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"S-So what can we do?" Leanna asked, puzzled.

Matthew replied, "The only way is to let Gemma regenerate another heart. While the heart grows, it will squeeze into the living space of the mother worm. In order to survive, the oppressed mother worm will consume the toxins to feed herself.

By the time the heart has taken its form, the toxins would have been consumed by the mother worm, and that's when the mother worm can be removed. With that, Gemma will have a new heart and will be able to live like a regular person!"

Dumbstruck, Leanna stammered, "C-Can this be done? Can a person grow a heart again?"

Matthew shook his head. "Of course you can't grow another heart, but you can plant one."

"Plant one? What are you planting?"

"A heart!" he exclaimed. "It's the same as planting the fields—sowing, germinating and then it grows fruits."

This got her more confused than ever. "W-What do you mean by that?"

Chuckling, he explained, "It means planting a developing heart into her body, and the process while the heart grows gradually is called planting the heart."

Still bewildered, she pressed on, "I-Isn't this a heart transplant?"

"It's not the same," he said while shaking his head again. "A heart transplant involves a fully formed heart, but to plant one, you need an undeveloped heart."

The look on her face changed suddenly. "S-So does it have to be a heart from a child?"

Matthew laughed and continued, "What are you thinking about? There are some evil doctors who would use this method, but such a harmful technique is detrimental to one's merits. What I mean is, cultivating a heart from a maternal body."

Only then could Leanna breathe a sigh of relief when she heard that. She really couldn't bring herself to do it if the heart of another child was needed, as her conscience wouldn't allow her to proceed with this method.

"So how does the maternal body cultivate a heart?" she asked.

"This is the most complicated part!" Matthew sighed. "First, you must find someone who is willing to cultivate the heart, and she must have a matching blood type with her."

"I-I'll think of a way," Leanna said immediately.

He cast her a glance and went on, "You can do all that by spending some money. The truly difficult part in cultivating a heart in a maternal body is to get hold of a type of herb called the Clemantis Grass, which is rare and hard to find."

In her anxiety, Leanna grabbed him and asked, "Mr. Larson, what's the Clemantis Grass? W-Where can I find it?"

With a nod, Matthew assured her, "I'll keep a lookout for this herb for you. In the meantime, I'll give you some prescriptions for Gemma's mother to help ease her suffering temporarily."

Overjoyed, she exclaimed, "Really? T-Thank you so much, Mr. Larson!"

"President Sandel, I'll definitely do what I promised you before, but c-can you please first release your grip?" he asked, slightly irritated.

It was then did Leanna realize that she had unknowingly gripped his hand from all her excitement, and her face blushed from the warmth she was feeling from his hand.

At the same time, she also felt an unusual emotion passing through her chest. She was once the most beautiful woman in Eastcliff with countless men chasing after her, like bees on flowers, looking at her as if they wanted to strip her naked.

After all these years, Matthew was the only man who looked at her with clear eyes full of sincerity and without anything unusual, so she couldn't help but scrutinize the man in front of her now.

This good-looking man who looked a little ordinary had an inexplicable charm about him. For many years, Leanna's heart, which had been still like the waters, suddenly skipped a little at this moment.

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Matthew wrote some prescriptions for Leanna and told her the way to boil the medicine. After keeping the prescriptions away carefully, she chuckled and said, "It's such a waste of talent for a person with your medical skills to stay in that small hospital, Mr. Larson. Why don't you come to the city hospital instead? That's where you'll be able to help more people."

A faint smile spread across Matthew's face as he shook his head. "Not at the moment. I don't like to be in the limelight and there are some things which are sufficient if I'm the only one who knows about it."

Leanna's heart skipped a beat as she could tell that it was a hint at her. "I understand, Mr. Larson. Don't worry, I won't let any other people know about your excellent medical expertise!"

Matthew nodded with a smile. Right now, he was still not strong enough and didn't want to expose himself, lest his enemies found their way to him.

And this was also the reason why he didn't dare to reveal his true identity to James and Helen. He didn't even know who was the enemy of his family and he might be targeted any minute if he had exposed himself!

