

She Made a Comeback as a Renowned Doctor

#Chapter 11: 20

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Chapter 11: Chapter 11: Grandpa Lewis Is Failing Fast

"When will you be willing to acknowledge the child?" Waylon Lewis's voice was cold and sharp as his piercing eyes swept over her.

Hope Williams felt a surge of anger, "Why should I tell you?"

"Because that's my seed," he stated coldly.

"It's the child I gave birth to!"

"Could you have given birth without my seed?"

Hope Williams looked at the man in astonishment. He'd provided only a sperm, and she had done all the nurturing, yet he dared to be proud? Had the audacity to claim?

"It was you who rejected them." Her voice rose, heated.

"..."

Waylon Lewis was stunned for a moment, unable to argue.

"Scumbag! Now you want them, and I'm just supposed to hand them over? As if you, President Lewis, own the world? Too late, I fought tooth and nail to bring them into this world, and I won't let you take them away from me."

Waylon's mood was complex, his tone still cool, "Did I say I wanted to take them away?"

"Then what do you mean?"

"As a father, don't I even have the right to lay eyes on my child?"

"You still remember you're a father!" Hope Williams sneered coldly. She was no longer the naive Hope Williams who would easily believe his words.

At that moment, Waylon's phone rang; it was Alitzel Williams, his mother.

"Hello, Mom." Waylon's voice was as cold as usual.

"Waylon, are you with Joy? Hurry back home, Grandpa Lewis is having another attack, he's not doing well."

Boom! Hope's heart seemed to be struck hard.

Grandpa Lewis isn't doing well?!

Waylon also tightened inside, abandoned his languid posture, gripped the steering wheel firmly, and turned left toward the old family home, "I'll be right back."

"What's wrong with Grandpa? What disease has he got, Waylon?" Hope asked, her eyes full of urgency.

No matter how the Lewis Family had treated her in the past, Grandpa Lewis had always been exceptionally kind to her. In the Lewis Family, Grandpa Lewis was the only one who offered her warmth.

Now, suddenly learning that Grandpa Lewis was not faring well, Hope couldn't accept it.

"Heart disease," Waylon replied heavily.

The car sped to the Lewis Family's old house, and Thomas Hughes arrived soon after with Joy Ward.

Joy rushed to Waylon's side, "Waylon, don't panic, I'll check on Grandpa's condition first."

Joy had been Grandpa Lewis's primary doctor these past few days. Having studied abroad and specializing in cardiovascular surgery, she was an expert in this field.

Waylon responded with a low voice, "Mhm."

Hope Williams ran into the old Lewis house, familiarly finding Grandpa Lewis's room.

Just as she reached the door, low sobbing sounds came from inside.

Hope's heart tightened, and she hurried inside.

Upon entering the room, her breath nearly caught.

Inside were many people, direct descendants of the Lewis Family, including Waylon's parents, Christopher Lewis, Alitzel Williams, and a few of Waylon's uncles.

The sound at the door caused everyone to turn around.

They all recognized Hope, and their expressions were shockingly surprised to see her reappear after vanishing for five years.

“Hope Williams, why have you come back?” Alitzel Williams nearly roared at her.

Years ago, considering the debt of gratitude owed to Hope’s parents by the Lewis family, they agreed to the Williams Family’s request to marry Hope to Waylon. Although the family status was mismatched, they hoped that Hope would be a well-behaved girl. To their surprise, after three years of marriage, she ran away without a word, leaving the entire Lewis Family deeply disgusted; even Old Master Lewis, who had doted on her like his own granddaughter.

What a way to repay the Lewis Family’s kindness – the elderly master’s illness was undoubtedly aggravated by her actions.

“Why did you even come?”

“Uncle, Aunt, I don’t have time to explain. Can I see Grandpa?”

Hope saw the old man lying on the large bed, eyes tightly closed, his face gaunt and eyes sunken, breathing weakly with the help of a respirator, and her heart ached fiercely.

“Who let you in? You’re not welcome here,” Alitzel Williams turned away and reprimanded her coldly.

“Mom, Grandpa has always hoped for sister-in-law to return. Now that she’s back, let her see Grandpa first.”

Hope’s eyes were gratefully fixed on Wyatt Lewis, who had spoken up.

“Shut up, she’s not your sister-in-law. Waylon has divorced her, she has nothing to do with our Lewis Family anymore,” Alitzel Williams was clearly angry.

“I brought her here,” said Waylon, entering the room.

“Waylon?”

When Alitzel Williams saw Waylon returning with Joy, her demeanor improved slightly, disregarding the rest, she rushed past Hope and grabbed Joy by the hand, “Joy, quickly check on Old Master, he’s having an attack again.”

“Aunt, please don’t worry, I’ll take a look at Grandpa first,” Joy hurried toward the Elder Lewis, giving Hope a provocative smile.

Hope didn't ignore her provocation, but she was solely focused on Elder Lewis and had no mind for anything else.

Hope tried to get closer to the Elder Lewis to examine his condition but was stopped by the old housekeeper, "Miss Williams, please stay back." They wouldn't let her approach, so Hope could only stand to the side, anxious.

It was an unbearable ordeal for Hope personally, and professionally as a medical person.

None here trusted her. Hope anxiously looked around, her gaze settling on Wyatt.

Wyatt raised his eyebrows towards Hope, nudging his brother to intervene on her behalf.

Eventually, Hope's pleading gaze fell on Waylon.

Surrounded by a stifling aura of sorrow, Waylon's mood was somber.

"Waylon, can you let me go and check on Grandpa?" Hope asked with a plea in her eyes.

His gaze was ice-cold as it briefly moved across her, "I didn't bring you here to cause trouble. Make any more noise, and I'll have you sent back."

After Joy finished examining the Elder Lewis, her face was filled with worry, and everyone crowded closer.

Alitzel Williams asked with urgency, "Joy, you can save Grandpa, can't you?"

Joy hesitated, shook her head sorrowfully, and looked at Alitzel Williams with sadness.

"Aunt, I'm sorry, but Grandpa—he..."

Chapter 12: Chapter 12: Throw Hope Williams Out

She paused in her speech, looking utterly heartbroken and helpless.

Waylon Lewis's pupils shrank violently, and the icy coldness in his eyes was replaced by profound sorrow.

"You said you had controlled Grandpa's condition before, so how could it suddenly become serious?" Christopher's urgent, grave voice sounded.

Joy Ward, yelled at, bit her lip and shook her head, looking aggrieved.

Grandpa Lewis's heart disease was very severe to begin with; she could only temporarily control the onset of his illness with increased medication. To those unfamiliar with medicine, it seemed as though Grandpa's complexion had improved, creating the illusion of recovery.

In this manner, her act of saving Grandpa Lewis would earn her favor with the Lewis Family, and with this act of grace, her chances of successfully proposing marriage to Waylon would be much higher.

Moreover, she didn't want Grandpa to wake up. This old man had always opposed her marrying Waylon in the past few years. His death would be to her advantage.

She had originally intended to increase the dosage, ensuring that Grandpa wouldn't die from illness before her marriage to Waylon; after the wedding, no matter how he died, she could easily claim that Grandpa was old, that a sudden illness took him, and that she had done her best. It wouldn't be her fault.

But she never expected the old man to be so feeble. Before she had the chance to marry Waylon, he was dying.

Hope Williams was so frantic she was nearly in tears, her eyes red and her whole body trembling. She grabbed Waylon's hand, "Please!"

"Waylon, I beg you to let me see Grandpa, I have a way, a way to save him!"

Grandpa couldn't wait any longer; there could be no more delays, truly.

