take this matter seriously when it involves more than two billion? On top of that, I don't really how to play your games!"

Dickson replied with a frown, "It's such a shame. On top of the two billion deal, I thought of offering the commission for the oilfield that I've won from them to the winner. But since you're not interested, I'm afraid—"

What the hell? Is he out of his mind?

On the verge of throwing a fit, Sasha decided that it was time to leave the lunatics for good.

However, a haughty voice broke the silence at that moment. "Don't you think it's too stingy of you to offer only the commission when you possess a freaking oilfield? If you're willing to offer ten percent of future receivables, I'll consider doing it."

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To everyone's surprise, the young man behind the helpless Sasha, Lance, volunteered to participate in their game.

What does he think he's doing? Is he really a match for them in gambling?

Sasha tried to stop him, but it was too late as Dickson had shifted his gaze to Lance and asked, "You've got guts! Consider it a deal! But what if you're not a match for my friends over here?"

"You'll get to seal the deal with that gorgeous lady over there! On top of that, I'll get my cousin over here to work for you for free for two years! She's one of the best in the industry and the prodigy of Wall Street!"

Sasha was on the verge of going berserk when Lance wagered her future without her consent.

She started strangling him and yelled, "What the heck do you think you're doing, Lance? Have you lost your mind or something?"

Lance shrieked in pain, "Let go of me!"

"No! I'm not going to do that until you take back your words!"

Unable to withstand the racking sensation he felt, he grasped Sasha's wrist and asserted in a hushed voice, "Just take it easy! I have everything under control!"

Sasha's eyes widened in disbelief. She looked him in the eye and asked, "What do you mean you have everything under control when you're not even aware of the game rules?"

"It's a piece of cake since I'm good at games! Just leave the rest to me and allow me to make you a filthy rich woman overnight!"

Letting her go, he marched his way to join the rest at the table.

It took Sasha a few minutes to snap out of her bewilderment. As soon as she returned to her senses, she rushed over and took a seat behind him.

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Truth be told, Dickson and his friends weren't the only ones who enjoyed wagering their fortunes for fun.

Since the country had been blessed with an abundance of natural resources, the citizens had long gotten used to having such exciting games as their favorite pastime.

Dickson must have set us up since he had lost in a few matches against his friends. I think he's using us to get back the things he has lost.

Sasha, who was seated next to Lance, was on pins and needles since a person's luck was crucial in probability games.

Soon, the players, including Lance, acquired their cards from the croupier. Lance carried himself as if it was nothing more than a casual game.

However, the blondie started frowning as soon as she took a peek at her cards. As expected, she was eliminated after another few rounds.

Sasha was confused when Lance and two of Dickson's friends were the only ones left in the game.

However, she wasn't as anxious as before after seeing her cousin's calm demeanor.

Toward the end of the game, Lance had merely a few cards left with him.

"Mr. Wand, are you sure you want to keep going? You're aware you're not going to defeat me even with a royal flush, aren't you?"

When Dickson's friends found out that Lance only had two cards left, they couldn't resist the urge to make fun of him.

As soon as Dickson heard his friends' sarcastic remarks, his expression darkened as well.

H-Huh? What's going on? Are we in trouble?

Sensing the uneasiness in the air, Sasha's heart sank to the bottom of her stomach.

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After Lance dealt the only cards he had, the duo burst out laughing because their speculations were spot on.

"Hahaha! You have lost again! In other words, we're going to gain ownership of another oilfield of yours, Dickson!"

"Why are you guys so excited when it's not even over yet? Allow me to show both of you how I'm going to turn the tables against all odds!"

The moment Lance started running his fingers across the cards he had dealt, the combination of cards turned into a royal flush, which happened to be the rarest and strongest hand in poker.

What's going on?

There was an uproar coming from the onlookers in the room. Similarly, Dickson stared at the cards with his eyes widened in disbelief.

"What's going on? What just happened to the cards?"

