

Chapter 311: Unexpected Situation

As soon as the emcee said the starting bid, everyone in the room got into an uproar.

The starting bid of the last beauty was undoubtedly much higher than all the previous ones put up for auction!

With a starting bid of 1.5 million dollars, they could all imagine that the final price for Beauty No. 1 had to be above five million dollars!

Many of the guests began to change their minds about bidding for Beauty No. 1. It was not because they couldn't afford it but because spending millions on a woman was quite foolish and absurd, even if she was extraordinarily gorgeous.

Of course, there were some who were eager to try bidding for her.

After all, Beauty No. 1 was an absolutely stunning rare beauty and one of a kind. If they could reap an enormous profit from using her as a social escort, they would definitely be able to recoup the amount they spent at the auction and perhaps obtain even more profit!

Thus, their gazes became more and more lewd and obscene as they ogled Grace, who was locked in the glass display case.

With an icy cold gaze in his eyes, Lucas suddenly stood up and exclaimed loudly, “Three million dollars!”

Everyone turned around to look at Lucas in astonishment.

During the biddings of the previous girls, Lucas had only placed his bid when they were coming to an end. But this time, he was the first to bid. Moreover, it was double the starting price!

How are we supposed to contend with that? the other guests thought.

Besides, it was just an auction where everyone would remain seated and merely raise the sign marked with their name when they wanted to place a bid. Yet Lucas suddenly stood up. The guests wondered if he was trying to show his determination to win the auction.

In fact, they had really made the wrong guess.

The reason Lucas suddenly stood up was that he wanted to let Grace, who was locked in the glass display case, see him so that she could feel slightly more relieved.

Because the glass display case was fully soundproof, the girls inside wouldn’t be able to hear anything and could only see the lewd and repulsive gazes of the men gawking at them like they were scrutinizing a sale product. Despite feeling ashamed and humiliated, they had no means to escape and could only remain fearful, uneasy, and worried about their fate in the near future.

Grace felt the same. Even though she usually put on a strong front, she was still just a young woman in her twenties. She was suddenly abducted on the streets and subsequently held captive in this glass display case, where she was being put up for auction like she was merely an object subject to the scrutiny of others. The most

terrifying thing was that she was clueless about how things would turn out for her in the end, and it was possible that she might end up in a situation countless times more agonizing and torturous than death.

So when Grace saw Lucas suddenly stand up, joy immediately appeared all over her face, replacing the panicked expression she had. She burst into tears of joy and lunged forward to lean against the glass and stare at Lucas like he was her savior.

Lucas looked at Grace gently and tried to tell her with his eyes that he would definitely rescue her.

Drops of tears rolled down Grace's cheek continuously, and she nodded while sobbing to express her acknowledgment.

At this moment, Grace felt as if she had been rescued from hell and that Lucas was her pillar of support that gave her an immense sense of relief.

After Lucas called out his bid of a massive three millions dollars and caused a brief commotion, the entire auction hall was once again filled with a bizarre silence and calmness as many people began contemplating if they should bid.

"3.2... million!" At this moment, someone stood up indignantly and bid. Of course, he wasn't as bold as Lucas and only raised the bid by 200,000 dollars.

In fact, it was a common sight and practice during auctions to raise the bid little by little. Placing such high bids to discourage competitors like what Lucas had done was relatively rare.

"Six million dollars!" Lucas immediately bid again resolutely.

Everyone in the auction hall immediately gasped and inhaled sharply.

He doubled his bid again!

The guests were flabbergasted.

The man who bid 3.2 million dollars immediately sulked. His budget for buying Beauty No. 1 was actually six million dollars. But now that Lucas suddenly raised the price to six million dollars, how could he continue bidding?

He looked at Lucas gloomily and had no choice but to give up and return to his seat indignantly.

“Okay! The bidding price for Beauty No. 1 has reached six million dollars! Is anyone going to offer a higher bid?”

The emcee spoke up again excitedly, and she said coercively, “As long as your bid is higher than six million dollars, this rare beauty will be yours!”

Unfortunately, after the emcee asked twice, no one in the entire auction hall bid anymore.

The price had already risen to six million dollars. Since the girls were being sold at such a sordid auction, they couldn’t groom Grace and make her a celebrity to earn money for them even if they won the auction. They could only use her as a social escort and make money off her through some secret deals, so it would take them a long time to recoup their capital.

Despite looking disappointed, the emcee could only continue with the standard process of the auction.

“Six million dollars, going once!

“Six million dollars, going twice!

“Six million dollars, going thrice...”

“Eight million dollars!”

Just a second before the emcee was about to drop the gavel, a majestic voice interrupted her.

Surprised, everyone looked at the person to whom the majestic voice belonged to see who it was that intervened at the critical moment and placed such a high bid of eight million dollars.

Lucas frowned slightly and looked diagonally at the back, only to meet a pair of familiar-looking eyes that contained a provocative gaze.

“Wow, it’s Mr. Liam Wallace!”

“Mr. Liam Wallace is partaking in the auction too? I heard that Club Splendor belongs to the Wallaces!”

“Well, that may be the case, but the organizers of the auction this time are the Kingstons. The Wallaces are merely cooperating with them by providing a venue. Strictly speaking, the Wallaces are also qualified to participate in the auction.”

Everyone whispered and discussed among themselves.

The moment Lucas saw Liam, a fleeting trace of killing intent appeared in his eyes. He failed in pestering Grace, so he simply kidnapped her and put her up for auction at a high price like she’s an object. He’s worse than a beast!

Beside Liam, a man and a woman were both glaring at Lucas hostilely.

Lucas sneered. He recognized them to be the ones he had just had a conflict with at the entrance.

The woman was Gisele Taylor, a member of one of the four top families of Orange County. She had tried to use Lucas as her shield earlier, but Lucas had rejected her. Furious and embarrassed, she subsequently went on to slander Lucas and accuse him of outrage of modesty.

And the man was Kyle Kingston, who originally didn't know Lucas but was instigated by Gisele to beat Lucas up to make Lucas kneel and apologize. But he ended up getting kicked away by Jordan.

The three of them are in this together. It seems they have malicious intentions!

Chapter 312: Congratulations on Winning the Auction

“Wow, look. The one at the side is Mr. Kyle Kingston! He’s attending the auction in person too.”

“I think he just came to take a look. As a member of the organizing family, he can’t participate in the bidding!”

“That’s for sure. If he had taken a liking to one of those beauties, he could have just kept her aside. Why would he bother competing with us to bid for her?”

“Also, who is that beautiful woman next to them?”

“I know. She’s Gisele Taylor, a member of one of the four top families in Orange County.”

...

The sudden appearance of these three people caused some commotion in the auction hall. But after Lucas shot them a glance, they quickly looked away and faced the auction stage to bid again.

“Twelve million!”

“Wow!”

There was immediately yet another uproar because of Lucas's bid.

Twelve million dollars was enough for even the creation of a model of a beautiful woman using pure gold. Yet the bidder intended to buy a woman for twelve million dollars, which was an absurdly high price even if she was as beautiful as a fairy!

Liam glared at Lucas menacingly with a trace of hatred and jealousy in his eyes. He exclaimed slowly, "Fifteen million!"

Boom!

There was an instant upheaval in the auction hall as everyone exclaimed in shock.

Fifteen million dollars could buy a super luxurious mansion, or if it was invested in some businesses, it would bring about massive returns. But it was now about to be spent on a woman. This was excessively extravagant!

Liam stared at Lucas provocatively and giped smugly, "What? Aren't you rich? Can't you afford a mere fifteen million dollars?"

The reason he suddenly decided to compete with Lucas for Grace was that he could long tell that Lucas was definitely bent on buying her and taking her away. So he insisted on going against Lucas and raising the price to a staggering amount to make Lucas break the bank.

Otherwise, there was no need for Liam to buy Grace with money at all because he was the one who had sent people to capture her.

Of course, after Lucas spent a tremendous amount of money to buy Grace, Liam was confident that he would still be able to snatch her back and leave Lucas with nothing!

The thought of his plans made Liam smile in pleasure.