Something seemed to cross Leanna's mind and so she asked, "That's right, Mr. Larson. Will you be participating in the Six Southern States Medical Conference in the next few days?"

Matthew was surprised. That same conference again? Previously, Stanley Carlson had mentioned to me, but he was a person in the medical field after all.

So, Matthew was not expecting Leanna to know about this as well. It seemed like the people in Eastshire really took this conference seriously. Shaking his head, he answered, "I have no plans of doing that for now."

"But Mr. Larson, with your medical skills, it will be a huge loss to Eastshire if you don't participate!" she said, taken aback. "Also, being in the medical industry, there's no way that Cunningham Pharmaceuticals can avoid the Pharmaceutical Union of Eastshire. If you don't take part in this, Cunningham Pharmaceuticals would inevitably suffer some losses!"

Matthew frowned. "What do you mean?"

"Hadn't the Pharmaceutical Union of Eastshire contacted you?" she asked curiously, and he shook his head.

Astonished, she said, "That's strange. Back when Cunningham Pharmaceuticals was not widely known, the Union wouldn't have cared for sure.

But they must have noticed you now since Cunningham Pharmaceutical has been in the limelight recently! I think it won't be long before they come looking for you."

"Why would they come looking for us?" he enquired, puzzled.

"The world is bustling and everyone gathers where there is profit. It's no longer news that Cunningham Pharmaceuticals' sales have spiked sharply recently.

The Pharmaceutical Union, who is responsible for the distribution of benefits among the pharmaceutical industry in Eastshire, would definitely ask for a share from Cunningham Pharmaceuticals. It seems likely that they'll ask you to fork out a part of your profit for the Union!"

"How could they do that?" he exclaimed with a frown. "Isn't this robbery?"

Leanna placed her hand over her mouth to cover her chuckle. "You're right. They are robbers! But they can do this because they have huge fists.

The one behind the Union is the Hughes—one of the Ten Greatest Families of Eastshire—who controls up to 60% of the business in the medical field of Eastshire. If the Hughes wants to go against you, then you can forget all about surviving in the pharmaceutical industry in Eastshire!"

"The Hughes are such tyrants!" he growled.

"With such huge fists, anyone is a tyrant!" she replied softly. "The Ten Greatest Families of Eastcliff used to be tyrants as well in the past, but they couldn't even lift their heads and became docile under the pressure of Mr. Newman.

The Ten Greatest Families of Eastshire are much more prestigious than the ones in Eastcliff! You'll know it when you meet them in the future! However, I suggest you should participate in the conference this time, Mr. Larson, because a lot of rare and precious herbs will be available at the conference every year.

I'm going to take a look as well, and maybe I could find some Clemantis Grass there!"

Matthew's eyes lit up. If that was the case, then he must make a trip himself, since he still needed to find the Thousand-Year Snow Lotus.

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By the time Matthew left Creative Cloud Group, it was close to noon and he went straight to Cunningham Pharmaceuticals. Sasha was now staying in the company and wouldn't go home for her meals either. So, Matthew planned to pay her a visit and spend some alone time with her.

Just as he reached the company doors, a few men in suits and leather shoes followed behind him. The person leading the group was a medium built, middle-aged man wearing gold-rimmed glasses.

He looked refined and cultured, but an inexplicable evil was lurking deep within his eyes as his gaze swept over the female employees of the company. He displayed the typical traits of a wolf in sheep's skin.

"President Larson, you're here!" Sasha's secretary greeted Matthew.

Even though the Cunninghams looked down on him, the employees were very respectful toward him, because he was the reason that they all received at least thirty percent raise in their salaries.

Furthermore, he made the Wellness Herbary profitable and that brought in a huge gain to Cunningham Pharmaceuticals, increasing their income even further.

Matthew acknowledged her with a nod and asked curiously, "Who are these people?"

"Oh, they're from the Pharmaceutical Union looking for President Cunningham to discuss something," she answered.

Matthew knitted his brows. Speaking of the devil! Right after Leanna had told him about the Pharmaceutical Union, these people were already here.

The man with gold-rimmed glasses cast his eyes at Matthew with a haughty look on his face, as though he was above everyone else.

