

## CHAPTER 11

Frank slid his hands in his pockets as he calmly got into the car.

Vicky, however, would keep sliding peeks at him from the driver seat.

“Mr. Lawrence, may I ask who Peter Lane is?” she eventually asked.

“My ex brother-in-law.” Frank admitted.

“Oh, I see,” Vicky exclaimed in understanding. “Helen Lane.” Frank nodded while she smiled. “I guess things have gotten unpleasant between you two! Would you like me to help a little?” Frank glanced at her.

If Vicky really did help, she could certainly make the Lanes disappear from Riverton without a trace.

However, he had no intention of going that far despite despising that family, and he more or less had to show some respect to Henry as long as he was alive.

“Thanks for your offer, but I can handle it myself,” he replied.

Vicky smiled. “Understood. Just remember that you can come to me anytime you’re having trouble.” – Helen arrived at the front doors of Verdant Hotel, her blue gown drawing many stares immediately.

Beside her, Gina was looking smug in her floral dress—her daughter would always have everyone’s attention wherever she went!

Still, she suddenly remembered. “Helen, hasn’t Peter made it here yet?” Helen frowned. “God knows what he’s up to—I’ll call him.” However, Peter never picked up, leaving her perplexed. “He’s not answering.” Gina huffed in disappointment. “That brat always drops the ball when it matters.” “Whatever, it’s fine,” Helen said solemnly. “The only thing that matters is to reach a partnership with the Turnbulls.” “Oh you’re early, Helen!” Sean exclaimed as he hurried toward her.

“We just got here too,” Helen replied politely.

On the other hand, Gina promptly fawned over him. “Gosh! Your suit must be worth millions, Mr. Wesley.” “Oh, not really... Just a few dozen grand straight from the tailor.” Gina then quickly pulled Helen over so that she stood beside Sean. “Tut, tut... You two are really a match when you stand together!” Helen rolled her eyes at her mother. “Stop it, Mom.” “Just saying it as it is.” Gina shrugged.

Sean smiled in understanding. “Let’s go in, Helen.” Helen nodded when she suddenly saw a familiar figure from the corner of her eye.

“Frank?” she murmured.

Gina turned and followed Helen’s gaze in response, and she saw that it was indeed Frank. “What?! What is that good-for-nothing doing here?” Frank happened to be waiting for Vicky at the entrance and frowned when he saw the trio.

Helen frowned too. "What are you doing here?" "Ms. Turnbull invited me." "Haha!" Gina guffawed. "Do you ever look in the mirror, Frank? Why would the heiress of the Turnbells invite a good-for-nothing like you?" Sean snorted as well. "Helen, your ex-husband is a real joker." Helen was left scowling and wondering when Frank got the habit of boasting.

Still, he was her ex-husband, and she did not want to cause a mess especially when her mother would not stop belittling him.

"You shouldn't be here, Frank. You should go," she told him.

Frank simply shrugged. "What, I can't come just because you're here?" "Of course. Can't you see the occasion?" Gina scoffed, smacking Frank's suit just then. "Don't think you deserve to be here just because you dressed up nicely. Trash like you will always be trash." "Oh, Mr. Lawrence." A cool voice suddenly rang out. "I didn't know you were bringing friends. Why don't you introduce us?" Everyone else turned and froze when they saw the tall, slender woman in a white gown striding toward him gracefully.

Her beauty was incomparable, be it her rosy cheeks, her almond eyes, or the poise in her step!

She walked straight up to Frank, wrapping her arms around his and making it clear that they were close.

Helen's eyes widened—even if Peter had told her that Frank had another woman, she did not expect her to be so beautiful!

Now, she understood what he meant when he said she was one in a billion.

And if her beauty was the result of technology, it would be technology from the divine!

Even Gina did not dare deny the woman's beauty, which promptly eclipsed her own daughter's... 'What a whore!' she thought to herself, miffed.

On the other hand, Sean was gaping and almost drooling, wondering why there was a woman more beautiful than Helen in a small place like Riverton, and why he had never heard of her!

He promptly strode up to her with a polite smile. "May I have the pleasure of your name, beautiful?" Vicky shot a cool look at him. "And you are?" Sean promptly straightened himself and tugged his sleeves. "Sean Wesley, at your service." "Never heard of you." Vicky pursed her lips. "Also, you really don't deserve to know my name." Sean was left gaping, his outstretched hand left hanging awkwardly in the air.

This was the first time a woman had ever humiliated him!