"Isn't it obvious? Someone has been messing with your cards!" Lance reached for another few cards and started separating the cards with his slender fingers.

Sasha had her eyes glued to his fingers while Dickson started examining the cards Lance had just separated in front of everyone.

Suddenly, the infuriated Dickson turned around and glared at his friends. He yelled, "Have you been cheating throughout the games?"

"N-No! It's not what it looks like!"

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"Stop making excuses to deceive me when the truth is as clear as day!" The wrathful tycoon went berserk in front of everyone and hurled a chair in the direction of his friends.

Lance knew things had spiraled out of control. Immediately after he grasped the dazed woman next to him, he dragged her out of the room with all his might.

"It's time to go!"

"H-Huh?"

Sasha, who was still in a state of bewilderment, had something else in mind which was equally mind-blowing as the fact that Lance had exposed the duo cheating.

She couldn't snap out of her trance ever since that particular thought crossed her mind a few minutes ago.

Bang!

As things got increasingly intense upstairs, gunshots could be heard firing just moments after they fled the scene.

When Lance heard it, he dashed down the stairs with Sasha as quickly as possible.

All of a sudden, someone in the jam-packed casino yelled, "They're coming again! Hurry up and run for your life!"

Seconds later, all hell broke loose in the casino as everyone started running in different directions. To make things worse, gunshots could be heard outside the casino.

Holy moly! Why did I even agree to make the trip in the first place?

Only then did Sasha return to her senses and feel her legs turning to jelly. With that, she collapsed onto the ground in fright. After all, she had never been to a warring country before.

Lance pulled her over with all his might and yelled, "Sasha!"

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Slouching against the man, she felt a sense of security when she caught a whiff of a familiar scent coming from him.

Sasha was lost in thought again and snapped out of it only after they made their way into a car.

She couldn't recall anything apart from the fact that she had been carried and brought out of the casino.

While Lance fastened the seatbelt for her, he noticed her eyes flickering and gazed at her with concern. "How are you feeling?"

His chest heaved while he panted for breath.

When Sasha raised her head and looked at him, she caught a whiff of blood. Immediately, she asked, "Are you hurt?"

She started scrutinizing the man in front of her, her face puckered in fear.

Lance waved dismissively and started wiping the blood off his wounds.

"It's just a bruise. We should consider ourselves lucky since we're able to make it out unscathed when the casino has been blown into pieces," he replied calmly.

The casino has been blown up?

Sasha started shivering in fear when she heard that, and it took her a few minutes to gather her thoughts.

"H-How did we manage to make it out alive?"

"Have you forgotten the hitman we hired?"

"Oh! So we're alive because of him! Well, I guess he's the best for a reason, huh? I'm glad we didn't spend that one million for nothing!"

Sasha started jumping for joy, but the young man in front of her went dead silent.

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When Sasha glanced at him, a thought struck her. She started searching high and low for something and asked, "Where's my phone? Have you seen my phone?"

"Why do you need your phone?"

"We need to board the next available flight and get ourselves out of here as soon as possible! Otherwise, we won't even last another day!" Immediately after she retrieved her phone, she started purchasing the tickets for the next available flight.

Lance stopped her and took her phone away when he heard her plan.

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"Are you going to leave the money behind?"

As soon as Sasha heard him, her expression darkened. She asked in return, "What money are you talking about? The deal with the tycoon? I'm afraid Dickson has been blown into pulps, hasn't he?"

Meanwhile, Lance accessed her phone and canceled the reserved seats without a second thought.

"He's not dead. In fact, he made it out of the casino before us."

"Huh?" Sasha's eyes gleamed in excitement when she heard the great news.

In the end, they made up their mind to pay the tycoon a visit the next day. For the time being, they would take shelter in the hotel.

On the other hand, Solomon had been waiting for updates regarding the incident from his subordinates.

