

The Marvelous Elijah's Return By Rever Chapter 101

Chapter 101

Did you take care of...

When the elevator doors opened again, Daniel, Mr. Boone, Elrod, Madden, Laurier, Viotto, Fox, Caddel, Francis. and Mr. Amana walked out, carrying briefcases that seemed heavy for their aging bones to carry.

A frown immediately settled on Elijah's face when he saw them with those briefcases, he pinched the bridge of his nose, groaned, and said, "You ten, stop right there!"

A nervous glance clouded their eyes as a look of hesitation settled on their faces and the ten of them halted in their steps.

Drawing a deep breath to calm his annoyance, Elijah walked over to them, and then asked, "What's in the briefcases that makes them look heavy?"

The men exchanged confused looks between themselves as if asking each other whether they should answer or just keep their silence.

"Papers," Daniel replied in an annoyed voice as he glanced at the floor before looking at Elijah and asked in irritation, "Can we go now?!"

"Nah, not with the briefcases... You can't." Elijah stated calmly as he stood directly in front of the men.

"Why not?! We have the right to."

"Every document belonging to Investistic Co. is not allowed to leave the walls of this building until further notice. So open all ten of the briefcases and..."

Looking over his shoulder, Elijah met Ryan's eyes and said calmly, "Ryan will check these so-called papers, and whatever belongs to the company will stay right here."

The feeling of anxiety by those words made Daniel and his colleagues freeze in place with fear and apprehension.

'Elmer Hayes and us will be in some deep legal shit if these papers land in this boy's hands.' Daniel thought as the others were silent, staring at Elijah and Ryan, and clutching onto their briefcase tightly.

'I told these idiots for us to hide these papers and pick it up at a later date... But no, Fox said that this boy was a fool, and we could easily walk out of here with them. Now look at this mess!' Mr. Caddel thought with worry as he looked around nervously.

Feeling hot in his coat, Mr. Fox looked at Elijah dead-serious expression, and swallowed hard, mumbling in his head, 'Why is this happening now? Why? Why?? I thought he wasn't smart enough for this stuff! mean, look at what he did with the company employees, and now, he suddenly wants to act professional with us??!! What the hell?'

'There's no way he can understand these numbers on the papers and figure it out, right?... He can't have a brain for this kind of stuff... does he?' Mr. Laurier thought with concern in his face.

The ten men stared intensely at Elijah and Ryan for a moment, and then Daniel said in a firm tone, "This is harassment on our right... and we will not comply with any illegal authorization for our private belongings to get temper with or search."

Elijah gave him the same stern gaze he gave the rest of the group, and then, at that exact moment, a bunch of men walked into the lobby with Rick heading the group, their faces stone cold.

The board of directors watched silently, fear dancing in their eyes and their palms sweating with nerves.

"The easy way or the hard way," Elijah announced calmly in a quiet tone that almost sounded bored, "either way, we are searching those briefcases."

'This boy... This kid... what the fuck did he just pull?!' Mr. Francis thought, looking at the ground, sweat trickling down his forehead.

Slowly. Mr. Boone nodded his head and stepped towards Ryan, holding up his briefcase and opening it. saying, "Let's get this over with."

The members of the board eyed each other before sighing when they heard Ryan say, "Stand in a straight line, one at a time."

'This is humiliating!' Daniel cried in his head as he made his way to the back of the line, lowering his head.

The search went on for about a couple of minutes, and when Ryan finally got done with Daniel, he looked back at Elijah and said, "The only things these guys need to be walking out of here with is their keys, wallets, and phone. None of these documents should leave this building."

'Shit!' Mr. Fox panicked in his head.

'Damn it!' Mr. Boone cursed in his mind.

'Who is this other young man?! Why does this boy have brains around him?! What is going on?! why isn't he being useless like the rumors?!'

'This is trouble!

What the hell!' Laurier cried in his head anxiously,

Hardening his face, Elijah met their shaky gaze and said, "You heard the man... Drop the briefcases and leave... Also, don't try to travel. You don't want to piss me off by doing that."

With a defeated look, everyone dropped the briefcases in front of Elijah's feet, eyeing Rick and the other men, feeling their hearts drop at their cowardice.