The secretary led the men into Sasha's office and announced, "President Cunningham, Mr. Hughes and his team are here!" Then, she left the room.

Sasha stood up hurriedly. "How are you, Mr. Hughes? Welcome!"

The man with gold-rimmed glasses was Samuel Hughes, whose eyes twinkled with joy instantly when he saw Sasha. "President Cunningham, I've heard about you for such a long time. It's a pleasure to meet you!"

Even from a distance, Samuel already extended his hand and wanted to grab Sasha's. Flinching slightly, Sasha could see the greedy look in his eyes and it made her uncomfortable.

Fortunately, Matthew stepped in and blocked her from view and grabbed Samuel's hand instead. "Mr. Hughes, how are you? Please take a seat, everyone!"

Samuel was taken aback and frowned. "President Cunningham, what's the meaning of this? I'm here to discuss something with you, so could you please send unrelated employees out of the room?

Unless of course, you think that the Pharmaceutical Union of Eastshire isn't worth your respect."

With a laugh, Sasha explained hurriedly, "You must be kidding, Mr. Hughes. This is Mr. Larson, my husband, and we make the decisions together in the company. You can discuss anything with the both of us!"

The look on Samuel's face changed a little and he threw a look of jealousy at Matthew before retreating with gritted teeth.

"Ahh, I see. We've received the application from Cunningham Pharmaceuticals to join the Union previously. After the screening done by our organizing committee, we're happy to announce that Cunningham Pharmaceuticals is one of the pharmacies who will be joining the Union!

Congratulations, President Cunningham! It is the dream of everyone in Eastshire belonging in the same industry to join!" he declared smugly.

Sasha was delighted. Eric Cunningham had made the application many times before but it never passed the screening, and she didn't think that they would be successful just a little while after she made it as President of the company.

This was a piece of good news. However, before she could say anything, Matthew asked, "Mr. Hughes, what do we need to do to join the Union?"

Clearly unhappy, Samuel threw a look of disdain at him while he replied, "You only need to fill out the form and submit the relevant documents."

Then, he paused and grinned out of the blue. "Oh, that's right. President Cunningham, you may need to make a trip to the provincial capital personally to complete some necessary procedures!"

From the look on his face, Matthew could tell that he was cooking up tales. There was no need for Sasha to go to the provincial capital at all; he merely wanted to trick her there so that he could find an opportunity to make a move at her.

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Dizzy with delight, Sasha couldn't even tell the ulterior motives behind Samuel's words. "No problem. All these are not a problem at all! I'll get everything done as soon as possible and send it over to the Union!" she chirped happily.

Samuel instantly broke into a smile. "That's great, President Cunningham. You can contact me once you're at the provincial capital. I'll help you get everything done!"

Sasha bobbed her head eagerly. "Thank you, Mr. Hughes."

"Don't mention it. This is my duty! President Cunningham, don't forget to contact me once you're there!" he replied with a chortle.

In a gruff voice, Matthew said, "Don't rush matters, Mr. Hughes. You still haven't made it clear about joining the Union. Do we have to contribute anything upon participation?"

"What do you mean?" Samuel asked with a frown.

Even Sasha tugged Matthew at his sleeve, implying that the question was impolite.

"I was just asking for a rough idea! Is there anything you can't mention now, Mr. Hughes?" Matthew questioned with a smile.

"Do you have any doubts about our Union?" Samuel queried in a low growl. "You could choose not to join the Union if you don't want to, and we definitely wouldn't object to it!"

This made Sasha anxious; how could they pull out now when they went to such great lengths to join the Union? But Matthew simply answered, "Alright, then. We're not joining! I'm sorry that your trip here was wasted, Mr. Hughes!"

Samuel was dumbfounded. Every other pharmaceutical company would be overjoyed to hear that they could take part in the Union. The things he said earlier was just to taunt Matthew, and he wasn't expecting him to turn down his offer for real.

If Cunningham Pharmaceuticals really wasn't joining the Union, he wouldn't be able to explain it either when he returned!

Looking ardently anxious, Sasha uttered, "Matthew, y-you shouldn't spout nonsense."

