

Ambush OTQ 1091

Chapter 1091

Doris couldn't help but be curious about this enigmatic man before her, a true mix of charm and mystery.

"Curiosity killed the pig," Waylon seemed to guess her thoughts.

"Enough with the insults," Doris rolled her eyes. "Calling me a cat sounds better than calling me a pig."

"Look at your manners," Waylon scoffed. "Is your family cat as uncouth as you? Aren't cats supposed to be graceful?"

Doris blinked at him, her cheeks puffing up like a pufferfish.

She felt a thousand reasons to challenge him, to fire back with a sharp retort.

What's wrong with being uncouth?

And you shouldn't call me a pig!

You're the pig, and your whole family except for Emmeline!

But she kept those thoughts to herself, fearing that if she said them out loud, he might smash her with the barbecue grill.

"No need to engage in insults," Doris said, grabbing her beer can and taking a couple of hearty swigs.

"You don't talk about yourself, so why should I talk about myself?" Waylon replied.

"Do you consider yourself a businessman or a doctor?" Doris retorted.

"Care to guess?" he replied.

"A shrewd merchant," Doris raised an eyebrow, "but not a mediocre doctor."

"No commerce without cunning, no profit without early rising," Waylon shrugged. "The essence of a businessman is not charity; it's about making profits."

"So, you won't share your story for free. You want to trade it for mine?" Doris asked.

"I didn't even want to hear your story," Waylon said, "but if you want to hear mine, I certainly won't share it for free."

"Then you go first," Doris said, "and I'll talk about mine when you're done, consider it paid."

"What if you renege?" Waylon snorted coldly, "Can I still take my words back?"

"You're pretty steady," Doris bristled disdainfully, "I'll tell you, it's not like this is something people can't hear?"

Waylon's lips curved slightly, barely noticeable.

This woman couldn't resist being provoked.

"I'm born and raised in Struyria," he began, "from elementary school to high school and even university, I've always been here."

"A frog in the well," Waylon interjected.

Doris ignored him.

"My parents were blue-collar workers and civil servants. It's just my sister and me in the family. Three years ago, my parents arranged for me to marry into the Wharton family. You've met Josiah already."

"Yeah," Waylon grunted.

"But Josiah..." Doris's face reddened. "He's not a man. To put it plainly, he's inhumane. So, after over a year of marriage, I'm still... you know, intact. You should understand."

The topic became sensitive, and Waylon felt a hint of discomfort on his face.

But Doris calmly continued, and he could only listen in the same manner.

It seemed that this was a story she had long suppressed, so she started with it.

He couldn't change the topic now.

"Yeah," Waylon replied, indicating that he understood.

"So, Josiah's parents insulted me, calling me a hen that couldn't lay eggs. Can I be blamed for that? Shouldn't they blame their son?" Doris spoke with a tinge of emotion.

At that time, she endured insults and abuse from her in-laws.

"I didn't want to stay in that house anymore. I wanted a divorce, but my parents vehemently disagreed. They said if I divorced, they would disown me as their daughter."

"Other than my parents, I only have my sister, but she has her own family business. What control does she have over me? So, I didn't dare bring up the topic of divorce at that time. Fortunately, Josiah felt guilty and treated me somewhat well. I thought maybe I could have a test-tube baby. With a child, everything would be fine, right?"

"Yeah," Waylon responded again, encouraging her to continue.

"But Josiah... he doesn't even have... you know... the seed. I was truly caught in a dilemma."

"I wanted a child, but how could I have one without a partner? Even with fertile soil, crops won't grow without seeds."

Waylon thought to himself, "That's the truth."

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Doris continued her tale, her voice filled with a mix of frustration and resignation. "So, I talked to Josiah about it. We figured, why not choose from a sperm bank? After all, we wouldn't know who the donor was. When the child is born, wouldn't it be just like yours?"

“Josiah agreed at the time,” she continued, “so I went to the Struyria First People’s Hospital. And it was a success. That’s how Una and Nessa came into this world.”

“Hmm,” Waylon nodded, indicating his familiarity with the story.

“But guess what?” Doris chuckled bitterly. “Suddenly, Josiah was able to perform his duties. And at that time, I was still breastfeeding, so he couldn’t touch me. It was like he had an affair with someone outside, you know? Isn’t that the darkest joke of all?”