Waylon's eyes narrowed, but Hope had already rushed past all restraint.

"Pull her back. Hope, do you still want to harm Elder Lewis?"

A servant moved to pull her away.

"Nobody touch her," Waylon commanded coldly. For some reason, upon seeing the girl's frantic expression, he softened inside and subconsciously wanted to believe her.

"Waylon?" Alitzel Williams looked at her son with some surprise. He used to detest Hope; why was he now protecting her at every turn?

Hope sat beside Elder Lewis, and with Waylon's backing, nobody dared touch her. She calmed down and examined Elder Lewis.

The Lewis Family had made thorough medical preparations in Elder Lewis's room. Hope's brows furrowed with concern; it was clearly symptoms of heart failure, and it had

been ongoing for a while. Elder Lewis was extremely weak now and might not survive if taken off the ventilator.

Hope took out a Silver Needle from her bag, pinching it between two fingers, pausing momentarily. Using the Acupuncture Technique on Elder Lewis at this time was the best and riskiest way to save his life.

The best treatment for such severe heart disease was a heart transplant, but for some reason, given the many renowned doctors surrounding him, Hope couldn't fathom why Elder Lewis had missed the optimal window for treatment. Now, they had no choice but to take a risky path.

"Grandpa, don't worry, I'll definitely save you."

"Miss Williams, what do you intend to do to Old Master Lewis?" Just as Hope was about to begin acupuncture, Joy suddenly shouted.

Joy's exclamations immediately drew the attention of others; Alitzel moved forward swiftly, seizing Hope's hand, which held the Silver Needle.

Everyone crowded around the bed.

"Hope, Elder Lewis was never unkind to you, and now that he's in this state, you still want to harm him. What is your intention?" Alitzel had never liked Hope from five years ago, and now the hostility was even stronger, with anger raging in her eyes as she berated Hope.

"I'm not, I want to save Grandpa," Hope retorted, her brows tightly knitted.

She knew that every wasted second delayed Elder Lewis's condition.

At this, Joy's eyes shifted, and a mocking, cold smile curled at the corners of her mouth directed at Hope, "Miss Williams, you were expelled from school, didn't even finish your sophomore year, and now you're probably not even a doctor. How can you save Grandpa? His body is very weak already; he can't withstand your meddling."

Joy's voice was soft and gentle, emanating thick advice and helplessness, appearing to be completely for the sake of Elder Lewis.

Only Hope knew that everything Joy was saying was laced with scorn for her.

Hope slightly turned her head to look at Joy, her face displaying nothing but urgency, "Let go."

"Miss Williams, perhaps you shouldn't exacerbate Grandpa's condition..."

Hope, out of patience with Joy's incessant chatter, flicked her hand away.

Staggering, Joy fell toward Waylon, who reached out to steady her, his expression indifferent.

"Waylon..."

Joy's gentle call and her beautifully fragile appearance, filled with vulnerability and helplessness, and seeming greatly wronged, moved all to pity. Her attempts at gentle persuasion cast Hope in the light of being unreasonable and unruly.

And Waylon's gaze on her carried a hint of reprimand.

Hope's lips twisted in bitterness.

Alitzel spoke out to chastise, "Hope, you dare be presumptuous in my Lewis Family's house? Someone, throw her out."

Hope's heart tightened, and her gaze instinctively sought Waylon's. In his deep, dark eyes, his towering figure shielded her from the bodyguards.

His profound gaze met hers.

In that moment, Hope felt a surge of intense expectation from the depths of her heart.

Would he believe her?

Waylon...

"I'll have someone send you back."

The man's icy voice caused Hope's entire being to shudder, all her wild expectations crashing down, shattered.

It was just like five years ago, when she told him full of hope that they would have a baby, and he responded by giving her a check, telling her to get rid of it.

Waylon was always so cruel to her.

Tears trembled in her eyes, but ultimately she couldn't hold back a scornful laugh.

"Miss Williams, please." Thomas Hughes stepped forward, showing much more courtesy than the Lewis Family's bodyguards towards this former lady.

"I won't leave." Hope knew that if she left, Grandpa would truly be beyond saving. Whether as Hope or as a Doctor, she couldn't leave.

“Thomas,” Waylon barked.

Thomas was torn and conflicted—on one hand, he couldn’t disobey his master’s command, and on the other hand, he found himself unable to be harsh with this former lady as he would with any other woman.

In his dilemma, he could only look to Wyatt Lewis for help.

Wyatt was also struggling with what to do and hesitated briefly before addressing Hope, “Sister-in-law, maybe... for Grandpa...”

Wyatt’s words hung unfinished as his gaze shifted from Hope to Elder Lewis on the bed, who with a trembling effort lifted a hand.

Chapter 13: Chapter 13: It Was Joy Ward Who Saved the Old Master

The next moment, Hope Williams’s fingers trembled and touched something, making her turn her head abruptly to see the old grandfather watching her with his muddy, excited eyes.

Hope Williams’s heart trembled fiercely and she immediately grabbed the old man’s hand, holding it tightly, her voice choked with tears that couldn’t be held back any longer, “Grandfather, Grandfather, it’s me, Hope.”

The old grandfather tried to open his mouth but couldn’t make a sound.

Everyone crowded around the grandfather, and the room became noisy instantly. Alitzel Williams tried to push Hope away, but the old man clung to Hope, not letting her go.

“Grandfather, what do you want to say?” Wyatt Lewis hurriedly asked. The old man opened his mouth and, seeing his expression, Wyatt understood, “Grandfather, you want the sister-in-law to stay, don’t you?”

The old man nodded his head with all his might.

“Brother, since grandfather has spoken, let’s let sister-in-law stay to see grandfather, maybe she can really save him.”

Waylon Lewis frowned slightly and looked deeply at Hope Williams, his inscrutable dark eyes filled with a touch of worry.

After hesitating for a moment, he turned and went out.

Since grandfather wanted Hope Williams to stay, Alitzel Williams couldn't protest, but glared fiercely at Hope Williams with a warning, "Joy, you're the old man's primary doctor, you stay as well."

Joy Ward nodded obediently, naturally delighted with this no-effort, pleasing task.

Everyone, including the servants, left the room, leaving only Hope Williams, Joy Ward, and the old man.

The room suddenly became quiet, and Hope Williams sat beside the old man's bed.

She took out a slender silver needle and immediately got into the zone after a series of disinfection steps.

"Grandfather, Hope has always been here, you're going to get better."

While saying this, Hope Williams pinched the silver needle between her fingers and stabbed it into the old man's acupuncture points. The old man was frail, and it was not easy for him to be awake now, his eyes closed tiredly.

Joy Ward crossed her arms and stood behind Hope Williams, watching her serious and solemn face, and couldn't help but sneer audibly, "What do you think you're doing, Hope Williams? Do you know medicine? Don't tell me you're trying to save the old man with a few silver needles, that's a joke."

"I'm telling you, this old guy is already at death's door, he's not far from breathing his last, you might as well give him a final..."

"Slap!"

"Ah..."

Before Joy Ward could finish, Hope Williams slapped her hard across the face.

Joy Ward covered her face, looking shocked, "You bitch, how dare you hit me!"

"Shut up!"

Hope Williams's eyes were sharp, and she grabbed Joy Ward by the hair, pressing a silver needle to her throat.

"I'm telling you, grandfather won't die. If you utter one more word, believe me, I'll make sure you can never speak again."

This fierce version of Hope Williams incited a chilling fear.

The silver needle pressed against her neck, sharp and painful, made Joy Ward afraid to move; the needle might just pierce her throat.