As he had expected, Lucas frowned and placed a higher bid. “Twenty-three million!”

“Damn?!”

“Oh my god! He actually raised the bid by eight million dollars! Is he out of his mind?!”

“Even if you’re rich, you shouldn’t squander your money like that! Twenty-three million dollars can buy you dozens of other beauties!”

“Twenty-three million dollars! Oh my gosh! The money has to be paid in cash on the spot. Is he going to throw away so much money just like that?”

“Haha... impressive! All of us here today are from wealthy families, but I can guarantee that there are only a few who can fork out twenty-three million dollars in cash at any time!”

“That’s right! However, Lucas Gray owns a Black Diamond Card, which allows him to withdraw five billion dollars in cash from any bank. I reckon he should be able to afford it.”

“Tsk, tsk, I’m so envious! Who doesn’t want to own a Black Diamond Card?”

...

The emcee on the stage was also shocked by the current bid price and couldn’t help clutching her chest with her hand.

Beside Lucas, Lena looked at him in disbelief. “Are you nuts? It’s twenty-three million dollars we’re talking about! Are you going to spend it all on a woman like her? Let me tell you. I can’t hide this for you. I’ll definitely inform Cheyenne about this!”

Lucas glanced at Lena and merely said indifferently, “It doesn’t matter. Go ahead and let her know.”

“You...!” Lena was so furious that she was speechless.

The fact that Lucas offered an unbelievable price of twenty-three million dollars made all the guests in the hall get into a huge uproar that only gradually calmed down after a long time.

Seeing that Lucas had really fallen for it and was going to waste an extra eight million dollars, Liam was overjoyed and conceited, especially when he saw Lucas’s gloomy expression.

“Hmph, you’re trying to compete with me, huh? Watch how I’ll deal with you! So what if you’re somewhat rich now? I can still turn you into a pauper in no time!”

Liam cursed and called Lucas a fool countless times in his heart before saying calmly, “Thirty million!”

He raised his eyebrows and stared at Lucas provocatively with a smug and contemptuous look.

He was already certain that Lucas would go to all lengths to buy Grace and take her away regardless of what it took. So even if he bid higher, Lucas would have no choice but to increase his bid too because Grace was his weakness!

The other people in the auction hall were completely flabbergasted by Liam's ridiculously high bid!

“What's going on today?”

“They keep placing such high bids, and the amount just gets crazier. No matter how gorgeous that woman is, she's still just a woman who will age and lose her beauty in a few years!”

The guests felt that the bids were simply too exaggerated.

After a burst of exclamations, everyone in the room cast their gazes onto Lucas, the generous man who spent money like it grew on trees, to see how high he would bid this time.

Many people were excited, and they knew that the auction today was bound to reach an extremely high climax. Even though they didn't take part in the bidding, they were spectators who had firsthand experience and would have plenty to talk about regarding this auction in the future.

While everyone was keeping their eyes on Lucas and eagerly waiting for him to bid again, Lucas suddenly waved his hand and said with a smile, “Mr. Wallace, since you fancy this beautiful girl so much, you may have her.”

Then Lucas sat down to indicate his withdrawal from the bidding.

His words once again set off an uproar.

No one expected Lucas, who had bought all the other nine beauties put up for auction tonight and was incredibly wealthy, would admit defeat and withdraw from the auction at this juncture!

Some immediately thought that Lucas was smart enough to realize that it wouldn't make any economic sense to continue raising his bid and thus withdrew. They felt that it showed that he was not a reckless man just obsessed with winning.

Of course, there were also many people who were hungry for more drama and excitement. Seeing the exciting bidding come to an end, they all began to criticize Lucas in their heads for being too cowardly with looks of disappointment on their faces.

The other bidder, Liam, was dumbfounded and froze in place when he saw Lucas actually withdraw from the bidding without hesitation! No! How is this possible? Why would Lucas Gray withdraw from the bidding? Doesn't he want that woman anymore?

What made Liam even more flustered and horrified was the realization that he would have to pay the sum that he bid now that Lucas had withdrawn!

Thirty million dollars!

How could he possibly fork out so much money?!

"Okay. Now that Mr. Gray has withdrawn from the bidding, the highest bidder so far is Mr. Wallace, who has placed a bid of thirty million dollars! Any higher bids?"

The hall was dead silent because no one would bid any higher.

Liam quickly broke out in a sweat that rolled down his cheeks.

"Thirty million dollars, going once!

"Thirty million dollars, going twice!

“Thirty million dollars, going thrice! Congratulations, Mr. Wallace. You have won the auction for our finale item, Beauty No. 1, with thirty million dollars! Congratulations!”

Chapter 313: Dug His Own Grave

As the emcee lowered the gavel with a crisp and clear sound, a loud round of applause resounded in the auction hall.

They reckoned that he had to be incredibly wealthy since he had spent thirty million dollars on a beautiful woman!

The crowd congratulated Liam, the winner of the auction of the finale item. Some were sincere, but many were of course secretly mocking and criticizing him for being a fool.

He has too much money to spend! What a wastrel!

At this moment, Liam was sulking and feeling so dismayed that he was on the verge of tears even though everyone was congratulating him.

Although he was the scion of the Wallace family, the Wallaces would never let him squander money in such a lavish and unbridled manner. His current disposable assets were less than three million dollars, let alone thirty million!

“Wait a minute! This auction doesn’t count!” Liam’s interjection interrupted the applause and successfully made everyone stunned.

“What does he mean?”

Since Liam already spoke, he no longer bothered about the gazes of bewilderment being cast on him. He said self-righteously, “It’s all his fault for deliberately competing with me, so I bid so high to spite him. It doesn’t count!”

As soon as he said this, everyone was stunned and full of disbelief.

Lucas sneered and stared at Liam like he was a fool.

“That’s how things work at an auction. What does he mean by ‘deliberately raise the price’?”

Moreover, if anyone had deliberately disrupted the bidding with malicious intentions, that person was Liam, who intervened halfway, not Lucas!

Lucas sneered and looked at Liam. When Liam first intervened to compete with him for Grace, he could already tell what Liam was trying to do.

But the amusing thing was that Liam still took Lucas for a fool and let his greed get the better of him, as he was bent on raising the price to empty Lucas’s bank account. But he ended up making a fool of himself and made himself fall into the trap he had created himself.

“In that case, are you planning to deny the outcome of the auction, Mr. Wallace?”

At this moment, a cold and dignified voice spread from the auction stage as Russell appeared in front of everyone with a stern expression on his face.

Following him were several tall bodyguards who worked for the Kingstons, and they were exuding a domineering and terrifying aura.

In all the years that he had worked as a professional and experienced auctioneer, Russell had seen countless people like Liam who got carried away with competing

against others to become the highest bidder but subsequently regretted their decision and tried to deny the validity of the auction. Thus, he immediately stepped forth to maintain order in the auction.

Seeing how assertive Russell was, Liam immediately felt a little ashamed and hurriedly said, “No, no, that’s not what I meant. But this bastard indeed deliberately raised the price...”

“Shut up!” Russell bellowed, interrupting Liam. He then said coldly, “An auction is not a market. The rule is that the highest bidder wins. What do you mean by ‘deliberately raise the price’?”

“Besides, if you thought that Mr. Gray was deliberately raising the price, you could have just withdrawn from the bidding. Why did you continue to compete with him? Are your brains fried?”

When Liam heard what Russell said, his face turned pale, and he looked extremely dismayed. But deep down, he was well aware that he was the one who had deliberately raised the price. However, he could only keep it to himself.

But just because Liam didn’t admit to it, it didn’t mean that others couldn’t tell.

After all, he had just suddenly intervened in the bidding of the finale item, Beauty No. 1. Besides, he was also the one who kept raising the bid. Everyone had seen it clearly.

The current outcome was undoubtedly because Lucas was smart enough to withdraw in time, thus causing Liam to fall into the trap he had created himself.

You reap what you sow!

All of a sudden, many people in the auction hall started mocking Liam with disdain while waiting gloatingly to see what would happen next.