“You should consider yourself lucky that the children aren’t his!” Waylon sneered. “What kind of children do you think you would have had with the Wharton family? Genes, genes, don’t you understand? The sperm bank is filled with elites!”

“I know that,” Doris said. “But I consider it a blessing that I have two wonderful children. They are my life, my treasures! Just think about it, ‘Like father, like son,’ and ‘The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.’ Una and Nessa, luckily don’t carry the Wharton family’s attitude.”

The child of uncertainty.

Waylon took a sip of his beer and uttered a thoughtful “Hmm” in agreement.

“I’ve finished my story,” Doris resumed, reaching for another skewer of lamb kebabs. “It’s your turn for an exchange.”

Waylon handed her a plate of grilled potato slices, generously brushed with chili sauce.

His gaze was profound, contemplating which part of his own story to share.

After a couple of seconds, he began, “Let me tell you about when I was twelve.”

“Hmm,” Doris responded, taking a bite of a potato slice.

The warm and tender texture, combined with the chili sauce, brought satisfaction to her taste buds and warmth to her heart.

“When I was twelve,” Waylon started again, “one day, my father dropped me off alone in the mountains.”

“Hmm?” Doris raised her head in surprise. “Was that your biological father?”

“Don’t interrupt,” Waylon shot her a glance.

“Tell me first, was that your biological father?” Doris was concerned.

“Of course he was. Otherwise, why would I bother?” Waylon replied with annoyance.

“Then continue. I’m listening,” Doris hastily reassured him, handing him a skewer of Enoki mushrooms.

She had figured it out. This seemingly unruly man was someone you could deal with by stroking his ego. If you crossed him, you’d probably get kicked.

The image of a provoked donkey kicking someone flashed through Doris’s mind, and she suppressed her laughter.

“When I was twelve,” Waylon began again, “my father abandoned me in the mountains. It was our own family’s land, filled with all sorts of medicinal herbs...over a hundred different kinds.”

Doris wanted to ask why he was abandoned there, but she didn’t dare interrupt.

She was afraid Waylon would quit talking if she did.

Just as the grilled lamb kidney was ready, the kind that had been cooked to perfection.

All it needed was a sprinkle of cumin powder and chili powder, and it was ready to be enjoyed.

She immersed herself in the pleasure of eating the succulent grilled kidney while Waylon spoke in a calm tone.

“My father left me in the mountains to force me to taste the herbs, to learn how to distinguish their properties, smells, meridians, effects, and their compatibility and antagonism with other herbs. At first, I didn’t have any problems with it. I would taste them and make notes. If I encountered a poisonous one, I would quickly find another one that could serve as an antidote and record the process of poisoning and detoxification.”

Doris glanced at him, feeling a sense of admiration. Learning traditional medicine was truly not an easy task.

Like Nicholas Culpeper, tasting a hundred herbs.

“As I continued this trial into the afternoon, as evening approached, I came across a highly toxic plant. My stomach was in excruciating pain. I hurriedly looked for the detoxifying plant described in the book, and the description was clear. However, no matter how hard I searched in the mountains, I couldn’t find it.”

As Doris listened to his story, her heart couldn’t help but race, and she couldn’t resist asking, “Didn’t it hurt you terribly?”

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“So, you’re sitting in front of a ghost right now, huh?” Waylon was caught up in his memories and was interrupted by her, full of displeasure.

“I’m sorry, I did it again!” Doris hastily clasped her hands together and raised them above her head, offering an apology to Waylon.

She quickly added, “You’re not a ghost, you’re an immortal being!”

Waylon gave her a white-eyed glance and continued his narrative.

Doris stuffed a piece of roasted pork into her mouth, fearing that she might inadvertently blurt out something again.

“As I was writhing in pain, on the verge of losing consciousness, unable to find the antidote herb, I lay down in the grass, squinting at the sky. It was adorned with a beautiful sunset, full of vibrant colors. I began to wonder if I was going to die, if I was about to ascend to heaven...”

Doris let out a gasp, clearly taken aback.

Even the roasted pork couldn't go down anymore, as she stared at Waylon, waiting to hear if he made it to heaven.

"...Then, I must have blacked out. In my hazy state, I saw a little girl, about six or seven years old. She had fair skin, big eyes, and two braided pigtails..."

Waylon recollected his memories as he spoke, "The little girl shook my arm and said in a sweet voice, 'Waylon, you can't die. You need to wake up for me. When you grow up, you're going to marry me. How can you die now?'"