She choked and nodded, and Hope Williams threw her to the ground in a disheveled mess.

Joy Ward, clutching her face and clenching her fists, stared viciously at Hope Williams, her eyes filled with resentful fury.

Time ticked by; Hope Williams's forehead was covered in cold sweat. Silver Needle Acupuncture required extreme precision; a single mistake could worsen the old man's condition.

Hope Williams held her breath throughout, not daring to relax.

Moreover, Hope Williams worried that the old man's body might not support the completion of the acupuncture, but luckily, the situation was better than she had expected. After finishing the treatment, the old man's condition stabilized and there was no immediate danger to his life.

Hope Williams expelled a heavy breath as she watched the EKG monitor, the old man's heart rate settling down, and finally relaxed.

Joy Ward's eyes widened in disbelief as she saw the steady heartbeat on the monitor. Impossible, disbelief spread across her face.

Hope Williams, who hadn't even finished school—a complete waste—had actually managed to save this old man who was on the brink of needing a ventilator. How could this be?

Her heart tightened, and she suddenly felt a struggle to breathe.

A strong sense of crisis overwhelmed her.

If Hope Williams had saved this old man, she might be recognized again by the Lewis Family.

What about her then?

She had been treating the old man for months, flattering the Lewis parents, gaining the trust and affection of Alitzel Williams, believing that she was not far from marrying into the Lewis Family.

Now Hope Williams's arrival had disrupted all her plans.

No.

Joy Ward clenched her fists tightly, absolutely not.

She wouldn't allow this to happen.

Hope Williams removed the silver needles and packed them up; the old man still required several more steps in his treatment, this was only the first step, but next she needed to study the treatment plan further.

She remembered that the Lewis family's old mansion had a pharmacy specifically for storing precious medicinal ingredients, just right for her to prepare a few doses of herbal medicine for the old man, which would help his condition.

Joy Ward watched Hope Williams leave, her eyes flickering viciously. She turned back to look at the sickbed, where the previously weak and pale-faced old man was gradually regaining his normal color, her heart filling with uncontrollable spite.

This old man had always disagreed with her marrying into the Lewis Family, and now if he was saved by Hope Williams, how could there possibly be a place for her?

Thinking this, Joy Ward slowly reached out and pinched the old man's ventilator tubing.

Just then, footsteps approached the door.

Panicking, Joy Ward picked up a stethoscope nearby and pretended to examine the old man's chest, the harshness quickly replaced by gentleness.

"Grandfather, don't worry, I'll do my best to save you, and you must also fight to get better. Everyone is waiting for you to recover."

Alitzel Williams, pushing open the door, heard Joy Ward speak these words.

Chapter 14: Chapter 14 Would you like to take me as your master?

Alitzel Williams, watching Joy Ward's frail figure, was filled with emotion. This child was truly kind-hearted and deserved to be her daughter-in-law.

"Joy." Alitzel Williams approached and called out to her softly.

Joy Ward carefully placed down the stethoscope, stood up, and looked at Alitzel Williams with gentle eyes. Alitzel Williams smiled kindly and took Joy Ward's hand.

Seeing this, Joy Ward knew that Alitzel Williams had overheard what she had just said. A victorious smile appeared at the bottom of her heart.

“Joy, you’ve worked hard.” Alitzel Williams gently patted Joy Ward’s hand.

“Auntie, I’m not tired. As long as grandfather can recover, I won’t feel it’s hard at all.”

“Good child.”

Accompanying Alitzel Williams was a famous elderly professor, Elder Murphy, who had a towering reputation in the medical world and primarily researched cardiothoracic surgery.

Elder Murphy sat down seriously, closed his eyes, and placed his hands over Old Master Lewis’s pulse.

After nearly half a minute, Elder Murphy opened his eyes, revealing a hint of doubt and surprise.

He saw the steady heartbeat on the nearby monitor and stood up, “Old Master Lewis’s heartbeat is even and stronger; his condition has clearly improved.”

“But previously every doctor said the Old Master was about to…” Alitzel Williams began, looking towards Joy Ward and stopping mid-sentence, “Joy, did you do something?”

“I…”

Joy Ward paused, looking at Waylon Lewis who had just walked in. She felt a stir in her heart. Just now, in the room, it was only her and Hope Williams; Old Master Lewis hadn’t seen who administered the injection.

Why couldn’t it be her!

Even if Hope Williams said it was her who saved Old Master Lewis, who would believe her, a nobody who hadn’t even finished school, over her, a renowned doctor who studied abroad?

Moreover, the Lewis Family had always trusted her.

The person who saved Old Master Lewis, why couldn’t it be her?

Thinking this, Joy Ward felt much more at ease.

To Alitzel Williams’s question, she smiled faintly and nodded lightly, “Auntie, I just thought of a new treatment plan, and unexpectedly, it worked, and Old Master’s heartbeat is normal now.”

“Really? Does that mean there is hope for the Old Master?”

Joy Ward paused a moment, controlled her expression well, and bravely said, "Yes, grandfather can be saved."

"Elder Murphy, who is this," Elder Murphy asked with a hint of admiration.

"Ah, I forgot to introduce. Elder Murphy, this is Old Master Lewis's chief physician, Doctor Joy Ward. Joy, this is Elder Murphy."

"Elder Murphy!" Joy Ward looked excitedly at the old man before her.

Elder Murphy's name was legendary in the medical world.

He was extremely skilled in medicine, but despite being in his sixties, he had retired from the public eye for many years. Many in the medical community had sought his mentorship, only to be turned down. Joy Ward couldn't believe she was actually meeting Elder Murphy.

"Not only has the Old Master's heartbeat stabilized, but it has also gained strength, and his condition has greatly improved. Child, who taught you your medical skills?"

"Elder Murphy, I studied abroad before and learned some on my own from medical books."

"Do you have a master?"

Joy Ward shook her head, "I have not."

"Then how about taking me as your master?"

Joy Ward looked incredulously at the elderly man, too excited to speak, "Really, can I really?"

"Mm, you are a rare talent. Proper nurturing will surely lead to great accomplishments."

"Thank you, thank you, Elder Murphy." Joy Ward couldn't believe the serendipitous opportunity; it made her completely forget that she had stolen Hope Williams's achievement.

"Joy, don't call him Elder Murphy, call him Master."

Elder Murphy was willing to take Joy Ward as an apprentice, a testament to her medical skill.

Alitzel Williams listened and looked ever more fondly at Joy Ward.

“Joy, thank you. You truly are our Lewis Family’s great benefactor. Isn’t that right, Waylon?”

Waylon Lewis didn’t notice Hope Williams’s presence, his eyes somewhat shadowed, but with his grandfather’s condition improving, his heart relaxed slightly. Since Joy Ward had saved his grandfather, she naturally was a benefactor of the Lewis Family.

Waylon Lewis nodded, his face showing a shallow smile, and said softly, “Mmh, it has been hard.”

Joy Ward naturally took Waylon Lewis’s hand, and he did not pull away, “Waylon, I’m not tired, your grandfather is like my own, I’ll do everything I can to heal him.”

Hope Williams returned with the freshly prepared herbal medicine, only to hear that Joy Ward had become the Lewis Family’s great benefactor, witnessing the harmonious scene.

Her heart sank as her gaze fell on Waylon Lewis and Joy Ward.

She didn’t have time to think when Waylon Lewis’s cool gaze fell on her, he asked, “Where did you go?”

Hope Williams lifted the herbal medicine packet in her hand, “Grandfather’s condition, along with the medication, should improve.”