'Why am I allowing this boy to shake me this much... There's no way he can figure out what these papers are...' Mr. Laurier thought in dismay, trying to convince himself that it was nothing. 'Even if he does, what is he going to do about it... Showing up with a will is one thing, but making Elmer... A Hayes, own up to his sins... that's impossible.'

"You are making a gravel mistake here. You and Peach are at the bottom of the corporate ladder, and if you are to climb, you need people with experience to help you guys, or else the bottom is where you two are sinking, and you will take the company with you." Mr. Amana declared firmly as he stared at Elijah with fire in his eyes.

"I agree." Elijah replied calmly. "Thanks for the advice... You all can go home now."

A look of confusion and shock spread across the men's faces because they didn't expect him to just accept it. But they said nothing and walked away.

When they all gathered outside of the building, Mr. Boone turned to the others and asked, "So, who's going to tell Elmer that Elijah has the files?"

An uncomfortable silence fell on them for a few seconds until Mr. Fox broke it by chuckling awkwardly and said, "No one... There's nothing that boy can do to punish a man like Elmer... So even if he finds out the truth, he will keep his mouth shut, if he doesn't want a problem with the Hayes."

"But why do I feel like he wants a problem with them though... Have we forgotten that he beat the crap out of Elmer and nothing came out of it?" Mr.

Caddel questioned, rubbing the back of his neck nervously as he shook his head.

"Honestly, I feel the same..." Mr. Francis commented in a worried tone.

The ten of them

shared a troubled look, wondering how to handle that situation.

“What are we gonna do...?” Mr. Francis asked in desperation, glancing nervously at the entrance, while the other members shared anxious glances amongst themselves.

“Should we run?”

“From a kid... Come on, guys... If we go down, Elmer Hayes goes down with us, and trust me, there’s no way the Hayes will allow that boy to succeed in trapping Elmer, so we are safe.” Daniel replied with a smirk.

“Are we sure though?” Mr. Viotto uttered, sounding confused, “That kid scares the living daylights out of us just now... we shouldn’t pretend that he didn’t... Something is off about him... his daredevil attitude is just too wild for a lowlife who knows he doesn’t have a backing.”

His words left the rest of the board with a heavy realization as they looked at each other hesitantly, and even though none of them wanted to voice their thoughts, they all knew Viotto was right.

The Hayes mansion was calm as Madam Jewel walked into the living room, but one look at Dean and a bit of tension filled the air as her expression grew solemn.

“What’s wrong?” She asked concerned as she approached her son.

“That bastard was at the company when Josh and I went there, and he...” Dean trailed off as anger flashed through his dark brown eyes and the vein on his forehead started throbbing.

“What did he do?”

“Nothing,”

A sense of embarrassment made Dean draw a deep breath, knowing that explaining his confrontation with Elijah would only make him look like a fool.

“Did you take care of what I asked of you to do there?” Madam Jewel asked, sounding slightly annoyed.

“Yes,” Dean replied quietly with shame written all over his face. “The employees have quit. Jones confirmed that all the employees left the building after I told them that we will be paying them two months ‘salary in advance for quitting their jobs.”

A small smile formed on Madam Jewel's lips as she patted him on the cheek, and then asked, "Well done, my son... How about what Elmer asked you to tell the board of directors?"

"It was going to take a long while to gather all the documents, but the members of the board assured me that those papers will be taken out of the company and burnt." Dean answered with a sigh.

Immediately, Madam Jewel looked pleased when she heard Dean's reply, saying, "Good... Those documents could be a bit of a handful for us to handle, so they shouldn't exist since Peach and that scum have access to the building now... But soon, all that is going to change." There was a brief pause and then she suddenly grinned, saying in a cheerful tone, "We should have a family dinner to celebrate!"

"Celebrate what?" Dean blurted out absentmindedly.

But his mother only gave him a sweet smile, stroking his chin and said, "Call your siblings and tell them dinner is at the mansion tonight."