At this point, Doris interrupted, her forehead covered in sweat, asking cautiously, "Is that all?"

"Yes," Waylon replied, "that's all."

"What happened next?" Doris inquired.

"What do you mean, 'what happened next?'" Waylon retorted.

"About the little girl," Doris said, "she said you would marry her when you grew up!"

"Have you lost your mind? Did you sprinkle some cumin on yourself?" Waylon responded. "I already said it was just a hallucination."

"But you described it so vividly," Doris insisted, "six or seven years old, fair skin, big eyes, braided pigtails."

"And then I realized there are plenty of girls who fit that description," Waylon remarked.

Doris pondered for a moment and nodded, realizing the same.

She had braided pigtails when she was five or six years old.

The little girl from the neighbor's house did too.

There was nothing particularly strange about it.

"It's a pity," Doris shook her head with a sigh, "if it were true, I would have loved to hear your romantic love story afterward!"

"I do have a romantic story afterward," Waylon said, eating his golden needles of mushrooms with his head lowered, "after that incident, that little girl's image filled my mind. I couldn't see any other girl in reality. It lasted until now, so many people think there's something wrong with me. But what's wrong with me? I just haven't found the person of my dreams."

"Where can you find the person from your dreams?" Doris asked, "Does losing a dream consume half of your life?"

"Not really," Waylon replied softly, "I've seen many people tormented by love, but being unattached makes life easier."

"I agree," Doris nodded, "Although I've been married before, hehe, I've never been tormented by love because I never loved that man, haha!"

She seemed quite cheerful.

"What about your parents?" Waylon asked, "It seems it's just you and your sister now?"

Doris's smile quickly faded, and her voice trembled as she said, "Afterwards, my parents got into a car accident, and that's how it ended."

Waylon quietly uttered, "I'm sorry."

"I'm fine," Doris sniffled, "They still live on in my dreams."

Waylon didn't respond.

He didn't know how to respond, and her words touched a tender spot in his heart as well.

He had never seen his mother, so she had always lived in his dreams.

And of course, there was that little girl from his childhood.

He just wondered if she had grown up.

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As Waylon lost in thought, Doris, sitting across from him, spoke up with a knowing look in her eyes.

"Mr. Adelmarr, have you ever considered that if the little girl from your dreams were real, she might have grown up by now?"

"Hmm," Waylon mused, looking at the skewered lamb in his hand, nodding. "She'd be quite the old lady by now."

Doris raised an eyebrow, intrigued. "What do you mean?"

"It's been nearly twenty years," Waylon replied, his gaze distant as if lost in a haze of smoke. "She'd be around twenty-six or twenty-seven. Not exactly a little girl anymore, wouldn't you say?"

Doris mentally calculated her age and realized she, too, was no longer a young girl. No, she had a child now. She was a young mother, and that gave her a sense of superiority.

"Well, if you were to meet her, do you think you'd recognize her?" Doris asked.

"You've been watching too much science fiction, haven't you?" Waylon furrowed his brows, a hint of annoyance in his voice. "I've already told you, it was just an illusion. Where would I go to meet her?"

Doris thought to herself, realizing he had a point.

"Ring, ring," Waylon's phone suddenly chimed.

He glanced down and saw it was Bowie calling.

There must be something happening at the Imperial Palace.

Waylon picked up the phone and walked to the side to answer the call.

“What’s up, Bowie?”

“Not much,” Bowie replied on the other end. “Kenny, Ben, and I are having dinner outside and thought of inviting you along.”

“I’ll pass,” Waylon glanced at Doris and continued, “I’m already out.”

There was a momentary pause from Bowie’s end, followed by a question. “Waylon, who are you with?”

“Do I need to report to you?” Waylon retorted.

“No, not really,” Bowie chuckled. “I know it’s not Emma or Abel, but I could tell from the background noise that you’re in a square or something. It sounds a bit chaotic.”

“Why don’t you join the Adelmars Private Investigators?” Waylon sneered. “Otherwise, your talents would go to waste.”

“If you don’t want to say it, it’s fine,” Bowie said on the other end. “But I could sense a different vibe coming from your end.”

“What kind of vibe?” Waylon scoffed. “Are you a bloodhound? Can you sniff out everything from the heavens to the earth?”

“Well, you see,” Bowie chuckled softly, “I sensed the presence of a woman where you are.”

