

When His Eyes Opened by Simple Silence Chapter 31

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Chapter 31

"It's the weekend tomorrow. Let's get the divorce settled on Monday!" Avery continued.

Faced with her fervent impatience, Elliot nonchalantly pulled out a cigarette and lit it.

Avery furrowed her brows. She could not figure out what he was thinking.

Could it be that he did not want to go through with the divorce?

Otherwise, he would not be so indifferent.

Avery took a deep breath and said, "Can you really handle being cheated on? I wouldn't want to see me for the rest of my life if I were you. You have to divorce me! You'd be an idiot not to!"

Elliot coolly exhaled a smoke ring as he followed her with his dark eyes, watching her performance.

"Have you met with Chelsea? That must have p*ssed you off, right? That's good because it was all my idea! I did it just to mess with you!"

Avery was adding fuel to the fire.

Mrs. Cooper was in a corner. Her heart was pounding as she listened in.

Why was Avery digging her own grave? Was she having a mental breakdown because of the abortion?

If she continued aggravating him, Elliot might just send her to her death.

At that thought, Mrs. Cooper could no longer stand aside. She walked over and said, "Madam Avery doesn't mean any of this, Master Elliot... She must still be upset, so she's lashing out now... She's been sitting around at home ever since the wedding, so I can guarantee that she's never done anything dishonorable with Mr. Cole."

"Go and rest, Mrs. Cooper!" Avery said as her cheeks flushed from anxiety. "This is between him and me, so I'll deal with it myself. You don't have to worry about me."

"Stop trying to provoke Master Elliot, then!" Mrs. Cooper exclaimed. "Nothing good can come from it. Listen to me and apologize to him, Madam. He might just forgive you." "I don't need his forgiveness," Avery replied. "I just want a divorce."

Elliot's sharp, hawk-like eyes were fixed on Avery's slender back.

Was she playing hard to get, or did she really want a divorce?

Judging from what he had seen and heard, it seemed that the latter was more likely.

Now that her plan with Cole had been exposed, and the child had been aborted, they had no way of further exploiting him. So, she could not wait to divorce him, so that she might run back into Cole's arms.

"Forget it!" Elliot snapped coldly as he put out his cigarette on the ashtray on the table. "Unless I'm dead, you can forget about getting a divorce."

"What? Why?"

Avery felt like she was just hit by an invisible force.

"Since it's agonizing for you to remain by my side, I'll continue keeping you in this agony," said Elliot out of

pure spite.

In an instant, Avery felt as if she had fallen into an icy abyss.

What now?

He was throwing her a curveball!

What did she have to do to get away from him?

She stormed off to her room; her mind in a frenzy.

Elliot's phone rang just as Avery arrived at her room.

It was Ben.

"Hey, Elliot. Chelsea is a complete mess. She's wandering the streets and refusing to go home. She won't listen to me."

Ben was out of ideas and had no choice but to call Elliot.

"Call her brother."

“Okay... Did you get home alright? Is Avery there? Did you ask her if this whole thing with Chelsea was her idea?”

Ben could not bear to see Chelsea like this.

“How is it anyone else’s fault that Chelsea did that? Would she just do anything Avery tells her to? What if she told her to jump off a bridge? Would she do it, then?” Elliot sneered. “Don’t be an idiot, Ben.”

Ben had nothing to say about Elliot’s unwarranted rebuke, but he did have an opinion about Avery’s behavior.

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“I think you’re going too easy on Avery. It’s not like you at all. She cheated on you, and you’re just letting her go after making her abort the baby? I was sure you would feed her to the sharks.”

“Do you think that the abortion was easy for her?”

“Huh?”

“She despises me right now. Seeing her helplessness and inability to act on that hate is a more gratifying form of revenge than letting her die.”

“I see... You’re not planning on getting a divorce, then? Don’t you think keeping her around could be dangerous? What if she decides to get rid of you?” Ben asked with a hint of concern in his voice.

“If she manages to kill me...” Elliot said as he crushed the cigarette between his fingers into the ashtray. “I’ll gladly admit defeat.”

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Chapter 32

Avery met with Shaun at Tate Industries over the weekend.

