

Mistaking A Magnate For A Male Escort Chapter 2238

Chapter 2238 Reconciliation

“But he’s obviously someone we know. The Lindberg residence is enormous—this spot is three kilometers away from the sentry post, and there are seven palaces in total. The fact that he could find his way here and even find the study room means that he had visited before on his own or with other people,” Layla pointed out.

Francesca knitted her brows. “If that’s the case, he must be from the three great families. They just couldn’t wait to get their hands on the seal, huh?”

Following a short pause, she added, “Could he be from the Atkinson family? They probably knew earlier on that I was going to meet Mrs. President, so they sent someone to sneak in while I was out. Or could the three great families be in this together?”

Layla nodded. “You’re right. The three great families are in solidarity at this time. As long as they pull Danrique down, they will be able to split the valuable Lindberg Corporation among themselves.”

Just then, the maid knocked on the door. “Ms. Felch, Mr. Donald is requesting to see you.”

“Tell him to get lost—”

“Wait,” Layla cut in. “She said he’s requesting to see you.”

Francesca understood what Layla meant right away and opened the door. “What did he say?” she asked the maid.

“He didn’t come in. He’s waiting outside, and he asked the guard to pass the message that he is requesting to see you. He has something important to discuss with you,” the maid recounted.

Hearing that, Francesca exchanged glances with Layla. She then consented, “Let him in.”

“Okay.” The maid went off to relay the message.

“If my guess is correct, he must have come to ask for a reconciliation,” Layla remarked in a low voice. “If the three great families take the seal, he will be the first one to get kicked out. Therefore, he has to reconcile with you and join your side. Only then will he have a chance to survive. Besides, I noticed that Donald stayed at the back without a word when Kevin and Gerard came to cause trouble last time. He did not join in their ruckus, and he seemed anxious. This means he’s well aware of Lindberg Corporation’s fate once the three great families get their hands on the seal. By then...”

“You’re right,” Francesca agreed. “He doesn’t have a powerful status nor many shares in Lindberg Corporation. His last name is the only reason he has a spot in there. If Danrique gets dragged down from his position, Donald will be doomed.”

“That’s right.” Layla then advised, “If he’s here for a reconciliation, you can give him a chance. After all, he’s more familiar with the three great families and the company, so he should know how to deal with them.”

“Okay.”

Francesca nodded before heading downstairs.

When Donald entered the house, he looked nothing like his arrogant self last time. Instead, he was tense and cautious. At the sight of Francesca, he got even more nervous.

“Uncle Donald, what brings you here?” Francesca asked straightforwardly.

“I...” Donald pondered for a while before continuing, “I want to talk to you.”

“Sure.” Francesca motioned at Norah, who then served some coffee and snacks before leaving with the other maids.

“What do you need to talk about?”

“I...” Donald hesitated again. Soon, he mustered his courage and began, “I want to apologize for my behavior last time.”

With that, he lowered his head and apologized sincerely. “I acted rashly last time, and I also spoke rudely. I hope you will forgive me in consideration of the fact that I’m also a Lindberg.”

Francesca glanced at Layla and promptly responded, “Please don’t say that, Uncle Donald. We’re family. You don’t have to be like this.”

Donald breathed a sigh of relief at her words. “That’s great to hear. I came here this time to tell you that you should never give them the seal. Otherwise, Lindberg Corporation will fall into their hands.”

“I know.” Francesca bobbed her head. “They even sent someone today to steal the seal. Thankfully, Layla noticed it in time, so they did not get what they want.”

Donald’s face turned pale when he heard about the attempted theft. Nevertheless, he managed, “Thank goodness they didn’t succeed. Do you have any news on Danrique now?”

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Chapter 2239 Allegiance

“Not yet.” Francesca shook her head and said firmly, “But I’m certain he’s all right. He will come home safely.” “I believe so, too. I’m counting on it.”

In truth, Donald was saying those words to encourage himself. He was also taking a risk. If Danrique could return unscathed, that would be for the best. Otherwise, Donald would be digging his own grave by joining Francesca’s side now.

However, he had analyzed the situation. If something really happened to Danrique, the three great families would not tolerate his existence even if he did not switch to Francesca’s side.

He might as well try his luck. “Is there anything else you want to talk about?” Francesca asked.