When he found out that Lance and Sasha had made it out of the casino unscathed, he asked with a frown, "Did he bring her out on his own?"

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His assistant shook his head and explained, "We were waiting for Ms. Nancy as per your instructions. However, a bunch of men showed up out of nowhere and escorted them out of the casino in the nick of time."

"A bunch of men?"

Once again, Solomon was startled by what he heard.

It turned out that he was behind the commotion that had occurred. It wasn't much of a surprise for the militants to get instigated easily since they were in the middle of a warzone.

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He was certain that if he rushed over to Sasha's rescue, she would stop turning him down.

What's with that brat, Lance? Why did a bunch of men show up out of nowhere and rush over to their rescue?

Solomon probed further, "Have you figured out the identity of the mysterious bunch?"

"Lance spent a million to hire a hitman to keep them safe. He's supposed to be the best in the industry."

Solomon asked rhetorically with a scowl, "Ha! You don't think that's all there is to that, do you?"

The assistant was at a loss for words.

It does sound baffling...

Who are the mysterious men who showed up out of nowhere? On top of that, they had guns with them! Even our men might not be a match for them in terms of combat skills!

Soon, Solomon's assistant disappeared into the dark, leaving him alone.

Gritting his teeth, he repeated the name of a particular man while he stared at the pile of rubble before him, "Lance!"

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Sasha had a long night as she couldn't stop herself from recalling the chaotic situation they were in a few hours ago.

On top of that, she kept recalling the time the slender fingers ripped the cards into pieces.

Out of the blue, the owner of the hands showed up in front of her and took her by surprise with his familiar scent.

But when she looked at him, she noticed that his face was drenched in blood.

"Sebastian! No!"

As she shrieked, she jolted out of her dream.

It was morning by then, and she had a hard time opening her eyes to the room that had been illuminated by the shaft of light beaming through the windows.

After spending another few minutes in bed to gather her thoughts, she went to the washroom to wash up.

As much as she wished to forget the nightmare, it was way too surreal for her to do so.

Was it really just a dream?

Sasha turned on the tap and started washing her face to stop herself from recalling the horrifying moments she experienced in the casino.

Ten minutes later, Lance showed up with breakfast and asked, "What are you doing?"

"H-Huh? I'm just getting dressed!" Sasha was in a state of bewilderment when he barged into her room. His presence took her by surprise, and she rushed into the bathroom again.

Hello? Can he knock on my door instead of barging into my room without my consent?

Sasha regretted showing him her pale and haggard look.

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There's no way I'm showing him this side of me! I need to get myself ready as soon as possible!

The thought of dolling herself up for the young man had never occurred to her up until that moment.

Meanwhile, Lance couldn't be bothered with the fleeing woman. He placed the meal he had bought her on the coffee table before he sat down on the couch and checked his phone.

Someone had sent him a text message: Are you okay?

Lance replied: I'm fine.

Then he received another message: I was only informed of the situation that had occurred in Corleon in the middle of the night. I couldn't reach you since your phone was switched off. Speaking of which, we have figured out the identity of the ones behind the attack. We think they're a bunch of retired militants.

Halfway through their conversation, the person on the other end revealed some newfound information and sent him a photo.

What are the retired militants trying to achieve by doing that?

When the young man was about to take a good look at the photo, the woman made her way out of the bathroom and asked, "Lennie, when are we making our way to Dickson's place?"

Sasha, who had dolled herself up, no longer looked pale and haggard. Right then, she was wearing a white shirt and a pair of jeans with her hair tied up.

The young man was dazed momentarily when he caught a glimpse of her slender pair of legs and slightly visible collarbone.

He secretly gulped at the beautiful woman in front of him.

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"Shall we find out his current whereabouts or inform him of our arrival first? I mean, we're not supposed to show up unannounced after such a horrifying incident, right?"

Sasha had no idea about the things going on in the young man's mind as she was busy sorting out their plan for the day.