Waylon froze this time, feeling guilty, and quickly glanced at Doris.

“Oh, come on,” he said to Bowie, “forget about it. If there’s nothing else, I’m hanging up. Enjoy your dinner with the guys.”

Before Bowie could respond, Waylon ended the call.

His heart skipped a few beats.

He didn’t return to the barbecue table. Instead, he turned towards the kitchen, scanned the QR code to pay the bill, and settled it first.

With a calm mind, he turned back and walked towards the dining table.

As he looked up, he suddenly noticed someone sitting next to Doris.

Waylon squinted his eyes, examining the figure. It was an elderly man.

Furrowing his brows, Waylon quickened his pace and strode over.

“Miss, your heavenly countenance tells me you are a person of great wealth and fortune,” the old man said to Doris. “I, as a face reader, don’t approach those with no connection. Your appearance exudes the aura of a once-in-a-century beauty, and I was drawn to your purple aura from afar...”

He rambled on, trying to persuade Doris to let him offer his services. However, Waylon abruptly reached out and grabbed the old man’s arm.

The old man was no pushover and swiftly dodged out of the way.

Waylon made another grab.

Doris stood up abruptly and exclaimed, "Mr. Adelmarr, what are you doing?"

The old man, upon hearing Doris' words, turned to look at Waylon, gasped in surprise, and swiftly turned to run.

Waylon shouted, "It's you!"

He wasn't sure if this old man was Trevor Ywain or not.

When Ywain left Adelmarr Island secretly, Waylon was only a teenager and couldn't be certain.

But now, seeing the old man run away, Waylon was convinced it was him.

Trevor never expected to encounter Waylon here.

He was utterly astonished!

Though it had been over a decade since they last met, Waylon's extraordinary looks were unmatched.

Combined with Doris' address of "Mr. Adelmarr," he knew for sure. Damn, was it him?

If not now, then when should he take action?

Oh, no!

Trevor dashed away, his mind filled with regret. Why did he have to be so impulsive? Just trying to do some business to fill his stomach, and he runs into Mr. Waylon?

What terrible luck!

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With agile strides, Waylon hurriedly chased after Trevor, his long legs carrying him closer with each step. It seemed like Trevor was within his grasp.

Suddenly, Trevor threw the "Immortal Showdown" signboard he held, aiming it at Waylon. Waylon swiftly dodged, causing Trevor to crash into a nearby barbecue stall.

The commotion disrupted the diners who were enjoying their barbecue at several tables. Startled and disoriented, they looked around, trying to make sense of the situation.

"That man," Trevor said, feigning an elderly demeanor, pointing at Waylon who was hot on his heels. "He's bullying an old man! Help me stop him!"

A few brave young men who were eating barbecue took it upon themselves to intervene, blocking Waylon's path.

Waylon couldn't bring himself to harm them. He watched as Trevor smirked, preparing to make his escape.

Seizing a metal skewer from a nearby barbecue table, Waylon hurled it towards Trevor's back.

Though it was a considerable distance, the skewer struck its target, hitting a meridian point on Trevor's back accurately.

Trevor let out a low cry of pain but dared not turn around as he scrambled away in a sorry state.

Waylon snorted through his nostrils. "You can evade for now, but can you evade forever? I'll be waiting for you to come back to me!"

Amid the chaos, Doris arrived, her face filled with displeasure. "Mr. Adelman, I can't believe you would resort to violence against an old man. He's just trying to make a living. Are you trying to annihilate him?"

The young men surrounding Waylon spoke up as well. "Yeah, if it weren't for us, that old man would have been beaten by him, right? We don't understand why a grown man like him can't get along with a beggar."

"Mr. Adelman, I don't understand," Doris said, her eyes brimming with tears. "You, of all people, how could you stoop so low? This is just unacceptable. Couldn't you see how pitiful that old man was?"

Waylon maintained a composed expression and did not explain. Instead, he addressed the young men, "I apologize, gentlemen. Allow me to cover the cost of your tables tonight."

"Well, you have no choice, do you?" one of the young men remarked. "Just look at the mess. The food is scattered all over the place."

"I'm truly sorry," Doris quickly interjected. "It was an accident, and we'll compensate for it."

"Hmph," another young man glanced at Waylon and said to Doris, "Take care of your man!"

Implicit in his words was the question of whether it was an admirable trait to bully an old man.

Doris blushed, feeling embarrassed, and looked at Waylon, seeking his reaction.

