

Read A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1391-1400

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1391-Ryan snorted grumpily. "What good is that? Have you thought of a backup plan in case the joint venture falls true? Wouldn't the company face another crisis?"

"Of course we are going to prepare a backup plan," Quinn explained. "We are having a board meeting for that agenda tomorrow, and we'll decide on improvements or reforms in case that happens."

While Ryan was left speechless since he could not find fault in that, Quinn added, "Sam and I are thinking we could abandon the new energy car project if the joint venture does fall through."

"What about the losses sustained?!" Ryan snapped in agitation right then. "Don't forget that John Levine's loan was used precisely to make up for that! Or are you going to leave it as bad debt?!"

"We will repay it-friendships aside, business is business," Quinn said firmly. "We'll use the profits from Saunderia's other operations."

"And the investment is just going to be abandoned?!" Ryan was still disgruntled-that would lead to a 100% loss, while they might at least sell a few cars if they persisted.

"That's the sunk cost fallacy," Quinn replied. "Without Damian Craig's advocacy and the public being thoroughly skeptical toward our technology, we won't make any sales

at all. Instead, it would expose us to a PR disaster as well, and that would culminate in a stock market drop."

Ryan had more to say, but Quinn told him bluntly, "Of course, there are plenty of other issues to discuss, and we'll do that with the board. The board has rights too, so their opinion is necessary because Saunderia isn't entirely ours. Anything we say here is pointless-we just have to wait until the meeting tomorrow."

Ryan pursed his lips, obviously stumped by Quinn's words.

Was she not saying that he was not a part of Saunderia and therefore had no right to impose?!

With that, the car was silent again until they returned to Saunders Mansion.

As Ryan alighted, he turned toward Quinn. "You should stay in the mansion tonight."

Quinn did a double take before turning toward Sam-they had been staying at their smaller house for a while now.

However, Sam stayed silent and stared outside the window as he had been throughout the journey.

"No," Quinn said then. "Sam and I will be heading back to our home."

Ryan's face dropped.

'Our' home?! What did she mean?!

Was she really dead set on Sam now?!

"Good night, Ryan," Quinn said with a politely distant smile before shutting the door and turning to the chauffeur." Please take us back to Central Avenue, Larry."

Ryan could only watch as the car sped off into the distance. He always had a nagging feeling that Quinn was still upset with him for letting her down-that she felt abandoned whatever his reasons might be and that she was just being petty and using Sam as a tool against him.

Right now, however, he felt that Quinn had really gotten over him-that her heart and soul was placed entirely on Sam, and it was no act...

Even so... he was not about to hand Quinn off to someone else! 2

Ryan's eyes narrowed-there was no way he would just take this lying down!

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1392-The car was silent as Quinn reclined against her seat and rested her eyes.

After having discussed it with Ryan just now, all she could think about was work. It was also concerning since there had been no word from Damian, and if the plan for a joint venture fell through, Saunderia would suffer a huge loss anyway.

Still, Sam suddenly asked, "Why didn't you leave with Ryan when he asked?"

Quinn actually flinched-she was too engrossed with her thoughts and did not expect him to say something out of the blue.

As she took a moment and realized what Sam was saying, she frowned. "Why would I leave with him?"

"You... With him..." Sam trailed off hesitantly, and anyone watching would see that he was clenching his knuckles without realizing it. "Don't you have feelings for him anymore?"

His heart was pounding even as he asked that, unsure what response Quinn would give.

"Nope," Quinn said bluntly.

As Sam's heart skipped a beat, he repressed his excitement and kept his tone neutral. "You liked him a lot before, didn't

you?"

"That's before, like you said. Things seem to have cooled off after so much has happened." Quinn smiled. "Some relationships are just fragile, I guess."

Hers and Ryan certainly did not withstand the test of time.

Still, even she was surprised that she got over Ryan so easily.

Sam gulped just then. "If you really don't have feelings for him anymore, stay away from him so that he won't get any funny ideas."

"Yeah." Quinn agreed to it right away.

She did not want Ryan to get any funny ideas, and she had already made herself very clear before-perhaps Ryan would understand in time that they were never getting back together.

The next morning, the board meeting was about to begin when the doors suddenly swung open, and everyone turned to find Ryan entering.

The whole room was left staring at him, stunned with confusion as he calmly found himself a seat, and began quietly, "I heard that Saunderia is facing difficulties lately, so I applied for leave from my unit to help."

The board was naturally pleased to hear that-everyone knew that Marvin's two sons were polar opposites.