“We need to open up the safe as soon as possible, Avery,” Shaun said. “Mr. Hertz has been pestering us for a decision. I don’t know if I should tell him the truth or lie to him... I’m stuck because I have nothing to show for it!”

Avery nodded and said, "I wrote down some numbers on a piece of paper last night. I think my father's passcode would be a combination of these numbers."

Shaun took the piece of paper out of Avery's hand, glanced at the numbers, then nodded and said, "Let's give it a try now!"

They entered the secret chamber, approached the safe, and began trying out possible combinations.

However, things did not go as smoothly as they had hoped.

After countless failed attempts, Avery frowned and let out a heavy sigh.

"Would Wanda know what the code is?" she said. "The code to our front door is a combination of my dad and Wanda's birthdays. He was good to her before he got sick."

Shaun shook his head and said, "If she knew how valuable this new system is, she would have taken it with her before she left."

"Do you think someone could have already taken the things in the safe?" Avery asked.

"That's impossible!" Shaun exclaimed. "I check the surveillance cameras here daily. No one, apart from us, has entered this room."

"I see..." Avery said. "Is there no other way to open it up if we don't have the code? I really can't think of anything else other than the numbers I wrote down."

Shaun looked glum, and he began to pace back and forth.

"There might be another way," he said moments later. "If we can't crack the code, the only thing we can do is break the safe door. However, doing that may damage its contents. It's a pretty big risk."

Avery stayed silent.

"Let me think about it!" Shaun said. "We'll just have to break into it if we can't figure something out."

Avery looked like she had something on her mind, but responded, "Okay."

"Avery, are you acquainted with Elliot Foster?" Shaun asked with a hint of suspicion.

"I'm not," Avery said as she hesitantly shook her head. "I would have already asked him for help if I did."

"Really? A friend of mine said they saw you enter the elite neighborhood where he lives yesterday."

Avery's cheeks flushed in an instant.

"Oh... I have a friend who lives around there. She had something to talk to me about, so I just went there to see her for a bit."

"Ah... I didn't know you had such wealthy friends," Sean said skeptically.

"They had a successful business before, but things didn't work out."

"I see... Well, you can go now since we can't crack the code. I'll think about it a little more."

"Okay, thank you!"

Avery walked out of the hidden room and left the building.

Once she was gone, Shaun inspected the piece of paper she had left behind. He studied it long and hard.

Was it really possible for the successor of Tate Industries not to know such an important code?

Shaun's suspicions about Avery continued to increase.

Moments later, he sent a text message to Wanda, who immediately called him upon receiving it.

"What do you mean Jack left something behind?"

"Did you really think that Jack was out to ruin his own daughter by leaving the company to her?" Shaun sneered. "I always thought that you were a smart woman, but it turns out you're in the dark about this, too."

Wanda picked up on Shaun's clue and suddenly turned cheerful.

"What exactly did Jack leave Avery?!" "A safe. It's a big one, too. Its contents are priceless, but Jack apparently forgot to give Avery the passcode."

Shaun had decided to join forces with Wanda. "If you can tell me what it is, I'll make sure to give you a cut of the profits," he said.

"How much exactly are you willing to cut? I'm not in if it's a small amount?" said Wanda.

"I'll give you twenty percent," Shaun snickered. "It doesn't matter if you decide to work with me or not. It never belonged to you, anyway."

“Deal! I’ll do it. How long is the code?”

“It needs six digits. I’ll send you a photo of the numbers Avery said were significant to Jack, and the combinations we tried that did not work this afternoon. Let’s see if you find any inspiration from that.”

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Once Shaun sent the photo to Wanda, he decided to watch over the safe all day in hopes that she might surprise him.

If Wanda could crack the safe’s code, then he could kick Avery out of the picture without giving her a penny.

Wanda called about half an hour later and said, “I can’t think of anything else other than the combinations that you’ve already tried, but I noticed that the date of birth written here for Laura Jensen is the one on her ID. That’s not her real birthdate. Let’s try again with the real one.”

“Alright!” Shaun responded enthusiastically.

Two hours later, they had finally managed to get the safe door open.

Wanda was right. Jack had used Laura’s real date of birth and not the one stated on her ID.

Jack had used a combination of Laura’s and Avery’s birthdates as his passcodes.

