

The Ace at the Apex

Chapter 300 Preparing to Move Out

After realizing that Javier had returned home, Jade was so excited that she hurried down the stairs.

Just as she was about to wake him up, Ingrid suddenly came out from the kitchen to stop her.

At that moment, Jade had already known Ingrid's true identity, so she had even more respect for the woman who had been silently protecting her the entire time.

"What's wrong, Ing?"

Ingrid brought Jade with her into the kitchen before she said, "He's quite tired. He just got home at 3am yesterday, so he hasn't even slept for four hours. You should let him rest for a while longer!"

Jade finally understood why Ingrid had stopped her, and she now felt embarrassed.

She was only engrossed in her own excitement that she did not realize that Javier must have arrived home late last night, which was why he did not go back to his room upstairs to sleep.

After that, Ingrid said, "It's possible that there are some things I shouldn't say as a servant since you two are my masters, but Javier really is much more exhausted than you imagine. It's just like what the internet would always say, how there are no such things as a peaceful life unless someone's helping you shoulder the burden in front. Things in a major family are... Very exhausting mentally."

Jade nodded her head and held Ingrid's hand. "Ing, you're Javier's sister, which also means that you're my sister. So you're not a servant at all, but my sister forever. Thank you for telling me all this, I'll be sure to take good care of him and share more of his burdens."

Ingrid smiled. It was exactly because she knew that Jade was a kind, smart and understanding woman that she told her all that.

If it were any other woman who did not know any better, forget telling her all of that, Ingrid would not even be bothered to serve them.

After all, the old fox had promised that she could leave anytime she wanted. So, there was no need for her to work for the Kerseys.

The only reason she had stayed behind was because of her little brother, and Jade, her sister-in-law who was a kind woman that she could get along with easily.

'The both of them really are perfect for each other. Living together with them has made me feel like I've got a family.'

After leaving the kitchen, Jade crept towards Javier.

She looked at the man who had a tightly-knitted frown on his face and knew that he was worrying about something in his dreams.

'People always say how money makes the world go round and that money can buy happiness. If that theory were true, Javier should be feeling especially happy right now.'

'Yet, how happy could he be feeling inside when he would even frown while dreaming?'

Jade bent over and gently kissed him on the cheek. Then, with a whisper, she said, "I'll be a good woman for you."

Without waking Javier up, Jade headed upstairs to shower and get changed. Then, she headed out for work after eating her breakfast.

The moment she arrived at her company, she immediately handled all of her on-hand tasks. After that, she immediately fetched the information on Reivaj Automobile. She wanted to help share Javier's burden as much as her capabilities allowed her to.

After all, he was her man!

Meanwhile, Javier had woken up later than 1pm.

It was very rare that he would be able to sleep for 10 hours. This really is a luxury that I can't ask for all the time.'

After preparing lunch, Ingrid told Javier about what she had said that morning.

"You won't blame me for saying too much, would you?"

Javier smiled. "Of course not. You're my sister, so you only said all those because you care for me."

Ingrid smiled and brought Javier some food.

The two of them ate and chatted. After that, Javier freshened up and headed to his company.

After discussing some business matters with Mary Jane and Chad, Javier headed off to Jade's office.

At that moment, Jade was understanding more about automotives. She was inexperienced in that industry, so she wanted to understand more about how the business operated. Thus, she could only begin from propulsion, suspension, hardware and other related systems to learn as much as she could.

Without a teacher, the internet was her best tutor. She was looking at a picture with a drawing to identify what she was looking at!

When Javier entered her office, he saw that Jade was staring at a movie without even blinking.

He smiled and asked, "You seem to be watching that very seriously... You're not watching the kind of movie that only two can act i n, are you?"

Jade instantly seemed overjoyed when she heard Javier's voice.

She then got up and approached him. With her arms wrapped around his neck, she said, "Why didn't you stay home and rest for a." few days? You just arrived home in the middle of the night yesterday, but you're now here."

Javier kissed her affectionately. "That's because you're here. If you were at home, I swear I wouldn't have come here."

Jade felt very warm. With every minute and second that Javier said such things, he would unknowingly end up bringing warmth into her heart.

This was a feeling that nobody else was able to give her, so she felt really good about it.

However, she then thought about herself and felt slightly guilty when she realized that there was nothing much she could give. Javier aside from her body and her heart.

“Honey, I really am unfitting to be the deputy general manager of this company. I’m no better than my master in terms of financial capabilities, nor am I able to control the market as well as Chad does. In fact, you’ve even had to negotiate the issue with the automobile business despite it being so trivial. You’re already so tired, but I still can’t do anything to help you.

“How about I step down from my position and stay home to take care of you? Let’s have Chad take over my job instead.”

Javier then embraced the beautiful woman before him. “Are you really willing to do that? You’ve built up this entire company from your previous company, so it’s practically your child. Plus, you’ve never liked staying at home and prefer to be in this kind of environment much better.” Jade nodded her head. “That’s right, but I still love you the most. I don’t want to see you being too tired, so I want to take care of you.”

Javier stroked her silky hair and asked, “Who do you think will retire first? You or Chad?”

Jade replied, “Of course it’s going to be Chad! He’s so much older than me, so is that even a legit question?!”

Javier replied, “That won’t do... You aren’t as capable as he is because you haven’t faced an actual huge issue before. If you really had, I’m sure you will be able to become even better than he is.

“Plus, even if you do step down now, Chad’s going to be retiring by 20 years maximum. When that happens, who am I supposed to look to succeed him? Am I supposed to nurture another successor then?”

“Most importantly, you’re my wife. Although we aren’t married yet, we could register our marriage at any moment so long as you want to. Now then, with so many reasons at hand, who am I supposed to hand over the company to if not my wife?”

Javier had made so much sense that Jade truly was rendered speechless for a moment.

Especially when he promised her that they could register their marriage whenever she wanted that she felt extremely touched.

She knew that Javier had a lot of women around him, Ciara and Edelgard being the ones she knew at least. She was sure that Javier would have others out there still.

However, regardless of when it was, Javier would always place her in the highest regard, which caused the minor regret she may have had to disappear with the wind.

Still in Javier’s arms, Jade hugged him tightly and said, “You’re so nice to me, Honey.”

There were many things she wanted to say, including how she was just a meager little manager a year ago who would fret over how she would be able to come up with 950 thousand dollars a year ago. Yet, now... she was controlling a billion dollar company. Also, she wanted to say that she was afraid of being alone the most, but she now had so much warmth in her life.

There were so many things she wanted to say, but it all boiled down into “you’re so nice” because Javier had indeed treated her especially well.

‘God, if there really is a next life, I ask that I’ll be able to meet Javier immediately.

‘I don’t care whether Javier ends up being a beggar or even a sickly man, I’d still be willing to be together with him, never to be apart from one another.’

Chapter 301 There’s No Such Reason

Revaj Group needed to move elsewhere. After all, it was now a billion-dollar company, so it would seem a little wrong for it to remain where it was.

Coincidentally, Chad had already considered this point a year before and had requested that Javier purchase a piece of land.

On top of that, Chad was a capable man who had already begun planning what to do with the land and started construction. Now that the company needed someplace else to develop, that piece of land had an entire structure and had already been furnished. All that was left at that moment was for the chairman to nod his head and everyone to move into their new office building.

Javier recalled that this piece of land had still been barren and had seemed exactly like a wasteland a year ago... He then held up his thumb in front of Chad. “Well done. You seem to have worked very hard.”

Chad smiled and said, “There’s nothing that can’t be sped up so long as there’s money involved.”

This was, in fact, the truth. There was no need for the company to set aside any funds whatsoever. Instead, the contractors would be paid for whatever labor and material costs had been incurred during the construction, making the entire process much smoother and swifter.

Javier then asked, “Have you followed the necessary procedures, such as getting rid of the formaldehydes? I don’t want our staff members to end up being sent to the hospital shortly after moving into their new offices. After all, there are just too many serious cases of formaldehyde causing cancer or white-blood-cell-related illnesses.”

Chad nodded his head “It’s all done. You can rest easy. Sam is the one who handled all that.

“Sam’s already begun learning how to conduct business. Last year, when I casually brought up the fact that we needed to remove the formaldehydes in the new office building to him as we were flying, he found out that there were pretty good profit margins in the job and opened up his own formaldehyde removal company to take on that part of the job.

“I’ve heard that he’s done a pretty good job of it. In fact, after he took on such a huge job, his new company became very reputable. He’s now gotten quite a number of jobs from all kinds of customers. I even heard that he’s earned 150 million dollars after running his company for a few months.”

Javier felt very happy. 'Not bad. Sam managed to find his own niche and even start his own business.

'At least this is a legit business, so this is much better than him going around causing problems in pubs and nightclubs.'

After chatting for a while about the move, Javier once again returned to Jade's office,

The moment he entered it, Jade seemed to panic. "Again?! We were just done a moment ago, yet you're here for more? What are you? Man of steel?!"

Jade was genuinely concerned at that moment. The two of them had just done it half an hour ago, yet Javier had now returned to her office.

It was already after working hours at that moment. A moment before that, Jade's secretary had informed her that she was going to brief Jade on her working schedule for the next day. Thus, if Javier wanted to do it again, Jade would be absolutely embarrassed when her secretary walked in on them later.

'How the heck am I supposed to maintain my dignity as a leader in the future if she sees us?!

However, Javier merely smiled. "What in the world are you thinking about? Could you perhaps be the one who wants more? You .. seemed to enjoy yourself very much just now."

Jade had felt super-embarrassed since. 'He should be keeping topics like that for nighttime chats. Why the hell is he bringing it up now?!

Javier finally went back to discussing official matters after he was done teasing her.

"Chad should've already reported this to you, but we're going to be moving offices very soon."