Immediately after Lance heard her question, he returned to his senses and looked at the meal he had bought her. Then, he suggested, "Why don't you have your meal first?"

"O-Oh, okay." Sasha finally recalled that she had not eaten anything since the incident yesterday.

After grabbing her breakfast, she made her way to the coffee table and took a seat next to him.

The breakfast he had bought was rather plain since the locals had gotten used to skipping breakfast. To be precise, they spent most of their time in the morning sleeping after having a wild night out.

Sasha had conducted her due diligence prior to their trip, but she was still taken by surprise upon seeing her breakfast.

When she saw that there were only a few chunks of meat alongside some tortilla wraps, she asked, "Are these all they have to offer?"

The young man remarked in a sarcastic manner, "What sort of meal are you expecting? You don't think we're here for a leisure trip, do you?"

Sasha was rendered speechless and decided to make do with the meal as long as it could give her the energy she needed for the day.

She reached for the tortilla wrap and tried to make herself a decent tortilla, but she just couldn't do it right.

For some reason, she ended up making a mess despite her efforts.

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"What's wrong with this? Why can't I seem to do it right?"

The young man, who was occupied with his phone, was at a loss for words when he heard her questions.

Moments later, he put his phone aside and wore the disposable glove to make the tortilla for the clumsy woman.

Sasha couldn't move her eyes away from him as he managed to put everything in place effortlessly.

Once he was done, he handed it over to her and said after removing his glove, "There you go!"

Sasha was utterly dumbfounded. Inexplicably, she had her eyes glued to his hands again as she offered, "I'll go get you something to wipe the sauce off your hands."

Immediately after she brought herself up, she retrieved a pack of wet tissue and rushed back to his side.

Unaware of her thoughts, he got himself a few tissues to wipe his hand clean.

As soon as Sasha caught a glimpse of his slender fingers and nails that had been trimmed to perfection, a buzzing sound echoed in her head again.

She hadn't been able to verify her speculation since things were extremely chaotic yesterday. On top of that, she thought it was impossible and wondered if she had been seeing things again.

Now that she had the chance to inspect his hands at such a close distance, she couldn't move her eyes away from them.

When he caught her staring at his hands, he asked, "What do you want from me? Can you hurry up and finish your meal? We need to get going already."

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It was then that she snapped out of her thoughts and started savoring the wrap he had made her

No! It can't be! I must be seeing things again!

She stuffed the wrap into her mouth while she convinced herself that she had been hallucinating again.

It's impossible for my cousin to be him! On top of that, his memories have been erased against his will! So there's no way he's that man!

Sasha kept telling herself that she was overthinking again.

Half an hour later, they finally departed from the hotel.

Horrified by the incident yesterday, Sasha asked, "Since we're meeting Dickson in his office this time, we should be fine, right?"

Lance responded with a nod and looked out the window.

Although one of Dickson's friends had passed on while the other one was gravely injured, he didn't think that they would go after him. After all, he had nothing to do with it.

Soon, the duo made their way to the office of the bigshot.

"Hello, I'm Nancy, and I'm here on behalf of Andy! I have an appointment with Mr. Coyle!"

"Hello, Ms. Nancy! Mr. Coyle has been anticipating your arrival! Allow me to show you the way to his office!"

As soon as Sasha approached the receptionist and introduced herself, the receptionist brought them to Dickson's office.

She was relieved as everything was going smoothly.

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"Ms. Nancy, I owe you a big one since you helped me secure the ownership of my oilfield! I'll honor my promise and seal the deal with you! On top of that, I'll allow you to get a share of the future receivables of that said oilfield!"

Woohoo!

Sasha couldn't believe that she was merely a step away from becoming filthy rich.

After the beaming woman took a glance at the young man behind her, she signed the contract she had prepared beforehand.

Once they had everything sorted out, she made her way to the financial department to collect the check.

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"Lennie, just stay right here until I'm back. I'll be heading over to the financial department to collect the check."