A staff member dressed in a black uniform walked up to Liam and asked with a polite but oppressive tone, “Mr. Wallace, please pay for the auction item that you have won the bid for immediately. The total amount is thirty million dollars. Would you like to pay by bank transfer or by check?”

This was often the case at auctions. No arrears were allowed when it came to the payment for the auctioned item. It was also to prevent some people from placing high bids for the sake of the thrill of it, only to end up failing to make the payment and thus aborting the sale of the items.

Liam’s face became even more sullen. There was only a little more than 150,000 dollars in the bank account linked to the card he had with him now. How could he afford to pay thirty million dollars?

Liam panicked and looked around anxiously. When he suddenly saw Lucas, who was sitting still, he hurriedly said, “Lucas Gray, aren’t you very wealthy? Hurry up and bid for the item again. I promise I definitely won’t compete with you again this time! Just add another dollar, and Grace will be yours!”

Remaining seated calmly, Lucas merely smiled flatteringly. “Mr. Wallace, have you gotten all muddled up because of how panicked you are? The minimum bid increment is 80,000 dollars. How can I offer a dollar higher?”

Liam finally recalled the things that the emcee had said before putting Grace up for auction. He gritted his teeth and exclaimed, “I can pay the eighty thousand for you! You just need to pay thirty million!”

He said this through gritted teeth. But he still felt the pinch and also felt that he was giving Lucas an advantage.

Lucas was immediately amused by his expression. “Mr. Wallace, do you take me for a fool? I could have bought the girl for six million, but you raised the price to thirty million. Yet you still want me to help you out of this. How are you so thick-skinned?”

“Haha!” Many people in the auction hall couldn’t resist laughing out loud.

Liam’s face was burning hot. But when he thought about the thirty million dollars, he could no longer care about his pride.

“Lucas, I know you fancy that woman. Can you bear to give her up just like that?” Liam said furiously as he reached out to point at Grace, who was still locked in the glass display case.

Lucas said indifferently, “Thirty million is enough for me to buy at least a hundred beauties of different shapes and sizes. What makes you think I have to buy her?”

Liam panicked and threatened, “If you don’t buy her, she will land in my hands, and I’ll turn her into my slave. I’ll violate her and humiliate her every day, turning her life into a living hell! Won’t you mind that?”

Lucas’s eyes were full of an intense murderous intent as he glared daggers at Liam!

Charismatic Lucas Gray Chapter 314

Chapter 314: I Disagree

Liam immediately felt as though he was engulfed by a terrifying aura, and he couldn't help shuddering a few times.

Liam's words were indeed very inappropriate, and he was as crude and uncouth as lowly gangsters, which was a huge disgrace to the scions of wealthy and prestigious families. Many of the guests present at the auction began to look displeased.

Russell's face was just as cold and sullen as he berated, "Mr. Wallace, please mind your words and manners! Also, once you've paid the sum of thirty million dollars, Beauty No. 1, who's on the stage now, will belong to you. Until then, you have no right to do anything to her. Now, please make your payment!"

The staff member in the black uniform asked again, "Mr. Wallace, would you like to pay by bank transfer or by check?"

Liam was being forced to the point of being at a loss for what to do, and Lucas refused to fall for his trick. So he could only bite the bullet and say, "I... I don't have so much money on my card now..."

"You don't? Then why didn't you think of that when you were bidding just now?" Russell snorted coldly. "Mr. Wallace, your family is wealthy and prestigious. In fact, even this auction venue we are standing in as we speak belongs to the Wallaces. On account of your grandfather, I'll give you one more chance. Call your

father or the senior Mr. Wallace immediately and ask them to bring the money here to make the payment for you!”

Liam’s forehead was already covered in sweat. If he had to call his grandfather and inform him that he had just spent thirty million dollars at the auction to purchase a woman who had nothing to offer except a pretty face, he would definitely be beaten to death!

Holding his phone with trembling hands, he couldn’t bring himself to dial that familiar number.

“Wait!” At this moment, Kyle suddenly interjected and slowly walked toward Liam from behind.

Russell frowned slightly, but as a subordinate of the Kingstons, he had to be polite. “Mr. Kingston, do you have any objections?”

Kyle glanced at Russell, but he didn’t answer him directly. Instead, he turned his head to say to Lucas, “I heard that you were very generous and bought the first nine beauties in a row during the auction tonight. Before Mr. Wallace appeared, you’ve also offered as high as six million dollars for the last girl. When you were competing with him during the bidding, your final bid was twenty-three million dollars, right?”

Lucas raised his eyebrows. “That’s right. So what?”

“Let’s put it this way. Since both of you are keen on buying this girl, and Mr. Wallace happens to be short of cash at the moment, let’s consider his bid invalid and yours successful. In that case, you shall take the last beauty home for six million dollars,” Kyle said self-righteously. Without even asking Lucas if he agreed at all, he instructed the staff member beside him, “Proceed with the arrangements for the payment transfer procedures for Lucas Gray. This matter is settled then.”

Russell's face was sullen, and after some hesitation, he said softly, "Mr. Kingston, I'm afraid this is not an appropriate way to handle this matter. After all, Mr. Wallace succeeded in bidding for the last item during the auction, but he's now unable to come up with the money to pay what he bid. If we get this matter over and done with in such a hasty manner, I'm afraid it will damage the reputation of the Kingstons' auctions..."

Kyle glared at Russell scornfully. "I'm the heir of the Kingstons, while you're just a subordinate who works for us. Are you sure you want to contradict me too?"

Having worked for the Kingstons for decades, Russell had always been highly respected by the Kingstons, including the helmsman and staff members. This was the first time that he had ever been publicly rebuked by a junior of the Kingstons.

Although he was indeed working for the Kingstons, Russell still had his own set of principles that he would abide by. For the sake of the Kingstons' reputation, he decided to try and persuade Kyle further, but the latter interrupted him with a look of annoyance. 1

"That's enough. I don't want to hear any more nonsense from you. I've already made my mind up regarding this matter. Should there be any consequences, I'll bear full responsibility for them. Will this do?"

When Russell heard Kyle's stubborn insistence, there was nothing else he could say. He could only keep quiet and stand quietly at the side.

After giving these instructions, Kyle turned to Liam. "Mr. Wallace, we're friends after all, so I will help you settle this matter this time. However, you must be careful in the future!"

Overjoyed, Liam hurriedly thanked Kyle, "Thank you so much, Mr. Kingston! I owe you a huge favor for this today. Regardless of what happens to you in the future, I'll definitely go to great lengths to help you at all costs!"

“Haha, sure!” Kyle chuckled and then turned around to face Lucas again. He then ordered Lucas like Lucas was his servant, “Okay, hurry up and pay up! Stop wasting our time here!”

Lucas remained seated, not moving by a single inch. His lips curled into a mirthless smile as he said sneeringly, “What if I don’t agree?”

From the beginning, Kyle had never asked for Lucas’s opinion and presumptuously exempted Liam from bearing the consequences of his actions. He even used such a disgustingly condescending tone to order Lucas to pay up immediately.

If Liam hadn’t interrupted the auction halfway and tried to deal with Lucas, Lucas would indeed have paid the six million dollars for the bid he placed.

Unfortunately, Kyle decided to let Liam off without any consequences. Lucas naturally wouldn’t agree to it, especially since Kyle spoke to him in such a rude and snobbish tone.

Lucas wasn’t bothered by the fact that he was a Kingston and wouldn’t let himself be shortchanged for the sake of pleasing Kyle.

“Punk, I’m being kind enough by not asking you for twenty-three million dollars directly. How dare you turn me down? Seems like you want to do this the hard way! It’s a piece of cake for me to deal with you!” Kyle threatened softly.

They weren’t speaking loudly, and only the few people nearest to them could hear them, such as Lena and Bruce, who were sitting right next to Lucas. Both of them had fury in their eyes.