Obviously, Ryan was the one whom they fawned over ever since he was a child. He was now working with the country's leading figures, each of whom were feared and respected by millions.

That was why no one would protest Ryan's offer to assist with the ongoing crisis.

In fact, they had high hopes for him!

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1393-The conference room was at once lively, with everyone's attention fixed on Ryan, most of them admiring.

On the other hand, Sam suffered rebuke as soon as he came. Although he had managed to gain some extent of approval now, he was once again anonymous with Ryan's appearance.

Quinn glanced at Sam just then, taking note of the change in expression on his face.

So she was not the only one annoyed with Ryan's presence- he was too.

Saunderia was now back on track under Sam's management, and Ryan would have interrupted the current flow of events.

It was also obvious that the board preferred Ryan, even if he never helped with Saunderia at all-all his intelligence was used entirely on scientific research, and science and business were two completely different things!

Naturally, Quinn did not say that out loud-Ryan was doing this because he wanted to help Saunderia out of their current crisis, so she had no reason to complain.

It was the same for Sam too.

However, Ryan looked pointedly at Sam just then and asked, "Are you upset that I'm here, Sam?"

“Nope,” Sam replied. Nothing’s better since you’re here to help. You’re smart, and the company would develop further with you.”

“I hope that’s spoken from your heart.” Ryan smiled in disdain, never sparing Sam at all times.

Used to it, Sam simply brought up the agenda of the meeting. “We’re discussing the joint venture. As things stand, there has been no response from Damian Craig, but I was there myself. I personally believe that our chances are bright-all we need is time. But during this uncertain period while the new energy car project is being put on ice, our project management would be left in disarray.”

“For one, many personnel are involved in the project, and as things drag on, the manpower cost will increase. To make things worse, they don’t know what to do, and they’ll work in fear every day as long as we don’t give them a clearly defined goal. Moreover, what are we planning to achieve with this project? Are we supposed to go all in, or is it supposed to be a backup plan? These are the strategies we need to decide on, and we need to utilize Saunderia’s resources suitably.”

Sam paused for a moment after the long exposition before continuing, “Now, we will discuss two agendas. The first is the plan for the new energy car project should our proposed joint venture be approved and personnel management in that case. The second is to scrap the new energy car project entirely to plug the leaking capital if the joint venture falls through.”

The board was silent and thoughtful-they must weigh their words before speaking at such an important meeting.

On the other hand, Ryan was left staring at Sam, stopping short of gaping.

While Sam had been supposedly working for a while, Ryan was told that it was their father who forced him to, and he never really cared about it. In other words, Sam had only been working seriously recently, but the composure and meticulous attitude he displayed left Ryan in disbelief.

How could Sam change so dramatically?! This was the same Sam whom he always thought to be insignificant!

Still, Gilbert spoke up just then. “Since you’re here, Ryan, you should know about Saunderia’s situation as well. Why don’t you tell us what you think? Us old folks would like to hear what you young people have to say.”

He obviously had high hopes for Ryan.

Ryan in turn remained calm and composed, having had Peter Lang work overnight to brief him about the company’s situation-especially on the joint venture.

As such, Ryan said bluntly, “I personally think that after everyone here and my father has given their all the new energy car project, I propose to keep it instead of so-called scrapping it.”

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1394-“We’re continuing to lose capital on the project, and that will go on if we can’t get the joint venture,” Sam retorted. “I’m only proposing scrapping the new energy car project if the proposed joint venture is turned down. If we get it, we’re definitely going through with it. We’re simply discussing the policy implemented for both scenarios to be prepared for anything so Saunderia has a strategic goal to strive for.”

“I don’t think you’re getting the joint venture,” Ryan said bluntly. “Or to put it frankly, I hold no hope in your business trip. We can presume there won’t be one.”

Sam pursed his lips-Ryan was directly denying his competence in front of the entire board.

And perhaps because he had been bullied ever since they were children, it was as if there was this vast gap between them.

As if when Ryan said that he was a failure, he was exactly that.

And seeing that Sam was not speaking up, Ryan continued calmly, “That’s why we can just forget about the so-called joint venture and plan the company’s direction in the absence of it. And I made it very clear earlier-I do not agree with the new energy car project being scrapped. We shall continue to pour all our resources into it even without the joint venture.”

“The entire project has completely stalled,” Sam reminded him.

“Because there weren’t proper promotion efforts.”

“Any promotional efforts would be rebuffed with public skepticism regarding product quality.”