Gina promptly snapped at Frank, "You ingrate! Has our family ever wronged you? To think that you'd cheat on Helen with this whore!" Helen stopped her, but she strode up to Frank and shook her head. "I didn't believe Peter when he told us. How do you explain this now?" Frank smiled coolly. "Explain? Why should I?" "What..." Helen did not expect her to admit to it so boldly—she actually wanted Frank to deny it!

"You're Frank's ex-wife?" Vicky studied Helen with a piercing glare right then.

Helen could not help straightening herself and rearing her chin, attempting to puff herself to look confident. "That's right." Vicky, however, was beaming—Helen's effort only made her appear exceedingly distressed. "Hehe. In that case, thank you." Helen did a double take. "For what?" "For divorcing Frank. How else would I find such an extraordinary man?" "Hah!" Helen snorted in wry amusement, as if Vicky had a few screws loose.

“Extraordinary? That totally doesn’t apply to Frank, does it?” “Actually, I believe myself to be a great judge of character. Mr. Lawrence may not be perfect...” Vicky merely flashed a smile of confidence before turning pointedly toward Sean. “But at least he’s much better than the one with you now.”

## CHAPTER 12

Sean was immediately annoyed by Vicky’s words. “Come on now, beautiful.

Give me a little credit.” He was the heir to the Wesley family, and she told him that he did not compare to a piece of trash like Frank?

However, Vicky merely snorted in disdain. “Why should I?” Sean pursed his lips, his veins bulging as he clenched his knuckle. “Let me give it to you straight—that brat doesn’t even have a job! Why else would Helen divorce him? What can he offer you?! He’s not even that good looking.” Vicky simply glanced at Frank and shrugged. “Mr. Lawrence only needs time.

He just needs a month, and surpassing your family would not be out of the question.” “Haha! You’re really funny!” Sean laughed.

Starting from nothing and beating his family in a month?! Dream on!

Vicky smiled in return. “I’m not being funny. Why don’t we make a bet? If Mr.

Lawrence surpasses your family in a month, you’ll go down on your knees and apologize.” Sean narrowed his eyes, his interest piqued. “What if he doesn’t?” “Then I’ll get down on my knees and apologize,” Vicky replied nonchalantly.

“Deal,” Sean promptly said, as if worried that Vicky would renege.

Frank narrowed his eyes at Vicky just then and turned to head inside the banquet hall.

She was making a mountain out of a molehill, and he was not about to get involved in their squabble.

“Wait, Mr. Lawrence...” Vicky quickly chased after him and caught his arm. “I just put my bet on you. Shouldn’t you fight a little for my sake?” “I’m not interested in your gambit,” Frank replied flatly.

“So you’d rather let me kneel in front of that pig?” Vicky moaned with a wounded look.

To anyone else, they looked like they were flirting.

“Frank, can I talk to you?” Helen suddenly asked.

“You can say it here.” “In private. Just the two of us.” Frank chuckled coolly. “Forget it. I’d rather not get gossiped about.” With that, he turned to leave without looking back.

Helen was actually surprised that he was so cold—he would do his utmost to fulfill any request before no matter how small it was!

Vicky smiled pointedly in turn. “It seems that Mr. Lawrence isn’t interested in talking to you! Perhaps you should give up and focus on securing that project with the Turnbull family.” Helen gritted her

teeth. "You don't have to worry about that." Vicky shrugged and flashed a confident smile. "Actually, I'm really worried that you won't get it and humiliate yourself instead." With those words, she turned and went after Frank as Helen looked on.

She was actually despairing inside and clenching her knuckles but unable to vent her indignation.

Frank never even looked at her, let alone explain anything about the woman with him.

Had he already forgotten about their three years worth of marriage?

Nonetheless, Sean walked up to her confidently just then. "Don't worry, Helen.

I'll have that woman apologizing on her knees in a month." Surpassing his family in a month?! How delusional!

Helen stayed silent, however, as she had the nagging feeling that something was out of place.

Her confident smile and cool poise was stuck in Helen's mind.

She was unable to carry herself with such aplomb given this occasion—was she really just some whore?!

"I have a bad feeling about this..." Helen murmured.

– Many business elites were already gathered in the first banquet hall of Verdant Hotel.

And being the protagonist of the night, Vicky certainly could not stay with Frank.

"Please have a seat, Mr. Lawrence. I will be back after I've greeted some guests." Frank shook his head. "Just do what you have to. Don't mind me." He started eating without a care—he had never met the other business elites, so he had no reason to talk to them.