Lucas sneered and glanced at Kyle, who was putting on airs and acting all high up in the air, before turning to look at Liam, who was looking all smug and conceited. He suddenly said loudly, “I’ve given up on that last bid just now, and yet you’re

trying to force me to be the winner of the auction just because Mr. Wallace can't afford to pay? Is there such logic in this world? It turns out that the rules of the Kingstons are so twisted. I've gotten an eyeopener today!"

Only then did the crowd figure out exactly what Kyle Kingston had said to Lucas. They immediately got into an uproar and looked at them with displeasure in their eyes.

There wasn't a single auction where such a rule applied.

Generally, if the successful bidder didn't have enough money to pay for what they bid on, it would be deemed as malicious bidding, and they would be required to pay for the goods immediately while also being subject to penalties such as getting blacklisted.

If the bidder really couldn't afford to pay, he would have to bear severe consequences, and that auction would also be considered invalid. With the permission of the guests, a new round of bidding would then begin.

In short, such a practice where the second-highest bidder was forced to buy the item while the malicious bidder faced zero punishment as if nothing had happened would never occur in auctions.

If that were the case, there would be plenty of malicious bidders in the future, and the rules of the auctions would be thrown into jeopardy.

Everyone discussed. When Kyle saw that Lucas had ruthlessly exposed the truth of this matter, his face turned sullen, and he hollered furiously, "Lucas Gray, are you bent on going against me?! Don't blame me for being nasty to you then!" 1

Chapter 315: Forced With The Rod

Liam mocked Lucas smugly, “Lucas Gray, don’t think you’re an important person. Kyle is from a prestigious family, and he can easily crush you if he wants! You’d better obey, pay up, and leave. Otherwise, you won’t be able to leave even if you want to!”

Now, not only had Liam gotten rid of the terrifying debt of thirty million dollars with Kyle’s help, thus saving him from the foolish mistake he had made. Furthermore, he was extremely pleased and smug because he felt that he had built a friendship with Kyle. So he spoke with a huge sense of superiority.

Lucas said indifferently, “What if I just don’t want to?”

Their threats meant nothing to him.

If Lucas hadn’t thought that those beauties the Kingstons had put up for the auction were most likely related to the origin of those beauties of the Ocean Bathhouse, and he wanted to get to the bottom of the truth, he could have just destroyed the auction hall before going to destroy the Kingstons.

Anyway, the Kingstons were the dogs of the Huttons, and they had repeatedly harassed Lucas, which was already extremely annoying.

Destroying the Kingstons was easy, but Lucas still wanted to get more insider news from them, so he hadn't done anything to them.

Seeing that both Liam and Kyle were angered by what Lucas said and sensing that things were about to go awry, Russell hurriedly stood out and yelled loudly, "Ladies and gentleman, the auction tonight has come to an end. Thank you for attending. Please leave the venue now!"

Russell signaled the surrounding staff members to escort the guests away.

In fact, the matter regarding the last auction item had yet to be settled, so they were all very curious about how it was going to be handled. But the fact that the Kingstons were asking them to leave now showed that they clearly wanted to settle it in private instead of letting everyone find out, probably because of the pride of the Kingstons.

At the thought of this, everyone could only leave reluctantly in order not to offend the Kingstons.

The large auction hall was soon empty again.

But Lena and Bruce, who chose to stay in place, stood out very starkly.

Russell frowned in displeasure. "Why aren't you two leaving yet?"

Bruce also frowned. "Mr. Gray is my friend, so I naturally won't let him stay here alone. Although I don't know what exactly you want to do to him, what Mr. Kingston did just now was clearly inappropriate, wasn't it?"

Lena nodded and expressed her support for Lucas. "Exactly, Liam Wallace clearly tried to go against Lucas by deliberately placing high bids that are way more than what he can afford. In the end, Liam Wallace ended up making a fool out of

himself because he couldn't afford to pay what he bid. Why should Lucas be the one to bear the consequences? It's not the first time the Kingstons are holding an auction. Why would you do something like that?"

Kyle rolled his eyes in displeasure. "What does it have to do with you? The auction is organized by my family, and we'll handle it the way I want to. You're in no place to intervene."

Russell also said sternly, "This is a matter between us Kingstons and Mr. Lucas Gray. I hope you won't interfere indiscriminately, lest you get into trouble yourselves!"

Although Russell didn't approve of Kyle's actions, he was still working for the Kingstons, so no matter what, he couldn't reprimand Kyle in front of outsiders.

Russell was obviously threatening them with the future of the Sawyers and the Hales and warning them not to poke their noses into others' business.

As he expected, Lena's face immediately became extremely sullen.

If she was alone, she would naturally go all out and continue to support Lucas without any reservations. But if the future of the Sawyers was at stake, Lena wouldn't dare to act so presumptuously and recklessly.

After all, the last time her father, Ethan, had a talk with her, he had mentioned that the Sawyers were now only glorious on the surface and that they were actually facing many large and small crises at this point. A slight careless mistake could lead to heavy losses, which was also why her father wanted her to marry Tristan and let their families unite.

Thus, she indeed couldn't act willfully at this juncture and cause the Sawyers to suffer severe and immeasurable losses.

Lena bit her lower lip reluctantly and stopped talking.

But Bruce shook his head, straightened his back, and said austere, “Even if you are displeased and decide to harm the Hales, I will face all your attacks!”

He had long seen Lucas’s methods of handling things, and now that the Hales had already pledged allegiance to him, they were naturally on his side.

But Bruce also believed that as long as Lucas was around, even the Kingstons wouldn’t be able to get any advantages.

Bruce’s insistence on supporting Lucas even at the expense of getting his family harmed caught Liam and Russell by surprise. Even Lena’s eyes were full of confusion.

Liam narrowed his eyes and threatened with a gloomy expression, “Hmph, since you’re bent on protecting Lucas Gray, don’t blame us for being unkind to the Hales when the time comes!”

Bruce glanced coldly at Liam, whose family was also one of the four top families just like the Hales. After calling Liam a good-for-nothing in his head, Bruce couldn’t be bothered to pay any more attention to him.

After seeing Bruce’s behavior, Russell could tell even more that Lucas was extraordinary. *He’s a young man who has the full support of the most respected family head among the top four families of Orange County. And he’s also the holder of a Black Diamond Card that’s extremely rare and precious in the world... How much more is there to him than meets the eye?*

No matter what, Russell was reluctant to become enemies with Lucas.

“Mr. Kingston, since Mr. Wallace can’t afford to pay what he has bid, while Mr. Gray is not willing to buy Beauty No. 10 at the last bid price, why don’t we just nullify this auction? Neither of you will have to pay, and Beauty No. 10 will be kept by the Kingstons. What do you think?” Russell suggested, wanting to let the matter rest.

Unfortunately, Lucas’s purpose in coming to the auction was to rescue Grace and take her away. So how could he possibly leave Grace with the Kingstons, who were just as disgusting as the Wallaces?

Kyle was also against the proposal because, in his opinion, it was too easy of a way out for Lucas and also an insult to him. “Hmph, how can an auction held by the Kingstons be nullified just like that?!”

Kyle chuckled coldly and suddenly said arrogantly while a raised voice, “Since I said that you have to pay for it, you have to obey! I initially wanted to do you a favor and let you pay only six million dollars. But now that you’ve angered me, I’ve decided that you must pay the full sum of thirty million dollars and not a single cent less! Otherwise, you will stay in this auction house forever!”

With a sinister smile, he waved his hand, and more than ten fighters dressed in black bodysuits appeared around them. They were all holding various weapons like knives, guns, batons, and so on as they began surrounding Lucas aggressively!

“Hahaha, Lucas Gray, I’ll give you two minutes to make your payment obediently! Otherwise, I can’t guarantee that you can still walk out of this hall in one piece!”

Chapter 316: Who's Threatening?

Both Lena and Bruce were shocked to see the armed henchmen. Neither of them expected Kyle to threaten Lucas using such a method.

Russell was also a bit surprised. He frowned and said in disapproval, "Mr. Kingston, these people are all experts who only appear when necessary. I'm afraid..."

Kyle rebuked hostilely, "Shut up! I have my own plans!"