Having stolen someone else’s accomplishment, Joy Ward pushed down the slight panic in her heart, smiled gently, and softly said, “Miss Williams, fetching the medicine must have been hard, give it to me.”

Her words seemed unproblematic.

Yet, the underlying meaning was making it clear to everyone that during this time, Hope Williams was merely helping her fetch the medication.

Hope Williams, unaware of what had just transpired, couldn’t detect the subtext.

Hope Williams slightly raised an eyebrow, ignored Joy Ward, and placed the medicine and the prescription on the table, clearly marked with the usage time and method.

“Brother, dad is calling you to the study,” Wyatt Lewis leaned on the door.

Waylon Lewis responded and gradually approached Hope Williams, “Wait for me here.”

Hope Williams lifted her eyes, her brow faintly arching, her demeanor serene, and she obediently nodded, “Okay.” Fat chance!

As soon as you leave, I'm running! Hope Williams inwardly scoffed.

Chapter 15: Chapter 15: Entrusting Hope Williams's Child to Joy Ward for Care

Waylon Lewis stepped out, and the oppressive feeling in the room dissipated with his departure.

Alitzel Williams approached Hope Williams, her gaze as disdainful and condescending as ever—a look all too familiar to Hope.

Without a word, Hope seemed oblivious to Alitzel's scornful stare.

Alitzel spoke coldly, "Hope, it's time for our family dinner, and you, I'm afraid, are not invited."

Hope responded with a slight smile, her gaze meeting Alitzel's neither servile nor overbearing.

Alitzel was taken aback—Hope seemed different from before, her gaze and the very aura about her conveyed a sense of change.

Gone was the former subservience, replaced by a cold demeanor and confident actions.

Hope glanced at Grandpa Lewis. His condition wouldn't erupt again in the short term, and the medicine she prepared would last a while. She needed to return and thoroughly work on the next phase of his treatment.

Repeated hints to leave meant it was time for Hope to depart.

Moreover, with Waylon now absent, it was the perfect opportunity to slip away.

Hope left the Lewis family's old mansion without a hitch.

A Cadillac smoothly pulled up in front of her.

The person inside rolled down the window and playfully snapped their fingers at her, "Hope, get in quick."

"How did you know to come?" Hope exclaimed, relieved, as she had been worried about not being able to find a ride.

"We never left; we've been following you, waiting to help you escape at the first chance," Aria Richardson explained.

“Mommy.”

“Mommy, we’re here too,” the two little ones from the backseat called out excitedly upon seeing Hope.

Any lingering gloom in Hope’s heart evaporated, and she hurriedly got into the car, pulling both little ones into her embrace.

It wasn’t safe to stay long, so Aria drove off speedily.

“Mommy, we missed you so much.” Luke and Willow snuggled in Hope’s arms, both excited and thrilled.

“My precious ones, Mommy missed you too, and you were both so brave today—I’m proud of you,” Hope hugged the children close.

“Hey! Hey! Now that you have your real kids, you forget your godmother, and your best friend too, huh?” Aria, driving up front, clutched her chest in mock hurt, “It chills my heart.”

“Godmother, if you were taken away, we’d miss you too,” Luke said with his babyish voice.

“No, don’t you two little tykes count on me getting caught, that terrifies me.”

Luke and Willow burst into giggles.

“Aria, thanks for your hard work today.”

“It wasn’t tough—it’s just running errands. Wherever you are, Luke’s tracker can pinpoint your location.”

Hope knew of Luke’s innate talent with all things electronic. She affectionately rubbed the tops of Luke and Willow’s heads. They indeed were the greatest gifts heaven could bestow upon her.

“Let’s go eat, I’m starving to death,” Aria’s stomach growled.

It was dinner time, and they had all been waiting for her, probably having not eaten. Hope felt quite guilty.

“Sure, you choose the place, it’s my treat.”

Aria didn’t stand on ceremony with Hope, “Let’s go for home-cooking, is that okay for you guys? I know a good place.”

Hope nodded, "Okay."

The car made its way to the restaurant, where they were in luck to find seats available at that hour. A waiter led them to a private room.

Once served, the hunger of the two small ones was evident as their cheeks puffed continuously with food.

Hope ate some and then began serving the children.

"Hope, what exactly is going on with you and Waylon Lewis now?" Aria asked, concern in her voice. The two of them couldn't keep up this game of one running and the other chasing forever.

Hope, almost finished eating, put down her chopsticks. Her eyes tired and resigned, she said, "He wants me to hand over Luke and Willow."

"What? He wants to take the children back?"

"Mm-hmm."

If not for the presence of the children, Aria would have slammed her chopsticks down in anger, "How dare he? Back then, he was the one who didn't want them, and now he wants them back—it's preposterous."

While continuing to serve the children—who were immersed in their meal and had not caught on to their conversation—Hope sighed, her gaze resolute, "I will not hand over my children to him."

These two were her life now; she would protect them at all costs.

She considered sending the children out of the country to lie low, but quickly dismissed the idea—they were too young to be apart from her, and she could not be away from them either. Besides, she couldn't leave the place; Grandpa Lewis's illness needed her treatment.

Thus, all she could do now was to be careful, very careful.

Study room.

Christopher Lewis and Waylon Lewis sat facing each other across the tea table.

The bright light fell silently on the pair, casting shadows of two men with strikingly similar features.

Christopher poured tea from the teapot into cups, his head slightly bowed, the movement measured and unhurried.

Waylon's expression was indifferent, his wise eyes narrowing slightly.

The atmosphere between them didn't resemble that of father and son; it was more akin to two masters strategizing.

"What do you plan to do about the children?" Christopher placed a teacup in front of Waylon, his deep voice resonating slowly.

Waylon wasn't surprised that Christopher knew about Hope having children. He picked up his tea, sipping elegantly before replying nonchalantly, "Let her keep them."

Christopher's brows knitted slightly, clearly disapproving of this answer, his voice becoming warningly low, "They are the progeny of the Lewis family."

The implication was clear: the Lewis lineage should not be left adrift.

"After you marry Joy, the children can stay with her. She'll be able to see them whenever; that's the most leniency I can grant her."

"They are Hope's children," Waylon's eyes narrowed even more, his countenance darkening.

"They are also the Lewis family's descendants," Christopher stood up, leaving with a final warning.

"I disagree," Waylon's voice was calm but fiery, causing Christopher's brows to furrow in an instant.

"The children's mother can only be Hope," Waylon declared with a firm and undebatable tone.

Chapter 16: Chapter 16 Our Big Boss Is Sharpening His Knife

Christopher Lewis's deep eyes squinted slightly,

Waylon Lewis stood up, his gaze leveling with Christopher Lewis, "Furthermore, I advise against scheming to harm her and the child. I won't yield on this matter."

Waylon Lewis showed no intention of lingering and started to walk away.

"Do you care about that woman?"

Waylon's tall figure slightly turned as he spoke indifferently, "She is my wife."

"That was before."

"Does that make a difference? As long as she is my wife for one day, she'll be for a lifetime."

Christopher's heart jolted. He knew this son of his very well. Waylon's coldness was embedded in his bones; he had never seen him care about anyone like this before.

After speaking, Waylon left the study without pausing, his steps large. Wyatt Lewis leant leisurely against the door, a cigarette dangling from his lips, displaying an indifferent and unrestrained demeanor.

Waylon asked indifferently, "Where is she?"

"My sister-in-law?" Wyatt snuffed out his cigarette, "She left."

Humph!

Just as he expected, that heartless woman had indeed run away!

Wyatt, standing to the side, could feel Waylon's chilling coldness intensifying. He turned serious, hesitated for a moment, and then spoke.