The correct passcode and the family portrait in the hidden room matched perfectly together.

It was Jack’s homage to Laura and Avery.

Wanda was on a video call with Shaun, and she burst into a raging fury when the safe opened.

“That b*st*rd! After all the years we’ve been together, he went and set such an important code to Laura’s and Avery’s birthdates! Sh*t! He would get an earful from me if he were still alive!”

When Shaun opened the safe, his muscles tightened in excitement, and his eyes sparkled with anticipation.

He did not hear Wanda's cussing at all.

There were two security levels to the safe.

The first was the passcode, and the second needed either a key or facial recognition.

The key was inside the room itself, and both Shaun and the other two technical staff knew of its location.

Shaun turned the key in the safe's lock and carefully opened the door.

He was met with a completely empty safe.

There was nothing in the safe!

Shaun's face was a picture of horror and fury.

"F*ck! Where the hell is it?!"

He violently landed his fist on top of the safe as his eyes reddened with anger.

"It must have been Avery!" Wanda cried from the other side of the phone. "Who else could it be but her? She gave you that piece of paper on purpose! She must have used her mother's correct birthdate to open the safe before this!" 1

"Did she plan to take everything for herself?" Shaun said through gritted teeth.

"D*mn it! I didn't expect her to be this ambitious! You can't let her get away with this, Mr. Locklyn!"

Wanda would love nothing more but for Shaun and Avery to go against each other.

All she had to do was sit back and watch the show.

Shaun ended the video call.

Avery was bad news, but so was Wanda!

He would not have wasted any of his time on them if it did not yield any profit.

He kicked the safe door shut, then thought carefully about when the contents were taken away.

Whether Jack had moved it before his death, or someone had taken it after he died, Avery Tate was still his biggest suspect.

Did she want to take everything for herself? Did she think she could get away with it that easily?!

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At the Foster mansion, Mrs. Cooper hurriedly sat Avery on the couch as she entered the living room.

“Master Elliot prepared a gift for you, Madam.”

Mrs. Cooper opened up the white gift box on the table, revealing the exquisite white gown.

“Are you sure he gave this to me?” Avery said as she looked at the gown in disbelief.

“Yes, Madam. There’s a dinner tonight that you need to go to with Master Elliot. There are shoes, too!” Mrs. Cooper explained, then opened up another box carrying a pair of fine stilettos.

Avery picked up one of the heels and stared at it with apprehension.

“Why is he taking me? I don’t know any of his friends. Isn’t he worried I’d embarrass him?”

“I’m sure he has his reasons,” Mrs. Cooper replied, “Move on from the past, Madam, and just spend the rest of your days happily with Master Elliot.”

Avery looked up at Mrs. Cooper and then said, “Do you think he’s moved on? We still don’t know what his real intentions are for taking me out tonight!”

“Madam... Was the baby you were carrying before really Mr. Cole’s? I didn’t think you’re that kind of woman,” Mrs. Cooper said.

Avery lowered her gaze and said, “That’s all in the past. Let’s not talk about it anymore.”

Then, she took the gown out of the box and said, “I’ll go try it on.”

“Alright,” replied Mrs. Cooper.

Avery arrived at Florraine Villa that evening. She walked into the banquet hall dressed in her new, ivory gown.

Under the light of the grand crystal chandelier, she looked like a mystical fairy that had mistakenly wandered into the human world.

All eyes were on her.

“Who is that? She’s stunning! Why haven’t I seen her before?”

“I think she’s the Tate family’s eldest daughter, Avery Tate. You know, from the soon-to-be bankrupt Tate Industries?”

“Oh! Now that you mention it, I kind of remember hearing something about that. What’s she doing here? Who invited her? That dress she’s wearing looks like the latest haute couture from Chanel. Is she that rich?”

The crowd engaged in a fevered discussion as their eyes continued to follow her.

Avery glanced around the hall but did not see a trace of Elliot.

Her feet were beginning to feel sore from her high heels, so she found an empty seat and sat down.

A few people approached her as soon as she rested herself on the chair.

“Miss Tate, is the gown you’re wearing Chanel haute couture?”

Avery glanced down at her dress.

Was it not just a typical gown?

Was it actually haute couture?

“Is something the matter?” she asked.