However, Waylon had already turned away, his face expressionless, heading to settle the bill.

Doris, too, followed him closely, sitting across from him with a solemn expression. "Mr. Adelman, what exactly happened just now? How could you resort to violence against an old man?"

"I told you it's none of your concern," Waylon replied in a somewhat cold tone, taking a big sip of his beer.

"I never expected that old man would come over to read my fortune," Doris said. "If you didn't like it, you could have asked him to leave. There was no need to resort to violence. Didn't you see he was in his sixties?"

Waylon snorted through his nostrils. "Some people aren't what they appear to be on the surface."

"Yes," Doris said, her eyes reddening. "I just can't fathom that Mr. Adelman, the epitome of a gentleman, would mistreat a struggling old man!"

Waylon took a deep breath, suppressing his anger, and said in a low voice, "I don't need to explain to you, and I can't make you understand. Believe whatever you want!"

"I feel ashamed sitting here right now!" Doris's face turned slightly pale. "Can't you see how they were talking about us?"

Waylon remained silent.

He didn't care how they perceived him or what they said about him. Capturing Trevor was his own business.

"They were all mocking you for bullying an old man. How am I supposed to see you now?" Doris's eyes welled up with tears.

"However you like," Waylon replied nonchalantly.

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Doris never expected this man to be so stubborn and unyielding. Were his cultivated demeanor and air of sophistication all just an act?

The more Doris thought about it, the angrier she became. She picked up her bag and stormed out in a fit of frustration.

Meanwhile, the waiter brought the highlighted dishes to the table.

Waylon's mind was filled with irritation, leaving him with no appetite.

The pleasant atmosphere had been ruined in an instant.

What a coincidence that Trevor had shown up out of the blue!

Of course, it was essential to catch Trevor, especially considering that he possessed documents like The Adelmars' recipe.

Waylon took a sip from his beer can, stood up, settled the bill, called for a driver, and left.

As he traveled, his mind remained gloomy, and his good mood vanished entirely.

He didn't care where Doris went.

Let her go wherever she pleased. She was a grown woman; she couldn't possibly get lost.

With these thoughts in mind, Waylon returned to Magsen Villa.

To his surprise, Doris hadn't come back!

Waylon looked at her slippers by the entrance, and an indescribable sense of irritation welled up within him.

But, upon reflection, whether she came back or not was none of his business!

"Mr. Waylon, you're back," Mrs. Jamison approached to take his suit jacket.

About to hang it on the coat rack, Waylon calmly said, "Send it for dry cleaning tomorrow."

Although the suit wasn't dirty, he felt uncomfortable wearing something that Doris had worn.

“Very well, Mr. Waylon,” Mrs. Jamison responded.

Mrs. Jamison also felt that the suit didn’t need cleaning, but since Waylon had spoken, she couldn’t disobey.

“Has Ms. Doris not returned yet?” Mrs. Jamison asked.

She assumed that, at such a late hour, Waylon and Doris would return together.

“I don’t care about her,” Waylon said dismissively, walking into the living room.

Mrs. Jamison was taken aback. What was going on with Mr. Waylon?

He seemed in a terrible mood.

Waylon sat down on the sofa, raised his hand to massage his temples, and then heard the sound of the front door.

He glanced up and saw that Doris had just returned.

He had no idea that Doris had left the barbecue restaurant and had to call a car from quite a distance away.

“Ms. Doris, you’re back,” Mrs. Jamison said, feeling pleased upon seeing Doris. “Mr. Waylon just returned as well.”

“I don’t care about him,” Doris replied with a stern face.

Mrs. Jamison was bewildered.

Had they agreed on something?

They were using the same words.

On the other hand, Waylon watched as Doris bent down to change her shoes and then headed upstairs.

He had no intention of speaking to her!

She was such an unreasonable woman, willing to turn her back on him at the slightest disagreement!

She didn’t even have the most basic trust in him!

Doris changed into her slippers and looked up at the proud figure of the man walking up the stairs. She felt a surge of frustration in her heart.

She had only spoken up about not mistreating the elderly, and yet, he acted like she had said something terrible.

Was she wrong?

Besides, if he could resort to violence against an old person, who’s to say he wouldn’t do the same to her and their child one day?

Just thinking about it sent a shiver down her spine.

She needed to find a house and move out as soon as possible!