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Chapter 102

The Last Supper

Watching her daughter's leg bouncing up and down, Miss Grace smiled weakly, and then she left the chair, sat at the edge of the bed by Peach, and rested her hand on her thigh, causing her to stop.

"I remember those days that you never wanted to leave my side..." Miss Grace said softly, and Peach looked up at her in guilt.

"It's not that I want to leave now, but I want Elijah to come..." Peach whispered, pressing her teeth into her bottom lip. "Ugh, now that I have said it, I get what you mean. But mama—"

"I am just teasing, and... Realizing that you are a woman now with a husband to go home to, and... I am happy for you, honey."

"I am sorry that I seem anxious to go home. I am just worried about Elijah because... Well, it's the Hayes, and he's in the middle of this chaos and I am scared..."

"Honey, Elijah is—"

The sound of the room doorknob turning

startled both mother and daughter, and they turned their heads, looking at Elijah.

“He is here for you,” Miss Grace whispered as she faced Peach, stroking her chin tenderly, before standing up and squeezing Peach’s shoulder.

“I feel like I should head out and give you guys a bit more time...” Elijah mumbled, staring between his wife and mother-in-law.

With a gentle smile, Miss Grace stood and walked over to Elijah, giving him a motherly hug, saying softly, “She’s fine and ready to go home.”

“Are you sure?” Elijah asked, glancing at Peach again.

Drawing back two steps, Miss Grace nodded, giving him a reassuring squeeze and a pat on the arm, saying, “You two stay strong and take care of each other, all right?”

“Always,” Elijah said, meeting Peach’s eyes, and they stared at each other for another moment, before Peach broke the contact, waking from the bed.

A while later, Elijah and Peach got into the back seat of the car, and the first thing that caught her attention was all the briefcases in the front seat. She just stared, not knowing how to process the thought of her husband having ten briefcases casually sitting at the front.

Suddenly, Elijah leaned his head on her shoulder, and that made Peach remain still, waking from her trance.

“I miss your scent,” Elijah whispered, closing his eyes.

Peach swallowed hard, her heart swelling with emotion, and she took in deep breaths, trying to keep herself calm, and whispered, “I miss you... a lot.”

Raising his lashes, Elijah chuckled softly, kissing her shoulder, and then moved his head away, leaning against the seat.

For a moment, Peach hesitated, and then she lifted her chin to meet his eyes, asking with fluttering lashes when he gazed at her, “What’s with the briefcases?”

“Company documents,” Elijah mumbled, feeling slightly annoyed by the memories of today. “The board of directors thought it was their right to leave the building with those particular records from Investistic Co.”

“Why?” Peach blurted out her thoughts with a frown.

“Ryan has no idea because he’s a lawyer, and a bunch of company financial records and legal documents are not his Specialties.”

“But it’s mine!”

The sparkle in Peach’s gaze intensified as her eyes widened, and Elijah found himself laughing softly.

Putting on a serious face, Peach sat up straight and explained, ‘Well, I never got the chance to prove myself fully because after graduation I had to help managed the motel, and I couldn’t apply for a job at a corporate, but I have a degree in—’

“A master’s degree in business management and finance.” Elijah finished for her with a small chuckle, nodding his head lightly.

The silence filled the car, and as Peach pouted, looking at him with a soft expression, she then mumbled, “You remembered?”

‘Well, I listened to the things you say,” Elijah replied, his lips curving up in a faint grin as he stared at her fondly

Then his eyes widened when she rushed into his chest, throwing her arms around him, burying her face into his shirt and breathing deeply, mumbling, “Did I tell you that I love you?”

Nervousness flashed through Elijah as he stared down at Peach, and as her words echoed in his mind, he felt a sense of euphoria wash over him as he tightened his arms around her and kissed her hair.

“Can I take a look at the papers?” Peach mumbled, snuggling against him and squeezing his coat in her grip. “Can I work on them?”

His breath hitched as he tried to regain control over his emotions, but then he relaxed, smiling slightly as he ran his hands along her back, whispering, “That’s ten briefcases of documents, your body is going to take a torn from handling so many papers. I can pay others to...”

Pulling back, Peach looked up to meet Elijah’s eyes and mumbled, “If I can’t handle it, I promise to tell you... After all, I am not allowed to lie to you.”