That was when Helen, Gina, and Sean entered.

Many business elites promptly approached them, offering toasts.

"Congratulations, Ms. Lane. This is your moment—Lane Holdings will be rising to the peak now that Ms. Turnbull has made a full recovery." "You're definitely getting that West City project." "Yeah, just don't forget us, alright?" Helen held a hand over her lips, hiding the grin beneath. "Oh, you're exaggerating. I didn't really help much." She was certainly buoyed inside—the instant she received word that Ms.

Turnbull made a full recovery, she sent her secretary to spread the news.

Now, everyone was fawning over her. And with the halo of saving Ms. Turnbull, who would ever steal the spotlight from her?

However, as the crowd followed her to the front roll, Helen was left staring at a figure sitting there that stood out like a sore thumb.

Sean promptly snapped, "Who let you sit there?! Get out!" It was the main table where the Turnbolls would sit at, and only Helen got to sit there!

Frank put down the buttered rib he was holding and wiped the grease of his lips.

“Ms. Turnbull told me to sit here. Do you have an issue with that?” “Hah! Is that so?!” Sean snorted in disdain. “You really know how to make stuff up, don’t you?” The business elites behind them were studying Frank curiously in turn.

“Who is he?” “Does he even have the right to meet Ms. Turnbull?” Sean promptly answered, “That’s Ms. Lane’s ex-husband, freeloading off her for three years and now here to cause trouble after she divorced him!” The crowd was immediately in an uproar, eagerly siding with the Lanes now that they were in the spotlight.

“What?! Someone that despicable actually exists?” “Huh, and here I wondered who he could be.” “Obviously a bumpkin. Can’t even use a knife and fork? He certainly doesn’t deserve Ms. Lane!” Seeing that the mob was outraged with Frank, Helen quickly went up and whispered, “Just leave, Frank.” Frank slowly looked up. “What, are you chasing me off too?” Helen frowned. “Hadn’t you embarrassed yourself enough?” “Embarrass myself?” Frank snorted in contempt. “I think you’re just afraid of me embarrassing your family. I’ve embarrassed myself plenty in your company for the last three years!” Gina promptly grabbed Helen and pulled her away. “Stop wasting your breath!

Ms. Turnbull will deal with him when she arrives.” At the same time, Sean walked up to Frank smugly. “You’re really thick-skinned, kid. Everyone wants you gone, but you’re still sitting there calmly. I’d be digging a hole to hide in if I were you.” Frank shot him a look. “I won’t touch you out of respect for the Turnbulls. Now, leave.” “Haha! You, touching me?! I don’t think you have the balls!” Sean laughed coldly, and leaned in to speak just loud enough so only Frank and him could hear, “I won’t lie to you—I’ve booked a room at the Spring Spring Hotel to properly celebrate with Helen tonight. I mean, you never consummated your marriage even after three years? You’re not impotent, are you? It’s alright. I could shoot a video when we do it tonight—” Smack!

Frank’s eyes had suddenly narrowed, his murderous intent flaring as he abruptly slapped Sean across the face!

“Wargh!!!” Sean was screaming even as the world spun around him—the slap had sent him flying!

The crowd was left silent and gaping right then. They never expected Frank to actually get physical at the Turnbulls’ banquet!

“F\*ck!” Sean’s face contorted with rage as he scrambled to his feet, feeling his mouth a little askew.

“Are you alright, Mr. Wesley?!” Gina exclaimed as she paled in shock, before wheeling on Frank and snapping, “Are you crazy?! How dare you lay a finger on Mr. Wesley!” Frank merely flexed his wrist. “You should be glad I didn’t kill him.” Helen was stunned by his outburst too, and snapped angrily, “How could you do this, Frank?! Apologize to Mr. Wesley right now!” Frank paused and wheeled on her in disbelief. “You’re asking me to apologize?

Did you tell him to do it when he incited your sycophants to mock me?” Helen averted her eyes, but snapped nonetheless, “He made a mistake, but you shouldn’t do that either!” “I’m sorry, but I’ve always solved problems with violence,” Frank replied coolly.

“If you don’t like it, do something about it.” “You... You’re hopeless,” Helen glared at her in disappointment.

“Ms. Turnbull has arrived!” Someone in the crowd suddenly shouted.

As everyone promptly cleared a path, Sean was smiling and scoffing at Frank.

“It’s over for you. No one’s going to protect you after what you did...” However, he was left dumbstruck when he turned and saw who stood at the center of the crowd.