Upon hearing this, Jade immediately pushed away her embarrassment. "Yes, Chad's already told me about it. We're now arranging for it to be done early next month, pending your approval. If you're alright with it, we can immediately begin making preparations.

"Plus, I've already planned for the move to be done gradually. We'll be splitting everyone into three groups: A, B, and C. Group A will begin moving to the new office first, while B and C stay behind and man their posts. Then, Groups A and C will work from both office buildings while B moves over. After both A and B are done, we'll have Group C move over there in time.

"Meanwhile, this office building won't be completely non-operational. Instead, it'll be our branch company, where we can bring in a few projects with a smaller profit margin. After all, we wouldn't be able to progress as steadily as we have today without our

regular customers. Therefore, it just wouldn't be right for us to discard them now that we're a much stronger company. Besides, as small as the profit margins of those projects may be, they would still make for decent bonuses for the branch company's staff members.

"The branch company would be something similar to... an old folk's home. We'll arrange for our staff members who are nearing retirement age to come work here!"

Javier nodded his head. "Not bad. You've thought about this in great detail. Let's proceed according to your plan then." In fact, Javier had not said that just to compliment Jade. Instead, she had indeed done a pretty good job planning so that the move would be neat, organized, and would not hinder their usual operation.

However, Javier did not intend on discussing that matter. He wanted to talk about something else. "What I actually wanted to discuss with you isn't us moving headquarters. I want to talk about our personal house. You're now the deputy chairman, so you can't stay here until you retire. Instead, you need to lead your own team and move over to the new office building.

"When that happens, where are we going to stay? Surely not in our company's residence, right?"

"Which is why I'm planning on taking you on a trip down to Clouston. I've got nothing to do over the next two days. Let's go find our own home."

Jade was especially overjoyed when she heard this. She was not overjoyed because of the house they were going to purchase but because of the fact that Javier had been thinking about them building their own home.

Previously, Jade had already decided that she was going to rent a place and then slowly search for a suitable house even if Javier did not mention a word about it. This was supposed to be her surprise for Javier. She wanted him to have a warm home to return to whenever he was tired.

However, Javier had ended up bringing it up himself that day. Thus, it was obvious that Javier did hold her in very high regard and did indeed want to build a family with her.

Thus, without a moment's hesitation, Jade very readily agreed to it.

After they were done with work that afternoon, Javier gave Ingrid a phone call and said that he was going to be out with Jade over the next two days, so they wouldn't be home.

Obviously, Ingrid did not have any objections to that. In fact, Ingrid was weaker than Javier in many ways. After all, Kenzo had taught Javier everything he knew, so Javier was definitely very skilled. Most importantly, Javier was a cunning fox.

Gone were the days when brawn had triumphed over brains. They were now living in an era when intelligent people could earn at least 10 times more than others.

When Ingrid went up against someone in a direct confrontation, she would feel extremely disgusted when her opponents were about as powerful as her yet more cunning. This was because these people might set up traps with every step they took, causing Ingrid to fall into one of them if she was not careful.

Ingrid had, in fact, gone up against Javier several times but had fallen for his cunning schemes...

Javier was not only strong physically, but he was also a great schemer who would take into account everything in his surroundings and set up traps with it. Javier's modus operandi was all about not bringing a knife to a gunfight or going into a knife fight with his bare fists. Javier would do almost anything to make sure that his opponents ended up feeling humiliated.

This was exactly why Ingrid was not worried at all when she heard that Javier and Jade were going to go on a trip together.

That night, Javier drove his L5 and rushed off to Clouston with Jade.

The entire journey took them three hours, and they had dinner the moment they arrived.

After eating, they headed to the hotel and checked into their room after Javier parked his car. Then, they headed out together to take a stroll.

“Honey, you really don’t have to accompany me out here when you seem so tired.”

Jade did care for Javier’s well-being very much and did not want him to end up feeling more fatigued because of her.

However, Javier was adamant. “I want to do this. We’ve been together for a year already, yet I’ve never gone with you on a stroll down the street or even to the shopping mall once. Since we’re here in Clouston together, I want to take you shopping. Tonight, I’ll help you carry your bags and pay your bills, so you just shop to your heart’s content.”

Jade gave Javier a kiss on the cheek, feeling as happy as though they were a couple who had just gotten into a passionate relationship. However, Jade thought about it for a moment and felt that she seemed to be living a very sweet couple’s life every single day she was with Javier.

Chapter 302 I Saw This Place First!

After spending a wild night together, Javier and Jade slept until the next afternoon.

They had booked their hotel room for three days, so it was a little after 1 p.m. by the time the couple left the hotel.

They then hailed a taxi and filled their bellies with some local delicacies before embarking on their journey to select their new house. 1

Over the next two days, they kept going from house to house. Jade was already feeling pretty satisfied with what they had found, but Javier just couldn’t bring himself to like any of the houses.

“Come on, what sort of house are you looking for exactly? We could just decide on one that’s almost to our tastes. Plus, I keep getting the feeling that the houses you find have a higher and higher price point.” Jade softly complained. She felt that she would be content with just an ordinary house.

However, Javier was not having any of that. “Of course it can’t be ordinary! It’s going to be the house my wife’s going to live in, so there’s no way I’m going to let it be ordinary!”

Sure enough, Javier always had a way of surprising Jade with the warmest, most loving care when she was not expecting it.

After looking for a long time, they finally found a mansion by the lake.

This was probably the mansion in the best location. Not only did it have a sea view, but they also would not have to suffer from the tide by being near the lake.

The salesperson even mentioned that someone would have bought that mansion long ago if it was not for the fact that each square foot cost more than 80 dollars extra in comparison to other houses identical to it.

The mansion Javier had chosen was more than 6,500 square feet, so coupled with the fact that each square foot cost 80 dollars more than usual, the entire mansion cost more than an extra 520,000 dollars!

Although Jade was not facing a shortage of money, she was still a little unhappy with the price. "Aren't you all breaking the government's price rules when it comes to this piece of land? You have two identical houses for sale in this area, yet the difference between the two units is just huge. Are you not afraid that someone might complain about this?"

The salesperson realized that he was up against a pro, but his company had already come up with a fool-proof counterplan for that exact situation long ago.

"This is because this is my boss' private house. He bought this place long ago, but he hasn't lived in it before, so this is a new house sold at a second-hand price. The government can't interfere in this because it isn't a product of our company."

Jade was speechless. They can do that?! Seriously...'

However, Jade had indeed learned a new tactic. 'Business strategies like these are more or less the same, so I can use it in the future by tweaking it a little.'

Jade stopped talking to the salesperson after that. Instead, she turned to Javier and said, "Let's look at another place, honey. They're all identical, so there's no need for us to waste an extra 520,000 dollars on this one."

The salesperson nodded as well. "Actually, sir, I would also suggest that you look at another unit. Please don't misunderstand me. I have zero intention of looking down on you. The main reason I'm saying this is because... I'll get a commission for the other units, but not this one. After all, it's my boss' private house.

"You see, I can't get away with not selling it, but I wouldn't earn commission from it even if I did sell it. I sincerely hope that you'll look at another unit."

After saying that, the salesperson opened his folder and pointed to a unit in the distance. "Look over there. That one seems pretty decent as well..."

This salesperson must indeed be someone who valued his commission a lot since he had dared to stab his boss in the back.

However, on second thought, it was only a natural decision, as nobody would be willing to work without profit. Even if there was a 0.1% commission, the salesperson would be able to earn 1,500 dollars if the house was worth 1.5 million dollars.

Bearing this in mind, the salesperson would end up with zero commission if he sold Javier that mansion, while his boss would end up earning an extra 520,000 dollars. Thus, it was only natural for the salesperson to feel unhappy.

Alas, Javier had taken a fancy to that particular unit. According to the popular saying, time was money, which was very applicable when it came to Javier.

There was no need for him to waste more time looking at another house just because this particular one was 520,000 dollars more

expensive. In fact, Javier could earn that much money with a simple snap of his fingers.

Thus, with his benefit in mind, Javier decided to purchase the mansion by the lake.

However, right at that moment, a saleswoman suddenly showed up with her own clients.

Her clients were also a couple, but an older one, who seemed to be pushing 60

The two of them were dressed pretty well but looked slightly out of place. It was a hot summer day, yet both of them were covered up in branded clothes that looked like a leopard's hide, as though they wanted to flaunt their wealth. Although they weren't actually wearing a leopard's hide, just the fact that they were wearing a set of casualwear on top of their sports attire and beach shoes was enough to make them seem extravagant.

Even the saleswoman could not help having a sarcastic look on her face when she looked at the couple.

Even though she had not said a thing, Javier could still hear her inner voice.

'What's up with these two trying to seem rich when they're not?!'

'I suppose she really is a salesperson. She's got rather keen insight.'

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The moment the old couple entered the mansion and saw Javier and Jade, the elder woman began yammering. "Didn't we already decide we were buying this unit? What's the big idea here? How could you simply allow these strays in here? This is our home, so who are you to bring others in here? Are they going to pay us if they bring filth inside? Now that they know what the inner structure of our house is like, it's no longer safe for us to live here! Is your company going to be held responsible for any theft that happens here in the future?"

The elderly woman was absolutely relentless with her words, not only attacking the saleswoman with a round of insults, but Javier and Jade as well.

Jade immediately frowned, but her outstanding personality refused to let her argue with the elderly woman.

On the other hand, Javier did not seem fazed at all. 'I've seen many blind people, but I can't possibly cure every single one of them now, can I? After all, I'm not an ophthalmologist. The only way for me to resolve this issue would be by... making them both blind forever!

However, before Javier could even say anything, the saleswoman smiled and answered, "Madam Loesch, we genuinely aren't to blame for this. If you had paid a deposit, this house would naturally have been yours and nobody else would have been allowed to come in here to view the place, nor would we

have brought any of our clients here. But the fact of the matter is that you didn't pay the deposit because you previously said that you needed to discuss this with your daughter."