Her confession startled him slightly, but then he grinned gently, cupping her face and mumbling, “You are a smart cookie, aren’t you?”

A blush crept on Peach’s cheeks as her eyes fell to his lips, and she let out a nervous laugh, knowing she was going to get her way from the look of adoration in his eyes.

“Fine,” Elijah finally said in defeat, his voice coming out low and husky as he stared at her lovingly. “You may do whatever you want with the ten briefcases.”

“Thank you!” Peach exclaimed cheerfully, giving him a quick kiss that made him frown at her slightly.

Seeing that look in his eyes, Peach darted her gaze, mumbling beneath her breath, “What?”

Without saying a word, Elijah leaned in towards her face, his gaze dropping to her slightly parted lips, and he held his stare, allowing the moment to prolong, making her breath hitch.

Then, without warning, he closed his eyes tightly and pressed his lips onto hers, and Peach gasped softly as he deepened the kiss, her knees weakening as he pulled her closer, her hands reaching up to bury themselves in his hair as she felt his teeth graze her lower lip softly, making her moan in a low tone.

Not daring to look at the rearview mirror, poor Dice kept his neck stiff and eyes focused solely on the road ahead.

The sound of laughter could be heard in the dining room of the Hayes mansion as the family of twenty five sat around the huge table listening to soothing classical music echoing throughout the room.

“I want to make a toast to my big brother. I heard that every employee walked out of Investistic Co. today. What pleasant news for my ears!!” Elmer said with an enthusiastic tone, lifting his glass and taking a sip from it

Immediately, there were mixed feelings among the family about his words, after all, he was losing the company, but Dean released the tension by saying, “Even with great losses, the downfall of your enemies is worth a toast of celebration!”

Those words swept away the remaining awkward atmosphere around the room and everyone started to chime in agreement, raising their glasses and drinking a toast

“Honestly, I can not believe that Elijah, who was so humble throughout our marriage, could beat up uncle Elmer like that!” Melina mumbled in a daze, zoning out on her uncle’s scars

“It’s because you had him in check and made sure he knew where he stood with us... That is why he was so modest, dear. But now that he’s with a rowdy woman, what do you expect!” Martha let out to her daughter

“This only proves that you raised Melina well.” Madam Jewel announced, enjoying the good mood she was feeling

“Our child knows better,” Dean stated, looking at his wife who smiled *warmly* at him, her eyes crinkling slightly

Darting her gaze between her parents, Melina frowned slightly, mumbling in her head, ‘I don’t think I know better. If I did, I won’t find it hot, right now, that Elijah went rogue on uncle Elmer... Maybe I just missed his wilderness in bed. Should I meet him...’

Smiling at the faces of each of her family members, Madam Jewel sighed with satisfaction and then took a sip of her wine, and then rested the glass on the table.

“Peach can continue to be stubborn, but in the end, she will have no other choice than to sell Investistic Co. to us for little or nothing,” Madam Jewel said proudly, her eyes brightening and her smile broadening.

“Mother, did I ever tell you how much of a brainiac you are and that I love you, so, so, much?!” Elmer cried, clapping his hands together with excitement.

Rolling her eyes at her son, Madam Jewel shook her head in disappointment and then said, “Are you even going to learn from your mistake once you own Investistic Co again?!”

A nervous laugh escaped Elmer’s lips and he averted his gaze while rubbing the back of his head nervously, and he blurted out, “Of course, mother! Everything that has happened recently has made me a changed man!”

“So are we just going to take Peach’s rebel of a husband out of our future plans like he is not going to be around when she’s selling the company back to us or something?” Amelia asked, looking amused.

“Well, that’s the goal.” Madam Jewel nodded, leaning forward to pour herself another glass of wine.

“To get the company back? Or Elijah not being around?” Melina blurted out, looking at her grandmother.

Taking a sip from her glass, Madam Jewel hummed softly before answering, “Why can’t we have the pleasure of both... There’s no need to choose.”

Everyone knew exactly what those words meant, and the room went cold as the music continued to play softly, and nobody dared to utter a single word.