"Bro, you obviously care a lot about sister-in-law. Why don't you tell her you were actually protecting her just now?"

The old man's illness had worsened to such a grave extent that all the doctors were at a loss. Just like Joy Ward said, Hope Williams hadn't even finished her sophomore year. How could she save the old man? If she took the risk of treating the old man and he happened to slip away, she wouldn't be able to step out of the Lewis family's door.

The Lewis Family and Christopher Lewis most certainly wouldn't let her go.

Waylon was keenly aware of this fact.

"It's not important," he said, his clear voice rising slowly, revealing an inevitable chill.

"Do you want me to bring Madam back?" asked Big Boss.

Waylon's slender hand lifted slightly, "No need."

This woman was stubborn. She fully believed he intended to take the child away. The more you force her, the deeper she would hide the child. In the end, no one would

benefit. Instead, it was better to let her go. As long as the child was with her and he kept a close watch, she would eventually show her hand.

He was not going to take her child away. As a father, he just wanted to see the child.

"Waylon, dinner time," Joy Ward called with a bright smile on her face, approaching Waylon Lewis.

Looking back at Joy Ward, Waylon's gaze was noncommittal as he responded with a simple, "Mmm."

After having dinner with the two children, Aria Richardson drove Hope Williams and the kids home first. Hope, with the kids getting out of the car, waved to Aria inside, "Drive safely on your way back."

"Don't worry about it."

"Goodbye, Godmother," Luke and Willow said in unison.

"Goodbye, my darlings."

Holding Luke in her left hand and Willow in her right, Hope led them home, "Darlings, we're going home."

Hope hadn't been back for long. This apartment was found for her by Aria Richardson, a three-bedroom with a living room. The key was that the area was quiet and close to the hospital, convenient for getting to work.

"Luke, Willow, you two need to take a bath first. It's Monday tomorrow; you have to go to school. We need to go to bed early tonight."

"Okay, Mommy, will Willow have lots and lots of friends at school?"

"Yes, Willow, you will make many new friends."

Willow clearly preferred it here over the foreign country. She always enjoyed being lively and making friends, and she was looking forward to school with excitement and curiosity.

Luke, however, looked a bit downcast, "Mommy, are we going back to Uncle Cloud's?"

Hope's expression turned complex as she settled down with the two children on the sofa, "Darlings, we won't go back to Uncle Liam Cloud's for now. Is it okay with you two if we live here with mommy?"

Willow, of course, agreed. Luke liked it here too, but he didn't want Mommy to face danger again. He had just overheard Mommy and godmother's conversation; obviously, bad daddy wanted to take them away, and Mommy disagreed; they also didn't want to leave Mommy, so this place felt unsafe to him.

"What's on your mind, baby Luke?" Hope asked worriedly, seeing Luke in thought. Luke was more mature than Willow, had more ideas, was somewhat more serious, almost like a little adult.

Luke pursed his lips and gazed earnestly at Hope, "Will Mommy be happy staying here? Can we live as carefree as we did at Uncle Liam Cloud's?"

Seeing Luke's earnest expression flash through her mind, Hope briefly glimpsed the handsome face of that person in her memories. Luke looked so much like Waylon Lewis, especially when he was serious; the resemblance was uncanny, as if etched in his bones.

Hope felt sorry for her two children, embracing them tightly, "Darlings, don't worry. Mommy will do everything to protect you. I promise you, we can live carefree here just like we did in the foreign country."

Luke's worries weren't alleviated by Hope's promise; instead, he felt even more distressed for Mommy.

Hope bathed the two children, and they were very well-behaved, going to bed on their own without causing Hope any trouble. Just as she was about to take a bath, she received a call from Liam Cloud.

Before Hope could speak, the magnetic voice on the other end mixed with a hint of anger, "Ancestor, did you climb here with an airplane? I've been waiting for you at the airport all day!"

Hope's breath hitched. She had told Liam she would bring the kids to him, she should have arrived around ten in the morning, and now it was nearly ten at night, "You're still waiting?"

Had this man really waited an entire day?

Hope could hardly believe it. This was the man who couldn't patiently sit through a five-second commercial when watching TV with the kids, and he had waited for her an entire day at the airport?!

"Otherwise?"

Despite the screen, Hope could feel the grind of his teeth.

“ ... ”

Hope organized her words carefully, softening her voice, “Liam, something came up on my side, I’m not bringing the kids over just yet...”

“What did you say? Say it again, I didn’t hear it clearly.”

Hope’s expression stiffened at the sound of Liam’s voice, feeling a bit guilty.

“F**k, Hope Williams, you just wait.”

“Don’t,” Hope quickly interjected, “I’ll treat you to a meal next time.”

“Too late, I’m really pissed off now, hanging up.”

Two beeps later, Hope put down the phone, frustrated. She pursed her lips; this madman could do anything when he was angry. He wouldn’t fly over in the middle of the night just to drag her out of bed and vent his anger, would he?

Shivering at the thought, Hope quickly messaged Wesley Ruiz, “Wesley, what’s the boss doing right now?”

After several minutes, Hope received a reply, two words... sharpening knives!

“ ... ”

Chapter 17: Chapter 17 What’s the Story with This Woman?

The next day.

Hope Williams got up early to prepare breakfast for the two kids, and Luke and Willow had already dressed themselves and gone to wash up.

Willow was particularly excited about her first day at school, and Luke was also curious about kindergarten. After breakfast, she took the two kids to the kindergarten.

Hope had been somewhat worried, as she had seen other children unable to leave their mothers on their first day at the kindergarten, crying and shouting.

But when they got to the kindergarten, Hope realized her worries were in vain—both kids were very excited and even took the initiative to greet the other children and teachers. As soon as they entered, they were surrounded by people.

“Whose little prince and princess are these, so handsome and beautiful—I would love to kidnap them home.”

“Yes, yes, seeing these two kids makes me want to have babies.”

“Aiya, too adorable, and then I look at my little rascals at home. Indeed, the grass is always greener on the other side.”

“What to do? I really want to kidnap them home.”

Milkily, Willow said, “Hello, sisters, my name is Willow Williams, you can call me Willow, but you can’t kidnap me home because I belong to Mommy.”

“I’m Luke Williams. Sisters can call me Luke.”

“Oh my, these two cuties, I can’t take it, help, too adorable.”

“Look, that must be the kids’ mommy, right? Mommy is so pretty, no wonder her children are beautiful, too.”

After Hope finished talking with the teacher, she came over to see her two treasures being lavished with praise by the parents.

Hope’s mouth curved into a smile; her treasures were naturally sociable and she wondered who they had inherited that from.

“Alright, Luke and Willow, go on inside with your teacher.”

Led by the teacher, Luke and Willow entered the kindergarten, looking back at Hope every few steps. Hope waved at them, watching as the children hopped and skipped inside. The children weren’t crying, but Hope felt like she was about to.

Her babies had really grown up.

After dropping off the kids, Hope went to the hospital to start work. Today was her official first day, so she first went to the director’s office.

Upon arriving at the office door, she could hear a roar coming from inside, “What on earth happened here? How could such a low-level mistake occur?”

“Knock knock.” Hope tentatively knocked on the door.

“Come in.”

Hope arched an eyebrow, thinking she might be facing the music on her very first day. She braced herself and walked in; the atmosphere in the office was tense.

Director Woods stood before his desk with several doctors in front of him, their heads bowed. It seemed they were being scolded for some mistakes.

Director Woods's cheeks were red with anger, and he paused when he saw the person entering.

Hope was also taken aback by the director's expression.