“Then we can prove its quality ourselves,” Ryan said slowly and clearly.

As Sam looked on, Ryan revealed his proposal. “It’s simple- why would there be product confidence if we don’t use it ourselves? I hence propose that all personnel in Saunderia- from executives to the janitor-switch to using our cars. The public would naturally come to trust our cars’ quality at that point and be willing to purchase it.”

Ryan’s proposal left everyone including Sam and Quinn in stunned silence.

Ryan raised a brow. “If no one’s speaking up, I’ll take it that everyone’s in agreement.”

The board members traded glances, but no one spoke in fear of causing hurt feelings.

Still, Sam suddenly said, “Ryan...”

As Ryan turned toward him, he asked, “When you say that we’ll have the entire company buy our own cars... Were you joking?”

“I never joke around,” Ryan said bluntly. “I personally despise wasting time.”

“Then, did you think things through before suggesting this?”

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1395-Ryan certainly sensed the irony in Sam’s voice. “What are you trying to say?”

“What right do we have to demand our own employees to buy our cars?!” Sam demanded. “This is a direct violation of labor laws, and do you have any guarantees that they’re willing to buy it? If so much as one of them is unwilling and they decide to report us, we must face the law’s judgment, and what do you think would be left of Saunderia’s reputation? The tide hasn’t really changed for Saunderia, and playing Russian roulette with company PR will see us facing bankruptcy again soon.”

“I’m sure they won’t protest if we give employee rebates,” Ryan argued.

“Employee rebates? What’s the percentage we are talking about?” Sam demanded. “Thirty? Forty? Maybe even beyond fifty? Did it cross your mind

that we'd be taking a loss in capital? Every employee has different living conditions and family background too, which affects their purchasing power. Moreover, if I'd recently bought a car that I'm pleased with, I'd refuse your offer even if you sold it to me with a ninety percent discount! Cars aren't household items—it's a consumable that requires maintenance. Even if it's a new energy car and costs less than carbon-fueled vehicles, it still costs money, especially for maintenance!"

Though Ryan was left glowering, he persisted. "There are employees who will need it! Do you think this is right, denying my proposal when you've done nothing?!"

Sam shrugged. ' Aren't you denying my hard work even before Damian Craig has given me a definitive response?"

Ryan fumed, obviously put on the spot by Sam just then.

"This is a board meeting," Ryan growled through his teeth." The board's unanimous agreement is needed. Those who agree with my proposal to have Saunderia employees purchase our cars with rebates as a means of promotion, raise your hand."

Everyone was quiet and did not move—none of them agreed with Ryan's proposal, after all.

He was left staring at them in disbelief—did Sam buy all of them in no time at all?!

"Is no one agreeing to my proposal?!" he snapped.

Sam certainly did not spare Ryan any dignity in return." Anyone who's worked in business and has any level of experience would say no."

"Are you mocking me?"

"Just stating facts.' Sam replied coolly. "This sort of marketing is fundamentally wrong, and making employees buy company products is a clear violation of organizational management. Never in Saunderia's long history has there been any case of such employee exploitation—because the company's tenets and ideals forbid it!"

"I'm not exploiting employees. I'm giving rebates—"

“Moreover, there’s no telling what would come out of this proposal. Saunderia is not influential enough to sway public opinion into believing our product is of high quality just because our employees are using it. Such is public opinion- no one gets full control over it.”

Sam simply denied Ryan any chance to speak, which left Ryan glaring coldly.

He never imagined that Sam would humiliate him as so many watched!

For his part, Sam was not going to waste his time with Ryan, and he promptly summarized imposingly, “I’ve made myself clear-I don’t want to fight with you in a meeting because this wastes everyone’s time. Your suggestion is rejected because the board does not agree with it.”

“Now, back on the topic at hand-does everyone agree with scrapping the new energy car project should the joint venture fall through?”

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1396-Every board member raised their hands in approval once Sam was finished, and Ryan could not believe his eyes.

“Haven’t each and everyone of you given your blood and sweat for the new energy car project?!” Ryan demanded loudly. “And you’re giving it up just like that?! This means you’re just writing off everything as a loss when you still have hope if you don’t give up!”

Even before Sam could speak, however, Gilbert finally had enough. “Ryan, do you really understand what Saunderia is going through at the moment? Did you ask before you came? n

“Of course I did,” Ryan said bluntly.

“I don’t believe that to be the case,” Gilbert told him.

He was always candid-he had been lenient toward Ryan earlier, perhaps because he regarded the boy through rose- tinted glasses.