But when she thought about finding a new place, she also remembered that Waylon had saved her from their previous landlord earlier today.

If he hadn't arrived in time, she would have been in big trouble.

Seeing Waylon at that moment had given her a sense of safety.

Why was she feeling so conflicted now?

Doris's mind was a jumble of thoughts.

She went upstairs, washed up, changed into comfortable home clothes, and then tried to coax Una and Nessa to sleep.

"Gurl... gurl..." her stomach grumbled relentlessly.

They had such a delicious barbecue earlier, and she had planned to enjoy a couple of beers afterward to unwind.

Now she couldn't even finish half of it before it got ruined.

She scolded herself for being so foolish as to hold a grudge against delicious food.

Even if she was angry, she should have eaten and drunk her fill before leaving!

And now, she couldn't have her late-night snack?

Doris contemplated going downstairs to find something to eat, but she realized that everyone was already asleep.

Sneaking around the kitchen like a thief wouldn't look good.

She had to endure it and hope to fall asleep.

Una and Nessa were both fast asleep.

But Doris's stomach growled louder, reminding her, "Gurl... gurl! I'm starving! Gurl... gurl! I need to eat something!"

Doris swallowed her saliva. It seemed she wouldn't be able to sleep on an empty stomach.

With determination, she got up, silently making her way downstairs to the kitchen.

As she reached the kitchen door, she heard the sizzling sound of a frying pan.

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Doris jumped in surprise, suddenly realizing that Waylon was inside the kitchen. He was dressed in light gray loungewear, tied with a large apron. He was also unable to sleep due to hunger!

Doris thought to herself, what a coincidence! Just when she mustered the courage to go downstairs and find something to eat, she encountered him busy in the kitchen. Was he deliberately trying to starve her?

Doris turned around, contemplating sneaking back upstairs.

“Come back!” a low and cold voice sounded behind her.

Did he see her?

Doris stood rooted to the spot for a couple of seconds before mechanically turning around.

“What’s up?” she asked, staring at him with dark eyes.

“Come here!” Waylon commanded, his voice dominant and authoritative.

Reluctantly, Doris walked back towards him.

Waylon handed her the spatula, his face serious. “Tomato pasta, two bowls, with sunny-side-up eggs.”

Doris didn’t take the spatula, just stared at him and asked, “Didn’t you already prepare the pan? Why do you need me?”

Waylon raised one finger with his left hand.

Doris paused, thinking, “Are you seriously scolding me?”

Just as she was about to confront him, Waylon said, “Accidentally cut myself, I need to take care of it.”

Doris quickly swallowed the curse words she was about to blurt out and instead said, “Are you okay?”

“Quite a distance from my heart!” Waylon said, his tone cold.

Doris thought to herself, can’t we have a civil conversation?

Waylon handed her the spatula and brushed past her, heading toward the living room.

He remembered there was a medicine cabinet in the corner, fully stocked with first aid supplies.

How could he have been absent-minded while cutting tomatoes?

While he was hungry himself, he wondered if she was also hungry.

It’s bothersome to worry about someone else’s well-being!

Getting lost in his thoughts, he accidentally cut his finger with the knife.

Just as he found the medicine cabinet and took out a band-aid, Doris approached.

“The pan!” Waylon frowned, pointing towards the kitchen. “Watch it!”

“I added water and turned down the heat,” Doris said. “I came over to help you, didn’t I?”

Waylon remained silent, his face serious, tearing open the band-aid with one finger.

“Let me do it!” Doris took the band-aid. “Tss, tss,” she tore open both ends, revealing the adhesive surface inside.

“Hand.”

Waylon extended his finger, his face still somewhat stern.

It seemed like he didn't appreciate Doris's help and even looked down upon it.

Doris didn't need to see his expression to know what he was thinking.

She didn't want anything else. She just wanted to help him apply the band-aid.

After finishing it in a couple of moves, she said, "Alright, be careful not to get it wet."

Waylon swallowed a "thank you" he was about to say, packed up the medicine cabinet, and returned to the kitchen.

Doris was about to put the sunny-side-up eggs in the pan.

He sat at the small kitchen table, waiting.

The air was filled with the warm and sweet aroma of stir-fried tomatoes, and the simple and rustic atmosphere brought a sense of calmness.

Unable to resist, Waylon glanced sideways at Doris, who was busy in front of the stove.

Her hair was loosely tied in a ponytail, and she wore lavender-colored loungewear with an apron tied around her waist.