“I doubt you can afford haute couture now with your family facing bankruptcy. What I’m trying to say is... Wearing a knockoff to an event like this is pretty humiliating, no?”

"If that's the case, I'd be the one humiliated. What does that have to do with you?"

The two women next to her burst into mocking laughter upon hearing her answer.

It was their first time seeing someone wear a knockoff with such arrogance!

"Do you have an invitation, Miss Tate? I bet you don't. How did you get in here?"

Avery glanced coldly at the women and said, "With my own capability."

Her answer was like a hard slap in the face to her audience.

Very quickly, the crowd's eyes shifted to her feet which were encased in a pair of rare stilettos.

They looked like limited edition Armeses.

"Did you get a sugar daddy, Miss Tate?"

The authenticity of luxury items could not escape the eyes of the truly wealthy.

The gown and heels that Avery was wearing were obviously the real deal.

From head to toe, her outfit was worth more than three hundred thousand dollars.

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"That's right! Otherwise, how would someone of my lowly status get into a banquet filled with rich people like you?" Avery said, mocking herself.

Everyone immediately saw her in a different light. "Who's your sugar daddy? If he's so generous with you

ddy? If he's so generous with you, he must be some powerful bigshot!"

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Chapter 35 Avery decided to play along.

"It's true. He's incredibly rich. He's just old, ugly, and barely hanging on."

The crowd was scratching their heads trying to figure out who this old, ugly, and unfit bigshot was.

A waiter walked over to Avery and said, "Please proceed to the second floor, Miss Tate."

Avery instantly looked up.

The building had an open concept, and the second-floor railing could be seen from the living room on the first floor.

Elliot's bodyguard was standing by the railing and looking down at her.

When the waiter escorted her away, the faces of the people in the crowd changed from one of mockery to one of awe.

Those in attendance at the banquet were the creme de la creme of high society.

Even the wealthy had their own form of social hierarchy.

That night, the more ordinary members of the upper class were mingling amongst themselves in the banquet hall on the first floor.

Those with more power over society, on the other hand, were invited to the exclusive second floor.

"I can't believe Avery Tate was invited up there! Who exactly is her sponsor?!"

"I have no idea! It's not like we can go to the second floor. All I can say is that she must have a trick or two up her sleeve! Even if her sugar daddy is some old, ugly geezer, she still hit the jackpot with him!"

"As far as I know, there aren't that many old men at tonight's banquet!"

"Was she just messing with us?"

The crowd looked at the second floor in unison, but they could see nothing.

When Avery arrived at the round table, there were less than ten people in attendance, and all of them were men.

She walked over and sat herself down next to Elliot.

The dining table was covered in exquisite delicacies.

Avery glanced at Elliot and asked, "You didn't make me come here just to eat, did you?"

Elliot looked at her raised brows, then said in a low voice, "Cole will be here, too. Didn't you secretly meet with him while I was away on business? I invited you here so that you could meet him in the open."

Avery did not expect this to be his intention.

Did he think that she was so obsessed with Cole that they could not bear to be apart even for a little while?

Ha!

Avery was ravenous as she had not had her dinner yet, so she was in no mood to argue with him.

She picked up her knife and fork and began to enjoy the food by herself.

"Mr. Foster, that nephew of yours still owes me three million dollars! I wouldn't usually fuss over such a small amount of money, but I heard that your relationship with him has gone sour. If that's the case, I'll have no choice but to go after him for it."

"I caught him flirting with my twenty-year-old daughter once. I called him up and gave him a piece of my mind! He didn't manage to trick me into investing with him, so he thought he could try his luck with my little girl! It's disgusting!" "Cole Foster is infamous in the financial world. Everything he invests in eventually goes bust. He's so stupid that you can't help but feel a little bad for him. He would've been a goner a long time ago if it weren't for his father's support!"

While the guests were ridiculing Cole, Elliot's gaze unintentionally fell on Avery.

"Are you checking to see if I've lost my appetite?" Avery said as she met his eyes. "The food's good, but the pasta is a little undercooked. I'm done eating."

She put down her knife and fork, then said, "I'm not interested in what you're talking about, so I'm going home!"

When she stood up from her seat, Elliot grabbed onto her arm to stop her from leaving.

Avery tried to shake his hand off but failed.