Now, however, enough was enough.

“I don’t mind admitting that I’ve regarded Sam with contempt,” Gilbert continued. “He had been goofing off for years despite holding a position in Saunderia, but now, I see him in a different light because he’s earnest about setting things right, and doing his best. Your presence here, however ... I

can't help but think that you're just messing around or indeed wasting our time."

"Mr. Wells." Ryan's face fell. "I would understand that if you don't agree with my proposal, but you're just insulting me!"

"I'm just stating facts, and if I were to be honest, I was even harsher with Sam when he announced himself as acting board chairman, but he's proven himself on his own merits."

"But I'm just trying to sustain my father's legacy. You have no right to humiliate me like this."

"That's why I asked if you understand what's going on in Saunderia. If you actually took this seriously, you'd realize the new energy car project is the reason behind our capital flow stalling and us facing potential bankruptcy. If we don't apply the right strategy before we make another foray, the same thing will happen again. That is why at present, the only option is to scrap the new energy car project instead of undertaking a pointless effort should the joint venture fall through."

Gilbert's words left Ryan utterly embarrassed—he had never suffered such humiliation before!

Even so, Gilbert continued slowly and clearly, "Your father and I are old friends after decades being business partners, and our families I close. I myself watched you grow up, and I didn't expect that you would disappoint me this much and that it'd be Sam who gives me something to look forward to. n

Ryan certainly could not abide with being belittled like that!

"In that case, do you think Sam would secure that so-called joint venture?! Do you think he can lead the company if he

takes things seriously?! Do you also think it's right, walking all over me just because my proposal was a mistake?" i

"Right now, what I know is that you have no idea what is going on in Saunderia or what it means to run a business. Yes, everyone knows that you were always smarter than your peers ever since a child, just as the technocrats know the part you've played in the technological department. See,

I'm not denying your gift, but you're only outstanding in your own field. You're talentless when it comes to business."

Before Ryan could argue, Gilbert continued, "The negotiation for the joint venture is not as easy as you'd like to think either. It's perfectly normal if it falls through-that's just how business works. That's why we won't doubt Sam's competence even if it falls through, because it's a means to salvage the new energy car project in the first place. No, we can even say that success is not within our calculations. But if Sam does secure it, that would prove that he's exceptional, n

"He's not going to get it," Ryan repeated.

He had no rebuttals aside from repeating that, after all.

Gilbert frowned in turn, clearly annoyed with Ryan's stubborn contempt for Sam.

Quinn was upset too-she did not think so when she was younger, but she could clearly feel how utterly dismissive Ryan was toward Sam.

He was thoroughly convinced that Sam was hopeless, even though she used to think that Sam goofed off too much as well!

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1397-It was not just Quinn-Marvin and Lindsay would probably agree that Sam used to goof off too much as well. However, after Sam had changed and his work was showing results, they were earnestly pleased and offered encouragement.

It was only Ryan who was staunchly convinced that Sam was a failure and refused to trust him.

When Quinn could not help defending Sam, his phone suddenly started to ring.

He checked the caller ID and promptly answered.

That move seemed to be a grievous offense in Ryan's eyes, and he promptly snapped, "We're in a meeting, Sam!

Personal calls aren't allowed! Don't you have any respect for the board?!"

Sam simply ignored him and walked over to a quieter corner, leaving him fuming.

Gilbert snapped at Ryan right then, “He’s the acting chairman, and anything he says goes—that means he gets to answer calls whenever he wants to! We’ve also been in enough meetings with him to know that he won’t answer unless it’s important.”

Ryan’s face was left ashen and thought to himself right then that Gilbert must be in cahoots with Sam—why else would Gilbert repeatedly leap to Sam’s defense while insulting him thoroughly?!

However, even as he turned to the other board members, they were all keeping quiet, clearly not taking issue with Sam taking a call at the meeting!

Ryan was speechless then—what goodies did Sam promise these people?!

Nevertheless, he had to stay silent despite his impatience, since everyone else was keeping quiet.

Eventually, Sam was done with the call and returned.

Before he could speak, Ryan snapped, “Don’t you think it’s an issue, having everyone wait while you take that call?!

Everyone’s time is precious, and you’re wasting it.”

“I don’t think I’m wasting anyone’s time,” Sam said slowly and clearly. “Because-“

“Right, you’re never wrong. Because you always know what you’re doing—even as a child,” Ryan scoffed.

As Sam glowered, Ryan continued, “There’s no way Dad would rest easy letting you be acting board chairman.