The pocket on the apron made her slender waist look so delicate.

The scene was unexpectedly beautiful.

It seemed to exude a sense of home.

"Do you want the sunny-side-up eggs well-done or runny?" Doris asked without turning her head.

Waylon calmly replied, "Well-done, runny isn't healthy."

"I think the same," Doris replied in a dismissive tone as if just going along with the conversation.

The sunny-side-up eggs were cooked to perfection, and Doris added two portions of angel hair pasta.

When the pasta was cooked, she removed the pan from the heat, ensuring the eggs were fully cooked as well.

Doris scooped two bowls, picking up one of them, intending to place it on the dining table in the living room.

"Here," Waylon said.

Doris hesitated for a moment.

She wanted to eat at the small kitchen table by herself.

She didn't want to face Waylon, noisily devouring her noodles.

No, she didn't want to eat noodles at all. She just didn't want to be in such proximity to him.

She was still upset, and she didn't want him to look down on her.

But Waylon had already spoken, and she couldn't create further division.

She had no choice but to place both bowls on the small kitchen table...

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Shortly after, Doris grabbed two forks and handed one to Waylon.

Waylon ate quickly, but there was no reaction from him throughout the entire meal.

After finishing a bowl of tomato pasta, he pushed his plate away, got up, and headed for the door.

"Um," Doris watched his tall and straight figure as she spoke, "about tomorrow's party..."

She wanted to ask about the time; all she knew was that it was around noon.

"I'll go by myself," unexpectedly, Waylon paused in his tracks without looking back and uttered those words.

Doris was taken aback. "Weren't you the one who asked me to accompany you? You already bought the formal attire for me."

Waylon responded slowly, "Be apparently acquiescing while contrary-minded, it will only cause more trouble for me."

Doris didn't quite understand at first, but then it dawned on her.

Waylon is talking about her screwing with him!

If they appear distant from each other, those troublemakers would have an easy opening to exploit.

But it was too late now to do anything about it.

Waylon had already gone upstairs to sleep.

She couldn't possibly knock on his door and tell him that she would behave "properly" at the party.

In truth, she was still angry about the whole situation.

How could a grown man bully an elderly woman? And he even dared to justify himself?

As expected, the next morning, Waylon left early.

He didn't even cross paths with Doris, nor did he mention anything about the party.

It seemed that this time, he truly had no intention of using her.

Doris couldn't help but feel a little disappointed.

After all, she believed in the principle of "taking someone's money is equivalent to taking responsibility for their troubles." Plus, they had signed an agreement.

Now that she had taken his money, she found herself useless.

There was a possibility that she would be “dismissed” when all was said and done.

And then there was the expensive dress she had just bought, worth over forty thousand, along with a pair of high heels that cost over six thousand.

Just thinking about it made her heart ache.

Doris carried the box with the dress and shoes as she descended the stairs.

She planned to return them during lunch break and give back the over forty thousand to Waylon.

Furthermore, she had lost her phone and needed to buy a new one.

That would be another two to three thousand dollars.

It was quite distressing.

Fortunately, thanks to Waylon, she had some savings now.

But considering that she needed to buy a house and give herself and her children a home of their own, those savings seemed insignificant.

Pondering about her future, Doris hailed a taxi and arrived at Nightfall Cafe.

She pushed open the glass door to find Sam and four waitstaff wiping tables and chairs.

“Doris, good morning?” Sam cheerfully greeted her.

The young girl was carefree and happy every day.

Doris couldn’t help but envy her.

“Good morning, Sam,” Doris greeted everyone. “Good morning!”

“Good morning, Ms. Doris,” the waitstaff responded warmly.

Emmeline hadn’t arrived yet.

Doris carried her handbag and went upstairs to change into her work uniform.

After about half an hour, Emmeline arrived.

She was wearing a white and black-paneled sports shirt with black pants.

On her feet were white sneakers with black soles, accentuating her long, slim, and straight legs.

Sam leaned on the counter, gazing at her legs enviously, and said, “Your leg looks like it’s split right below the waist.”

“Practice splits more, and you’ll be able to do it too!” Emmeline teased her. “I guarantee you’ll have nothing but legs below your belly button!”

Sam chuckled and then twirled her wrists with a fork in each hand before sighing.

“What’s with the sigh?” Emmeline glanced at her sideways. “It’s early in the morning.”