“Let me tell you about the company’s current state. The impact of Danrique’s issue is quite severe. Without his signature, a few major projects are postponed. Some of the bigger business partners have been calling every day for an update on Danrique’s whereabouts. Even the president has been asking about him every day.

In short, Danrique’s safety will affect the entire corporation, the fate of many business partners, and even the economy of Erihal. This is a very important matter. The thing is, the three great families won’t be able to represent Lindberg Corporation even if they have the seal. The business partners will not keep working with Lindberg Corporation just because of the seal.

Similarly, Erihal’s economy will still be unstable. Lindberg Corporation did not reach its position today solely with that one seal, so the three great families could not possibly handle the company’s problems on their own. Those business partners

only acknowledge Danrique, and he's the only one who can get the situation under control."

"I understand now. So they're making such a big fuss over the seal to obtain power, not for the company," Francesca concluded.

Donald nodded. "That's right. They will not be able to manage the company properly. And if they get the seal, the company will only meet its downfall quicker. The business partners aren't taking any action now because they believe Danrique will return.

Once the three great families lay their hands on the seal, it will be a clear sign that something has happened to Danrique. In that case, the partners will withdraw their investments and cancel the collaborations. Lindberg Corporation will be doomed if that happens."

As Donald finished his sentence, he couldn't help sighing.

He went on, "To be honest, I used to feel that Danrique was too cold-blooded. He never went easy on other people, so I even wished that someone could go against him and tame his terrible temper. But now, I realized that it's impossible to run such a big corporation properly without an iron fist like his. Moreover, no one else can manage to do that aside from him."

Upon hearing those words, Francesca felt somewhat emotional. She never knew that Danrique carried so much responsibility and burden on his shoulders.

Donald continued to say, "That's how things are at the moment. By the way, Harrier went to H City and hasn't returned yet. Kevin and Gerard are the ones running around right now. Harrier is the youngest among them, but he's the most cunning one. He always hides at the back and waits for the other two to get things done, then he reaps the benefits. You have to be careful of him."

"I got it." Francesca glimpsed at Layla before looking at Donald. "Now, I have a few questions for you." "Go ahead." Donald straightened his back.

“Aside from you, is there any other elder in the Lindberg family who is powerful enough to overpower the three great families?”

“No. If there was, he or she would have come to you long ago.” Once again, Donald sighed. “I’m the only one with some power left in the entire Lindberg family now. The other relatives don’t even have a say.”

“Then aside from the Lindberg family, who else has enough influence to keep the three great families in check?” Francesca asked again.

“The president,” answered Donald. “He’s the only one who can control them now.”

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Chapter 2240 Influential People

Francesca pondered for a moment after hearing those words. She seldom came in contact with the president, but she surmised that the first lady's actions were probably at the president's behest.

In other words, it meant that the president supported her. However, he had yet to offer his support officially. Is it because the three great families have yet to force me to the edge of the cliff? Or is it because he thinks it's not time yet?

Just then, Donald added, "Don't expect too much from the president." "Why?" Francesca was puzzled.

"Influential people like him often look at the big picture. They don't do things out of sentiment," Donald said grimly. "If Danrique is still alive, the president will do his utmost to hold onto him. But if he's not, the president will likely consider Erihal's economic situation and help a new president ascend to the position."

"I get it." Francesca understood what Donald was trying to say. "So, what you mean is, if Danrique is truly no longer with us, no one will help me."

Donald sighed. "Yes. At the moment, the candidate will likely be someone from the three great families. I reckon the person with the highest chance of obtaining the position is Harrier. Compared to Kevin and Gerard, Harrier is more strategic and composed. Moreover, compared to Danrique, he is easier to control."

Donald's words held a deeper meaning behind them, and Francesca immediately understood what the former was trying to say. "What you're saying is, Harrier is willing to submit to the president and adhere to his arrangements."

Impressed, Donald exclaimed, “Yes, you nailed it. The situation does not favor us at the moment. What’s important right now is to find Danrique. If he is able to return safely, everything will be fine.”

“Don’t worry. I’m sure he’s alive!” Francesca declared resolutely.

“I believe that he’s alive, too. He’s a strong man who won’t be defeated easily, but...” Donald trailed off for a while before continuing, “What I’m afraid of is that someone wants him dead.”