"Mmm."

Lance, who was occupied with his phone, hummed in response.

The moment she reached the financial department, the entire building started shaking, accompanied by a thunderous bang.

"What's going on? Are we under attack?"

"Someone has blown up the building! They're fighting again!"

The person's words indicated that it wasn't the first time such a thing had occurred.

Within a few seconds, all hell broke loose in the building.

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Immediately after Sasha retrieved the check, she put it into her bag along with the contract and rushed in the direction of the entrance.

However, the petite woman ended up being shoved to the side by the crowd before she could reach the entrance.

To make things worse, the ones outside started firing shots at those in the building.

Bang!

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When Sasha witnessed a woman collapsing in front of her the moment she was shot in the head, she covered her mouth and started retching in disgust.

This is horrifying! Where the heck am I? Why are we under attack in an office?

Overwhelmed with fear, she started shaking involuntarily.

No! I can't die just yet! Lance needs me! I need to make my way back to him! He's still waiting for me upstairs!

Initially, her mind was all over the place, but at the thought of returning to her cousin, she braced herself and made her way up the stairs.

When she was about to dash upstairs, a man shattered the window and barged into the office out of nowhere. He grabbed her hand and yelled, "Nancy, we need to hurry up and make our way out!"

The moment the startled Sasha returned to her senses, she asked the man behind her, "H-Huh? Solomon? What are you doing here?"

Solomon had no intention of explaining himself. Instead, he took her away against her will, jumping out of the window while holding her in his arms.

Sasha was in a state of bewilderment at the turn of events.

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Only after Solomon brought her into the car and departed did she finally snap out of her trance.

"Where are you bringing me? Lance is still in the building! Stop the car at once! I need to make my way back to Lance!"

As soon as she came to her senses, she yelled at the man to bring her back to the building.

Nonetheless, Solomon showed no signs of giving in since he had gone to great lengths to save her amidst the chaos.

He locked the door and said, "Nancy, listen to me! We have to leave first! I'll send someone else to save him!"

"No! I want you to stop the car at once! Now!"

Unable to keep her cool, Sasha shrieked at the top of her lungs.

A while ago, Lance saw the duo making their escape after trudging his way through the rubbles and making his way to the financial department.

His eyes that were drenched in blood turned icy gradually. Truth be told, he could have easily made his way out of the building unscathed the moment all hell broke loose in the building.

A jump out of the window was all it would take for him to escape. In spite of the danger he would be putting himself in, he insisted on making his way downstairs just to ensure that Sasha was safe.

To his surprise, she had escaped with another man and left him alone.

He responded with a self-deprecating smirk and removed his glasses after the blood in his eyes started flowing out.

After that, he peeled off the mask he had been wearing.

It turned out that he wasn't Lance. Despite his pale and haggard face, he still looked ethereal with his perfect facial features.

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Casting his mask onto the floor nonchalantly, he made his way out of the building determinedly.

After half an hour, Sasha finally returned to the building.

Solomon was against the idea of sending her back, but he had to give in since she started retaliating by smashing the window with all her might until she bled.

She knew a lot of things could have occurred within half an hour. By then, the ones who launched the attack were nowhere to be seen.

Thirty minutes was all it took to turn a lavish-looking building into a pile of rubble full of corpses and injured victims.

Where the heck is Lance?

As soon as Sasha saw the survivors, she staggered her way over to them and asked, "Where's Lance? Where is he? Has anyone seen Lance?"

In a panic, she asked every single person she met as she made her way into the building.

Unfortunately, luck wasn't on her side as she couldn't get anything on her cousin. After all, no one would pay attention to others when their own lives were at stake.

Sasha was unable to keep her cool anymore. Without hesitation, she dashed into the building in an attempt to locate Lance.

When Solomon figured out what she had in mind, he rushed over and stopped her. "Nancy, you're not supposed to go in! It's still—"

"Get the hell out of my sight!"