Staring at Lucas contemptuously with raised brows, Kyle roared, "Punk, weren't you very arrogant outside Club Splendor just now? How dare you kick me so hard that my guts still hurt even now?! You're now on my turf, and these are all my men. Let's see how you can continue to be arrogant in front of me!"

Only then did Russell understand the reason Kyle bore such a strong hatred for Lucas and was bent on going against him. It wasn't so much as to help Liam but mostly to take revenge on Lucas.

After hearing what Kyle said, both Lena and Bruce frowned, feeling rather worried. *It seems that Kyle Kingston won't let Lucas off easily... What should we do now?*

Lena looked at the menacing and murderous-looking henchmen around her. She couldn't help biting her lower lip as her face turned pale, and she subconsciously hid behind Lucas.

She had always been well protected by Ethan and so had never been in such a dangerous situation before. It was inevitable for her to be nervous and terrified.

“You guys leave first!” Lucas suddenly said to both Lena and Bruce.

“What... what about you then?” Lena asked worriedly.

Lucas comforted her with a light smile. “I’ll be fine.”

“Hmph, things have already come to this, but you’re still boasting! Do you really think that you can escape from my elite subordinates unscathed and in one piece? Also, no one in this hall is allowed to leave until you pay that thirty million dollars!” Kyle said with a menacing expression.

Since that chick from the Sawyers and that old foggy are bent on accompanying Lucas Gray because they’re worried about him, I’ll show them that anyone who dares to side with Lucas Gray will die a horrible death!

“Hurry up. Two minutes are up. Hurry up and pay me the money! Otherwise, I’ll sever both your arms!”

With Kyle’s order, the ten-odd armed elite henchmen immediately stepped forward toward Lucas threateningly, ready to pounce on him.

Lena watched nervously, and her body even began to tremble slightly.

Lucas glanced at them and smirked. “Do you really think you can do anything to me?”

Then he stood up and walked toward Kyle, completely ignoring these so-called elite henchmen who worked for the Kingstons.

“Bastard, don’t be too arrogant! All it takes for me to rip you apart is a single order from me!” Kyle hollered furiously.

But his heart soon began to palpitate as Lucas approached him, making his hairs subconsciously stand on ends.

“Quick, stop him! Stop him!” Kyle bellowed at the top of his lungs.

But before the elite henchmen could make a single move, Lucas suddenly vanished out of sight!

“Where is he?” Taken aback, Kyle got flustered and hurriedly looked around. But a hand suddenly appeared in front of him and gripped his neck tightly!

“!” Kyle’s pupils suddenly constricted as fear overwhelmed him!

A moment ago, Lucas was clearly still several meters away from him, and the elite henchmen of the Kingstons were standing in between them. *How did he break through them and dash toward me in an instant?*

The henchmen were just as astonished. They didn’t even get a clear glimpse of Lucas’s actions just now. All they felt was a chilly breeze blowing past them, and before they knew it, Lucas had already broken through their siege and strangled Kyle’s neck!

What horrifying speed!

“Let... go...” Kyle was strangled to the point of becoming flushed as he desperately tried to reach out and push Lucas’s hand away.

But Lucas tightened his grip mercilessly, and Kyle immediately rolled his eyes, unable to say another word.

This move successfully managed to stop the Kingstons’ elite henchmen, who wanted to charge toward Lucas and attack him, making them no longer dare to act recklessly.

“Mr. Gray, let’s talk things over calmly. Please quickly let go of him!” Russell hurriedly exclaimed in panic.

His forehead was covered in cold sweat as he tried to stop Lucas, fearing that Lucas would strangle Kyle to death in a moment of anger.

Although he also hated Kyle, the scion of the Kingston family, Russell would be in trouble if Kyle really died in the auction he was in charge of, regardless of how much the Kingstons valued Russell.

They were suddenly in a stalemate.

Lena gently covered her mouth because when she saw Lucas moving past those henchmen as quickly as a bolt of lightning, she was reminded of when she had encountered an assassination by a biker charging toward her outside the Sawyers' villa. She initially thought that she would die, but Lucas appeared in the nick of time to rescue her like a god descending from heaven.

At that time, Lucas was probably as quick as he was just now.

Lena's eyes were full of sweet joy as her heart began beating rapidly.

Kyle was probably the most miserable and terrified person now.

He was now under Lucas's control, and there was a sharp pain in his neck. He couldn't even breathe properly, let alone speak.

He was no longer as arrogant as he was a few seconds ago, and there was nothing but fear on his face.

"You said that you'd get your men to sever my arms and not let me leave this place in one piece if I don't pay that thirty million dollars, right?" Lucas asked contemptuously with a smirk.

But his smile seemed terrifying to Kyle, overwhelming him with so much fear that he began trembling violently.

He shook his head desperately, but Lucas was strangling his neck tightly, rendering him immobile. So shaking his head made the pain in his neck intensify and even harder for him to breathe. His eyes kept rolling backward, and he seemed to be on the verge of dying.

Liam spluttered threateningly, “Lucas Gray, you... Let go! If you dare to harm Mr. Kingston, the Kingstons won’t let you off!”

Liam was standing near Kyle, and he was so frightened that he turned as pale as a sheet when he saw with his very own eyes that Lucas was about to strangle Kyle to death.

Russell was enraged and roared at Liam, “Idiot, shut up!”

Judging from Lucas’s performance, Russell was certain that Lucas wasn’t the type that would relent under threats. Liam’s words would only further anger Lucas.

“Mr. Gray! I know Mr. Kingston was at fault just now. He shouldn’t have offended you, but please have mercy and let us talk things over calmly! If you end up killing him, it won’t do any of us here any good!” Russell hurriedly pleaded. If Lucas continued strangling Kyle, he would die in less than a minute!

Lucas naturally wouldn’t kill Kyle just like that. Seeing Kyle begin convulsing, Lucas finally relented and let go of him.

Kyle could no longer stand on his feet. As soon as Lucas let go, he directly collapsed onto the ground. He gasped desperately for fresh air while looking thankful to have survived a near-death encounter.

Lucas kicked Kyle, who was now like a dead dog. He then stepped on his chest with one foot and questioned indifferently, “Now, do you still want me to pay you that thirty million dollars?”

Chapter 317: A Button

At this point, Kyle had long become terrified of Lucas. He hurriedly shook his head. “No, no, no, I wouldn’t dare to make you pay! I’ll give you that woman for free. I won’t take a single cent!”

If he had known that Lucas was so formidable and terrifying, he would have never tried to provoke him from the start!

“Hurry up and release her now. What are you waiting for?”

“Release her? Oh, oh, yes. I’ll get to it immediately!”

Kyle was a little dazed at this point, and his mind was in a whirlwind, so it took him a while to realize what Lucas meant. He hurriedly hollered at Russell, “Are you deaf? Didn’t you hear what Mr. Gray said? Quickly release that woman on the stage!”

“Yes!” Russell didn’t dare to delay. He sprinted toward the auction stage to personally open the door of the large glass display case that Grace was locked up in. He then brought her to Lucas.

All this while, Grace had been locked in the glass display case and could only watch the auction begin with a commotion, followed by the altercation between some people and Lucas, who was originally supposed to win the auction and take her away. When she saw this, her heart tensed up, and she was terribly scared that something might happen to him.

Later, all the guests were made to leave the auction hall, resulting in Lucas and a few other people being the only ones left. All of a sudden, a bunch of armed henchmen surrounded Lucas, making her even more anxious.

Unfortunately, she was locked in the soundproof glass display case, so she couldn't hear the noise outside. The fact that she didn't know what was happening made her even more flustered and anxious as she continuously hit the glass walls of the display case until abrasions formed on the skin of her elbows.

Now that she was brought to Lucas and saw Kyle, whom Lucas was stepping on, she finally learned that Lucas had the upper hand in the conflict this time. She was finally going to be rescued!

"You two, take her away first!" Lucas suddenly said to Lena and Bruce.

Lena immediately looked at Lucas worriedly, as she couldn't be at ease with him staying here alone.

Bruce hurriedly grabbed Lena's arm and shook his head. "Lena, I think we'd better listen to him and leave! There's no point staying here anyway. We might even end up disturbing Mr. Gray."