She glared at him and said, "You must have too much time on your hands. I've got a thesis to write! If you don't let me go, then I'll send it to you and you can finish it for me."

Seeing her sullen expression, Elliot released his grip.

When Avery arrived on the first floor, she saw Cole with a glass of champagne in his hand. He was slightly hunched, and he was singing flattering words to a group of people. He did it with the utmost respect.

She was already completely over him, so she simply turned away and walked out of the villa.

Elliot arrived back at the mansion at 10 p.m. that night. When Mrs. Cooper saw him, she asked, "Did Madam Avery not come home with you, sir?" Elliot checked the time on his wristwatch, then raised his brows and said, "She left at eight. She's not home yet?"

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"Madam Avery hasn't come home yet," said Mrs. Cooper. "I've been waiting in the living room the whole time and I haven't seen her all night."

Elliot's eyes turned dark.

If she did not come home, where could she have gone?

Did she lie to him about coming home to write her thesis?

"I'll give her a call right now," Mrs. Cooper said as she rushed toward the living room.

Avery had been abducted the moment she had set foot out of Forraine Villa, and now, she was on the other side of the city.

She had been dragged into a car, blindfolded, and her wrists were bound.

The car drove on for about an hour before coming to a halt.

She was taken into a room and thrown into a chair.

When her blindfold was taken off, she heard the unfamiliar voice of a strange man.

"Apologies, Miss Tate. We're just doing our jobs. We won't hurt you as long as you cooperate with us."

Avery glanced around the white room until her eyes fell on the stranger's face.

He was wearing a mask, so she could not see his features, but his voice was completely unfamiliar to her.

"I'll cooperate as long as you don't hurt me. However, I won't do anything illegal even if you force me to," she said calmly.

The man chuckled lightly, then said, "I doubt a weak little lady like you would be able to commit a crime."

As he said that, he untied Avery's hands and connected her to a lie detector machine.

"This is a lie detector. You have to answer my questions truthfully. You won't get past this test, otherwise. If you lie, you're not leaving this place tonight. Understood?"

Avery gazed at the machine, stayed silent for a moment, then nodded her head.

"Don't worry, I won't lie."

"Good," said the man, then began the test. "What's your name?"

"Avery Tate."

"Did your father tell you the code to the safe before he died?"

"No."

After she answered, the man glanced at the machine's monitor.

All of the indicators were within the normal parameters, proving that she was telling the truth.

"Why were you at Forraine Villa tonight? Who invited you?"

Avery remained silent.

"Are you trying to lie to me?" snapped the man. "Don't think too much about the questions, just give me an answer!"

"Oh... I was just worried you'd get shocked by my answer," Avery said nonchalantly. "Do you know the

Fosters?"

"Who?"

"Do you know Elliot Foster?" Avery asked.

of course I do. He's loaded. Who wouldn't know who he is? Why are you bringing him up? Was he the one who invited you?" asked the man.

Avery shook her head and said, "Do you know his nephew, Cole Foster?"

"What are you going on about? And am I the one asking you the questions or are you?! Just answer my question! Stop wasting my time!"

The man was losing his temper.

"Cole Foster took me there," Avery said.

"What's your relationship with him?"

"We have a special relationship. We're all adults here, so you should know what I mean, right?"

"Fine, I get it! Were you the one who opened your father's safe? This is an important question, so you better not lie! My employer knows the truth! This machine is just a backup!"

Avery stared at the man's furious gaze, pondered for a moment, then said, "It was me, but the stuff inside isn't with me."

"Who did you give it to?!"

"I mentioned him just now," Avery said with an innocent expression on her face..

"Elliot Foster?"

Avery shook her head.

"Oh! Your man, Cole Foster?" Avery nodded.

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Unfortunately, Avery had to use Cole as a scapegoat this time.

Since Shaun had found out about the missing contents, she had to divert his attention elsewhere before things got more difficult for her.

Suddenly, Avery's phone rang.

The man opened her bag and pulled out her phone.

The words "Foster Mansion" flashed on the phone screen.

"You weren't kidding! Since you're close to the Fosters, I won't keep you any longer. Go on!"

The man did not want to get in trouble with the Foster family. Besides, he already did what he was paid to do.