Francesca froze when she heard the words, and something in her mind clicked.

Prior to Donald’s reminder, she had not considered this issue at all. Even if Danrique was currently alive, there was no guarantee he was going to make it back safely.

This means that the people who seem to be concerned about his whereabouts are potentially the ones that want him dead. So, it’s a race to see who finds Danrique first...

If Gordon found Danrique first, the latter would be saved. However, if someone else were to beat Gordon to it, the consequences would be unimaginable.

“Truth be told, I don’t have better advice for you.” Donald heaved a long sigh. “I can only inform you of the situation as it is, in hopes that you mentally prepare yourself. Since you have two experts who can give you advice, you’re in a much better position than I am.”

Donald turned to Layla after speaking. “That’s all I came to say. I’ll be taking my leave. I hope you find Danrique as soon as possible.”

“I’ll figure something out.” Monica arrived as soon as Francesca saw Donald out. “Ms. Felch, His Highness wishes to meet you.” “All right, give me a moment.”

When Francesca was about to head inside to change, Monica hurriedly called out to her and said, “His Highness is in the car. He says that it’s inconvenient for you to travel back and forth all the time, hence he came over.”

Francesca turned around and stared at the car that was parked nearby. A subordinate opened the car door and carried a wheelchair out of the car before wheeling William over.

Francesca ushered them all into the study, and they were joined by Layla as well. William greeted Layla politely before cutting to the chase. “Francesca, I heard that you went to visit the first lady today. Did anything happen?

“I saw Hazel, who had just returned this morning. She was hurt.” Francesca began to describe the meeting in detail.

Chapter 2241 Dead

When they heard about Gerard's rude behavior and that Sam nearly bit him, Layla and William exclaimed in unison, "Was he bitten?"

Francesca was determined. "No. I managed to stop Sam just before Gerard was bitten." Layla patted her chest anxiously. "Are you sure he wasn't bitten? How did Gerard react?"

Francesca frowned and replied, "He muttered something to his daughter, but I couldn't hear what he said. I'm certain Sam did not bite him. Otherwise, Gerard would have collapsed on the spot. There was no way he could have left alive."

"That's true." Layla let out a sigh of relief. William knitted his brows. "We can't be sure. Is it possible for L's refined poison to cause a genetic change in Sam, resulting in a slower-acting poison?"

"Hmm..." Francesca considered the possibility. Before she left, Sloan had reminded her about Sam's increased toxicity after it was soaked in poison. Thus, the period it took for the poison to react might have been prolonged.

Moreover, Sam was a tiny snake, so its fang marks weren't easy to spot. Since Gerard had been covering his neck when the attack took place, she could not be a hundred percent certain that he had not been bitten.

At that thought, Francesca immediately relayed an order to one of the maids. "Please get Sloan to come here."

"Right away!" Just as the maid was about to go and fetch Sloan, a subordinate came rushing in, reporting, "Ms. Felch, there are many policemen outside. They are asking for you to aid their investigation."

Bewildered, Francesca asked, “What investigation?” “Ms. Felch!”

At that juncture, Sloan also came rushing over, exclaiming anxiously, “I’ve just heard the news. Gerard is dead!” “What?” Francesca was so shocked that her eyes almost popped out of their sockets.

Layla also stood rooted to the spot, stupefied. William, too, was stunned for a moment before his face darkened and his expression became unfathomable.

Sloan was beside himself with anxiety as he queried, “What on earth happened today? The police said that Hazel filed a report against you, accusing you of killing Gerard. The higher-ups of the police department are directly involved in the investigation.”

“I killed Gerard?” Francesca was flabbergasted. Suddenly, an uneasy feeling rose within her heart. All this seems to be premeditated...

At that moment, William began solemnly, “Sloan, I need you to remember something. L had once mentioned that Sam is extremely poisonous. Once it sinks its fangs into someone, the poison will immediately react. There is no way the victim can survive for more than half an hour.”

“Huh? But he’s never said that...” Sloan stared at him, puzzled.

Layla interrupted impatiently, “Just listen to him. It doesn’t matter if Mr. Lindberg has mentioned it before or not. This is what you will tell the authorities.”

Realization dawned on Sloan, and he nodded fervently. “Okay!”