Lena also realized that this was indeed the case. So she could only say worriedly with some reluctance, "Be careful on your own then. We'll wait for you outside."

Soon, Lena and Bruce brought Grace away from the underground auction venue.

"Mr. Gray, we've already let your friends go. Can you please let Mr. Kingston off now?" Russell asked anxiously. He was worried he might further anger Lucas if he said something wrong.

Lucas said calmly, "I didn't intend to become enemies with the Kingstons today, and I wasn't the one who started this ruckus either. I can let Kyle Kingston off today, but I hope you will remember that I, Lucas Gray, am no pushover. The reason that I choose not to create trouble is not because I'm afraid. Anyone who

plans to provoke me first should consider if they can bear the consequences before doing so!”

“Yes, you are right! We will definitely remember!” Russell hurriedly agreed on Kyle’s behalf.

Kyle was still being stepped on by Lucas, who was still in control of his life. Regardless of how indignant and reluctant he was, he had no choice but to bear with it for now, not daring to show the slightest displeasure on his face.

Lucas moved his foot away from Kyle’s chest and let him off. He then turned around and walked toward the exit of the auction hall.

Kyle stared straight at Lucas’s back, wishing he could kill him immediately. But after thinking about the way Lucas could suddenly appear in front of him like a phantom, he hesitated and dared not take the risk. *Forget it. I’ll let this bastard off for now. When the time comes, I’ll definitely kill him!*

The elite henchmen around him didn’t move either because they hadn’t received any orders from Kyle. They simply watched Lucas walk toward the exit of the auction hall.

Liam stood next to him with a sullen expression. He had planned to make Lucas spend a ton of money today, but the latter managed to slip away like a loach. Not only did he not fall into Liam’s trap, but he even humiliated him and Kyle. Liam was bent on taking revenge on Lucas!

Just as Liam was glaring viciously at Lucas’s back, Lucas suddenly turned around and flicked something from his fingertips that swiftly darted toward Liam like a ray of light.

“Pfft!” The round object instantly penetrated Liam’s throat, and two streams of blood gushed out from the front and back of his neck.

Liam raised his hand and touched his neck in bewilderment, but he was already falling backward. With a loud thud, he collapsed onto the ground.

“Mr. Wallace!” Russell and Kyle were astounded. By the time they rushed forward to squat down beside Liam and take a look at his situation, his pupils had already dilated and lost their luster.

Liam was dead!

“This is... a button!” One of the Kingstons’ subordinates hurriedly picked up a bloodstained golden button from a spot on the ground near Liam and handed it to Russell.

When Russell saw the familiar-looking button, his pupils suddenly constricted, and he turned to look at Kyle’s neck.

Kyle was wearing a designer striped dress shirt, but the topmost button on the collar had already gone missing. The remaining buttons on the shirt were identical to the bloodstained one!

The truth couldn’t be any clearer. Lucas had ripped the button off of Kyle’s collar when he was strangling him. At that time, Kyle was on the verge of death, so he naturally had no time to notice such trivial things.

The tiny object that Lucas had flicked with his fingers when he was standing at the exit of the auction hall was this very button that pierced through Liam’s throat, killing him on the spot!

Everyone’s eyes were full of disbelief.

The door of the auction hall was nearly twenty meters away from Liam’s body!

Given such a great distance, even a bullet might not be shot accurately at the target.

Yet Lucas managed to kill Liam accurately by flicking the tiny button at him. How terrifying was this?!

His actions... were far beyond the abilities of a human!

Bang!

Lucas walked out of the door of the auction hall, and the metal gate slammed shut with a loud bang.

Kyle shivered violently as he broke out in cold sweat that spread all over his body.

Beside him, Russell also raised his hand to wipe the sweat off of his forehead. He said with lingering fears, “Mr. Kyle, this man is too terrifying. He has incredible combat skills and reflexes. He also has an extremely rare Black Diamond Card. You’d better not go against him in the future!”

Looking at Liam’s corpse, Kyle recalled the humiliation he felt when Lucas choked him and stepped on his chest. He said indignantly, “Regardless of how powerful he might be, his body is still made of flesh and blood! Next time, I’ll definitely deploy my family’s gun squad to besiege him. Let’s see how he can hide then!”

Russell stared at the indignant and furious but frightened Kyle and decided not to persuade him further. *This stubborn fool who was almost just killed is probably going to dig his own grave soon. Why should I bother talking sense into him if he refuses to listen?*

Chapter 318: Asking About the Insider News

Meanwhile, Lucas left Club Splendor without turning back at all. Lena, Grace, and Bruce, who had been waiting outside, immediately went up to him and surrounded him.

“Lucas, are you alright!?” Two almost identical voices sounded at the same time, asking the same question in unison.

Lena and Grace looked at each other and felt a little embarrassed.

Lucas smiled. “What could possibly have happened to me? Don’t worry!”

“Those henchmen of the Kingstons were very aggressive and menacing just now. They’re both just scared that you might have gotten hurt,” Bruce said with a chuckle. As someone who had experienced a lot in life, he immediately realized what was going on.

“It’s okay. The Kingstons aren’t that scary, and Kyle Kingston is just a wimp. You don’t have to bother about him. Also, Grace, Liam Wallace will never be able to pester you again in the future. Rest assured!” Lucas said nonchalantly.

Bruce’s eyebrows suddenly twitched. Having lived for decades and accumulated plenty of experience, he could naturally tell the brutality in Lucas’s words.

He reckoned that Liam should have already died...

On the other hand, Lena and Grace seemed to fail to hear what Lucas meant. They merely thought that Lucas had just used some methods to deter Liam and stop him from creating trouble again.

Lena carefully looked at Grace's beautiful appearance and suddenly asked, "Lucas, so you knew this beautiful girl prior to this auction? No wonder you were willing to spend so much money to bid for her!"

Her tone contained a subtle tinge of sourness that even she herself failed to notice. She even repeatedly comforted herself that she was just standing up for Cheyenne, her best friend.

Lucas didn't notice the hint of jealousy in Lena's tone and simply said seriously, "Yes, she's my friend who got abducted and brought here forcefully by that bastard Liam Wallace. If Cheyenne didn't see it happen and asked me to save Grace, I'm afraid I wouldn't have known about it. Fortunately, I made it in time."

Only then did Grace realize that Lucas didn't show up at the auction house and rescue her by chance. Instead, he had specifically come here to save her! At the same time, Grace also felt even more grateful to Cheyenne.

Lena now knew why Lucas suddenly showed up at the auction out of the blue. And after learning that Grace and Cheyenne also knew each other, her curiosity was piqued even further.

But this was obviously not a good place to talk. Lucas waved into the distance. Zach, who had driven him to the club and had been waiting at the entrance, immediately ran over.

"Mr. Gray! Are you done handling your matters?"

Lucas nodded and said to Zach, "Send Miss Keller back to the hospital. I have some other matters to attend to."

"Yes, Mr. Gray!" Zach immediately acknowledged.

Although Grace wanted to thank Lucas properly, he clearly had an urgent matter at hand. Moreover, she had just experienced a near-death encounter, so she wanted to go back to the hospital and have a good chat with her mother. So she didn't say anything more and instead just nodded at Lucas before heading back to the hospital with Zach.

Lena also wanted to chat with Lucas for a while more. But when she saw that Lucas seemed to be in a hurry to handle some matters, she bade goodbye to him sensibly. "Lucas, I'll take my leave now. I'll ask you and Cheyenne out for some fun another day!"

"Alright, take care!" Lucas smiled and waved. After seeing Lena leave, he turned around to look at Bruce.

Bruce understood that Lucas had something to say to him, so he took the initiative to ask, "Mr. Gray, I've prepared some fine tea at home. Would you like to come with me to have a taste of the tea?"

"Sure, let's go."

Soon, Lucas went to the Hale residence together with Bruce in the latter's car.

In the guest hall of the Hale residence, Bruce led Lucas to the master seat while Bruce himself sat beside Lucas. After instructing the servants to serve some hot tea, he ordered them to leave so that he and Lucas could be alone.