## CHAPTER 13

Helen gasped as Vicky strode toward them under the crowd's escort, realizing that she was Ms. Turnbull given how the crowd behaved around her.

She certainly harbored contempt for Vicky earlier and was left feeling uncomfortable about that.

Not only was Vicky far more beautiful than she was, but even the former's family and connections crushed anything she had!

At that moment, she understood what Vicky meant about humiliating herself.

There was no way she would get that project as long as Vicky was around!

At the same time, Sean was stammering, "Y-You're Ms. Turnbull?" "What, does that disappoint you?" Vicky looked at him gleefully in turn. "Also, you were insulting Mr. Lawrence, weren't you?" "Hmph! So what?" Sean snorted.

From where he stood, Frank had nothing going for him at all. Even if he managed to seduce Vicky, he was nothing more than her plaything!

In fact, if Vicky fought him over her gigolo, she would be bringing shame to the Turnbells!

As such, he was dead sure

## CHAPTER 14

With Trevor's case being a precedent and what Vicky told Helen before they came inside the banquet hall, Helen was convinced that she had no chance of getting the West City project.

That was when Sean said with a scowl, "Don't worry. That good-for-nothing is just Vicky's gigolo, but my father actually is her grandfather's associate. I'm sure the man would understand with just a phone call." Gina finally remembered that he was there too. "Oh, Mr. Wesley! You really come through for us when it matters!" Helen leveled a miserable look at Frank in turn. "Sorry, but we really have to trouble you this time." She certainly did not dare pin her hopes of Frank—the West City project was the key to Lane Holdings' future!

Sean whipped out his phone, and went to a quiet corner to call his father, James Wesley, who was the head of his household.

"What is it? Why are you calling this late?" James growled.

Sean promptly pleaded, "Dad, could you ask George Turnbull to give my friend a project?" "What?!" James promptly snapped. "Have you lost your mind?! What even gave you the idea that I can speak up in that man's presence?! Even if I was allowed an audience, do you think I'm even capable of changing his mind?! Just suck up to Ms. Turnbull already. Everything else is pointless!" And with that, he hung up, leaving Sean scratching his head exasperatedly.

He started to head back, wondering how he would explain this to Helen.

He had been playing the long game but had yet to sleep with her—there was no way he could give up now!

Gina saw him hang up and promptly asked, “How did it go, Mr. Wesley? What did your father say?” Sean avoided her gaze but forced a smile and braced herself as he said, “Don’t worry. My father has already agreed to it—he’s probably calling Mr. Turnbull as we speak.” Gina breathed a huge sigh of relief. “Phew... That’s great!” Helen was relieved too and told Sean solemnly, “Thank you so much, Mr.

Wesley.” Sean chuckled cheerfully. “Come on, don’t say that.” Meanwhile, Vicky and Frank had headed upstairs to a private room, where she poured him a glass of wine.

“Mr. Lawrence, you don’t mind me acting on my own volition, do you?” she asked.

Frank was seated cross-legged as he replied flatly, “I actually thought you were holding back.” “Then I’ll remember not to hold back next time,” Vicky said with a giggle. “I presume you’ve heard about the West City project?” Frank nodded. “I have.” After all, Trevor would report Helen’s every move to him, and they had secured that project while they were still business partners. 1 Vicky brought up a long, narrow wooden box just then.

“Your ex-wife actually met my father and gave us this—a 100-year panacea cap.

She really wanted that project, but my father didn’t know she was your ex-wife.

Just say the word, and I’ll have them all kicked out of this banquet hall.” Frank frowned in thought, and asked, “Who would’ve been given the project before this?” “Trevor, of course,” Vicky admitted. “But he’s turning down Riverton projects now. As for Lane Holdings, they are actually a suitable candidate despite being a new enterprise, since they worked with Trevor before and gained experience as well as ability.” Now, the fate of Lane Holdings all depended on what Frank would say!

## CHAPTER 15

After some thought, Frank took a deep breath and said, “Denying a person income is no different from murder—if you’ve already considered giving them the project, Ms. Turnbull, I have no cause to tell you to do otherwise.” Vicky smiled at Frank as she studied him. “It seems to me that you’re just not keen on pushing them too far. Linger attachment to Ms. Lane, perhaps?” “If that’s what you think of me...” Frank shot her a look. “Can’t say anything to that.

“Have you not considered taking in a new lover now that you’re single, Mr.

Lawrence?” Frank shook his head. “Not interested.” Vicky pursed her lips—his response was somewhat a killjoy.