The old woman became furious. "Exactly! I already said I was going to discuss it with my daughter. Doesn't that count as confirmation that we want the place? Why would you still bring others over here to view the place? Where is your security protocol? Answer me! Where is it?"

The saleswoman felt very helpless about the situation, but she still smiled and said, "Madam Loesch, please allow me to explain myself again. You will need to pay a deposit fee before we can confirm that you've reserved this unit. We can't reserve it just because of a verbal agreement. I believe no other company would operate this way either, would they?"

"Plus, you didn't say you wanted to reserve this place. You only said that you needed to discuss it with your daughter when you headed back."

"What's the big deal? Can I not discuss it then? You real estate agents always love to seem so high and mighty. Can a customer not say that they need to discuss this matter first? Don't you know that the customer is always right? We're the kings here, and you should be serving us like the servants that you are!"

The saleswoman could no longer help smiling, which caused the old woman to feel even more furious. "What's with that attitude of yours?!"

The saleswoman hurriedly said, "My apologies, I couldn't hold back for a moment. However, what I wanted to say is that there are multiple kings in existence, so you're not the only ones we're serving."

The old woman felt absolutely embarrassed. She had genuinely thought that she would be treated as a king wherever she went because of how she was dressed, yet someone who seemed to think otherwise was standing in front of her at that moment. Her embarrassment caused her to feel even more furious and frustrated.

"I don't care! I'm buying this house for sure. Today, in fact! I want you to kick out all these irrelevant people! My daughter's got all the money in the world, so she can pay for this!"

Next to the old woman, her husband stepped forward and spoke, sounding a little more sense. "It's a deposit fee you want, isn't it? Go on then, how much is it? 450 dollars? 300 dollars? We can pay it."

The saleswoman smiled once again, almost stamping her foot and laughing out loud, in fact. 'I'm seriously beginning to suspect that these two are here to make a fool of themselves!'

Chapter 303 Are You High?

Initially, the old woman was pretty furious when she saw the saleswoman smiling once more. She almost wanted to rip her mouth open

However, she understood why the saleswoman was smiling when she found out that the deposit fee was 45,000 dollars.

They had thought they would be able to reserve a house worth millions of dollars with just a few hundred dollars worth of a deposit? What a joke!

However, the old woman was not going to allow that amount to cause her to humiliate herself.

She shot a fierce glare at her husband before she said, "What are you smiling at? It's 45,000 dollars, isn't it? We've got the money to pay! My husband meant to say that that amount feels like 450 dollars to us!"

The old man hurriedly agreed. "Exactly!" The saleswoman was stunned, not realizing that the old couple was actually rather wealthy.

However, she did not want to cause any future problems for herself due to some misunderstanding, so she secretly turned on her cell phone's video recording function.

"Madam, Sir, of course we'll welcome you with open arms if you've decided that you're going to pay the deposit. However, there's something I need to explain to the both of you up front. This deposit will be used as a guarantee so that this unit will be reserved for you until you sign the housing contract with us in a month. You may choose to pay us in full or through a bank loan. That's up to you.

"If you sign the housing contract with us within a month, this 45,000-dollar deposit shall be used to pay off the price of this house, For example, if this house is 1.5 million dollars, you will still have to pay us 1,455,000 dollars.

"However, if you're unable to sign the housing contract within a month, the deposit you paid us will not be returned because it shall become reimbursement for the loss we suffered by not being able to sell this place to other customers. This is a standard operating procedure that all real estate agents practice."

The old woman immediately looked unhappy when she heard this. "What?! That's our money! Who are you to refuse to return it to u

S?!"

The saleswoman was left completely speechless and praised herself for being smart enough to record this conversation. Otherwise, she would have been in deep trouble later on.

Just as she was about to explain the situation to the old couple once more, Javier suddenly spoke up.

"I'll save you all the trouble, I'm buying this unit, and I'll pay the deposit right now. Take me to your office so we can proceed with the sale!"

Javier spoke very readily and wrapped his arm around Jade's slender waist, ready to leave the house.

He had no time to waste by listening to the old woman's yammering. After all, that house was his, not the old woman's.

However, the old woman had the exact same thought as Javier, which was why she was furious when she heard this.

"Who the hell do you think you are? I've already had my eye on this place for a long time, so who are you to suddenly show up and take it away from me?"

If it was not for the fact that she was an old woman, Javier would have given her a tight slap to show her who she was dealing with.

However, since she was an old woman, Javier was naturally not going to do such a thing.

Instead, he stopped and told her, "I'm showing you respect as an elderly person, so stop speaking without thinking. Take this chance to enjoy your life a little longer instead of wasting your breath on meaningless arguments!"

Before the old woman could say anything, her husband immediately looked unhappy and said, "What the f*ck? Are you planning on hitting us, perhaps? Come on then! You weren't even born when I was out fighting our enemies in the war last time! Come on then, you little sh*t! Bring it on!"

The salespeople were completely stunned, as neither of them had ever thought that the old man would be a war veteran. However, Jade suddenly laughed mockingly.

Meanwhile, Javier did not seem to show the old man any mercy as he scornfully said, "I don't mind you trying to seem all tough, but can you make your lies seem more convincing? You're currently 60 years old, aren't you? Even if you were 70, the war would've been over already! What's all this about you fighting our enemies in the war... Were you beaten up by these enemies you're speaking of while you were in your mother's womb?"

Javier's statement instantly made the salespeople come back to their senses. 'He's right! The war was long over by the time the old man was born!'

The old man felt completely embarrassed. He had originally thought he could bluff by acting tough, but he'd ended up making up an unconvincing lie..

The women might not have understood what Javier had said, but the old man knew all too well. Thus, he instantly felt furious and almost charged forward, wanting to start a fight.

However, when he realized that Javier was absolutely fearless and the others were not intending on stopping him, he immediately took a step back in embarrassment. In the end, he pretended his old hip injury was acting up.

With one hand against his hip, he whined in pain and said, "I would've smacked some sense into you if this hip of mine was fine, you little sh*t!"

The old man had called Javier "little sh*t" one too many times and ended up causing the latter to flip into a bout of rage.

'Does this old man think I wouldn't dare teach him a lesson just because he's old?

Filled with rage, Javier went back into the mansion once more.

He then found the salesman who had brought him and Jade there. "I'll personally pay you a 1,500-dollar commission. I want you to give me your company's bank account so that I can pay you the deposit fee right away. Then, I want you to kick those two out of my f*cking house!"

The salesman was overjoyed that he was given a commission for free.

Thus, although he had seemed unmotivated a moment ago, he was immediately in high spirits and hurriedly did as he was told.

“Don’t worry, sir! I’ll get it done right away!”

As he spoke, the salesman had already taken out his cell phone to give his company a phone call. He asked for their bank account and instructed his colleagues to prepare the contract .

The bank account number was sent within a minute, and Javier took out his cell phone to make the transfer.

However, the old couple angrily said, “This is our house, so who are you to sell it to him? I forbid you to sell it to him.”

The saleswoman approached the old couple at that moment. However, rather than helping her client, she ended up helping her colleague instead

Both in the real estate industry and the car sales industry, salespeople would ultimately rely on working with their colleagues to deal with their customers.

Although they competed with one another, they would still know who they should help when the time came.

The saleswoman stopped the old couple and said, “Madam, sir, for the last time, the person who pays the deposit fee first shall be deemed the owner of this house. If you continue to cause a scene here, I will have no choice but to call the police, sue both of you for interfering with a legal business deal, and have you both arrested!”

Now that she was threatening to call the police on them and have them arrested and thrown into jail, the old couple did not dare retaliate anymore.

However, the old woman suddenly said, “We can pay the deposit fee as well, so why should he pay it first? We’ll pay first since I’m the one who saw this unit first!”

The saleswoman did not know what else to say at that moment. After all, she could not stop the old woman from paying the deposit fee first.

The salesman was also as anxious as the saleswoman, as he was about to potentially lose 1,500 dollars worth of commission. Thus, he hurriedly nudged Javier’s arm, gesturing for the latter to transfer the deposit first.

However, Javier did not seem to be anxious at all. “It’s alright. They came here first, didn’t they? Let them make the transfer first then.”

‘I refuse to believe that this old couple, whose combined age should be around 110 years old, would actually know how to make a bank transfer using their cell phones!

Sure enough, this was exactly the case, as the old woman said, “I don’t know how to transfer money through my cell phone, but I can do it through a bank transfer. I’m going to head to the bank right now.”

Javier then chuckled. “You’d better run fast then because I can make the transfer through my cell phone within seconds.”

The old woman instantly panicked. “You’re cheating! You’re not playing fair! I’m going to sue you in court!”

Javier curiously asked, “What are you going to charge me with? Making a bank transfer through my cell phone? In that case, you’re going to have to sue a lot more people, including UnionPay and the banks, for developing this function. In fact, you’d better sue the country as well because they’re the ones who agreed to let this function move forward.”

The old woman was dumbfounded and looked completely out of her wits.

It was now the old man’s turn to step up and say, “You little sh*t...”

“You old f*ck, try uttering any more nonsense and I’ll smack you senseless. I can’t be bothered to deal with you, yet you keep taking advantage of my kindness... Try uttering another word, go on! Let’s see if the ambulance will end up taking you to the emergency room or to a morgue!” The old man was stunned into silence, as he could tell that Javier was genuinely going to hit him

Chapter 304 Watch Your Words

The old man no longer dared to utter another word after Javier’s violent threat.

However, the old woman suddenly seemed to change her tactics and sat down on the floor, flailing her hands about like a madwoman.

“You lot are so unfair! You real-estate agents are taking his side to bully us! You refuse to let us pay the deposit fee and buy the house. Plus, you’re even ganging up with him to beat us up! Call the reporters! Have them expose their cruel deeds!!!”