And then Elmer suddenly clapped, laughing his heart out and he announced loudly, “Mother is truly the best! Let’s cheer!”

Immediately everyone clinked their glasses together and started to drink in unison, the sound of laughter filling the air

'Well, if Elijah is going to die soon, then it's only fair to have the last supper with him, in bed.' Melina thought with a smirk, shaking her head slowly.

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Chapter 103

We have a date

The soft texture of the sheet as Elijah brushed his hands against it made him immediately open his eyes. and whisper, "Peach!"

The storm of panic he felt softly faded when he sat up and saw her at the table, focusing on a pile of documents with scrabble up sheets scattered around.

Her attention was solely on the papers that she didnt even notice him staring at her for a long while before he got off the bed, stretched out his shorts legs, and walked over to her with a smile

"Morning, beautiful," Elijah said in a low voice, resting his palms on the table to lean over and kiss the top of Peach's head

Slowly, she looked up at him, tilting her head up a bit so that they could lock eyes as she said softly, "Morning,"

And then she studied his face with a warm smile before focusing back on the paper, her messy morning hair falling over her forehead like a curtain and his white t-shirt neck slacking off her shoulder

"I left you in this exact spot and went to bed. Did you get enough sleep?" Elijah asked, pulling away from the table, and then he walked off

Eyeing her husband hesitantly, Peach sighed and then said, "You slept like a baby I guess you didn't feel me getting into the bed last night. But even if it doesn't look like it, I just woke up from sleep."

Silence settled for a while as Peach focused back on the document, and for a while, she was deep into it until she felt Elijah gently brush her hair back, and she froze as he tied it into a loose ponytail.

"What are we having for breakfast?" Elijah mumbled as she spaced out, staring at him with a soft expression

“Toast and cheese with coffee...” Peach replied, trying to fight back the urge to forget the paperwork and cuddle into him.

His sudden ringtone interrupted the silence, and both of them turned their heads toward it, and Elijah sighed as he walked over to the night stand and picked it up.

Seeing that it was an unknown number, he hesitated for a second but finally answered the call, saying,

Hello?”

“Is Peach awake or sleeping in your arms,” Melina’s voice came from the other line, and Elijah immediately ended the call, looking over at his wife, and instantly, they locked eyes, and Peach gave a soft smile before focusing on the paper.

His ringtone went off again right after, and he took another breath before answering this time with a serious tone of voice, “Bryan, morning.”

“Let me guess. You forgot what day it is?” Bryan teased, and Elijah groaned loudly as Peach looked over at him curiously, watching as he pinched the bridge of his nose in frustration.

“Crap!” Elijah cursed before glancing back over to Peach.

“We have a date today.”

“Right! Right... Where? At what time?”

“Check your inbox.”

“Okay... I will be there.”

After hanging off the phone, Elijah went to his call log first and blocked the number that Melina called him on, and then he hit his inbox icon to see Bryan’s message, whispering, “Twelve,”

“These numbers don’t seem right,” Peach whispered, her brows furrowing slightly, and Elijah glanced over at her, laying down his phone on the nightstand.

Then he walked over to her, taking a look at the sheet with concern, and asked, “What’s not right?”

“I am not sure yet, but so far the figures seem suspiciously huge for the company earnings... with these numbers, Investistic Co. should be one of the top businesses in the country.” Peach muttered.

Silently, Elijah watched her for a moment, and then he asked, "Are you sure you can handle this."

"After cracking something this wild, I want to continue. Investistic Co. is for us, and I want to play my part too." Peach replied, giving him a reassuring smile.

A look of hesitation crossed Elijah's face, and he said, "I got a meeting today, but I can cancel"

"Don't, please. You can go... I promise I will be fine." Peach said without lifting her sight off the paper,

Seeing how drawn she was to work, he knew leaving her alone meant she would remain at this exact spot, working, and he let out a breath.

"I'm calling Ryan... He's an excellent lawyer so whatever you need to know, legal-wise, he will give *you* clarity, okay?" Elijah said, looking down at her.

When Peach nodded in response, he rested his index finger under her chin and raised her head to meet his eyes, making her gulp and stare back into his own.