"What exactly was going on in the Kingstons' auction tonight?" Lucas asked, cutting straight to the chase.

Bruce's expression turned solemn. He had long guessed that Lucas would definitely ask him about this matter. After all, openly auctioning off living humans like they were objects was an extremely serious matter, especially since Lucas abhorred such unethical and immoral practices. He would definitely be concerned about the origin of the auction.

Bruce didn't dare to delay and hurriedly told Lucas everything he knew. "The Kingstons are from San Francisco, and they started off as auctioneers decades ago, so auctions have always been very important to them. In recent years, the Kingstons held more than ten medium-sized auctions every year, and the venues are not limited to San Francisco. For example, they chose to hold one in Orange County this time. There are a large plethora of items they put up for auction each time, and almost anything can be sold at their auctions. There were even heavy firearms in past auctions!

"But as far as I know, they should have started putting up living humans for auction only in recent years."

Lucas frowned. "In recent years? Roughly when did they start doing so?"

"They should have started about six or seven years ago. I remember that when the Kingstons first started putting beautiful women up for auction, it caused quite an uproar among the scions of wealthy families, so I remember this matter very clearly."

Lucas tapped his fingertips against the small mahogany coffee table as he fell into deep thought.

He had originally thought that the Kingstons were the ones who supplied beautiful women to the Ocean Bathhouse.

But Preston Taylor mentioned the other time that the Taylors had started running such a business about two decades ago. Yet the Kingstons had only started running the auctions of beautiful women about six to seven years ago. The timeline clearly didn't tally.

It seemed that the Kingstons probably weren't the ones who had provided the Ocean Bathhouse with those women.

But no matter what, both families were guilty of illegal trafficking and abduction of women, so there had to be some relation between the two. It could be that the origin of those beauties was from the same source.

“So, do you know any insider information about the beautiful women used as escorts on the top floor of the Ocean Bathhouse?” Lucas asked again.

After all, Bruce was old and also had a high status. Besides, the Hales were also one of the four major families in the county, making them on equal ground as the Taylors. It was entirely possible for him to have heard some insider information.

“I don’t know much about this matter. The Taylors managed to gain a foothold in Orange County by relying on that sordid business they run on the top floor of the Ocean Bathhouse. They eventually developed into one of the top four families of Orange County. I was once curious about the source of their beautiful women too, so I sent some people to investigate it.

“Unfortunately, the mysterious organization supplying those beautiful women was quite careful and powerful enough to kill all the people I sent. We even received a terrifying threat from them, so I decided to give up on investigating the source.

“Furthermore, at the time, other families in Orange County had also sent people to investigate this matter. After all, the Taylors had reaped massive profits from that business, and many were jealous of them. But they faced the same thing as us in the end and were also issued stern warnings. At that time, there were two other families that had developed well. Refusing to believe the threats, they continued to send people to shadow those people. In the end, those two families completely disappeared from Orange County.

“Since then, everyone has treated this matter as an extreme taboo, and no one really mentions it anymore. As far as I know, even the Taylors, who run that business, are unclear of what those people’s origins really are.”

The information Bruce provided Lucas was much more detailed than what Preston had told him, but it made Lucas frown even more.

The power of that mysterious organization seemed to be even greater than what he had previously thought.

“So, do you think that there are any secret dealings between the Taylors and the Kingstons?” Lucas asked.

Chapter 319: One Step Further

After hearing Lucas's question, Bruce immediately understood what he meant. "Are you suspecting that... those beautiful women at the Ocean Bathhouse, when the Taylors owned it, were provided by the Kingstons?"

Lucas nodded. "So, is there such a possibility?"

Bruce smiled as he answered with great certainty, "There have actually been some conflicts between the Taylors and the Kingstons, and there was once a major dispute. So it's impossible that the Kingstons would secretly supply those beautiful women to the Taylors to help them develop and expand their businesses."

Lucas raised his brows with great interest. "Oh, is that so?"

He didn't quite know much about the grudges and feuds between those top families. Besides, the Taylors and the Kingstons were in different cities, so it hadn't crossed Lucas's mind that there had been a major dispute.

But Lucas had also noticed that among the guests of the Kingstons' auction tonight, there were core members of other top families of Orange County. But the only two direct descendants of the Taylors, Preston and Scott, hadn't attended the auction. The only Taylor present was Gisele, who had appeared only for a short while and entered together with Kyle.

So it seemed that it was true that the Kingstons and the Taylors didn't get along with each other.

Bruce explained, “More than ten years ago, one of Kyle Kingston’s aunts, who was very beautiful, was arranged by the Kingstons to marry a man from one of the top eight families of DC. But she fell in love with the son of the family head of the Taylors and refused to comply with the marriage arrangements her family set for her. She couldn’t convince the Taylors to change their minds, so she ended up eloping with her lover.

“Afterward, the Kingstons were enraged and nabbed the both of them before subsequently forcing them to break up. During the scuffle, one of the Kingstons accidentally killed the son of the Taylors’ helmsman, which led to the suicide of Kyle’s aunt. As a result, the Kingstons lost the opportunity to build connections with the wealthy families in DC, and since then, they formed a major feud with the Taylors and haven’t been in contact with each other for many years.

“So, those escorts were definitely not supplied by the Kingstons.”

Lucas nodded. *Seems these two families have a strong feud with each other. In that case, I’ll have to investigate both families separately.*

After explaining the feud between the two families to Lucas, Bruce said worriedly again, “Mr. Gray, since you strangled Kyle Kingston at the auction tonight, the Kingstons definitely won’t let you off even though they were at fault to begin with. They’re very protective of their family members, so they absolutely won’t let the matter go just like that. You have to be more careful!”

Lucas smiled nonchalantly. “It’s just the Kingstons. They don’t mean anything to me.”

Lucas spoke with great confidence and nonchalance because he really didn’t take them seriously.

Bruce was slightly surprised, but he soon smiled.

Previously, Lucas had shown his ability to easily annihilate the Hales. But no one knew how much more power Lucas had but was still concealing.

For instance, the Black Diamond Card that Lucas had taken out at the auction in Club Splendor tonight had made everyone taken aback because it was far beyond their expectations.

Now that the Hales had already pledged their allegiance to Lucas, there was no doubt that the Hales would naturally receive greater benefits if Lucas became stronger in the future.

Lucas took a sip of tea and suddenly asked, “I’d like to ask you something. Do you hope for the Hales to remain at the status quo now, or do you want to take a step further and become the strongest family in Orange County, or even surpass those top families in other cities?”

Bruce immediately froze in shock. After he processed Lucas’s words, joy instantly appeared all over his wrinkled face.

“Mr. Gray, do you... do you mean that... you can help the Hales become even more powerful and be on par with the families currently superior to us?” Bruce asked eagerly in a shaky voice.

Taking your family to greater heights and leading them to become stronger while earning prestige and the respect of others was almost the holy grail of every responsible and ambitious family head. Bruce was no exception.

Under his leadership, the Hales had managed to grow from a mid-tier family to become one of the four top families of Orange County. It was certainly something that he was proud of, but that was all. They had been stagnating at the status quo for more than a decade without making any more progress.

After all, the competition between families was extremely stiff, especially at their level. For them, progressing a step further was a Herculean task.

But Bruce believed that Lucas was an extraordinary person who definitely meant what he said!

Looking at Bruce's excited expression, Lucas smiled calmly. "Don't rejoice too soon. Given the current strength of the Hales, you are still far from reaching that goal."

The excitement and agitation in Bruce's eyes reduced a little, and his rationality made him trust that Lucas was right. The Hales definitely still had a long way to go before they could progress.

"It's alright, Mr. Gray. We'll surely make up for what we lack! I believe that as long as you are here, the Hales will reach that stage sooner or later!" Bruce said with a firm and determined gaze.

Only then did Lucas smile faintly. "Okay. Select some young and trustworthy people from your family tonight. They have to be under the age of thirty, physically fit, hardworking, willing to take hardship, and most importantly, loyal enough to the Hales! After you've chosen the candidates, I will send someone over to your place tomorrow to train them properly."