According to a saying on the internet, the elderly did not become villains, the villains just grew old.

Jade had never seemed to understand this saying in the past, but after witnessing what the old couple was capable of, she fully understood it now.

Both of them are just full of nonsense and they’re doing anything they want, including behaving like madmen just because they’re old. They’re such shameless people!

I just don’t get it... How do they manage to be so shameless despite being so old?

Seeing that her exquisitely beautiful face was filled with anger, Javier smiled at her and said, “You can’t hope for everyone to be as kind as you are. If that were the case, there wouldn’t be shameless people who trample over the kind people in this world.”

After calming Jade, Javier turned to look at the old woman, who was sitting on the floor.”

“I gave you a chance to pay the deposit, but you failed to do so without insisting on going to the bank. Fine, let’s put that behind us. I’ll give you a chance right now to pay the full amount!” Javier then turned to the salesman. “How much would we have to pay if we paid the full amount? Give me a number.”

The salesman hurriedly began calculating when he heard Javier make such a bold statement.

A moment later, he said, “It’s 1.906 million dollars, but I’ll throw in my own personal discount and make it 1.85 million dollars – instead!”

Although the salesman might have said that this was his personal discount, he must of course have gotten his boss' approval to give that discount beforehand

However, Javier could not be bothered to blame the salesman for that. Instead, he turned to the old woman and said, "Go on, pay the amount. I'll accompany you two to the bank. If you're able to pay the amount within half an hour, the house will be yours. Otherwise, I'll be making the payment the moment your half hour is up." :

The old woman was stunned. There was no way she had that much money! She might have a few hundred thousand dollars in the bank, but the money they needed to buy the house belonged to her daughter, who had said that she would only be back in two days to pay the rest of the sum.

After all that hassle she had gone through, the old woman was now being asked to pay the full sum instead!

'How the hell am I supposed to fork out 1.85 million dollars?!'

The old couple was indeed perfect for each other. As soon as the old woman was rendered speechless, her husband immediately stepped up

However, just as he opened his mouth to say something, Javier suddenly raised his arm at the old man.

"You better zip it, or it won't be words that come out of your mouth."

Although Javier had not raised his voice, the old man could still tell perfectly well that Javier was not making empty threats.

Most importantly, his daughter had only given him that much ammo to behave arrogantly. Thus, now that he was facing someone - just as wealthy as his daughter, he just could not do anything about it.

In the end, the old man chose to sit down on the floor and began whining like a madman, just like his wife.

- Javier laughed scornfully and could not be bothered to deal with them any further. He then directly made the 1.85-million-dollar

transfer.

The salesman hurriedly led Javier and Jade out of the house like kings. At the same time, he told the saleswoman, "Hurry up and get those two old timers out of here. This is already their house. If they refuse to leave, call the police and have them arrested for forceful entry!"

The saleswoman readily took out her cell phone and made a phone call. "Hello, is this the police station?"

Even though the saleswoman had not actually dialed the police, that was more than enough to scare the old couple, who

immediately got up from the floor.

The old woman shot the saleswoman a fierce glare before she turned toward Javier, her face filled with hatred.

“Just you wait! I’ll have my daughter deal with you when she comes back! How dare you steal our house from us! Bah! You shameless boy!”

Javier seemed to be laughing inside. “Who the hell’s the shameless one here?”

Next to him, Jade could no longer endure the old woman’s behavior anymore. “Madam, I’d advise you to adapt to your situation and look at some other houses instead. You’d better not have your daughter cause us any trouble, or she won’t even be able to protect herself!”

This was not a threat but a powerful declaration she knew both she and Javier were definitely capable of realizing.

However, the old woman did not think so. Instead, she thought that Jade was bluffing and needed to be punished.

After mumbling a few more curse words, the old woman still said that she was going to have her daughter get back at them later. :

Javier immediately led Jade away with his arm around her waist. “Let her daughter come. She won’t feel content until she sees her daughter being dragged down into the dumps because of her.”

They then left with the salesman leading the way.

The saleswoman immediately locked up. She was just about to leave but could not help chuckling as she said, “Both of you have seen this house as well, so you need to be careful about any security-related issues as well. Otherwise, should this house be robbed, both of you are going to end up becoming suspects.”

The old woman instantly, said unhappily, “Why? Who are you to accuse us?!”

“I’m just using your previous statement against you. Anyone who views this unit will naturally be deemed a thief. That man bought the house after viewing it, but you didn’t. So, of course both of you will naturally be considered thieves.”

The saleswoman then left after waving goodbye at the old couple passionately.

‘Although they’re potential clients, I seriously can’t stand handling such difficult clients. It’s too damaging for my health.

They’re the type of customer who will keep on calling me after a sale to complain about all sorts of defects they’ve noticed in the house.

‘If that happens, I can’t just ignore them. But they will surely take advantage of me if I entertain them.

“The easiest way out of this for me right now would be not to earn their money. Also, since I’m not earning their money, I can enjoy myself by scoring them!’

Meanwhile, the old woman was feeling extremely unhappy after being scomed by both Javier and the saleswoman.

She took out her cell phone and made a phone call. “Victoria, hurry up and get back here. Your father and I have been bullied into submission! That d-mn boy’s much, much stronger than us... D*mn it! I can’t

tell you clearly on the phone what's going on, so just hurry up and get back here! We've been bullied relentlessly!"

Javier had absolutely no idea who would be blind enough to want to bully the old woman, but he did know that the sales manager of the real-estate company was rather friendly.

The sales manager served Javier and Jade both coffee with a flattering smile. On top of that, he even passionately asked if Javier was planning on getting another house.

Of course, he was half-joking when he said that, but Javier actually began discussing it seriously with Jade.

'We can't have Aunt MJ and Chad live in the company residence as well, can we?'

Jade nodded her head. "Let's get them both a unit each as well. They've definitely contributed a whole lot for the company to be able to reach this stage."

After she said that, Javier made his decision. "Give me two more units."

The sales manager was stunned into silence. What the f*ck? Do they think they're buying pizza right now? They're just buying houses so casually!

It was not until Javier chose two units and paid for them in full that the sales manager regained his senses...

'Alright then, they really are buying pizza...'

Then, the sales manager and all of the salespeople who weren't busy saw Javier and Jade off before they began to gossip enviously

"Now that's what I call rich! Just look at them! They literally bought whatever houses they took a fancy to. I've never even spent money so easily on Amazon before!"

"We're both women, so why is it that her husband's so different from mine? Last night, I was still wondering whether I should purchase a 30-dollar pair of shoes or another one that cost 36 dollars, so I had my husband choose for me. In the end, he chose the 30-dollar pair... Sigh... Why do other women's husbands always seem better than mine."

"D*mn it, I'm sure he's from a rich family. He's the kind of man that flaunts away his family's wealth, in fact. I'm sure he's going to end up squandering away everything he's got one day!"

"F*ck off, I was the one who handled his registration. He's the chairman of Reivaj Group, a company worth billions of dollars, you idiot. He's got so much wealth in comparison to you, yet you think there's going to be a day when he'll end up poorer than you? Are you high?"

Chapter 305 Revolt

Money made the world go around, as they said, and it made it go fast!

For example, every document and required paper had been handled by the sales representative two days later posthaste. Javier paid a king's ransom for the housing property tax, but frankly, he hardly felt the loss when it came to his overall wealth.

By late afternoon, Javier had scouted Clouston's most expensive home design company based on its professional expertise. Just the thought that they were being commissioned to design and renovate three luxury villas made the company pay rapt attention. It dispatched two teams to follow Javier back to his house. They would hash out some designs and let Javier choose the one he liked the most

Jade led the teams into the villas, and the brainstorming began. Javier himself took a seat at the entrance step and lit a cigarette. It mattered very little how the villas would look as long as Jade was pleased.

It was then that trouble paid him a visit.

Oh, it was not Jade, who was busy inside. Trouble literally came for a visit in the form of that cantankerous family of three they had met yesterday: the churlish, tantrum-throwing old couple, who appeared with a young woman squeezed between them today.

She had long, flowy hair, a figure that was not half-bad, and a face hidden behind large-frame shades and a black mask in a style most commonly adopted by celebrities too famous to get any privacy. She must be the daughter then.,

As soon as the trio approached Javier, the old woman trained her finger on Javier, her nostrils flaring. "This is him! That savage snarled at us about beating your father up on top of threatening your mother with rape! This animal of a man right here! You gotta avenge your mother, honey. Show him!"

Her parents had clearly made their daughter after their own image considering how bilious she looked. Raising her fair, toned arm, she pointed at Javier and snarled, "Oh, so you're the tough guy who wants to beat my dad and bully my mom, huh? Ooh, wearing those big boy pants makes you feel like you can take me on, does it? Ha! Spoken like someone who doesn't know who I am"

Javier's mocking snicker interrupted her. "You're right, though. You've wrapped yourself up so tightly in clothes that I have no freaking idea who you are supposed to be. Lemme guess. Zendaya? ScarJo? Oh, I know! You must be Meryl Streep... Nah. Sorry, I just can't get it right, I'm afraid." *F*ck you, d*ckface. You really think I'm here to trade quips with you? Think the f*ck again!" The daughter barked, dropping furious f-bombs before turning to the bodyguard standing behind her. "Punch that piece of sh*t in the face already! I wanna see him curled in a fetal position on the floor before this conversation goes forward!"

Her bodyguard was a hulking mountain. He was nearly two meters tall, and his frame was all muscles and sinew. He could have been mistaken for a hippopotamus standing on two legs, as he seemed to be cobbled from boulders. He even had his hair in a warrior's ponytail. Had it not been for the suit he had on, he would have been mistaken for a WWE Wrestler with a berserker gimmick.