Still, she did not press the issue.

She certainly could not hurry things since Frank had just divorced Helen a couple of days ago.

“Well, I’m sure you’re more interested in herbal treasures,” she said, nonchalantly opening the box. You can have this panacea cap...” A faint sweet aroma swirled into the air immediately, and Frank was promptly focused as he studied the panacea cap meticulously.

Vicky rolled her eyes. “Honestly... you didn’t have such concentration when you were looking at me!” 11 Frank completely ignored her, however, and suddenly shook his head in disappointment. “It’s a fake.

JI “What?!” Vicky did a double take. “That bstad brought a fake to my house as a gift?!” Frank shrugged. “It’s 50 years old at best. No chance it’s a centennial.” For panacea caps, its medical efficacy would differ greatly even if there was just a years’ age gap, leading to the difference in value for each individual cap.

And Vicky was all too aware of that!

“Still, it is more or less useful. Why don’t you sell it to me?” Frank suggested.

Vicky smiled generously. “No, you can just take it if you need it, Mr. Lawrence.” “Alright, I owe you one now,” Frank nodded he did not have any moment right now. “Also, I’m going if there’s nothing else...” “Actually, if you could outside for a moment, Mr. Lawrence,” Vicky quickly said.

“I’d like to introduce you to an illustrious gentleman. I’ll have someone deliver the panacea cap to your penthouse later.” “Thank you,” Frank said and returned to the banquet hall.

Gina promptly approached him, once again behaving like a fishwife now that Vicky was gone. did you tell Ms. Turnbull?” “Nothing,” Frank replied flatly.

“What “You’re not fooling anyone,” Gina snapped stubbornly right then. “Do you think I’d believe you?” Frank shrugged. “Believe what you want. What does that have to do with me?” Helen stopped Gina just then. “I believe you, Frank. And I know that you’re upset with me, but I’d rather you didn’t cheapen yourself. Vicky Turnbull isn’t all that she seems, and you wouldn’t even know if she betrayed you someday.” In fact, the first time she saw Vicky, she knew she was no pushover.

And how was a quiet, down-to-earth man like Frank ever getting the better of her?

Frank smiled in turn—not only was Helen dead set that he had been badmouthing her, but she also thought that he was Vicky’s gigolo.

“You should be worrying about yourself,” he told her before looking pointedly at Frank. “I mean, you’re already waist-deep in muck yourself.” Helen certainly had something to say against that, but her phone suddenly started ringing.

Though she saw that it was an unfamiliar number, she answered it after some hesitation.

“It’s not very nice of you to badmouth me, Ms. Lane.” Helen paled in shock and promptly looked around, as if she was just stabbed in the back!

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## CHAPTER 16

It was only then that Helen noticed the camera above her, with a red bulb flickering repeatedly.

Meanwhile, Vicky continued, “To be honest, I really don’t want to give you the Western Project. It’s therefore a shame that someone doesn’t want Lane Holdings to fall apart, and I can’t do anything about that—so come by Turnbull Tower in a couple of days to sign it.” Helen, however, could not bring herself to celebrate despite being told she had the contract.

Instead, she was snappy as she demanded, “Spying is a bad habit, Ms.



Turnbull.” In the security room, Vicky merely giggled. “I can find out how many times you used the ladies’ room in a day if I want. I’ll let it go this one time, so watch out if you badmouth me again.” Beep, beep, beep As Helen quietly hung up, Gina asked in confusion, “Who was that?” “Vicky Turnbull.” Gina’s eyes promptly lit up. “Really? What did she say?” “She told me to sign the contract at Turnbull Tower in two days,” Helen replied exasperatedly. “She said that someone doesn’t want Lane Holdings to fall apart.” Though the contract was now secured, she felt like she was dancing to Vicky’s tune!

“Wonderful!” Gina almost leapt out in excitement and turned toward Sean.

“Thanks for calling your dad, Mr. Wesley! We wouldn’t have gotten the contract so easily otherwise!” Helen forced a smile too. “Thank you for this, Mr. Wesley.” After all, the person Vicky mentioned had to be Sean—he had supported her all this way, and who else had what it took to change Vicky’s mind?

“Huh...” Sean, however, looked utterly perplexed—he knew full well that it was not his father James, since he did not have that much power to do so.

Still, who cares who actually did it? This was now his accomplishment!