Thinking about Lucas's terrifying combat skills and the fact that Hans, the martial arts expert the Hales had spent a lot of money to hire, couldn't even strike Lucas once, Bruce reckoned that the younger members of his family would certainly become elite fighters if Lucas personally sent someone to teach and train them!

Even if they wouldn't be able to hold a candle to Lucas, they would definitely be countless times better than the elite guards they had hired in the past!

Bruce was so excited that he nodded profusely. "Yes! Thank you so much for giving us this opportunity to be groomed by you!"

Lucas smiled faintly. If he wasn't touched by Bruce insisting on speaking up for him at the expense of offending the Kingstons at the auction tonight, he might have never thought of giving the Hales this opportunity.

"Okay, I should get going." Lucas stood up.

Bruce hurriedly stood up and said solicitously, “I’ll send you back immediately.”

“It’s alright. Go get busy with what your own matters. You can just arrange for someone to send me to the hospital.” Lucas didn’t want Bruce, who was advanced in years, to personally send him to his destination late at night. Lucas wasn’t the type of person who put on airs either.

“Yes!”

Although Lucas said so, Bruce wouldn’t be negligent and casually arrange a random driver for him.

Soon, a tall and lanky young man entered the guest hall.

When he entered and saw Lucas on the master seat, his pupils suddenly constricted, and his body trembled. Even his foot froze in midair.

Chapter 320: The Culprit

Lucas raised his brows when he saw him as well.

The young man who entered was none other than Bruce's eldest grandson, Connor Hale.

Back then, Lucas had confronted the Hales and caused a stir at their home because Logan had colluded with Scarlet to abduct Amelia. At that time, Lucas had dealt with Connor harshly for making nasty remarks, causing him to suffer many losses.

When Lucas captured all the Hales overnight and put them on the verge of destruction, Connor suffered even more torment in prison.

If Lucas hadn't decided to pardon them and allow them to go home, Connor would have probably died by now.

Thus, Connor felt extremely complicated regarding Lucas. When he saw Lucas, he was full of fear and respect.

"Why are you still standing there at the door? Hurry up and come here to greet Mr. Gray!" Bruce hollered at his incompetent grandson furiously.

The reason he asked Connor to come over was so that he could appear more in front of Lucas and hopefully change Lucas's opinion of him.

After all, Bruce was already in his seventies, and he didn't know how much longer he would live. Once he kicked the bucket, the great business empire of the Hales would be handed over to Connor.

Bruce would be at ease if Connor could be on good terms with Lucas.

Connor suppressed the fear within him as he walked toward Lucas. He greeted respectfully, “Hello, Mr. Gray!”

Lucas chuckled when he saw the large droplets of sweat on Connor’s forehead and the way his legs seemed to be trembling a little. “Hello.”

Connor heaved a sigh of relief when he heard the friendly tone of Lucas’s voice.

Bruce ordered, “Connor, drive Mr. Gray to Orange Coast Medical Center now.”

“Yes, Grandpa.” Connor hurriedly nodded before quickly going to the garage. He then drove the best car they had to the entrance of the guest hall to pick Lucas up.

Bruce stood at the door and watched the car leave the residence before heaving a long sigh of relief.

“Gather everyone here for a meeting now!” After he issued this order, all the people in the family began to get busy.

...

Meanwhile, Connor sent Lucas to Orange Coast Medical Center while making sure to drive carefully throughout the journey. “Mr. Gray, we’re here...”

When Lucas opened the car door and was about to get out, Connor thought he could finally relax and calm his nerves, which had been tense all this time.

“Oh, by the way...” Lucas suddenly turned around, giving Connor such a huge fright that he shuddered.

Lucas was a little speechless. “Go home and tell your grandfather that I want him to find a place to settle down the nine women I bought at the auction in Club Splendor. Make sure no one can harm them again.”

Connor nodded repeatedly. “Okay, Mr. Gray, don’t worry. I will definitely relay every single word of yours to Grandpa.”

“Okay.” Lucas nodded, pushed open the car door, and got out.

Sitting in the driver’s seat in the car, Conner completely relaxed his mind and leaned back against the seat. He felt that his back was already drenched in cold sweat.

When Lucas walked into the hospital, he called Jordan and said, “Call Stanley Ray and ask him how things are going over in LA. Tell him to come over immediately if he’s free because I’d like for him to go to the Hales and train some of them into capable fighters.”

Jordan immediately replied in a much louder voice, “Lucas, let me do it! I happen to have a lot of time on my hands lately. I’ve been so idle that my skills are getting rusty! Let me go train those newbies! I guarantee I’ll be able to put them through tough and arduous training and turn them into elite fighters!”

Lucas was speechless. “I actually have some other tasks I want you to do, but since you want to be their trainer, go ahead. But I still want you to ask Stanley to come over. I have some things for him to handle.”

Jordan immediately agreed, but he soon smacked his lips and asked in puzzlement, “Lucas, you’re trying to help the Hales become stronger, right? Actually, with your power, you can easily conquer all of Orange County. Why do you still bother going to such great lengths?”

With Lucas’s status, he could easily conquer Orange County and even some other counties.

Lucas replied calmly, “Wouldn’t that be meaningless? I want to build my power with my own abilities and make it grow to the point that I can confront the Huttons in DC!”

After hearing this, Jordan immediately felt zeal and ardor coursing through his veins. “Okay, Lucas. I promise to make all of those newbies improve by leaps and bounds within a month!”

After ending the call, Lucas thought about it and called Joe, followed by Flynn. He instructed each of them to pick a few trustworthy people and send them to the Hales for training.

Lucas had taken both of them in as trusted subordinates, so he hoped that they could have some capable underlings who could be of help to them.

After all, no one would mind having too many competent and able subordinates.

After giving these instructions, Lucas walked to William’s ward.

But to his surprise, Cheyenne wasn’t the only one in the ward. Grace was also present and was currently chatting with Cheyenne.

When they saw Lucas enter, both of them beamed with joy and surprise.

“You’re back!” Cheyenne immediately stood up and walked quickly toward Lucas. She sized him up and finally heaved a sigh of relief after confirming that he was unharmed.

Grace couldn’t leap over and check on Lucas like Cheyenne did, but she stared at Lucas with great concern in her beautiful eyes for a long time. After seeing no visible injuries or dirty stains on his body, she finally felt relieved as well.

Although they had a lot to ask Lucas now, they glanced at each other and tacitly decided not to say anything, lest William became worried after finding out what had happened.

...

In the Wallaces’ manor in the southern district of Orange County...

At this moment, there were dozens of people standing around the entrance of the most luxurious villa in the middle.

In the middle of the crowd, there was a corpse lying motionless on the ground.

The corpse belonged to a young man of about 25 or 26 years old. There was a distinct hole in his throat, and his neck was covered with some dried blood.

The eyes of the corpse were still wide open, out of focus and fixed on the starry sky above. He seemed to be confused, as if he hadn't figured out how he died even during his last moments.

"Liam! My poor son, you've died such a tragic death! Who killed you?!" a woman in her late forties shrieked at the top of her lungs as she leaped toward the corpse on the ground.

Many of the Wallaces, standing at the side, seemed to be furious and grief-stricken.

"Who was it? Who the hell had the audacity to do such a vicious thing to a Wallace!?!?" a few reckless and impulsive young men hollered in rage.

Kyle stood beside the group of Wallaces and said with a look of grief on his face, "I'm sorry. It's all my fault for failing to protect Liam well and ended up letting some villain scheme against him, causing him to die at such a young age. Mr. Wallace, please punish me!"

He had a polite attitude and was even hanging his head a little low.

Liam's grandfather, Pierre Wallace, had anger written all over his face as he glared with his eyes wide open and full of fury.

Although Liam wasn't too competent, he was still Pierre's grandson, whom he had watched grow up. Yet Liam ended up dying tragically on their own turf in Orange County. No matter what, he would never let the culprit off the hook! "Mr. Kingston, please tell us who killed my grandson."