Once Avery was free, she immediately called Mrs. Cooper back.

"Why did you hang up just now, Madam? It's late and you're not home yet. Did something happen?" Mrs. Cooper asked.

Avery glanced around her surroundings.

She was in the middle of nowhere. The road was dim, and it ran through a forest. At a glance, it looked like the bloody jaws of a wild beast that were ready to gobble her up. It was terrifying.

"Is the driver still on the clock, Mrs. Cooper?" Avery asked. "I can't get a cab where I am now."

She was dressed in nothing but her gown from earlier, and she was trembling in the cold, fall air.

"He just arrived with Master Elliot. I'll ask him to go get you. Send me your location."

"Alright," Avery responded, then sent her location to Mrs. Cooper's phone, who then sent it to the driver.

It was a remote area that people seldom visited during the day, let alone in the dark of the night.

"Send some people there right now and find out what happened," Elliot ordered his bodyguard.

Avery returned home about three hours later.

The driver stopped the car in the courtyard and got out,

Mrs. Cooper was confused, so she walked over to the car to check things out.

"She fell asleep in the car," explained the driver. "It's not proper for me to touch her, and I couldn't bring myself to wake her."

Mrs. Cooper opened the passenger side door and woke Avery up.

Avery sat up and rubbed her tired eyes.

"You're finally safe at home, Madam! Let's get you to bed!" Mrs. Cooper said as she helped Avery out of the car. "Master Elliot was waiting for you the whole time. He was very worried about you."

Elliot had been sitting in the living room all night.

He did not say it, but Mrs. Cooper could tell that he had some feelings for Avery.

The only reason he made her get an abortion was so that he could continue spending his life with her. "He's waiting for me?" Avery said. The fatigue had suddenly escaped her. "He's not going to blow up atm

e, is he?"

"Absolutely not. He's just worried that you were in the middle of nowhere at this time of night," Mrs. Cooper said.

"Oh, I'm fine now," Avery responded.

As she slid into her house slippers at the front door, she noticed Elliot walking toward the elevators from the periphery of her vision.

He was not in his wheelchair.

Was he able to walk by himself now?!

"His legs..." Avery began to ask Mrs. Cooper.

"He can walk now, but not for long periods of time. He'll still need the wheelchair once in a while."

"He should be fully recovered soon."

"That's right! You're hoping he'll recover soon, right?"

Avery's cheeks flushed as her gaze shifted to his back.

Elliot's steps had slowed down slightly.

"Of course, I do," Avery said, then changed her tone and added, "That way, he can go back to work instead of being at home so much!"

She saw the muscles on his back and shoulders tighten, then he turned around. He was furious.

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“What I meant was, how are you supposed to buy me designer dresses and shoes if you do not work harder and earn more money?”

Avery had changed into her house slippers, walked over to Elliot, and added, “This is my first time wearing such expensive things.”

“Poor you,” Elliot hissed, then walked into the elevator.

Avery held her tongue as she watched the elevator doors close.

She wanted to insult his excessively extravagant and wasteful lifestyle.

When she entered her room, she took off her gown and walked into the shower.

The warm water enveloped her entire body, numbing her senses.

Avery arrived at Tate Industries first thing the next morning.

At 10 a.m., there was not a seat left empty in the meeting room.

“Good morning, everyone. My name is Avery Tate. The reason I called for this meeting today is because I was abducted last night,” Avery said, then glanced around at the faces in the room.

“Seriously?! Are you okay, Avery?” someone exclaimed in shock.

“I’m fine. I wanted to have an open discussion with all of you today,” Avery said calmly. “Things aren’t looking great with the company right now. Investors aren’t interested in us, and those that are looking at us, are only interested in acquiring us for a low price. With our current debt, what they are offering will hardly cover what we owe.”

“We can bring out our Super Brain program! Once we arrange a press conference and introduce it to the public, people would be lining up to invest!” someone suggested, setting off a frenzy of consensus in the room.

“My father would never agree to sell the company. This is something that I’m sure all of you are aware of. Also, the new system isn’t ready yet, so I’m afraid it is not worth as much as you think it does,” Avery explained.

“What do we do, then? Are we really just going to let the company go bust?”