“Haha!” He laughed smugly right then. “It’s really nothing.” Seeing that he was brazen enough to accept the Lanes’ gratitude, Frank scoffed ruthlessly, “Does Vicky giving the project to Helen really have anything to do with you?” Sean flushed right then, and promptly snapped angrily, “Shut up! What, are you saying that it’s you?” Gina certainly agreed with Sean. “Mr. Wesley just called his father to speak with the Turnbells on his behalf. He’s not like you, all talk and no bite! From where I’m standing, you’re just jealous!” “Actually, it was me,” Frank replied.

“What?” Sean chuckled. “Are you saying that you made Vicky Turnbull change her mind?” Frank nodded.

Helen stared at him in disbelief, while Sean guffawed. “Haha! You’re a real riot!

It’s ironic considering that we haven’t heard a peep from you for a while!” Frank said flatly, “Exactly. Vicky changed her mind because I kept quiet.” “Oh, just give up already,” Sean snorted in disdain. “You can’t even come up with a good story, so stop tooting your own horn.” “That’s enough, Frank—you should stop.” Helen was frowning too, clearly upset that Frank would lie like that.

If anything, she was further skeptical that Frank could lord over Vicky after seeing Vicky in person- it was simply unrealistic.

## CHAPTER 17

Sean said just then, “Don’t bother with that bonehead, Helen—it’s been a long day, and you must be tired. I’ve booked us a VIP room at the hotel, so why don’t you and your mom get some rest?” “Yeah, of course—I’m so tired.” Gina promptly agreed to it and started to pull Helen along. “Let’s go, dear.” Helen stood still, however. “Mom, no.” She knew very well what Sean wanted, but she was not ready to start a new relationship now.

Gina shot Frank a look. “What do you mean, no? There’s no husband waiting for you at home. Why bother?” Seeing his chance, Sean promptly pressed his advantage. “That’s right, Helen.

We could also chat about the agreement tonight.” Though Frank appeared neutral as he stood nearby, his words were filled with anger. “Word of advice, Helen—go home.” She had just divorced him a couple days ago, and he had to watch her get a room with another man already?!

“Don’t you mess with me, you brat!” Sean growled through his teeth as he glared at Frank.

Gina was shooting him a look of contempt too. “Helen can go wherever she wants! You don’t get to tell her what to do!” That was when Helen’s phone started ringing, and she snapped at them, “Stop it.” She answered it to the wails of her brother Peter.

“Argh!!! Helen, my hand...” “Peter? What’s wrong?” Helen asked in panic.

“Someone beat me up... broke my hand... I’m at the hospital now!” “Okay, we’ll be right there.” Gina had heard her son’s voice and promptly asked, “What happened to Peter?” “Someone attacked Peter and broke his hand,” Helen said anxiously. “He’s at the hospital. We have to go.” “W–What are you waiting for?! Let’s go!” Gina cried.

Since nothing was more important than her son, she now only cared about getting to the hospital and did not even bother to tell Helen to stay with Sean.

“F\*ck!” Sean swore under his breath, fuming since he was so close!

Still, he forced himself to appear concerned. “I’m coming too, Helen.” Helen nodded, and they all left the banquet hall, leaving Frank behind.

He was actually surprised that scum like Peter proved useful when needed. And since he was no longer being harassed, he sat down and started eating again.

After a while, Vicky returned to him. “Where’s Helen and the others?” “The hospital.” “What?” “Peter Lane’s hand was broken. He’s waiting for her to pay his bills.” “Haha...” Vicky almost laughed out loud at the Lanes’ misfortune. “That’s hilarious... Wait, did you plan this?” Frank shrugged. “Nope. I have no idea when Barney would do his job.” “Alright—it’s better now that they’re gone. Come on—let me introduce you to some bigwigs,” she said and beckoned to him.

Frank wiped his mouth and followed her up to a hall on the second floor, which was decorated even more grandly with classical designs.

## CHAPTER 18

There was a single table in the hall, with many men already seated around it.

Vicky smiled. “Let me introduce you, Frank. This is Gerald Simmons, Riverton’s Chief of General Affairs.” The middle-aged man with a square jaw nodded at Frank, and he nodded in turn. “Mr. Simmons.” At the same time, Vicky worked her way around the table, introducing the guests one after another, each of whom were rich and important Riverton individuals.

“Chief of Riverton’s commerce guild.” “Head of Riverton’s Skyblade Dojo.” “Owner of Flora Hall.” After Frank greeted each of them, Vicky finally introduced him. “This is Frank Lawrence, whom I mentioned earlier.” The Head of Riverton’s Skyblade Dojo said, “I see that you’re a seasoned martial artist.” “You flatter me,” Frank replied humbly. “I just know a thing or two.” Vicky had naturally left Frank’s improved version of the Boltsmacker unmentioned while telling Yara to keep it a secret.