Seeing how worried Sasha was, a surge of confidence welled up in Samuel instantly. "You're not joining the Union? Fine, I'll give you a chance.

Let's go back, everyone, and we'll report that Cunningham Pharmaceuticals isn't interested and won't be joining the Union forever!" With that, he turned around and left.

Sasha wanted to stop them from leaving, but Matthew held her back. "Trust me and leave them alone!" he said in a hushed voice.

Although startled, she didn't chase after them in the end because she trusted him. When Samuel and his team reached the door and saw that no one chased after them, he immediately sank into panic.

The Union was here to get a share of that three billion deal which Cunningham Pharmaceuticals had made. If he messed it up, he definitely wouldn't be able to explain it when he returned! He sauntered a little more, but still no one came after them. Left without any other choice, they turned back into the office.

The moment he stepped through the door, he instantly said, "Forget it. I'm not stooping myself to the level of the younger generation.

President Cunningham, in the business world, there's no need for us to spoil the bigger plans because of an act of impulse. I'll give you another chance and you can fill up the forms now. You don't even need to make a trip to the provincial capital and I'll get everything done for you. How about that?"

Becoming a little wary, Sasha wondered why they seemed so eager for them to join the Union and thought that it seemed very fishy.

"Mr. Hughes, my question remains the same. What do we have to offer in order to join the Union?"

In a deep and low voice, Samuel explained, "By joining the Union, you'll have access to all the resources of the Eastshire medical industry, and the Union can help Cunningham Pharmaceuticals to grow stronger.

When everyone stays in a group, they can assist each other and cooperate. This is the dream of all pharmaceutical companies in Eastshire!"

With a chuckle, Matthew repeated, "Mr. Hughes, are you not understanding my question? I wasn't asking about what we'll benefit from it. I was asking, what do we have to offer?"

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"Why do you keep asking this? Did anyone ask you to fork out a sum?" Samuel retorted fretfully.

"Is it not true then?" Matthew chuckled. "So do you mean that we don't have to contribute anything at all after joining?"

"How is that possible?" asked Samuel with a trace of anger in his voice. "In order to enjoy the benefits, you'll have to contribute something. If everyone doesn't contribute and only enjoys the benefits, how could the Union continue to operate?"

"So what I want to know is, what do we have to contribute?" Matthew repeated.

Furious, Samuel questioned him, "W-What do you mean by this?"

"We just want to get a clear picture. Isn't that a legit question?" Matthew continued, "How could we simply join when you're not telling us what we have to contribute?

It's as if you went shopping and someone told you how awesome a product was, without telling you the price. Would you buy it, then?"

Blood rushed to Samuel's face as he finally began to take Matthew seriously; the young man in front of him was not an easy fool at all!

Taking a deep breath, he replied, "You'll definitely have to contribute something after joining the Union. Everyone must share a portion of their sales. In other words, you'll get to enjoy the profits of others!"

Sasha's face fell when she finally understood Matthew's concern.

Sharing of profits? Cunningham Pharmaceuticals just clinched a three billion deal. How much would they get back if they had to share this profit? Putting it bluntly, wasn't this just sharing the profits of Cunningham Pharmaceuticals?

"So how much do we have to fork out?" Matthew asked.

"According to our usual regulations, the new member would have to submit fifty percent of their profits, but as a special treatment for Cunningham Pharmaceuticals, you'll just need to submit forty percent!"

Sasha was close to lashing out at him when he finished. For Cunningham Pharmaceuticals to submit forty percent of their three billion sales, that would be 120 million.

In other words, even before they could enjoy any benefits from joining the Union, they would have to first fork out 120 million for others.

It would be fine if it happened to the old Cunningham Pharmaceuticals when their sales were low; forty percent would be a mere ten to twenty million and then it would even out when they received some benefits from the Union. However, if they had contributed 120 million now, she estimated that they would be making a loss of 1.1 billion!

It made sense now why Matthew kept stopping her; he must have known about this beforehand. "I'm sorry, Mr. Hughes," she said immediately. "Cunningham Pharmaceuticals won't be joining the Eastshire Pharmaceutical Union for now!"