After a moment, Director Woods's stern, angry face immediately transformed with a surge of intense excitement, "Cyn... Hope, you've finally come. Have a seat quickly."

Hope nodded slightly, her exquisite face wearing an appropriate smile, "Thank you, Director, but please continue with your work. Don't mind me."

"You all leave for now. Make absolutely sure not to make such low-level mistakes again, hear me?"

"Director, we remember."

Director Woods came over to pour tea for Hope, who was a bit flattered, "There's no need, Director. I can do it myself."

The doctors, who had just been scolded severely, walked toward the door while stealthily glancing at Hope, wondering who this woman was.

To make this harsh and angry director change his demeanour so drastically, even personally pouring her tea?

"Hope, I'm so glad you could come; I was afraid you might not want to."

Director Woods was so moved that he was on the verge of tears.

Hope couldn't help but smile at his reaction, "Do you really see me as someone who doesn't keep her word?"

The Director waved his hand, laughing, "I never thought so. It's just that the competition is so fierce; I was afraid someone might poach you if you came a day late."

"Don't worry, I promised you, and I will not go back on my word."

"Good, good." The Director laughed heartily, "There's a meeting later. Let's go together. It will be a good chance for me to introduce you to the other doctors."

"Okay, but, Director, I prefer not to use the identity of 'Cynthia' at the hospital. Just treat me the same as you do everyone else."

Hope was rather uncomfortable with the reputation Cynthia carried and the Director's attitude towards her.

Of course, Director Woods was aware of the pros and cons.

The meeting was at nine, and the large conference room was already filling up with doctors arriving one after another.

Chapter 18: Chapter 18 Hope Williams Joins the Hospital

Valentina River clasped Joy Ward's hand and exclaimed loudly with shock, "Joy, you're incredible, to have actually received Elder Murphy's recognition and become his apprentice."

Valentina's loud voice drew the attention of others, who gathered around when they heard about Elder Murphy.

Elder Murphy's name naturally drew people.

"Elder Murphy? Could it be the same Philip Murphy that even our director steps aside for?"

Joy smiled humbly and nodded, "Yes, it was unexpected for me to receive the master's recognition. I am honored to become his apprentice."

"My goodness, hasn't Elder Murphy never taken any apprentices before? Doctor Ward, managing to make Elder Murphy make an exception to take you as his apprentice is truly amazing."

"That's because our Joy is highly skilled in medicine."

"I'm so envious; I dream of having Elder Murphy give me even a few pointers, so my medical skills could improve too."

"Yes, our Joy is young and promising, not only did she save Old Master Lewis but also gained Elder Murphy's appreciation. Plus, being the top beauty in our cardiac surgery department, coming from a good family background, kind-hearted and highly skilled in medicine, and her close ties with President Lewis—it seems like she might become Young Madam Lewis soon. As women, she truly is a winner in life; we are so envious."

Surrounded by praises, Joy still maintained a humble smile, her voice soft, "Oh, you all are exaggerating, nothing's settled yet between Waylon and me."

Valentina joked, "Not settled doesn't mean it won't be. It's just a matter of time, Joy. You will eventually become Young Madam Lewis, and when that happens, don't forget your good sisters."

Joy lowered her gaze, her cheeks blushing with a shy smile, "Of course, I also hope it gets settled soon. Oh, it's almost time for the meeting, let's stop gathering around me."

"Look, our sister Joy is blushing!"

Joy's side was extremely lively.

An assistant director took the stage and reminded everyone, "Stop chatting, the director will be here soon. Today he has something important to announce. Please return to your seats."

"What important thing might Assistant Carter be talking about? The most important thing we know is that the number one in the medical field, Cynthia, will be visiting our hospital. Is there anything else?" someone curiously asked.

Joy, looking at Assistant Carter, appeared somewhat nervous. Of course, she didn't want Cynthia coming. If Cynthia joined their department, her fame alone could steal all the attention that should belong to her. Why would she want that?

"Has Doctor Cynthia come?" Joy asked casually, a question that concerned everyone.

"No, Cynthia hasn't come, but another doctor has joined and she's in your cardiac surgery department too."

Joy felt a great relief internally and sighed outwardly, "Ah, it's really unfortunate that Cynthia's not coming."

With Cynthia not coming, no one else could steal her limelight.

"Everyone, stop chatting and go back to your seats."

Soon, Director Woods entered the meeting room with his usual stern face, and Hope Williams followed behind him.

Valentina conversed with Joy, but Joy was distracted, still figuring out how to keep Old Master Lewis's illness a secret.

She wondered where Hope had learned those demon arts to simply use a few needles and actually pull that old man back from death's edge; her methods were entirely useless for that old man, and when his illness flared up, she wouldn't be able to handle it and everything would be exposed.

Her thoughts lingered on this, uncaring about any new colleagues. It wasn't the famed Cynthia, and no one could steal her limelight, so she was indifferent.

"Hello everyone, my name is Hope Williams!"

“ ... ”

Joy suddenly lifted her head, her pupils constricting.

Next to Director Woods stood a woman in a light-colored Chanel-style dress, her slightly curled long hair giving her a refined and cold demeanor.

An extremely beautiful and exquisite face held a slight smile as she introduced herself, then she stood quietly, listening as the director continued to speak.

Hope Williams!

Joy's gaze wavered, and she forcefully gripped the armrest of her chair.

How could it be her?

Around her, several doctors exclaimed,

“My God, she's so pretty, like a celebrity.”

“Yeah, not just pretty, she's like a flower on a high peak.”

“It literally raises our hospital's overall attractiveness.”

“Heh.” Valentina River gritted her teeth and glared at Hope Williams, and in surprise, let out a scornful snort. She was so infuriated that she interrupted the doctors next to her, “It's just looks she has, a person who was dishonorably dismissed from college without even finishing sophomore year, and I don't know how she managed to get into the hospital.”

“Dishonorably dismissed? Expelled? What do you mean?” The others grew interested.

“Exactly as you heard, she was expelled by our college; it's well-known. Guess why she was expelled?” Valentina River deliberately raised her voice, filled with mockery, making the others prick up their ears.

Joy Ward glanced at Valentina River, her eyes showing helplessness, and whispered to Valentina, “Valentina, stop it. This is not something to be proud of for Miss Williams.”

But her voice wasn't low enough, and instead, everyone around could hear.

Hearing this, others felt there was more to the story.

“Tell us why.”

“Yeah, Doctor Ward, tell us. We're all curious.”

Joy Ward pursed her lips, looking like she wanted to say more, which only made people more anxious to know.

“Quiet, you lot, making noise like what?” After finishing a speech, Director Woods looked displeased at Joy Ward’s group.

Joy Ward stood up and bowed slightly to the director, apologizing, “Sorry, Director, please continue.”

Hope Williams raised an eyebrow, her cold gaze sweeping over Joy Ward.

Joy Ward curled her lips in a corner, casting a provocative look that only they understood.

“Joy, how could she possibly get into our hospital.”

It was well known that theirs was one of the top hospitals—not anyone without a degree from a prestigious school, without high academic credentials, and without excellent medical skills could get in.

What made Hope Williams qualify to work in the hospital.

This was something Joy Ward couldn’t figure out either. Hope Williams had been expelled by a top tier medical school and logically, no other school would have taken her, let alone that she knew, Hope Williams never pursued further education, but instead, married Waylon Lewis.

But the truth proved that Hope Williams did indeed get a job at the hospital and became a doctor, and even yesterday she had saved Elder Lewis. Where did she get such abilities?

After the meeting, many people stayed in the conference room.