"Are you okay with Ryan coming over?" Elijah asked, his voice hushed and gentle as he raised a brow.

"Yes," Peach nodded slowly, feeling her heart skip a beat and her cheeks burn hot, and then she added, "I trust him, and I am okay with it."

"Good. If you need anything, call me."

"Okay,"

As her head lowered slightly, she felt Elijah's hand move from her chin up to cup her cheek, looking into her eyes, and wondering if he should tell her about Melina's call.

"What is it?" Peach asked, smiling sweetly up at him.

Eyes wide, Elijah quickly blurted out, "Nothing! Just... Don't stress yourself out, alright?"

"Okay," Peach responded with a nod, and then smiled brightly up at him before going back to the papers on the table.

But Elijah suddenly grabbed her wrist, making her look back at him as he said, "I think the only way my mind can be at rest to walk out of here is by leaving you in good condition."

"Good conditions?" Peach repeated, raising an eyebrow at him.

“Yes. Now, stand up. We are going to take an shower, and then we will have breakfast.”

“We,”

As Elijah gently pulled her out of the chair, Peach pouted at the papers, not wanting to part with them, but she followed him, looking back every second before Elijah finally dragged her into the bathroom.

Once inside, Elijah closed the door behind him and turned to her, making Peach raise an eyebrow at him in question.

Taking a deep breath, he stepped closer to her, pinning her back against the door as he cages her between his hands, leaning forward so their faces were inches apart.

“You trust me, right?” Elijah asked in a calm voice, making Peach’s heartbeat quicken.

When Peach didn’t answer right away, he grabbed her by the waist, raising her off the tiles, causing her legs to immediately wrap themselves around his hips as she giggled loudly. “I trust you.”

Resting her back against the wall as his firm grips kept her steady on his waist, she laughed as she looked into his eyes and said, “I trust you with my whole heart, mind, and body!”

The deepness of her words left him speechless, and for the first time, he was not worried about her breaking his heart, but him hurting hers.

At eleven–fifteen, Elijah was in the backseat of his car as Dice drove him in silence, and it was quiet for a while as Peach’s words played on Elijah’s mind.

“How’s Rick and the others doing watching over the building?” Elijah asked, keeping his eyes on the window as he stared at nothing.

Glancing briefly in the rearview mirror to stare at Elijah, Dice answered humbly, “They wore the company security uniforms as you instructed yesterday, and this morning, no one is questioning them about being around the building.”

“That’s good. Hopefully by next week, I can have that company kick off and be in business again.” Elijah said, letting out a sigh as he ran his fingers through his short hair.

At exactly twelve, Elijah walked into Golf N’ Greens lobby, surprised that the place was busy on a Friday afternoon, considering it was still just morning a moment ago.

The receptionist gave a polite smile and then asked, “Do you have a reservation?”

‘Yes. I am meeting with Bryan Checks and a few others.’ Elijah replied with a neutral tone.

“Name?”

“Elijah Darius,”

“Hold on one minute, sir, please,”

After searching his name in the system, her doubt was cleared, and her expression became friendlier as she said, “Delen, please escort Mr. Darius to the Crimson & Gold room.”

A while later, Elijah along with Dice followed Delen to a black painted door, and Delen knocked twice before opening the door and stepping aside to allow Elijah inside the room.

“Our final member is here.” Bryan Checks said with a grin as he stood up from his chair, smiling at Elijah.

A look of confusion crossed the face of a guy, who was dressed in a velvet blazer and dress pants, and he glanced between Elijah and Bryan as they hugged.

“Are you shitty us!” He blurted out in surprise and shock, standing up from his seat. “Did you pull us away from our busy schedule to prank us or what?!”

Looking away from Elijah, Bryan scowled as he sighed to calm himself and asked, “What are you talking about, Joey?”