After all, it would be a slap in the face to Yara’s father if he found out!

” 4 ” Gerald scoffed just then. “That’s the healer you spoke of, Vicky?” “Yes.” Vicky nodded. “You shouldn’t underestimate him because of his youth, Mr. Simmons. He’s a rare breed when it comes to medicine.” .

“Even compared to Mr. Zimmer?” The Chief of Riverton’s commerce guild glanced pointedly at Dan Zimmer, the head of Flora Hall, just then.

Vicky took a deep breath and said, “No offense, but I dare say that Frank is Mr.

Zimmer’s equal, if not superior.” There were gasps heard around the room—the men present more or less know Vicky’s temperament and that she would never trade barbs with anyone.

And yet, she would suck up to that brat even if it insulted Dan!

Was Frank really that gifted, or was Vicky pushing her luck?!

Dan simply chuckled. “I’m sure that he’s a dozen times better than I am. After all, I personally attempted to help you but failed, Ms. Turnbull, whereas that boy succeeded.” “Indeed.” Vicky smiled. “And since everyone’s here, why not test Mr. Lawrence’s abilities to see for yourself? He’s here personally, there’s no reason to doubt him before you test him.” “We’re not doubting him,” Gerald replied flatly. “But he’s no older than Mr.

Zurich’s granddaughter, is he? Also, I heard the Wesleys presented you with a 100-year-old panacea cap as a gift. Isn’t that the reason you’ve recovered instead?” Vicky sneered. “It’s a 50-year-old panacea cap, to be precise. And I gave it to Mr. Lawrence.” “And when did you become an authority in herbology?” Gerald asked. “Don’t tell me that the boy told you.” “Yes.” Gerald sighed in disappointment. “I guess people do make mistakes, Vicky. You used to believe in evidence, not words alone!” Vicky did a double take, but Gerald was right—she had grown to have complete faith in Frank’s words before she knew it.

Even so, it goes without question that Frank had cured her.

On the other hand, Frank understood what Gerald was saying.

Despite everything said, the men around the table were skeptical about him, convinced that he was a swindler who bewitched Vicky and tricked her for the panacea cap.

“Now reflect upon my words, Vicky,” Gerald added and rose to his feet, ready to leave.

The rest were shaking their heads and planning to leave as well.

That was when Frank suddenly clapped a hand on Gerald’s shoulder. “One moment please, Mr.

Simmons.” Gerald scowled right then. “What is it, boy? Do you want a fight?” Frank scowled, but said solemnly nonetheless, “No, Mr. Simmons. I would just like to ask—have you been experiencing symptoms such as losing sleep and concentration, as well as night sweats?” Gerald narrowed his eyes. “I have.” Beside them, Vicky was smiling.

She had noticed the serious look on Frank’s face and knew that he was getting serious!

## CHAPTER 19

-There was unwavering confidence all over Frank’s face. “That’s not all, Mr.

Simmons. You would wake up every morning with sore muscles and enfeebled limbs.” Gerald inhaled deeply and looked solemnly at Frank. “How’d you know?” The brat had yet to examine him in any way—did Vicky tell him about his symptoms earlier?

"It's all written on your face, Mr. Simmons," Frank said flatly.

Geral snorted. "My face? Then tell me, what is my affliction?" "A coronary artery disease," Frank said bluntly. "If it's a serious case, I estimate that your condition will worsen in three days, so you should seek treatment as soon as possible." The hall was left quiet for a moment by those words before everyone started laughing out loud.

Vicky narrowed her eyes in turn—did Frank make a mistake? That should not be!

Just then, the head of Riverton's Skyblade Dojo beckoned at Frank and chuckled. "Vicky told you about Mr. Simmons' condition earlier, didn't she? You have the symptoms right, but you never mentioned the cause." Beside him, Gerald shook his head in disdain. "My kidney's the problem, brat, and you're saying that it's my heart? You're wrong by a country mile, so you really should go back to school!" Frank worked his mind furiously then—it was clearly a coronary artery disease caused by built-up fatigue. The kidney condition was merely a complication, and if his hunch was right, Gerald had been injured in the lungs before.

The one who had examined him merely checked the surface conditions, not the root cause.

"May I ask who diagnosed you?" Frank asked.