Javier flicked the ashes off his cigarette. "C'mon. We just met! Do we have to fight so soon?" He moaned. "I personally think we should argue like civilized people of the 21st century. Who's with me?"

"No one's f*cking buying your crap! What are you waiting for, Boulder Bear?! Beat the bejeezus out of him!"

At her shrieking command, Boulder Bear-which was ostensibly the name of the bodyguard-lunged at him. His first leap ended with a booming stomp that kicked up rolling dust, like a hippopotamus on a

stampede. He shot toward Javier with unstoppable force and a burst of momentum not unlike the very first eruption of a volcano.

The daughter looked over her shoulder at her parents with a smirk on her lips. "Mom, Dad, meet Boulder Bear. I spent a fortune to hire this big man for my protection. He costs, like, a few million dollars! But he more than makes up for it with his sheer might and skills. Like, he once fought a goddamn brown bear in the forest with his own fists, completely topless, and won! Beating up this pipsqueak? Piece of cak-"

Boom.

- It sounded like a big bag of concrete had just plummeted to the spot next to her.

Dust was kicked up into the air, creating a frenzy due to the disturbance and choking the daughter. She sputtered to recover, but the shock and disbelief in her features remained the same.

Boulder Bear was lying flat on the ground. Was he dead? He looked dead to her!

What the f*ck had happened?! She had missed it. She had been so busy talking about how powerful Boulder Bear was that she had scarcely shot a glance in Javier's direction. Why should she? Javier should be able to withstand more than one punch, right? She would still be able to enjoy seeing that piece of sh*t have his face rearranged after she bragged about her bodyguard!

Who would have thought she would not even have the time to finish bragging about him? Now, Boulder Bear was lying at her feet, staying completely motionless right under her mini skirt.

Her ire skyrocketed. Goddamn it, she had told him to punch that parent-bullying-d*ckhead in the face! The hell was he doing staring up her skirt?!

She scrambled, taking a step back and raising her high-heeled foot to stomp the bodyguard. "Goddamn it, stop this bullsh*t and get up already! You're fooling no one by playing dead!" Boulder Bear did not move. No matter how hard she stomped, her million-dollar, bear-fighting bodyguard simply would not budge. She crouched closer and took off her shades to study him, only to realize he had been knocked out of his wits.

The daughter was stunned. Everything was completely at odds with her expectations! She had thought that Javier could take some blows, but to be good enough to not even suffer one and then knock Boulder Bear out with one punch?!

Javier took the cigarette out of his mouth. "I thought we were a bunch of civilized people, man. 'Hey, let's not fight!' I said, but no one listened. Now look at what happened! Some guy just bit the dust. What should we do next? Who should I punch? I will leave the choice up to the three of you," he said mockingly.

The daughter was embarrassed. It went without saying that none of them could survive a fight with some guy who had managed to make Boulder Bear collapse with one attack! On the other hand, the ego that had driven the trio into today's crusade was not going to tolerate any bruises, so they were not going to just stand down either.

The daughter took off her mask and revealed her blood-red lips. Taking in a deep breath, she snarled, "That dump you call a home cost you 1.9 mil, right? I'll give you 2 million to get the hell out of here!"

Javier laughed. "God, who the hell are you, sister? Aren't you a high-rolling, filthy-rich upper-class gal? You sure can throw around 100,000 dollars as if it's just glorified confetti to you!"

"What, are you jealous? My daughter is so rich that she can crush your back with just how much money she makes! A movie she stars in alone can bring her millions!" the old woman retorted smugly,

All the pieces clicked into place. Reeling in realization, Javier exclaimed, "Oh, so you're an actress! Come on, let me see who you're supposed to be."

He beckoned to the young woman to take her shades off, but the latter stubbornly refused. In response, he grinned and added, "Come on. If you keep spurning me like that, I might just vent my impatience by punching your pa."

The daughter had no choice but to obey when she heard his threat. Though she looked unwilling, she took her shades off.

Well, she looked... homely. More than that, Javier genuinely had no idea who she was. Still, even though he had no clue who this million-dollar actress was, maybe his parents might? Maybe...

The older woman began bragging, "This right here is my precious daughter! Precious and biologically related to me too. She was a part of my body for at least nine months! My proud, precious Victoria Loesch-the most famous actress in the industry!"

The description concerning her relationship with her daughter was a little overboard. Did she really think no one would know what being a "mother" meant if she forgot to resort to unwanted over-descriptions?

Javier thought she could stand to be even more upfront about what "motherhood" was if the old woman was so inclined. "You know, you could have just said that she crawled out of your uterus if you wanna be that specific."

The old woman paled. Try as she might, she could not come up with a retort that was appropriately biting. Victoria was furious enough to ignore any witty retorts and get straight to fuming.

"F*ck you. Would it hurt you to be a little more civilized?"

Javier laughed. "Oh, now we're supposed to play nice, like decorous, civilized people? Why didn't I see you act like such a person yourself this whole time then? You went straight into a shrieking meltdown! What is civility to you? Your sanitary pads? You have one close to you when you need it and throw it away when you're done?"

Victoria's face turned white as a sheet, and yet she knew that having her face exposed prevented her from matching Javier's vulgar juvenility even if it was just to fight back. She was a celebrity, after all, and that came with a demanding need to maintain her image and reputation...

Taking another deep breath, she ignored his insult and declared, "Talking to you is a waste of my breath. 2.3 million dollars. Take it and GTFO."

Javier flicked the ashes off his cigarette and got to his feet, clapping the dust off his backside.

He then loomed over Victoria. "You think you're really rich, huh?"

Victoria looked up at the man invading her personal space as he leered down at her. She felt a little intimidated, but her image as a celebrity demanded that she keep a straight face and show no fear.

She began to do what she did best: acting. With practiced ease, she flashed him a gibing smirk, replying, "I'm not a top billionaire, sure, but my wealth is handsome enough to crush you under its weight."

Javier made a production of having an epiphany. Oh, I see! I see. Good. I'll just have to crush the source of your money and turn you into a dirt-poor plebeian then."

Chapter 306 A Couple of Old Farts

Javier actually remembered Victoria Loesch a little. She was one of the young rising stars Chad had contacted back when he had been facing Lloyd Young. He had not exposed her darkest secrets to hurt Lloyd because he had been busy promoting the movie "Ackerman."

He would never have exposed her, to be honest, had it not been for the special circumstances they had found themselves in. She might not know this, but Victoria had actually been working under Javier this whole time.

That was the problem, was it not? She had been disrespecting her boss's boss, right down to declaring she would crush him with her wealth alone. That was just inappropriate!

He produced his phone and started calling Lloyd while Victoria watched, sneering at him. "What now? Gonna call some tabloid to make up 'news'? Please, you know they'll argue for me rather than against me, right? Hell, my fans are an army! Go and stir up a riot if you aren't scared of being canceled to hell and back!"

"Gee, you're Miss Badass, aren't you?" Javier sighed.

Victoria was an even worse trash-talker than that, but she stopped herself. Right now, she had no idea if he was calling someone or secretly recording her.

Not that Javier needed her to speak anymore. What was more important was knowing what Lloyd would do for today's impudence. As soon as the call was connected, Javier got straight to the point. "Young! There's a Victoria Loesch working with your studio, right?"

Young?! As in Lloyd Young?

The old man and his wife might have no inkling who he might be, but their daughter did. She had to. He was her boss, and just earlier this year, Victoria had tried to gain Lloyd's favor through sex. It had not happened, but only because Lloyd had ignored her advances altogether.

Now, though, this unknown b*stard had just gone straight to calling her boss and addressed him in a tone only a superior would use while talking to his underling!

It was this little thing that alarmed her. Sure, Javier could be bluffing, but no one but the people in the business world could have possibly heard of Mr. Young's name. The fact that he had...

“-Oh, brother, you have no idea how uppity she has been acting. I just bought a house for myself, and this gal brought some big, muscular hunk to beat me up. Then, she wanted to toss 2.3 million dollars on my face to get me out of the neighborhood. You must be really rich, I said!” Javier recounted everything for the man on the other side of the line.

“I’m curious, Lloyd. Is every star and celebrity under you this rude and self-important just because they’re rich?” he finished with a rhetorical question, grinning.

Lloyd could feel his face burning. When he had started his day today, he had not once imagined that one of his many, many lesser known stars would be stupid enough to cross his boss.

“Understood, boss. I’m gonna handle this for you.”

After a confirmation like that, Javier did not need to say anything else. He hung up the call and lit another cigarette. Chuckling with leery contempt, he told Victoria, “Those are some sexy lips you have there, sugar. I wonder if you’ll be on your knees a few minutes from now, begging me with those cherry-red lips to help you...”

It was a special kind of humiliation for a woman to be disrespected in such a lewd way in front of her parents, and Victoria was naturally enraged.

“You-f*cking-animal! I wouldn’t do that to you even in your horniest dreams! Don’t even think about it, d*ckface!” she bristled. “You probably think you’re slick for overhearing the name of my boss and using it for this stupid phone call bluff. Well, suck it, loser! I wasn’t born yesterday! Why don’t you tell him to call me himself, huh? Go on, tell him to call me with that sh*t-eating grino f yours!”

She was so haughty and furiously belligerent that it was hard to tell if she was just posing or if she had a real reason to be so confident. Javier would not waste his time analyzing the irrelevant, though, because he was sure she was going to receive the call she wanted anyway.

Three puffs of smoke later, Victoria’s phone rang. She glanced at her screen and saw that it was her client, who had needed her for some advertising work.

Victoria breathed a sigh of relief to herself. As long as it was not her boss!

She looked up at Javier with renewed smugness. “You see this? My client is calling me to tell me about my next advertising job! Another 100,000 is coming home to mama. Oh, God, what am I gonna do with all this money?!”

Javier grinned and beckoned to her phone. “Pick it up, sugar. I wanna hear how much you’ll be making this time.”