Anyone would do better than you, otherwise I wouldn’t have asked for an extended leave. You have no idea how much progress is delayed with me being away-“

“Actually, I think you’re the one wasting everyone’s time with your crap.” Sam cut him short right then.

Ryan exploded right then, but before he was ready to leap up and lecture Sam, Sam suddenly said, "I've secured the joint venture."

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1398-The conference room was suddenly so silent one could hear a pin drop.

The board seemed to think they were hearing things and held their breaths in fear that they were dreaming.

Ryan, however, was thoroughly skeptical that the eternally bratty, useless Sam could secure the joint venture.

Nonetheless, Sam repeated sonorously so that everyone could hear him clearly, "Damian Craig has agreed to our joint venture, and he will be present when we sign the agreement next Wednesday, after which we would go into details regarding the joint venture."

"For real?!" Gilbert exclaimed, his voice almost shaking even though he was the first to come to his senses.

The rest of the board was looking at Sam in disbelief. They- including Marvin—were convinced that the new energy car project was a lost cause, and scrapping it was inevitable to prevent further loss of capital should they fail to secure the joint venture. None of them would find the losses regrettable either, because it was a strategic withdrawal given the circumstances.

They all knew how difficult it would be to secure a joint venture involving transnational technological exchange either and with a rival of sorts.

It was therefore unthinkable that Sam made it work anyway!

"That's what Damian said when he called me just now." Sam shrugged just then.

"I... I don't know what to say!" Gilbert was speechless in thrill.

The other board members joined in to offer their praise too.

"Well done, Sam!"

"How did you get Damian Craig to agree to it? I heard the man's eccentric, and most people can't even get an appointment with him."

“This is a monumental achievement, Sam-it’d otherwise take up to five years for Saunderia to fully recoup the losses! 99

As every board member fawned over Sam and praised him, Ryan was left ignored, though it was not like he could speak at all just then.

He stared fixedly at Sam, unable to believe that the latter had really secured the joint venture-what fluke was this?! Did Sam just happen to be in the right place and the right time when the Minervans decide on expanding into Zidonia?!

That had to be it—Sam would otherwise never achieve something like this!

Nonetheless, the bustle in the conference room lasted for a while until Sam gestured for everyone to be quiet. “Damian has only agreed to the joint venture. We have preparations ahead of his arrival next Wednesday-don’t let down your guard just yet.”

“Yes, yes,” the board agreed right away.

“You’ve changed so much, Sam.” Gilbert could not help praising Sam again. “I can’t even calm down at my age, while you remain ever composed. Your father should be proud of having a son like you, just as Saunderia should be proud that you’ll be taking the reins.”

Such earnest flattery actually left Sam blushing, but he stayed calm.

“I’ve just done what I can, and I thank you for tolerating my shortcomings before,” he said politely before returning to the topic at hand. “With the joint venture now agreed upon, we shall discuss it, since the earlier discussion about scrapping the project and cutting losses is now moot. We don’t have to reconsider human resource management for the project either-just have the workers be on standby until the project is revived.”

“Yes,” the board agreed.

“Quinn will be in charge of arranging the particulars of the joint venture,” Sam added solemnly. “She knows the specifics of Saunderia’s operations better than I do.”

“Yes.” Quinn nodded—Sam was far from proficient when it came to the specifics since he had not been working here for that long.

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1399-If anything, Sam left everyone astounded that he could take the reins of Saunderia.

Naturally, they must not simply dismiss it as pure talent.

In fact, Quinn had personally seen the hard work Sam put in, studying Saunderia operations management whenever he had the time. He would also work all the way past midnight, and even as they headed home, he would be doing further reading in the car.

Considering that Sam would spend all his time on video games or drinking before, Quinn was certainly amazed that he seemed to be born anew now.

She started to split up the tasks in preparation for receiving Damian's arrival next week. With the board's increasing approval of her and Sam's leadership, they would basically take up any task given with no complaint.

That naturally eased the pressure on them while smoothing out operations.

After the board meeting, Quinn started to follow Sam back to his office.

She had become accustomed to walking there as well, and Sam would often ask her about jargons or marketing procedures he knew nothing about. She would answer him whenever, which in turn saved them time.

Nonetheless, Ryan suddenly called out to her, 'Quinn, come with me to my office.'

Quinn paused in hesitation and looked at Sam.

However, he simply growled "Whatever," and strode off.

Quinn was a little disappointed-even if Sam had changed drastically, their relationship did not.