William ordered, “Just leave the rest to us and go out to stop those people from entering. Tell them no one is allowed inside the castle and that everything is to be discussed when L returns.”

“Yes!” Sloan immediately left to carry out the order.

“Everyone else, please leave,” Layla instructed.

Inclining their heads, the maids bowed and exited the study.

Impatiently, Monica said, “Your Highness, it’s as you expected. The meeting today was a trap.”

“Who’s trying to harm Francesca?” Layla asked worriedly.

“If I’m not mistaken, it’s the person who invited her... The first lady.” William fixed his gaze on Francesca.

Francesca shuddered upon hearing William’s words. She asked in stupefaction, “Why would she do that? We have no grudge against each other.”

William frowned and explained calmly, “It probably has something to do with her daughter. We’re still investigating the precise reason. She had tried to harm you many times, but you’ve managed to get away each time. This time, however...”

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Chapter 2242 Uproot

William heaved a sigh. Apparently, he did not feel optimistic about how things looked. “Is the first lady doing this to bring the three great families to power?” Layla asked, puzzled. “It’s not necessary if she’s doing it for the sake of her daughter’s love life.”

Francesca had once told Layla about the current state of Avery, the president’s daughter, as well as the fact that Avery had feelings for Danrique.

However, Layla thought that as the president’s wife, the first lady didn’t need to seek vengeance against Francesca for something so trivial.

Danrique’s fate was currently unknown, but he would not forgive the first lady if he managed to survive and learn the truth.

William’s countenance grew solemn. “Perhaps for a variety of reasons. But from how things currently look, I’m almost certain she’s the mastermind. She deliberately summoned Francesca over to meet the Atkinsons and left them alone on purpose. Knowing Francesca’s hot temper, she expected a conflict to arise and believed Francesca would surely retaliate. Once Francesca retaliates, Gerard will die, and Francesca will become the main suspect.”

Monica exclaimed, “How devious! Will they send Ms. Felch to prison? I don’t think they would dare to, as the Lindberg family holds power here even in Mr. Lindberg’s absence. They wouldn’t dare act so boldly, right?”

Layla agreed with Monica, which was a rare occurrence. “She’s right. What’s more, Danrique is still alive. He might even be back in a few days.”

“Perhaps they don’t want him to come back,” William suggested suddenly. The atmosphere in the room grew tense at once.

The three women gaped at him.

“If L does not return, the president can instate an obedient puppet who will take over Lindberg Corporation.”

William’s lips curled into a sneer as if he had already gotten used to such devious methods.

“If L is dead, then getting rid of Francesca becomes a matter of urgency. If L is still alive, however, making a move against Francesca now would force him to show himself. And once he does, countless crises await him.”

Francesca gasped involuntarily. “So that is their plan. I was wondering why would the first lady attack me with such vicious measures. Turns out it isn’t because of a personal vendetta, after all. There are huge benefits in it for her.”

“Doesn’t the president care that his wife is doing these things?” Monica asked.

Layla had seen through everything. “What a redundant question. All he has to do is sit back and do nothing, and his wife will grant him the power he desires. If anything happens, the first lady would be his scapegoat, shouldering everything for him. For all we know, he doesn’t know anything. If their plan succeeds in the end, he would be the greatest beneficiary.”

Monica shuddered. “It’s frightening how evil people can be.”

William laughed derisively. “Everything had been planned ahead of time. Preparations had already been made back when the president first invited L and the three great families to the banquet. If Danrique had not brought Francesca along that night and instead accepted Avery as his wife, they would have become a family. A family shares common interests, after all. However, they never expected

Danrique to bring Francesca along and publicly reveal her identity, rejecting the president's 'kindness' in the process..."

Francesca said irritably, "How is this different from Frank? They're all like 'death to all who oppose me!'"

"Well, that's how it is in a dog-eat-dog world. Even blood-related siblings would lash out and kill each other, so what's to stop them from doing the same to L, who is nobody to them?" William sighed with a bitter smile.

"The problem in M Nation has long since existed, right? Why did it only blow up at this juncture? Could it be related to the president, too?" Layla asked.

William, on the other hand, was objective. "They must have been in wait for the right opportunity. Perhaps they had begun making preparations in advance when they noticed that a problem would arise around this time. Then, they would seize this opportunity to uproot Lindberg Corporation and claim it for themselves."