"I was just thinking," Sam said helplessly, "ever since I went from being a bodyguard to a coffee seller, I haven't had time to practice splits."

Emmeline burst into laughter. "You're just lazy. If you want to be lazy, you can come up with a hundred excuses."

"Ms. Louise," Sam said, "please have mercy. Look at me now, just a coffee girl. I seriously request to return to my previous position. I can't continue to be so down and out."

"Alright then," Emmeline raised an eyebrow, "give me your place at the counter, put on sunglasses, and stand by the entrance!"

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"Turns out I'm just a doorkeeper, huh?" Sam remarked. "Well, I'd rather make coffee then! At least I won't get sunburned!"

Emmeline ruffled Sam's hair, laughing. "Oh, you silly thing. What goes on inside that head of yours?"

Sam shrugged, smiling and changing the subject. "Ms. Louise, why were you running late today?"

"Mr. Abel left early this morning, and I took my time getting ready. I didn't realize it was already past eight when I finally got in the car."

"No wonder I saw you walking alone from the parking lot," Sam commented. "Usually, it's Mr. Abel who escorts you in, never leaving without a cup of coffee."

"Are you implying something?" Emmeline tilted her head, looking at Sam's innocent face. "Are you disappointed because you didn't see Luca today?"

Sam blushed, pouting her lips. "Only a puppy would think that! I'm just stating the truth! Look at how quick you are with your assumptions!"

Emmeline burst into laughter, finding Sam's flustered reaction amusing.

The more she laughed, the redder Sam's face became, and she finally declared, "I'm ignoring you!"

Wiping away the tears of laughter, Emmeline said, "I'll text Mr. Abel and tell him to come for coffee once he and Luca are done. I'll mention that Sam is missing Luca."

"Oh no!" Sam stomped her foot. "If you say that, I'll go on strike, and you can make the coffee yourself!"

Doris descended the stairs with the first batch of pastries, smiling. "Who's going on strike? You won't get any pastries if you do!"

"I can't allow that," Sam exclaimed. "Just for these delicious pastries, I'll stay at my post."

Both Emmeline and Doris laughed.

Doris had made coconut milk cakes this time.

A layer of snow-like coconut shavings coated the outside of the pure milk jelly.

She picked up a piece and put it in her mouth. It was smooth, fragrant, and chewy all at once.

With a firm suck of her tongue, there was no need to chew, and it slid down her throat.

Especially since the milk jelly had been refrigerated, the slight chill as it went down made her whole body feel refreshed.

“This flavor is amazing!” Sam exclaimed. “Such a simple thing, yet Doris manages to make it so delicious. No one else can do it.”

Emmeline also praised, speaking while eating, “Doris, which man are you going to marry in the future? I’m worried someone will steal you away from me.”

Doris laughed, “I’ve decided not to remarry in this lifetime. I’ll just make pastries for you!”

“That won’t do,” Emmeline said. “Am I going to waste your youth like this? I can’t bear the guilt!”

“From what I see, the spoils should stay within the family,” Sam winked at Emmeline. “We can handle it internally.”

Emmeline was momentarily stunned, then understood, her eyes sparkling. “I think that’s a good idea!”

“What idea?” At first, Doris didn’t understand, but then she caught on, and her face turned red. “You two are teasing me again!”

Emmeline and Sam burst into laughter.

“Doris, it shows that you have a guilty conscience,” Emmeline said. “Why did you immediately think of someone when we mentioned ‘internal handling’?”

“Who is it?” Doris stiffened, “How do you know who I’m thinking of?”

“And how do you know who we mean when we say internal handling?” Sam pressed.

Doris blushed, she didn’t know what had just happened to her.

Anyhow, once the two girls said it, all that came to her mind was Waylon.

“Internal handling isn’t just about Waylon,” Emmeline chimed in. “There’s also Bowie and Kenny. Why did you only think of that one person?”

“Yeah,” they both sang, “Doris, you better come clean. Why did you suddenly associate ‘internal handling’ with our Mr. Waylon?”

“Enjoy your pastries,” Doris said, trying to keep a straight face. “You two can’t stop talking with your mouths full of these delicious pastries!”

“Look, look, she’s getting flustered!” Emmeline laughed. “She does have a guilty conscience!”

“I’ll make sure to tell Mr. Waylon later,” Sam winked. “I’ll let him know that Doris has a crush on him!”