Victoria did and put the call on loudspeaker. When she spoke, her voice suddenly had an overly sweet coat to it. “Oh, Mr. Jones! Lemme guess...Another product in need of some starpower? Okay! Our last deal was...2.3 million dollars, right? Hmm. I thought it seemed a little too much for someone I kinda considered a dear friend, so I’ll do it for the lowered price of 2 million dollars this time! Consider the discount a gift from me to you!”

“Miss Loesch, with all due respect, I’m calling you to inform you that our company has decided to stop working with you from now on. Goodbye and good luck.”

The dissembled coyness on her face hardly had the time to fade when abject shock washed over her features. She had wanted to use this as a chance to show off to Javier. She had wanted to blind him with her glitz and glamor!

Who the hell would have expected this to happen?! It was like finding out one had been pregnant for weeks since the last time one had had sex! She could not fathom why a client with a good working relationship with her would just drop her like that. To think this had happened right after she had given him a 300,000 dollar discount!

Nothing made sense!

Patching up her lost dignity in front of her gawking parents was the least of her worries now. What she had to do urgently was call her manager, and put their conversation on loudspeaker at that. She had to salvage her loss. She had to repair her ego!

“Oy, you! That’s right, it’s me! You had one job, man One f*cking job! How much did you f*ck up to blow our contract with Mr. Jones

—

She scarcely made it that far when her manager went completely off the rails so loudly that he cut off Victoria’s own tirade. “No, f*c k you, b*tch! Or maybe b*tch doesn’t cut it when it comes to describing you! You’re a f*cking failure! Even your looks failed hard enough to warrant surgical correction. I’m done with you. So long, bitch. Don’t call me ever again!”

.

The call ended with the surreal, hollow beat of a conversation cut short.

Victoria was gobsmacked

What the hell? Nothing was making sense. Her advertising work was suddenly gone. Her manager had fired her for no apparent reason...and without mincing words too. Just what the f*ck was going on here? Everything had been normal a minute ago.

And then it had derailed so hard it had gone straight to...

She whipped her face in Javier’s direction, an ugly, foreboding feeling creeping into her chest.

He flashed her a toothy grin, and she shivered. It was like looking at a hyena’s smile.

Before she could even properly digest what was happening, her phone rang again. This time, she played it safe and listened to the call privately, but that did not change the fact that she had been thoroughly humiliated twice in a row. Her parents were showing signs of distress and desperation too, as their golden goose of a daughter was suddenly losing income.

They had spent the first half of their lives surviving on welfare and through underhanded means before they had been blessed with a daughter who had managed to grow out of the mud she had been bom into. They now depended on her to live like upper class elites! This could not be happening to her!

Unfortunately, it seemed that reality had decided to ignore their silent prayers. When misery comes, they come not single spies. They come in battalions.

Within a window of ten minutes, Victoria kept receiving calls. She could not stop keeping score of how many times she heard that

she was being fired-by her advertising clites, her manager, two drama series, a C-list movie with her as a main character, and three separate talk shows that had decided to boot her out of their guest lists...

The calls never stopped. Worse, all of them ended the same way: "We're sorry, but it would be better for us not to work together anymore."

Victoria felt like the world was crashing down on her. Had she offended a member of some secret, world-controlling cabal? Everything was a mess now!

She turned to Javier and finally remembered that he was the one who had called Lloyd first. Eyes wide in disbelief and panic, she cried out, "This was your doing?!"

Chapter 307 For the Good of the People

It was at that moment that Victoria knew how she had f*cked up.

She was more than certain that the call Javier had made to Lloyd had been legitimate. No one else other than the boss of her company could have the ability to cancel her in such a short amount of time. Nor could anyone else have the power to take away all of her resources and opportunities as a star, including any advertising work and talk show appearances.

As he flicked the ashes off his cigarette again, Javier's toothy grin remained the same. "Yep, it was me. What, you wanna punch me in the face for it?"

Victoria dared not, even if she wanted to. Three months of inactivity could chill one's momentum to stardom enough when it came to an actress of her type. Even if she could, theoretically, rise out of her hiatus and back into new heights, it was still going to be an uphill battle. What more could she expect after being canceled altogether?

She might very well have no way of continuing her career

How could she not panic?!

"Who the f*ck are you?! Why are you doing this to me-tell me why?!" Victoria shrieked, feeling infuriated. "I'm just an actress trying to make ends meet. I'm the underdog here, while you...You have all that power now, don't you, Mr. One-of-the-elites?! So why: play this game of power imbalance against me? Can't tell you're being a bully by doing that?",

Javier was earnestly stunned. "Wait, what? I am the bully? Excuuuuse me, princess! Your parents started it. They insisted on snatching the house I chose-even though they could not pay up at all! I can afford the house I chose, by the way, but they would not let me buy it no matter what. Seriously, sister, who do you think taught them how to feel this goddamn entitled?"

"And then you came rushing over to me without even trying to get to the bottom of this! You immediately ordered your bodyguard to punch me in the face while you shouted about how much of a

badass you are. Then, when I knocked your dumb muscle out, you started rudely throwing money in my face to get me to back out of buying my house. I don't know, man. Is it just me, or is it kinda funny that you called me the bully after doing all that?

"And let's not get to the part when you called yourself 'just an actress trying to make ends meet.' Sister, you have been shouting about how big of a star you are and how much clout you have in the entertainment industry! Since when are you the underdog?" he retorted. "And you asked me why I am opposing you, as if you really are too stupid to be self-aware...Or wait. Are you genuinely that stupid after all?"

Victoria was at a loss for words. If there was anything she was genuinely unaware of, it was the fact that she had switched tactics midway through their fight. She had started off as the proud queen ready to quell a rebellion and then turned into an underdog crying about her disadvantages. Though it was not conscious on her part, she had easily switched roles and started playing the victim.

It just seemed plausible that this annoying thorn in her side must be as powerful in status as Lloyd was.

As the exchange went on, Victoria's parents' anxiety and panic grew. They had no idea what was going on, per se, but they could tell that their daughter must have offended someone strong.

The older woman showcased her own acting skills when she quickly stepped in with a fake smile. "Alright, I think we get how serious the situation is, boss. We're just your typical plebeians! We can be too blind for our good sometimes, you know that. But I know you're a bigger person than us boorish, everyday people, aren't you? Please turn the other cheek and let our Victoria off the hook just this once, okay? Let's not cause things to escalate any more, agreed?"

Javier laughed scornfully. "The last time I gave you guys this chance and walked away, you were shrieking about how badass your daughter is and how hard she's gonna squash me, right? Didn't I tell you to just be a decent person and not drag your daughter into this mess? Gosh, but you didn't listen, did you? And now that you realized you can't actually bully me through her, you just wanna let this pass quickly and worm your way out of any accountability, huh?"

"Ma'am, you've been an adult way longer than we have. Hell, you're a senior! You should be aware of known concepts like accountability and owning up to your mistakes, right?" he added.

Javier did not plan to let this go just like that. He hated people like Victoria-people who thought a little fame alone could make them a diva. It was all-too-easy to destroy someone like Victoria Loesch; they could easily find another Victoria-whomever among real aspiring actresses and replace this one.

No, the most important aspect about a company-signed celebrity was their character. A problematic trouble-magnet should always be rooted out before they destroyed the company with one ginormous, mutually-destructive antic.

By this point, Victoria finally realized who was the trouble-magnet in her rank. The bane whose actions had inadvertently caused her to suffer today,

"You told me he threatened you with rape! Threatened dad that he would beat him into a bloody pulp! Mom, what the hell?!" Victoria bristled, her flaring temper causing her parents to cower in embarrassment.

“Well, it’s ‘cause... It’s b-b-because you said you’re busy and you wouldn’t come back to solve our problems, and, well...you had to come back and help us with this one. That’s why we told a little white lie”

“W-W-White lie?! You lied to me?!” Victoria erupted, stomping her feet: “I swear, one day, you two old farts will be the death of me!”

Welp. She must have quite a mouth to call her own parents something so nasty.

Immediately, Victoria turned to Javier and put on her meekest front: “Look, I’m sorry, okay? I didn’t know they lied to me and put a spin on the truth like that. I didn’t know that the truth was different. You know why I might have been a little mad, right?” she explained. “So please don’t be mad about an honest mistake, okay? Let me make it up to you.”

Javier’s lips curled into another toothy grin, pushing his eyes into a half-squint. “You don’t have the best memory, I see. You must have forgotten about me praising your sexy lips. ‘Member that?”

His comment gave Victoria hope. She had always been the kind of person who would do anything to get to the top. Nothing was beyond the pale if it meant taking her a step higher than where she was. Her sensuality was but one of the tools in her arsenal.

A new fog of seduction took over her eyes.

She said nothing, but it was as though a temptress had possessed her. She was casting a spell using her gaze alone.

Unfortunately for her, Javier was not going to let her tempt him like that. He returned to his seat in front of the door and pointed at his crotch. “Go on Apologize to me while your parents watch.”

He obviously referred to more than a verbal apology. Had that been the case, Victoria’s previous apology would have sufficed-this was what clued her in on what he really wanted from her. She cast a glance over her shoulder at her parents. It was awkward, to say the least. But she thought about her future and decided that, for all the awkward implications this was going to cause her, she would rather go through this than die in a ditch somewhere in Hollawyd, completely forgotten.

Her internal debate was brief. Victoria approached Javier and dropped down to her knees, extending her hand toward his crotch. There was no flush of embarrassment anywhere in her face-in fact, she looked positively lascivious.

The older woman and her husband felt totally humiliated. They had not expected their daughter to be so open to doing something like this. It was just embarrassing and undignified!

And yet, they did not stop her.

The disgust and humiliation were easy to see on their faces, and yet they said nothing to stop their daughter. It was as if she had nothing to do with them.