Hope Williams was about to tidy up her office when she stepped out of the conference hall but someone called her.

“Miss Williams.”

Hope Williams turned around, her calm gaze landing on Joy Ward, and she quirked her red lips, “What is it?”

Joy Ward’s charming face was as usual wearisome with a hypocritical smile, “Oh no, I should call you Doctor Williams now.”

“Joy, you calling her Doctor Williams, even our famous Miss Williams might not accept, since we all know she was expelled from her sophomore year,” Valentina River crossed her arms and stood aside, sneering coldly.

“Don’t talk about Doctor Williams like that, Valentina, after all, it’s also a skill to get into the hospital.”

“She indeed has skills, otherwise how could she seduce a professor back then?”

The two of them played off each other, with many doctors passing by stopping to watch.

Hope Williams’ frosty, indifferent face also bore a slight smile, not contesting their words, just silently standing there watching them squabble.

But her unyielding gaze made it seem like they were not talking about her.

“Are you done?” Eventually, under their poor acting, Hope Williams spoke lightly.

“...”

“If you’re done, make way, I’m very busy.” Saying that, Hope Williams didn’t spare them another glance and walked away.

“Hope Williams!” Valentina River stomped her foot in anger.

Her disdain, what did it mean, making them like villains deliberately trying to embarrass her, but she simply didn’t care, which made them look even more foolish like buffoons.

Chapter 19: Chapter 19 His Indulgence Towards Hope Williams

“Joy, was she just provoking us?” Valentina River stomped her feet in anger.

The more outstanding Hope Williams had been before, the more they disliked her.

They never thought that despite being expelled from school, she could still get into the hospital, and all with that face of hers, as if she needed to do nothing to capture everyone’s attention.

How could she not be jealous?

Joy Ward glared at Hope Williams’s departing figure and irritably snapped at Valentina’s relentless chatter, “Enough, stop talking, it’s annoying.”

“You really want that good-for-nothing to stay in the hospital and work with us?”

Of course not. Did Hope Williams even qualify?

She absolutely did not.

If she wanted to stay in the hospital, she would have to get her approval.

...

Today was her first day at work, and Hope Williams didn't have too much to handle. She saw a few patients, organized some medical records, and although Director Woods had invited her to dinner at his house, Hope Williams had declined. She needed to pick up her two treasures from school at four-thirty.

Leaving the hospital, Hope Williams put on her coat, walked to the parking lot, and just as she was reaching for her keys in her bag to get into her car, she suddenly heard footsteps behind her.

Hope Williams slightly furrowed her brow, paused and sighed, "Miss Ward, do you intend to haunt me relentlessly?"

Joy Ward didn't bother to hide her disdain either and sneered, "It's Miss Williams who can't seem to stay away."

Hope Williams tilted her head and calmly looked at Joy, "What do you want to say?"

"Miss Williams, you've been away for five years. Why come back? Do you want to rekindle old flames with Waylon?"

Whether it was yesterday's medical emergency at the old Lewis family mansion or her starting work at the hospital today, it gave her a strong sense of crisis.

"Is that any of your business?" Hope Williams scoffed, "What are you afraid of? Afraid that I'll snatch your Mrs. Lewis title?"

"You won't succeed. Our families have already started setting an engagement date. Hope Williams, the woman by Waylon's side is destined to be me."

"Oh." Hope Williams casually oh'd, her delicate face bearing a smile that failed to reach her eyes as she studied Joy thoughtfully.

"What's the meaning of this talk then?"

"Don't get close to Waylon anymore. Don't appear at the Lewis family mansion again. Go back to where you belong." Joy said, tilting her head up in arrogance.

Hope Williams crossed her arms and leaned casually against her car, speechless and amused by Joy.

"In the end, you're still afraid I'll take your Mrs. Lewis position, right? Rest assured..."

Hope Williams paused, straightened up, and leaned in close to Joy with a cheeky smile, "I will definitely fight you for it."

"You!" Joy's smile crumbled.

Hope Williams arched an eyebrow, a hint of mockery in her expression.

Just then, a Rolls-Royce drove up and stopped firmly.

Hope Williams and Joy both turned their heads; Hope Williams felt the car was familiar. In the next moment, a tall figure with an aura of cool authority stepped out of the car.

It was Waylon Lewis.

It seemed that Waylon felt her gaze; he looked over, his deep eyes meeting hers.

"Waylon, you're here."

Joy, with her high heels and an initially spiteful face now replaced with a sweet smile, walked up to Waylon, affectionately hooked his arm, looked up at him, and said tenderly and shyly, "Waylon, I'm so happy you could pick me up after work."

"What are you doing?"

"I was just chatting with Miss Williams. Oh, by the way, Waylon, did you know? Miss Williams has started working at the hospital too. We're colleagues now. But after being expelled from school, Miss Williams probably didn't continue with medicine, right? She must've gone to great lengths to get into the hospital."

Joy's voice was soft, sounding as if she was concerned about Hope.

Others might not hear the insinuation, but Hope could.

What she meant was, without continuing her medical studies, she must have used some improper connections to get into the hospital.

She really hated her, wanting to smear her in front of everyone, using her mouth to ruin her reputation.

Hope Williams didn't speak, the corners of her mouth curling up in a cold smile, ignoring Joy's words.

“Miss Williams...”

Joy expected a fierce retort from Hope, but instead, Hope chose to ignore her completely. That look in her eyes, Joy knew all too well, was contempt, and a sense of humiliation welled up within her.

Without lingering, Hope got into her car swiftly, closed the door, and drove out of the parking space. The car left quickly, the actions smooth and seamless.

The smile on Joy’s face couldn’t hold up any longer. She bit her lower lip lightly and slowly turned to see Waylon, only to find him watching the departing figure of Hope’s car, lost in thought.

Angrily clenching her teeth, Joy immediately put on a frail, woeful facade and softly called out, “Waylon, about Miss Williams...”

Waylon withdrew his gaze, a touch of helplessness in his voice, “That’s just her temperament. It’s fine as long as you’re not like her.”

Joy finally understood. His words seemed to be advising her, but why did she detect a hint of indulgence towards Hope in his tone?

And perhaps that indulgence was something even he hadn’t noticed.

Joy clenched her fists, wishing she could drive and crash into Hope.

“Let’s go.”

Joy nodded gently, her expression still carrying sadness and grievance, “Alright.”

...

“Mommy, we missed you so much.”

Hope Williams’s smile was warm as she hugged her treasures tightly, “Babies, Mommy missed you, too. Did you have fun at school today? Tell Mommy, did anything interesting happen at kindergarten?”

“We had fun, Mommy. Today during nap time, Brittany River wet the bed and was crying so much. I saw it, and Willow even comforted her, right?”

“Is that so? How did Willow comfort Brittany?”

“Willow told him that it’s okay to wet his pants at five years old because that’s not embarrassing. After all, not everyone is like Willow who never wets the bed. But I don’t

know why, as Willow comforted him, his face just got redder and redder, and in the end, he ran off looking unhappy. Why is that?" Willow tilted her little head in confusion.

Chapter 20: Chapter 20: Encounter with Ex-Husband and Rival While Shopping

Hope Williams frowned. "My dear daughter, what kind of comforting method is this? Don't boys care about their face?"

Luke added, "Hannah even knocked over her bowl and cried to go home to find Mommy. Teacher Thompson had to console her for a long time."

"And then there's Theo and Aiden fighting, Aiden's nose even got swollen."

Children at this age love to play and are tough, which is indeed the norm for kindergarteners.