"I did." Dan slowly stood up.

"In that case, you should re-examine Mr. Simmons here," Frank said, showing him some degree of respect since they were fellow men of medicine.

"That's enough!" Gerald barked, clearly upset now. "It's not just Mr. Zimmer— Riverton General came up with the same conclusion. Or are you saying that you're better?!" "Of course not—if you're refusing to listen, I will just stop," Frank replied, shaking his head exasperatedly.

Having said his part was already the most nicety he could afford.

Gerald wheeled on Vicky in turn. "Never call me again for something like this, Vicky." He was exceedingly disappointed in Frank and was even more surprised that someone as smart as Vicky would be swindled by the likes of him.

As he turned to leave, the rest all got to their feet.

Vicky was left biting her lip. She suddenly said, "Mr. Simmons, I'd still suggest you stay in Riverton over the next three days, so that Frank can reach you in time if your condition deteriorates." Frank was taken aback that Vicky would still defend him, whereas Gerald chuckled in disdain. "Oh, sure. I'll be groveling for his help if I do get sick." "You said it, not me." Vicky shrugged. "Don't say I never warned you." "Hmph." Gerald snorted and stormed off.

The rest filed out as well, leaving just Vicky and Frank in the hall.

It was only then that Vicky asked worriedly, "Frank, was what you said true?" "Of course," he replied.

Vicky breathed a sigh of relief. "That's good." She offered to introduce Frank to other local bigwigs from Riverton, but Frank was uninterested and excused himself to return to his room.

Meanwhile, the banquet lasted until early morning.

## CHAPTER 20

At the same time, Peter was groaning and moaning on a bed at Riverton General.

He was unable to move with his entire arm plastered, while Gina was sobbing, her heart broken. "What happened, Peter? Who hurt you?" Sean added indignantly, "Tell me who it is. I will settle the score for you." "Who else?!" Peter cried. "It's that bstrd Frank Lawrence!" Helen was taken aback. "But Frank's been at Verdant Hotel the whole time..." "He sent his goons after me!" Peter growled through his teeth.

In reality, Barney gave him a thorough beating just as he was ready to join them at Verdant Hotel. While Barney himself did tell Peter that Frank sent him, Peter did not mention the fact that he sent Barney to hurt Frank in the first place.

Even so, only Helen found his story suspicious. "Why would Frank send people after you?" She knows that Frank was not that petty and would not have Peter beaten up just because he did not like him.

Peter started to stammer right then, "H-He's jealous of me... What other reason is there?" However, Helen could see that he was averting his eyes as well. "Is there something you're not telling us?" Peter's face fell, and he shrieked, "What are you saying Helen?! You'd rather trust a stranger than me?!" Gina too snapped impatiently, "Helen, are you implying Peter is going to lie to you? Why do you keep siding with outsiders, really?" Exasperated, Helen gave a noncommittal response. "Fine, I believe you, alright?" However, she made a mental note to ask Frank later.

On the other hand, Sean was thumping his chest and assuring Peter, "Don't worry, Peter. I'll avenge you when there's a chance." "Thank you, Mr. Wesley!" Peter was beside himself with emotion. "You're more a brother-in-law than Frank Lawrence ever was!" Afterwards, Sean tried to get Helen to the hotel again, but she insisted on staying with Peter.

Sean was left fuming, but it was clear that he would not get Helen alone to himself.

Early the next morning, Frank woke up and finished his usual training regime, dressed, and took a Chapter 20 cab to Riverton Hotel.

2/2 According to his calculations, Gerald's condition would deteriorate in three days, and he needed a pill to fully recover.

Arriving at the pharmacy, he paid and waited for them to get him his ingredients when a familiar voice called out from behind, "Frank? What are you doing here?" Frank turned to see that it was Helen and replied flatly, "Getting some medicine." Helen checked to ensure there was no one else around, before asking, "Did you send someone to break Peter's arm?" "I did," Frank replied, nodding.

"W-Why would you do that?" Helen demanded, feeling pained.

Frank shrugged. "He sent that thug after me first, but I gave the thug a beatdown instead. It's only natural that I made sure I return your brother's favor, though." Helen was left gritting her teeth in frustration and stamping her feet. "I knew Peter wasn't telling the truth-I'm sorry if I got a little emotional." Still, she suddenly looked into Frank's eyes and asked. "So... Where were you staying yesterday?" "The penthouse suite of Verdant Hotel," Frank replied.

Helen clenched her knuckles without knowing it. "With Vicky Turnbull?"