Just as Victoria was about to close her fingers around her target, she felt a hard kick deep into her gut. The force caused her to fall and roll away from him as Javier retracted his foot. Snickering, he sneered, “As if you’re good enough for me!”

She was stunned. Then, shock gave away to scored rage. "You were playing with me?!"

Javier flicked the butt of his cigarette toward her, and it fell right inside her skirt. The ember scalded her sensitive skin, and she cried out in pain. Only she knew where exactly it had landed on her.

"I don't even want to touch you, sis. You're just a cheap thrill at most. And all I have been doing is trying to stave off my boredom by playing with you," he announced. "This has been boring. Just get the f*ck out of my sight!"

He got to his feet and clapped the dust off his butt, ready to leave. But Victoria was not going to let him go so soon.

"No, you f*cking stop right where you are! You mother*cking d*ckface, you think you can just cancel me and win, huh? Sorry to disappoint you, but you aren't gonna put me under your thumb just like that! What you think Lloyd's gonna listen to you like a dog? Well, even if he does grovel to you, I can always go somewhere else. There will always be agencies and companies that want my talent!"

- Javier waved dismissively, as if beckoning to her to do whatever she pleased. He sauntered back into the villa before leaving one

last threat behind. "There's one last thing I want to say to the three of you: This is my home. You come here without invitation one more time and I'll chop off your legs. Don't try me!"

Without looking back at them, he turned and went inside.

Victoria gritted her teeth, feeling helpless. Her mother finally approached her and tried to help her out, admonishing her. "Come on, get up, sweetie. We can't let anyone see you like this. You're a star, remember?" Victoria decked the older woman's face with her hand as though it was a whip.

"Star, my *ss! If it weren't for your stupidity, you old farts, you think I'd ever end up in a state like this one?!"

The older woman gawked at her, feeling shocked.

Chapter 309 A Celebrity of the Seedy Underworld

Someone had shot Chessie, and no one could tell who it could have been

All the text stated after that was where they were right at that moment.

Javier wasted no time reporting the address to Herschel. The car took a sharp turn away from the airport and into the freeway, the flight aborted and abandoned.

Faye would never have texted him if it were not that big of a problem, and reality made Javier suspicious. When he called her on her personal number, no one picked it up.

That meant that Chessie's condition was severe enough that it prevented her from picking up her phone.

The revelation moved the deepest part of his lividity. What kind of special foolhardy motherf*cker would dare touch one of his women?!

His rage even boiled over to Faye. What the f*ck was she doing if the woman she had been sent to protect had ended up getting harmed anyway? And harmed this severely at that! How useless was she?!

Fighting back the ugly flame in his chest, he called Trevor and told him there was an emergency, so he had to cancel his appearance. Fortunately, the event was nothing essential; the only thing Javier would have to mourn was missing the chance to see the prototype being produced.

However monumental that might have been, it paled in comparison to Chessie's safety. It was the only thing on his mind now, and he prayed she would not be in harm's way.

More than that, he was worried about the identity of whoever had shot her.

Could it be the Kerseys?

If it were...If it were one of them, then that was the end of the good relationship between him and the sly old fox. Anyone who dared touch Chessie would have to answer to him without exception.

His car tore through the asphalt.

It was about eight at night when Javier finally reached the hospital Chessie was currently in. She was still recuperating in the ICU, but there was a silver lining: After an intense operation akin to a battle between life and death, Chessie had been rescued and brought back from the dead and had now survived the worst of it.

The shot had gone through her back, and as the trajectory had been a little askew, the bullet had missed her heart.

It was this stroke of fortune that had saved her.

Javier met Faye on his way to the ICU, and she hung her head in abject fear. She would not lift her face to look him in the eye at all.

Honestly, if she raised her head, Javier would deck her across her cheeks without a word. He had not already done it only because he was not in the mood to go through the motion of lifting her head by her chin. He walked into the ICU and was immediately greeted by the sight of Chessie comatose. She was beautiful, just as she always was... but her face... It lacked color. It was deathly pale.

Next to her, the respirator worked with rhythmic hums. He looked at the ECG screen, and after making sure her heartbeat was even and normal, he felt his own heart finally settle down.

He caressed Chessie's supple cheeks, got to his feet, and left. He passed by Faye again, and this time, he turned to Herschel and ordered him, "I want you to investigate this. Why was she shot, and who could the culprit be?"

Faye was mute, but Javier was not going to waste his time trying to talk to her by texting her on the phone.

He instead went to see the doctor as soon as he left the ICU. The doctor turned out to be a professional who cared very much about her patient. Despite the late hour, she had not retired to rest yet. Instead, he found her studying her patient's health report.

When she heard Javier express his worries, she mollified his anxiety by confirming Chessie's recuperation. The situation was rather critical, she admitted, but the damage would cause little harm to her both in the present and in the future. If no viral infection was to occur, and Chessie woke up, she would be discharged after ten days to half a month of hospitalization.

Javier thanked the doctor multiple times before returning to the ICU. Herschel had just finished piecing out the information Faye had provided by that point and was ready to report his findings.

"It was an infamous underground syndicate from another state. They aren't just involved in gang wars, boss. They also operate as a drug cartel. The conflict between them and Chessie was drug-related. Apparently, they wanted to sell their stuff in Chessie's turf

after crossing over to our state. Chessie fought back and kicked them out. They then tried to talk her into a cooperation, but she refused.

"The next thing they did was smuggle their drugs through Chessie's turf, and this time, she called the heat on them. The smugglers and their mooks were all captured and detained by the cops, which pissed the syndicate off enough that they started plotting revenge," he explained. "The leader of this organization is someone called Saul Smith. Word is that he's near his fifties and has been a lowlife thug and gang member forever. He's managed to make a small fortune for himself too-through drugs, no less."

It was all Herschel knew at the moment, but it was enough for Javier to make a call. "You take Running Man and GT Racer with you. I want that Saul Smith brought to me...alive."

Herschel almost seemed too delighted to go on his new quest. He briskly went down the stairs and summoned Running Man and G T Racer both before leaving with them.

Javier balled his hands into fists. The only thing that mattered to him was seeing the face behind the gun aimed at his woman. How massive were his balls for him to do something as stupid as that?

He sat next to Chessie's bed, pointedly ignoring Faye, who remained nearby. She made no sound that could attract his attention either. She simply stood in the same spot she had been taking up since the very beginning. She was motionless, quiet, and remorseful

Disappointing Javier was not the biggest reason for her remorse. No, it was the fact that she had failed Chessie. Chessie had treated her like a sister, and yet Faye had failed to protect her sister from harm. It was a bitter feeling to swallow.

The silence stretched on. Half an hour later, Chessie finally stirred. Groggy eyes considered the anxiety etched on Javier's features before she breathed weakly. "Why are you here?"

"Ran out of cash, ma'am. Gonna need to eam about 95 dollars fast."

Chessie laughed, but the action made her wound stretch enough for her mirth to choke and tum into a grimace as she drew in a sharp breath.

"God, please don't laugh. Just focus on getting better, alright? I'll deal with that b*stard Saul Smith for you."

The only reason Javier could have known that name was if Faye had told him. Faye was the only one who could have told him about her accident too.

Chessie turned to look at Faye, whose remorse lay bare in her expression. As she fought back the pain, a smile shadowed Chessie's lips. "Hey, Faye? This isn't your fault. It's not...your fault that those b*stards shot me while you...were using the bathroom. There was no way you could go....without peeing, right? It's not your fault. It's not...your fault at all."

Chessie was trying to tell Faye not to blame herself for the crimes of others, but more importantly, she was saying it for Javier to hear it too. She was hoping the man would spare Faye from the brunt of his rage, so she stared into his eyes with a pleading look.

Javier could not bear to see her look at him like that, so he relented and nodded. Turning to Faye, he sighed. "Fine. This isn't your mistake to bear. Go home and rest. I'll keep Chessie company tonight."

Faye waved, moving a bit. She made some simple signs, informing him that she would be standing at the main door to ensure Chessie's safety.

Javier was not going to argue with her since she insisted, so he let her do what she pleased.

He kept her company for half the night...until he fell asleep with his head slumped against Chessie's headboard. He only woke up the next morning because the nurse-who did not seem to think he deserved a warmer reception-shouted at him.

"Were you really keeping her company, young man? Please, that young woman out there did a better job standing guard than you! She's been standing out there like a guard dog the entire night without visiting the bathroom even once!"

She had not even visited the bathroom? Faye must hate herself for what had happened to Chessie while she had been using the loo, so she dared not leave even for a bathroom break anymore.

Chessie had woken up the same time Javier had, so she overheard the nurse's words and shot Javier a look.

He understood immediately. Rising to his feet, he went outside and met the tireless guardswoman. "Go eat something and then sleep on that empty bed next to Chessie. I'm not gonna blame you for what happened this time, but if this happens again, I'll tell Ingrid, and you're gonna get it from her!"

It took both encouragement and a small threat to persuade Faye to leave her post for breakfast, though Javier noticed the place she dashed straight to was the bathroom...

God knew how much Faye missed the smell of the toilet!

After two days of staying in the ICU, the young woman was transferred to a VIP ward. As one could easily have guessed from its

name, it was the kind of room reserved for the rich. The more money one could afford to pay, the better care one would get and the more comfortable the environment and facilities would be for whoever was keeping the patient company.

Chessie's underlings and the police had paid them a visit during those two days. Since Chessie had suffered a near-fatal gunshot wound, the hospital was mandated by law to report it to the police regardless of the patient's wealth. Chessie, for her part, had

already prepared an excuse. As she explained to the officers, she was adamant that she had no idea why the culprit had shot her. She testified to having no enemies and not knowing anyone dangerous that she might have offended

The police might have lodged a case concerning Chessie's situation, but so far, their only lead was the surveillance camera-which had been busted at the time of the shooting. At the very least, though, one should admire and thank the law enforcers for their hard work while trying to crack the case. Not even half an hour had passed since the police had left when Javier met Herschel, who had returned to the hospital. "We got him, boss."