The two of them took turns speaking, mentioning fighting, wetting pants, and even supplemented each other, vividly describing the events as if they had discovered a new continent, especially Willow with her gossiping enthusiasm, getting more and more excited as she spoke.

"Mommy, kindergarteners are really interesting. Willow wants to go to school every day from now on."

Hope Williams was embarrassed. Why were these treasures only focusing on others fighting and wetting their pants? "So what did Luke and Willow learn today?"

"The things that Teacher Thompson taught, the private tutor sister has already taught us," said Luke without thinking.

"Uh-huh, Willow knows them all too."

Um...

When the kids were three, they followed Liam Cloud around causing trouble, and unable to bear it, Hope Williams had found them private tutors since the kindergarten curriculum was indeed too easy for them.

"However, Mommy, the class that Teacher Thompson teaches is really interesting."

Hope Williams was driving and chatting with the two children when her phone rang—it was Aria Richardson.

"Hello, what's up, Aria?"

“Hope, did you pick up the treasures?”

“I did, we just left the kindergarten.” Hope Williams glanced at the backseat where the treasures were playing with toys.

“Then let’s go shopping. Since you returned to the country, we haven’t really shopped together. It’s also the kids’ first day at school; as their godmother, I should really show my support. After shopping, I’ll treat you all to dinner.”

“Today? I might not be able to today…”

“Let’s go, Mommy, let’s go shopping with godmother.” Willow, perking up at the mention of going out, jumped up excitedly, “Willow hasn’t seen godmother in a long time.”

“A long time?” Hope Williams raised her eyebrows and laughed, highly doubtful of that term.

“Yes, yes.” Willow counted on her fingers, “It’s been one night and one day.”

“Willow, godmother supports you, no problem at all. Hope, let’s go.”

“Mommy, let’s go, Luke doesn’t want to stay at home either.” Luke had no objections, and Hope Williams laughed helplessly, “Alright, see you later.”

“Sure.”

Hope Williams changed her route to the mall.

After parking the car, she saw Aria Richardson not far ahead; Luke and Willow rushed over to give Aria a big hug, making her burst into laughter.

“Oh, my dear treasures, godmother loves you to death.”

Hope Williams approached smiling, “If you like them so much, why don’t you have your own?”

“No way, I just love your treasures. Come on, godmother will buy you gifts, choose whatever you want, godmother is paying.”

“Yay, godmother is the best.”

Hope Williams ruffled Willow’s hair, feeling a bit jealous.

Aria Richardson continued teasing, “Who’s better, Mommy or godmother?”

“Mommy,” the kids answered in unison, with a strong will to live.

The expressions on the kids' faces made both Hope Williams and Aria Richardson laugh.

As they chatted and walked into the mall, a prestigious Rolls Royce slowed to a stop by the roadside.

Waylon Lewis and Joy Ward got out of the car.

Joy Ward smiled sweetly, "Waylon, thank you for being willing to accompany me today to help choose a birthday gift for my dad." Saying so, Joy Ward casually hooked her arm through Waylon's.

Waylon Lewis glanced at Joy Ward lightly, his magnetic, deep voice neither warm nor cold, "I promised you, I won't go back on my word, let's go inside."

Waylon Lewis led the way forward, and Joy Ward lightly clinging to his arm just let it naturally fall away.

Joy Ward looked down at her empty hands, her smile almost faltering. She quickly caught up to the man's pace, and once she was beside him, her face resumed its brightest smile.

Today was Monday, and the shopping mall was not crowded, so the individual stores were quite empty. The sales associates, seeing customers, became extra enthusiastic.

Hope Williams and Aria Richardson had just entered, and several sales associates immediately surrounded them. Shopping seemed to be a natural instinct for every girl. Within half an hour in one store, they already carried both big and small shopping bags.

Then, Hope bought a few new sets of clothes for the kids. Willow wore her new princess dress and was happily bouncing around.

Aria doted on the children; Luke liked LEGO, and Willow enjoyed toy dolls. If it wasn't for Hope holding her back, she almost cleared out a shelf of LEGO and dolls.

They headed to the children's area which all kids love, with various toy facilities catching Luke and Willow's attention. It was natural for children of this age to love playing.

"Mommy, you and godmom go shopping," Luke said alongside Willow in the children's toy area, playing happily with other kids. "Don't worry about us; I'll take good care of my sister."

Hope and Aria smiled at each other, appreciating this rare leisure time. There was no danger here, so Hope naturally wouldn't dampen the children's spirits and nodded. "Okay, Mommy will come to pick you up later. Don't run off, okay?"

“Okay, we promise. Don’t worry, Mommy,” they chorused.

“Go ahead and shop with godmom, girls need to dress up pretty.”

“You two little clever ones.”

Hand in hand, Hope and Aria spoke. “Hope, a new store just opened over there. I saw it the other day; the clothes are mostly in light colors. You’ve always favored light-colored dresses, right? Let’s check it out.”

Hope always liked to wear light-colored dresses. With her fair skin and gently cool demeanor, she could carry off any color, but light-colored clothes looked particularly elegant on her.

Upon entering the store, Hope immediately spotted a light blue dress with no extra decorations, the chiffon lightly lifted by the breeze, featuring a delicate gradient, and its design simple yet classy.

The sales associate immediately came over enthusiastically, “Miss, you have great taste! This dress is a new model in our store and is limited edition. In all of A City, our store only has two of these!”

“Hope, go and try it on if you like it.”

“Okay.” Hope took the dress and went into the fitting room.

Aria browsed around and found nothing she particularly liked. While she sat on the couch waiting eagerly for Hope to come out, she heard a familiar voice. “Waylon, what do you think about this light blue dress?”

“It’s okay.”

Aria frowned at the familiar male voice, hastily glanced away from the clothes, and saw Waylon Lewis and Joy Ward.

Her eyes widened in surprise. What luck for Hope, bumping into her ex-husband and romantic rival while shopping!

“Miss, you have great taste! This dress is a new model in our store and also a limited edition. In all of A City, our store only has two of these! Another lady just took a liking to this dress too. You might want to try it.”

“This dress’s color is very unique.” Clearly, Joy also really liked this dress. “Waylon, wait here for me; I’m going to try it on.”

“Okay.” The man responded indifferently, sitting down on the sofa, his strong presence somewhat out of place in this ladies’ clothing store.

Aria quickly took out her phone to text Hope, warning her to avoid any awkwardness.

But Hope had already come out of the fitting room.

“Wow! Miss, this dress suits you perfectly!” the sales associate couldn’t help but exclaim as her eyes lit up.

“Yes, it really is beautiful, like a fairy descending from heaven.”

“Miss, you look stunning. It’s like this dress was tailor-made for you.”

“Does it look good, Aria?” Hope walked around the clothing rack, initially looking for Aria, only to lock eyes with the man.

She was dressed in a light blue dress with a small V-neck that revealed her delicate collarbone. Her naturally pale skin, under the bright showroom lights, seemed to glow even brighter. She stood tall with her back straight, wearing a pair of clean, flat shoes.

Her face, lightly made-up, was incredibly beautiful; her black curly hair gently rested on her shoulders, resembling a celestial nymph.

Perfection and elegance emanated from her, making her unapproachably noble.

“Holy shit!” Aria couldn’t help but exclaim.

The second their eyes met, Hope’s smile stiffened, and her good mood instantly vanished.

So much for the proverb about enemies often crossing each other’s paths.

Waylon’s eyes briefly flickered, and his eyebrows raised, carrying an unmistakable impression of amazement.

Meanwhile, Joy had also changed into the same dress and was being assisted with the belt by a sales associate.

“Waylon, how do I look in this... Hope?”