He showed no possessiveness toward her, though she would not demand it either-there was no time for love when they were both engrossed with work. If anything, she was content that he was being serious and not messing around.

"Come on. He doesn't care about you at all," Ryan said bluntly.

Quinn pursed her lips as she followed Ryan, entering the board chairman's office with him.

Although Sam was now the acting board chairman, he never moved from his office, complaining that it was too troublesome.

Quinn, however, had the feeling that Sam simply did not want to waste time. It was as if he wanted nothing less than to spend every waking moment working, so it was no exaggeration to say that he was now a workaholic.

Still, there was something that just felt wrong about letting Ryan have the board chairman's office, though she could not quite explain why...

Naturally, Quinn would not say it, though she was still curious. "Why did you ask for me?"

"I don't know much about working here, but I'm going to contribute now that I'm here. You've been here for a while and you know Saunderia through and through, so you can be my personal assistant while I'm here." The way he put it was as if it was only natural!

A Life Debt Repaid Chapter 1400-Quinn stared at Ryan quietly, suspicion lurking just beneath her eyes.

She had always trusted Ryan ever since they were children, convinced that he was more mature than their peers, smarter, and more protective of her.

Now, however, she suddenly started wondering if she had misunderstood something about him.

In fact, she thought his behavior at the moment was so childish she had no idea where to start.

She certainly had no idea how Ryan could say something so easily, especially when he obviously knew that she and Sam were married. She had also repeatedly told him that she was doing fine with Sam at the moment too, and that there was no way she would rekindle her relationship with Ryan.

Moreover, Ryan also obviously knew that as Saunderia's acting board chairman, Sam's decisions would decide Saunderia's development. He especially needed Quinn's help since he was under huge pressure.

And yet, Ryan brazenly spouted such thoughtless words and appeared so selfish!

On the other hand, Ryan scowled since Quinn stayed silent.” What, is there an issue?”

“Are you really here to work, Ryan?” Quinn asked bluntly. “Or perhaps you think so lowly of Sam that you’re dead sure he can’t manage Saunderia at all and came to keep an eye on him?!”

“Of course I’m here to work.” Ryan snorted. “Why else would I apply for leave, put aside my important research work, and come here?! And yes, I do think lowly of Sam. I’m sure he’s not going to do well—if anything, he’ll get full of himself and throw his weight around if he accomplishes anything at all. Saunderia will not survive his abuse.”

“I somehow get this feeling that you don’t want him to succeed,” Quinn muttered.

Why else would Ryan insult Sam like that or be so intent in taking her away from Sam?

Forget her abilities—she knew Saunderia better than Sam, and she always gave her very best to the company without any ulterior motives.

Nonetheless, Ryan’s face fell right then. “Did Sam brainwash you or something?! Why wouldn’t I want him to succeed? I couldn’t ask for more if he can keep Saunderia afloat, what with Dad being sick and a successor being needed. I can’t share his burden, so of course I want Sam to keep things together!”

“Then you have a strange way of showing it,” Quinn said bluntly, looking him in the eye. “Every board member was praising and encouraging him. You did not do that at all and kept doubting him instead!”

“That’s why I’m worried Sam can’t grow up! Do you think the board is right, fawning over him after measly accomplishment?! No! They’re just going to spoil him, and do you think Sam would keep doing his best once he gets full of himself?! I’m whipping him into shape!”

“We’re all adults,” Quinn said quietly. “Are you really unable to differentiate between what’s good and what’s not?”

“Are you doubting me, Quinn?!” Ryan demanded coldly, finally losing all patience.

“Would you believe me if I told you I’m not?” Quinn smiled, seeing the clear skepticism on his face. “By how you’re treating Sam, I doubt you’re trying to ‘whip him into shape’.”

“Quinn!!!” Ryan screamed, stunned that Quinn would actually fight him over Sam!

Was she this stupid?! Could she not tell who between him and Sam was better, or who deserved her affection?!

“I’m sorry, Ryan, but I’m going to have to refuse,” Quinn said, not backing down. “Sam needs me very much right now, and I’ll stay at his side. I’ll have Peter make the arrangements if you need an assistant or a secretary.”

And with those words, she left without a pause or waiting for Ryan’s approval.

Once outside the office, however, she took a deep breath— she was hardly as determined as she looked, since she never could refuse anything Ryan asked.

Today, however, was the day she finally stepped out of his shadow.

She would never mindlessly compromise herself for him now!

And in the office, Ryan was glaring at the door, having watched as Quinn left so briskly without caring how he felt... or at all!