"If we continue to not have stable funding, I'm afraid that's exactly what's going to happen," Avery answered.

Shaun slammed his palm on the table and roared, "You just want to keep Super Brain to yourself! Your father wasn't the only one who worked on it!"

Avery looked coldly at Shaun and said, "Mr. Shaun, since you are claiming that the program isn't the work of my father alone, then you should be able to form a new team to produce a new Super Brain. When you do reach that point, I would not object to you selling it to rebuild the company."

Shaun's face flushed with anger at Avery's words.

Avery's father, Jack, was the lead engineer on the project. Without him, there was no way for them to recreate the program.

"You say that you're doing all of this for your father, but you secretly gave his life's work to an outsider..."

"So, you were the one who abducted me last night, Mr. Shaun?" Avery asked.

Shaun's eyes widened in horror.

"If you're staying at the company in hopes of getting some giant profit, I suggest you give up. How would you get any kind of profit with all the debt we're still buried in?" Avery said, then shifted her gaze to the rest of the room and added, "Anyone who's on the same page as Mr. Locklyn is welcome to settle your final wages today."

Shaun and two core members of the research and development team stormed out of the meeting room.

"Avery Tate looks gentle and quiet, but she turned out to be brutal!"

"She said she gave the stuff to Cole Foster... but I don't trust her! She might still have it!"

"Let's look into Cole Foster first!"

Avery left Tate Industries at noon to meet with Tammy at a restaurant for lunch.

"It's so hard to meet you now, Avery! We barely see each other anymore!" Tammy whined. "Are you still having trouble looking for investors for your dad's company?"

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Chapter 39 “Voc it’s been hard” Avery answered. “I don’t think it’s plausible to introduce a self-driving program to the market right now. Even the most advanced program would not be able to beat the human mind. If I’m not confident in the program, why would the investors be?”

“Don’t be so pessimistic about it. Many people invest in things that they find creative, not just because of practicality. There’s a party tonight. Everyone there is an heir of a rich family. Do you want to come with me? You never know, you might just bump into someone who’s interested in investing!”

“Forget it!” Avery scoffed. “I won’t get anywhere with a bunch of rich brats. It’s the first generation, self made bigshots that I need.”

“They’ll be there, too! You might as well try your luck,” Tammy said as she tried to convince Avery. “I don’t want to go either, but my dad’s making me. He set up a blind date for me. Just come and give me some moral support, okay?”

“Fine,” Avery said as she gave in.

At 7 p.m. that evening, Tammy drove Avery to a five-star hotel in the city.

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“When we get in let’s split up. That’ll make it easier for you to fish for investors,” said Tammy. Avery nodded and said, “I didn’t forget that you’re here for a blind date. I won’t be a third wheel.”

Tammy chuckled, then said, “Keep your eyes on your phone. I’ll text you when I can’t take it anymore.” “Okay,” Avery responded.

The two women walked into the hotel and entered the ballroom from two separate doorways.

Avery picked up a glass of juice, then sat herself down in a corner of the room.

She wanted to take a peek at Tammy’s blind date.

The Lynch family was in the department store business. They were not a listed company, but they were popular and well-known in the country.

Avery was sure that the person Tammy’s family set her up with would be from a similar background, but she was curious about his looks, age, and personality.

Soon after, a familiar, handsome face caught Avery's eye.

Why did Tammy's date look so familiar?

That man... Was that Jun Hertz?!

She had a meeting with him at Tate Industries before. It was a short discussion that did not end too pleasantly.

Avery placed her glass down and sent Tammy a text.

Avery: (What's your date's name? He looks familiar.)

Tammy was in the middle of a conversation with Jun when her phone screen lit up.

She saw Avery's text, then sent a reply.

Tammy: (Jun Hertz. Do you know him?)

Avery: (I do!!!)

Tammy: What's with that reaction? Did something happen between you? I can back off!

Avery: INo! I don't know him that well, but I know he's got about two hundred million dollars in his account!

Tammy: (Holy sh*t! Is he that rich? No way! He just graduated from college not too long ago. How could h e have that much money?)

Avery: ... He plans on buying out my dad's company.]

Tammy: (What?! I'm going to need a second to process this.]

Avery: (Don't tell him we know each other! There's something fishy about this guy, but I haven't been able t o find out much about him.)