Samuel's face turned stone cold. "President Cunningham, you have submitted the application and we've approved it.

In order to allow you to join, we even screened out others who were qualified. But now, you're saying that you want to back out. Are you taking us as fools?"

"The application was submitted last year," Sasha began, clearly annoyed. "You didn't approve it when our sales were merely tens of millions last year.

Yet, you came right away after we just signed a three billion deal. Mr. Hughes, tell me if you don't know who's taking the other for a fool now."

Embarrassment crept over his face as she had hit a nail on the head. They only eyed the business from Eastshire after seeing that the pharmaceutical industry was profitable, and it was only recently that Cunningham Pharmaceuticals had caught their attention.

So they dug out their application from last year, slapped an approval stamp on it and came straight here. Simply put, they dashed here for interests and there was no screening done at all. Still, how could they bow down to others when they were used to being arrogant?

"Sasha Cunningham, what you just said is an insult to the Union! Hmph, how dare you insult the Pharmaceutical Union of Eastshire when you're in the same industry!

That just means that you're the enemy of the whole pharmaceutical industry of Eastshire! Mark my words, if you're not joining the Union but are still able to continue your operations, it means that I, Samuel Hughes, is incapable!"

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After leaving his intimidating words behind, the people from the Union left in a huff. Sasha wanted to stop them, but Matthew held her back again, saying, "Just let them go."

"Matthew, this is the Pharmaceutical Union we're talking about!" she cried out with a worried look. "Many pharmaceutical companies in Eastshire are their members and it would be very troublesome if they publicly oppose us! Even if we're not joining the Union, we could at least speak respectfully with them instead of offending them."

Shaking his head, he told her, "It's useless. Obviously, the Union is here to grab a share of our profits. If you have pleaded with them, they would think that we're weak and pushovers and would be even more audacious!"

"T-Then what could we do?" she asked anxiously.

With a small chuckle, he assured her, "Don't worry, I'll think of a way. Just finish the job you have to do for now."

As she fixed her gaze on him, she felt a sense of assurance inside. Although she didn't know what plans he would come up with, her trust for him was absolute.

"By the way, how's the construction of the new factory?" he asked. The original factory which they had was no longer able to supply the demand after they signed such a huge deal.

So, they had bought a piece of land and planned to build a new factory there to expand their business.

Sasha beamed at him and said, "Everything's going smoothly and the construction has started. In less than six months, the factory will be completed and start its operations!"

Nodding his head, Matthew contemplated transferring Tiger to the new factory to watch over the progress of the construction. After all, this was a huge project and it was inevitable that some thugs might create accidents on purpose to get some compensation.

With someone to manage the scene there, they wouldn't have to worry about other trivial matters. However, he didn't dare to let Tiger go there directly. If Helen and James knew about this, they would assume that he was trying to make money from the construction by sending his friend over, and they would definitely make a huge fuss again.

Meanwhile, after the men from the Union left Cunningham Pharmaceuticals, they went straight to look for a few pharmaceutical companies in Eastcliff, who were all members of the Union.

The owners of the pharmaceutical companies kept their heads low and bowed respectfully when they saw Samuel.

When Samuel told them roughly that he wanted to go against Cunningham Pharmaceuticals, they became very excited. Cunningham Pharmaceuticals had been in the limelight lately and they all knew about their three billion deal, wondering how they could get a share of that profit.

But since they were not strong enough, it only remained as a thought. Now that the people from the Union were here, they might be able to get some benefits even by just being on the sidelines, while the Union was the frontline.

In a small voice, one of the owners said, "Mr. Hughes, he who has wealth speaks louder than others, and that is true for Cunningham Pharmaceuticals now. I'm afraid you can't tackle them with regular methods.

Why don't you just make a move from the Union and order for the removal of products from Cunningham Pharmaceuticals from all pharmacies in Eastshire? That way, you could cut off their sales from its roots and put that Cunningham woman in her place!"

"That's some futile remark!" Samuel exclaimed with a frown. "Don't you think I know about this? The Union sent me here to handle the business with Cunningham Pharmaceuticals. Wouldn't it be embarrassing if I return empty-handed and ask for help from the Union?