“You made us wait on this punk! Isn’t he the once old... and now new son-in-law of the Hayes family... Look even if he has a connection with the so-called Hayes, you are way beyond their status and power level!” Joey yelled, his hands balled into fists. “He’s beneath all of us here! So why the fuck—”

“Enough, Joey!” Hosah, another one of them, stated sternly as he stepped forward, resting his right hand

on Joey’s shoulder and holding him back. “Don’t say something you might regret later.” Grabbing Hosah’s wrist, Joey aggressively pushed his hand off him and turned around to glare at Elijah before asking, “So why the fuck would you convince us that this... this... has the means to buy huge shares in our companies... you know that I am in desperate need of that money... so why will you pull this shit, man?!”

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Chapter 104

Twenty Five years in prison

Frowning Bryan rubbed his temple with his index and middle finger, and then let out in anger at Joey's remarks, "Get out."

A look of disbelief fell over Joey, who started to laugh hysterically at the request.

"Out?? What the hell is wrong with you?... You are seriously choosing that... over me!" Joey shouted, pointing at him accusingly. "This is bullshit man!!! I trusted you!!"

"Fuck off, Joey!!" Bryan screamed back at him.

"That will not be necessary." Elijah casually said, making everyone turn to look at him, stunned by his comment

Calmly, Elijah walked past the two, sat down on the black leather couch, and crossed his legs over the other, looking Joey directly in the eyes and adding, "You are desperate for money, ain't you?... The ego of one can be very blinding. So you can either sit and let's talk or walk out. Your choice."

A look of reluctance covered Joey's face as he clenched his jaw shut tight, and then he scoffed, mumbling, "What can you offer me?"

"Nah, it doesn't work that way... Try the other way around." Elijah said calmly, staring at him with a blank look

"What can I offer you?!"

"Good. You are getting the hang of it."

As a sense of arrogance and pride took hold of Joey's face, he puffed his chest and said, "Delphi Oil Co. is one of the top three companies in the state, and our products sell well and fast. And our company also has some pretty damn decent sales internationally..."

"Okay, so if you are that successful, then why are you so desperate for my money?" Elijah asked plainly, folding his arms over his chest.

A scoff escaped Joey's lips as he raised an eyebrow at Elijah and mumbled beneath his breath, "What money..."

Then he suppressed his sense of frustration with Elijah and continued, "We suffered a huge loss by investing in bad products recently, and the penalty was high. So, naturally, we're trying to get more cash from an investor. Someone who's willing to..."

"Drown their money with your sinking company?" Elijah interrupted, a small smirk playing on his lips. "Take your mind out of the past... the glory that lasts there, and talk to me from the present... Because right now, you are just a man with a stupid debt problem."

Immediately, the pride that once clouded Joey's face disappeared, replaced by a mixture of calmness and embarrassment, as he muttered, "I know where I stand."

"No, you don't. If you did, you wouldn't have sat on a Pedestal in the ruins of your company, acting high and mighty with me when you barely knew shit about me, past all the rumors and gossip. Now climb down from your cloud and let's talk business."

Never in his life had Joey been humble so quickly by someone who didn't raise his voice or fist, and he found himself nodding his head obediently as he said, "I agree. I shouldn't have judged the book by other's reviews, and get to understand it for myself... but can you really help my company?"

"If I couldn't, Bryan wouldn't have thought to call me." Elijah said, glancing towards Bryan. "So, I will lend

the three of you my time, and if your business is something I can profit off of in the end, I can invest. Deal?"

Taking his time to think it over, Joey looked around, seeing the other dudes nodding, and then he looked back at Elijah and said, "Deal!"

"Good... Now, convince me why your companies are worth my money." Elijah calmly said, resting back in his seat, crossing his leg over the other, and Bryan just stood there, amazed at how Elijah got Joey in the grip of his thumb.

Watching Peach from where he sat, Ryan crossed his arms over his chest, seeing her sitting across the table from him as she continued writing down her transaction.

Then he eyed his watch, seeing that hours had passed, and she was still going over one document after the others, and all he could do was watch, wondering if he should tell her that it was past three o'clock.

"How're things going?" Ryan called out, interrupting her writing.

"What?" Peach asked, lifting her head.

"The documents..."

“There’s a lot of indication that a foe play was done in these documents and the more journal entries are worked through, I think Elmer and the board of directors have been doing some dirty work since the very beginning.”