Tammy: [Leave it to me! I'll figure out what's going on!)

Since Tammy was focused on her phone, Jun shifted his gaze and looked around the banquet hall.

That was when he noticed Avery sitting in a corner of the room.

What was she doing there?

That party was a singles event, but Avery had a husband.

Jun grinned, then pulled out his phone and sent Elliot a text.

Jun: (Hey, Elliot. Your wife's at a singles party in the Celestial Hall at Regency Hotel. There are a few guys with their eyes on her... Did you let her out to play?)

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Avery's phone rang ten minutes later.

She answered it, hung up, sent Tammy a text, then rushed toward the hotel exit.

Jun watched Avery's back as she quickly made her way out. He smiled.

How did she find the men to make a fool out of Elliot Foster behind his back?

Could she not just stay quietly by his side?

Where was she going to find a man who was better than Elliot Foster?

Jun had no idea what she was thinking.

Tammy's brows furrowed as she replied: [What's the rush? Is it that urgent?]

Avery: (Extremely urgent! I'll see you again soon!)

The one who had called Avery was Elliot's bodyguard.

He had instructed her to wait for him at the hotel entrance.

If she did not listen, he was going to break her legs.

Avery still suffered from the past traumatic experience with the bodyguard. He was a cruel man.

Although she knew that he was acting on Elliot's orders, it was better to be safe than sorry.

A black car stopped on the street in front of her about fifteen minutes later.

The car window rolled down, revealing the bodyguard's ominous face.

Avery got into the backseat, closed the door, and the car sped off.

"You know, Miss Tate," said the bodyguard. "If Mr. Foster had a pet dog for a few months, it would know who its owner and family are. Why are you biting the hand that feeds you?"

"Are you saying I'm less than a dog?" Avery said with a frown.

"That's exactly what I'm saying," said the bodyguard in a tone filled with loathing. "After spending all of this time freeloading off Mr. Foster, what else have you done other than p*ss him off every day?"

"You think I want to be a freeloader? If you don't like me that much, then why don't you convince him to divorce me?" suggested Avery.

"You're an idiot!" roared the bodyguard. "I don't know what's gotten into Mr. Foster. How could he fall in love with a stupid woman like you?"

"You're the idiot here," Avery said. "How could you possibly think that he loves me?"

"Seriously? If he didn't love you, you'd be long gone by now! Have a heart, won't you?" said the bodyguard as she angrily slammed his fist onto the steering wheel.

Avery stiffened in the backseat. She wanted to hold back, but she could not help but retaliate.

"Would he have forced me to get an abortion if he loved me?"

"Did you really expect him to let you give birth to some other man's kid?!"

"What if it wasn't someone else's baby?" Avery asked. "He still wouldn't let me keep it."

"Just don't have a baby, then! If you were half as smart as Miss Tierney, you wouldn't end up fighting every

day!"

Avery glanced out the window and said, "That's your opinion. I like children, and I want to have my own. What right does he have to say he loves me if he won't allow that?"

The bodyguard was frustrated beyond words.

After a moment of silence, Avery suddenly asked, "Why do you think he loves me? Why can't I tell?"

"He slept with you, didn't he?" said the bodyguard through gritted teeth. "If that's not love, then what is?"

"That's it?" Avery said.

"He made me check on what happened with you in the outskirts last night. Doesn't that prove that he cares about you? But how do you repay him?"

Avery was taken aback.

She did not expect that Elliot would send someone to investigate after her.

"How exactly did I repay him?" Avery said.

She did not dare feel moved.

Judging by the bodyguard's fury, she was prepared to hear the worst from him.

"You told them that you went to Forraine Villa last night with Mr. Cole. You said that you had a great relationship with him and passed on something important to him... You're a lying, scheming cheater!"

Avery let out a laugh and said, "He's angry again?"

"How could you laugh at a time like this? He'll whip you with his belt if you're not careful!" warned the bodyguard.

"I just wanted to test out the lie detector, but it turned out to be a complete waste of money," Avery said, then lowered her voice and added, "I didn't say those things to make him mad. I didn't know he would investigate any further."

"I told you he loves you! Why won't you believe me?" the bodyguard yelled. His voice had turned hoarse.