Since I'm already here personally, I'll take care of that b\*tch myself. The few of you know Eastcliff the best, so let's think of a good way to deal with them."

The owners looked at each other and sank into deep thought for a while until one of them suggested solemnly, "Perhaps we could make a move on their new factory which is under construction!"

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Surprised, Samuel asked, "What new factory are you speaking about?"

"It's the new factory the Cunningham Pharmaceuticals is building," the other answered. "Mr. Hughes, you're a prominent man from the Hughes Family in the provincial capital. You could appear personally to a few other important figures in Eastshire, so that they could stop the works at the new construction site.

Not only would this drag their progress and cost them a lot of money, they also wouldn't be able to produce the orders which they signed, and have to pay

liquidated damages in return. Before long, that would definitely put that Cunningham woman in her place!"

Samuel's eyes twinkled. "That's not a bad idea. Let's give it a shot. Alright, that's what we'll do. The few of you should start arranging this for me by finding out more information. Don't worry about anything and just go all out. I'll back you up no matter what happens!"

The other pharmaceutical owners were delighted when they heard this. What could hold them back now that they have the backing from the Hughes Family?

In the afternoon, while Sasha was having lunch with Matthew, her secretary dashed in with a worried look on her face. "President Cunningham, this is bad. There's trouble at the construction site!"

Matthew frowned. Just after Samuel Hughes had left, trouble cooked up at the construction site. The first thought that popped into Matthew's mind was that the culprit was the Hughes. With a tensed expression, Sasha asked, "What happened?"

"A few people came and claimed that our new factory is affecting the Feng Shui of their house and started a scene there.

Maybe it's due to the hot weather, so everyone got easily irritated and started a fist fight after exchanging a few words. One person from the other party is wounded and is at the hospital now."

Sasha was immediately panic-stricken. Having only been in sales before, she had never run into such a situation and didn't know that so many troublesome situations would occur at the construction site of a factory. "S-So what is the situation now?" she asked anxiously.

"A group of people have surrounded the site to stop us from continuing with the works, and they even removed quite a few of our construction machines! They

also dragged the manager who is in charge of the site to the hospital, claiming that he should pay with his life!"

The stress in Sasha's voice was clear as she asked, "It's just one person who's injured, isn't it? H-How did it turn into such a huge mess now?"

Her secretary hesitated for a moment before answering, "President Cunningham, I heard that this group of people are the local thugs in that area, and they're most probably just feigning some injuries deliberately to make a fraudulent claim. How about this, I'll take a look at the site first and report to you in more detail when I get back?"

Sasha nodded in approval and her secretary left. Looking at her, Matthew asked in a soft voice, "Sasha, why don't I take a look myself?"

Shaking her head, she said, "Don't go there. It's a mess right now and the situation might become worse if you went. Furthermore, those are some rogues. What happens if they hurt you?"

Matthew laughed. "Hurt me? I don't think it's that easy!"

She rolled her eyes at him. "Whatever it is, you shouldn't take the risk! Go back to work for now and I'll take care of this issue!"

A grin spread across his face when he saw how concerned she was for him. After he said his goodbyes, he went straight to look for Tiger instead of going to the hospital. If the other party wanted to resort to underhand methods, then he would like to see if they had the capacity!

More than an hour had passed before the secretary rushed back and reported to Sasha that the situation at the construction site was more complicated than she had thought.

Those people who had occupied the site and stopped them from continuing with the works were a group of rogues who all disappeared when the police were called in. But once the police left, they would return and prevent the works again, and the construction was now basically in a state of suspension.

Sasha was in deep distress as they had invested a huge amount into that construction. If the works couldn't be completed according to plan, Cunningham Pharmaceuticals would suffer huge losses. In addition, the most important point of the new factory was to meet the demand of the three-billion order.

If it couldn't be completed as scheduled, it seemed like the three-billion order couldn't be delivered as scheduled, either. If that happened, just the liquidated damages alone could topple the whole Cunningham Pharmaceuticals, but there was no solution at the construction site now.