For a moment, the silence dragged on for a while, and then Ryan’s phone buzzed, making him reach into his pocket to pull it out.

Silently, he glanced at the text, reading Elijah’s words, “If Peach is still sitting at that table, convince her to get something from the hotel restaurant, so she wouldn’t exhaust herself.”

- Raising his gaze, Ryan watched Peach for a second, noticing that she was engrossed in the document, her brows furrowed, deep in concentration.

After a long pause, he leaned back in his seat and then yawned so loud that she forced her eyes to raise from the papers to him and narrowed her eyes at him suspiciously.

“Is everything okay?” Peach asked with a slight frown on her face.

“Yeah, fine,” Ryan answered, shrugging his shoulders and rubbing his chin lazily. “Just hungry... You know what?! We should get something from the hotel restaurant. Umm... We can do room service, but I can never decide until the menu is in front of me.”

Studying his sudden drowsy eyes, she gave a faint smile and then said, “Sure. We can grab something to eat and then I can finish this up.”

As Elijah calmly watched Curtis execute his presentation of Eco Gas Co. his attention was still divided as he tapped his phone against his palm, waiting anxiously.

After a while, his phone buzzed, causing him to immediately check his inbox, staring at Ryan’s text, “We are at the hotel restaurant.”

“What did she get?” Elijah texted back with a smile.

“Do you have any questions... Umm... Mr. Darius.” Curtis asked, his tone humble.

Hesitantly, Elijah looked up with a calm expression, and said, “No, just as I am down with working with Bryan, you three seemed to have a solid standing in the Oil, gas, and Insurance fields and my only demand is that I will have fifty–one percent of the shares.”

“Making you the highest shareholder in each company.” Joey commented, surprised that Elijah would

make such a strong demand. “And a primary person among us, and a majority shareholder.”

“Well, if you want my money... That’s my offer, and if my demand is met, I am willing to be ar most of the financial crisis of the business, then you all.” Elijah calmly stated, smiling faintly at Joey. “As long as it’s a natural crisis, free of corruption or foreplay.”

‘I was a fool... You are nothing like what the rumors said. This guy really is a smart ass...’ Joey thought, staring at Elijah with a shocked look. ‘He knows what he is talking about.’

Looking over at Curtis, then at Bryan before eyeing Hosah, Joey could see that they were not giving their decisions a second thought, and then William proved him right by saying, “I think that’s a reasonable deal.”

Silently, Elijah watched the others nod in agreement, before turning his glance back to Joey.

“The deal is perfect.” Joey finally agreed, his eyes sparkling with hope and determination. “If you can provide the money to save my company, I am fine with you having higher shares than me.”

When his phone buzzed, Elijah drew his attention off Joey and read the words on his screen, “She’s having chocolate muffins with a glass of pineapple juice.”

A smile graced Elijah’s lips before he looked up at the faces in the room and said, “Good. My lawyer and I will meet you all on a later day and then we can finalize everything and move on from there.”

Taking a big bite of her muffins, Peach looked at Ryan, not breaking her eye contact, with a confused look plastered on her face until he asked, “What is it?”

“What’s the penalty of accounting fraud in your opinion?” Peach asked in a hushed voice, taking a sip of her juice.

“For those that commit it?” Ryan asked, raising an eyebrow in surprise.

“Yes, for the people involved.” “Well... it depends on what kind of accounting fraud they are committing.”

Hesitating, Peach stared into her half-full glass, deep in thought, and then let out a moment later, “I think Elmer had the company underreporting line costs by capitalizing instead of expensing them and had inflated its revenues by making false entries... because... from the records I have so far, I have found almost hundred million in fraudulent accounts, and that’s just two briefcases.”

“That kind of fraud has a penalty of twenty–five years in prison if proving to be fraudulent.” Ryan pointed out, earning an approving nod from Peach.

Holding back her tongue for a second, Peach twirled the tip of her finger around in a circle at the mouth of the glass, and then said, “It can be proved... I think all those briefcases are documents that expose this... even though I am not through with them yet.”

‘Elmer Hayes is fuck if Elijah knows this!’ Ryan thought, a half-smirk growing on his lips.

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