Javier instructed Faye to take care of Chessie. Then, with Herschel taking the lead, he left to see Mr. Saul Smith, the leader of a massive syndicate from their neighboring state. He could not wait to see that man himself. Could not wait to see just how massive his balls must be for him to aim a gun at one of his beloved and pulled that f*cking trigger.

Chapter 310 Of Man and Monster

Javier met him in an old, abandoned warehouse. Saul Smith was a man close to his fifties and yet he still looked rather fit and ripped. Tattoos crawled all over his body, except his face, which was quite a terror to behold as it was. A long scar, indicating that it used to be a knife wound, ran down his right eye and reached the left corner of his lips, accentuating the inhumanity of his appearance.

Javier could hear Saul's voice reverberating from the warehouse even before he stepped inside. "You mad motherf*ckers. Showing your pretty faces like that for me with no care in the world. Why are you so sure I won't kill every last one of you once I'm outta here, eh?"

He studied the bandage around Running Man's shoulder and asked, "How bad is this?"

Running Man waved. "Just a scratch, Boss. The wussy retaliation of cornered prey holding a knife, more like it. Ain't nothing to be compared to bombs on the battlefield."

Javier smiled and patted him on the shoulder. He took a cigarette out of his pocket and lit it before approaching their captive, who was tied to a pillar, "What were you yammering about just now?"

Saul turned out to be as mad as he looked. He did not seem to think he should be worried about being tied up to a pillar in the enemy's base at all. His eyes were staring into Javier's, and his lips cracked, forming an unhinged smile. "You mad motherf*ckers. Parading around with your faces right in front of my eyes like supermodels on a runway, are you now?"

Javier let out a noncommittal hum. He then pointed at Running Man. "Did you hear what he said then?"

Saul had, as a matter of fact, as Running Man was within earshot. It did not mean he understood why Javier made a point out of it, so he simply stared at Javier.

"He dead*ss called the wound you inflicted a p*ssy compared to the ones he sustained on the battlefield, you dolt," Javier said placidly. "If you had even one brain cell in that skull of yours, you'd

have already realized that he has no problem murdering people. We, on the other hand? We do not plan to let you live another day.”

Some form of clarity seemed to dispel the crazed look in Saul’s eyes at that thought. For a moment, he simply gawked at Javier.

He suddenly let out a guffaw. “Ohh, so that’s the game? Jesus, why didn’t you just saaaaay so? Or better yet, just skip this yimmer yammer and kill me already! You don’t lead a life like mine without signing a deal with the Devil, junior. Satan is like a long suffering wife waiting for me in hell. He’s been waiting for my soul to come home. Come help poor Satan, would ya? He’s missed m e so much!”

Javier nodded. “You aren’t afraid of death then.”

His answer tickled Saul, causing him to burst into an uproar of chortles. “Honey, I wouldn’t be dealing with drugs if I gave a flying f* ck about death. The number of crimes I’ve committed, oh Lord-big men in black suits will have to fry my dead body with a sh*t ton more electric chairs than just the one to balance that ledger! Ha, light me up like a Christmas tree on fire, babe!”

Tsk, tsk. How charming.

Javier thought for a moment. “Sigh. Well, if death isn’t what you’re scared of, then I guess I won’t kill you. Death is only a satisfactory threat for cowards, because they at least die many times before their death.”

Saul had almost no inkling what Javier meant. “F*ck my life. I just had to be captured by some jobless Shakespeare major. Just kill me or torture me or whatever, I beg of thee! Don’t make me go to sleep so soon after your recital!” Saul moaned. “Though if you really wanna perform, try moaning and squealing and screaming like b*tches when they’re horny and getting f*cked by my rock hard d*ck. I sure love me the chorus of women orgasming-now that’s f*cking poetry! Haha, ‘f*cking’ poetry, get it?!”

Javier cast a glance at Herschel, who was standing next to him. “Would you look at that! Looks like we got ourselves a bad-f*cking-* ss, didn’t we? A bigshot who f*cks Lady Death while a nuclear bomb is strapped to his anus! Listening to his words will make hair grow on your chest! Jesus, thousands of years of human evolution have perfected this bad*ss specimen for us to marvel at him, Hersch. I’m so touched and awed that I’m about to cry!

“Let’s show him the respect befitting a hero of his magnitude, man. Go get that thing you hid in your spare tire compartment.”

Herschel stiffened a little. “Hey... Wait a minute! Since when do you know about that?”

“For f*ck’s sake, Hersch, just grab it. Of course I f*cking know. Why wouldn’t I know what sort of sh*t you smuggled back home?”

An inch away from being kicked in his derriere, Herschel scrambled to his SUV. Javier turned back to Saul. “You’re gonna love this, Saul. You’ve never had this much fun!”

Smuggled back home, he had said. Even Saul could not help his curiosity-which, in a way, also alarmed him a little. To be curious

was to admit not knowing what something was, after all.

“So, while we’re waiting, you mind giving me a cigarette before I return to the arms of my wife in hell? At least those death-row inmates get a nice feast before they die, you know.”

“Nah!” Javier rebuffed. “Nicotine calms anxiety, and I don’t feel merciful enough to give you that much. Besides, you’re not gonna be executed. What are you talking about? It’d be a grave sin to let humanity’s greatest badass die by my hand, man. It’ll be a major disrespect to you too.”

Saul did not appreciate having his mind read. “Well, sh*t. You really hate my guts, don’t you?” he sneered. “F*ck you and your cigarette, Sh*tspare. Would it kill you to at least enlighten me and tell me why the f*ck I am your enemy?”

“Oh, now this is reasonable.” Javier nodded. “You hurt Chessie. You know what that means.”

Saul reeled in belated realization. “Of course! Hahaha, of-f*cking-course!” He chortled. “Now that’s karma, ain’t it? I hired a hitman to end that bitch, and the b*tch’s white knight’s here to get back at me now. Karma, babe!”

Javier exhaled a long puff of smoke. “You’re taking this surprisingly well.”

“Junior, when you’re in the kind of business I am, you better f*cking be. I’ve learned that if you punch some motherf*cker at school, you better be ready to be punished with a belt for it. I was only in the first grade back then! You think I wouldn’t have learned more than that after so many years?

“But I gotta teach you something your Shakespearean education didn’t tell you, junior: This society ain’t run by treating b*tches like the rich. Bros are here to stand by your side. Hoes? They are here for a ride. The only point of their f*cking existence is, pardon my French, to be f*cked. All those niceties that come out of her mouth while you’re boning her? Ain’t real, bruh. If you wanna make it big, you turn to your bros. Just look at the three you’ve got right here! Now, those are some good boys! They barged into my den, tied me up like a mother*cking POW, and then hauled my *ss all the way here. Now, that’s some f*cking skill-respect!”

“That b*tch you’re f*cking, though? She is as dumb as broads come. Wouldn’t make money when she could! She got her panties tight over some code of honor, as though she’s running a knights’ guild. For f*ck’s sake! Get on with the times, c*nt. Old-school feudalism? Try modern-world classicism. Try goddamn capitalism-money, my dear boy! Money, money, money’s our god! Honor and fealty? They can’t survive jacksh*t in our ugly-*ss times!

“If I had it my way, I’d have bound that dumb bitch with ropes and locked her in a cabin ain’t no one knows about. A large doghouse for a b*tch, you dig? Play with her when you’re feeling like it, kick her back into the cabin when you get sick of her face. Saves time, satisfies your needs, and it’s hassle-free. You see the logic in this?

“Maybe we should work together, junior. You’ll get all the money you ever want. All the hoes you see on TV. You can be an animal to them all you want. Oh lord, you wouldn’t believe how quiet they are. They can’t even let out a f*cking moan in public ‘cause their reputation can’t take it. So what can they do? They moan for you! God, I’ve f*cked so many of them back in my turf already!”

Saul was almost unexpectedly verbose for a captive, but all that speech was really meant to achieve was persuade Javier into letting him go. He simply hid that intention under layers and layers of bullshit-bullsh*t that worked for his strong man act while he tried to save his life.

“That was one amazing speech, senior. Your rhetoric skill is presidential and bad*ss as f*ck. I almost burst into applause!” Javier exclaimed. “Still, I think I’d rather see how brave and unbreakable you really are. Maybe we will work together if you manage to surpass my expectations.”

Saul guffawed. “Ha! Come at me, junior. Let’s see if your fists give out before my bones do!”

“Fists?” Javier snorted. “Who told you anything about using my hands?”

Right on cue, Herschel returned from outside with a Heckler & Koch MP7. Javier took the rather modest-sized gun from his hand and began to check its magazine.

“Ah, Heckler & Koch MP7. A personal defense weapon with low recoil and high accuracy. A very effective gun in all respects, and very mobile as well. Plenty of countries outfit their military with it, including the Naval Special Warfare Development Group of Sammius,” he explained. “Sammius doesn’t do subpar weaponry, senior. So what does that say about this lil’ gun in my hand?”

“That’s the game we’re playing today. I’m gonna compare your body to this gun.”

Saul’s eyes widened. The first few signs of fear began to color his pupils.

He had seen plenty of guns. Been into plenty of gunfights too. Chessie would not have sustained a gunshot if Saul had been a gun virgin. But all the guns he had ever used had been locally-made cheap knockoffs. He had never used a foreign gun before.

He spotted the unmistakable brown sheen of copper bullets loaded in that MP7 while Javier inspected it. Those were real.

Saul started to feel afraid. What was Javier up to with that submachine gun? He got his answer a moment later.

“Grand Turismo Racer? Get that camera up and working. We’re gonna record his bad*ssery. We’ll make a renowned celebrity out of you yet, Saul!”