

## **Bumpkin 1271**

### **Chapter 1271 The Kind of Man You Fell For**

"Alright, alright. Mr. Johnson, please don't be so formal." Tanya nodded, giving off an amiable air.

"Prince Dominik, Princess Eleanor, Prince Liam, I'll take my leave now." He bid farewell to each of them.

"Mr. Johnson, take care. We'll catch up later," Dominik responded after stepping forward, carrying himself in a gentlemanly manner.

After Hendrey left, the two soldiers at the door went to drag Tiffany along as they followed him out.

Tanya folded her hands behind her back and glanced back in the direction of Zac's bedroom, her eyes narrowing slightly. "Who do you think would dare to harm Zac?"

Liam placed the junk food in his hand on the table, clapped his hands, stood up, and brushed off the crumbs from his clothes. "There's nothing to discuss. He's already injured anyway. It's a waste of my time to think about it."

He portrayed the image of a spoiled child to the fullest.

Then, under the gaze of the three, he swaggered away.

Tanya couldn't hide her disappointment.

Among her sons, Liam was the most disappointing.

Dominik shook his head. "This matter is suspicious. Could it be related to Madam Hayley?"

Eleanor's eyes flashed with a hint of disdain as she shook her head. "Mother, why are you making things difficult for me? I don't know who it is, but it must be Prince Zac's enemy. Perhaps it's someone sent by Veronica to take revenge on him. But Prince Zac can't provide any evidence. He can only suffer in silence."

Constantly thinking about Matthew, she didn't want to stay here any longer. She then waved goodbye to Tanya and Dominik. "Dominik, Mother, I'm leaving now. See ya."

After saying that, she bounced away.

Watching her figure, Tanya shook her head and let out a deep sigh. "Dom, won't you look at your sister? She's still so immature. How can I feel at ease? In the future, you must assist your sister well. Understand?"

As Dominik stood behind Tanya, his handsome face changed from its usual calm and elegance to a

sudden sharpness. His gaze was filled with a cold chill, but his tone remained respectful as he answered, "Mother, you worry too much. This is what I should do. It's our duty to share the burdens and solve the difficulties for the hidden clan, isn't it?"

At the parking lot.

Xavier said to Antheena, "You go up to the car and wait for me. I have something to say to Veronica."

Antheena frowned slightly with a hint of unwillingness in her eyes, but she didn't show it too obviously.

After all, it took a lot of effort for her to become close to Xavier. She didn't want him to be cold toward her again because of her "immaturity."

"Okay."

She turned and got into the car, closing the door.

Veronica and Matthew walked over behind her.

When the two stopped in front of Xavier, Veronica uttered, "I'm sorry you had to go through that."

## Chapter 1272 We Are Family

This feeling left Veronica feeling both lost and helpless.

Though bitter in her heart, she knew she couldn't have it all.

"You misunderstood." Veronica explained, "He has always wanted to reveal his identity, but I have been stopping him. Also, be careful of Eleanor. She is not as simple as she seems."

After saying that, Veronica didn't have much else to add. "Take care."

She then turned to Matthew. "Matt, let's go."

The two of them walked away from him in silence.

For Xavier, the scene seemed to unfold in slow motion. The person he loved was growing more distant with each step.

His heart was torn apart. The pain was so intense that it felt like spasms, taking his breath away.

When will she ever take a proper look at me?

After Veronica and Matthew got into the car, Matthew started the sedan and slowly drove away.

Inside the car, Veronica leaned against the passenger seat, looking ahead, and sighed. "Offending Zac means that once your identity is revealed, he will definitely know it was you. From now on, you must be cautious."

She was somewhat worried about Matthew's safety.

"Okay, my dear wife."

The man smiled and reached out to touch Veronica's cheek.

But as soon as his hand touched her delicate skin, she mercilessly slapped it away, instructing, "Focus on driving."

"Okay, I'll listen to you."

Matthew was in a good mood. There was even a faint smile that he couldn't hide in his eyes.

Seeing him so happy, Veronica was puzzled. "You look like you're in a good mood."

"It's nothing. I just find it satisfying to see you slap Tiffany."

In the living room earlier, Tiffany kept accusing Veronica and Xavier of colluding with each other. However, Veronica didn't hesitate to walk up and slap her.

As Veronica listened to Matthew's words, her eyebrows slightly furrowed, and then she smiled. "Is that so?"

She was worried that Matthew would be upset not because she slapped Tiffany, but because Tiffany slandered her and Xavier. Veronica's slap directly clarified the relationship between her and Xavier.

He was happy because of that.

Veronica's eyes dimmed at the thought of that. She turned her head and looked at Matthew. Pursing her lips, she hesitated for a moment before bringing up, "Matthew, about yesterday... It was my fault. I was being petty."

Matthew took her to the One Piece Restaurant. Soon after, when he was about to leave, she thought Matthew would confront Xavier.

To her surprise, he went to see Zac.

Instinctively, she thought Matthew would be able to escape from Zac and would have a careful plan before dealing with him.

So, when Matthew suddenly left, Veronica could only think of Xavier.

Excessive concern led to problems.

"Xavier has had conflicts with you, but there is also a sense of gratitude. I can understand."

Chapter 1273 What Love Was About

"Do I get to decide?"

"Of course." She nodded.

"Then..."

A mischievous smile appeared on Matthew's face.

Just as he was about to make a request, the honking of a sedan interrupted him.

He then noticed a car parked next to his.

Matthew's eyes turned cold as he was interrupted right when he was excited. Still, he held Veronica's cheek and lightly kissed her lips.

With a fleeting kiss, he let go of her, lowered the car window, and peered at the person outside.

"Is there something I can help you with, Your Highness?"

Matthew was getting a headache from how persistent the woman outside was.

A gentle breeze brushed by, making Eleanor's red dress flutter.

Her smile was as radiant as the sun when she brushed aside the strands of hair that were blown by the wind and crossed her arms. "Master, do you not welcome me?"

"Isn't it obvious?" Matthew showed no mercy toward the beautiful woman.

His cold attitude showed his dislike for Eleanor.

As the esteemed leader of the hidden clan, Eleanor had never been treated so coldly by anyone before.

Instead of getting angry, she became more infatuated with Matthew. "What should I do? I came to find Goddess Veronica. You can't refuse me, right?"

"She is my woman, so yes, I have the final say." His tone was frigid.

Eleanor didn't mind at all and directly opened the door of the back seat. "I want to talk to Veronica about something. You can keep driving, Master."

However, Matthew didn't move after she finished speaking.

Eleanor rolled her eyes. "Huh. I've seen people who burn bridges after crossing them, but I've never seen someone who wants to burn the bridge before crossing it."

While complaining, there was no trace of anger or dissatisfaction on her face. She even suggested, "You have successfully opened One Piece Restaurant. Don't you want to invite me over for a meal?"

Veronica knew that Eleanor was clever, but she didn't expect her to know about these things as well.

For a moment there, it was hard for her to figure out what Eleanor's true thoughts were.

Eleanor was not one to follow a routine. Her thoughts were unfathomable.

"You didn't expose us in front of Zac. It would only make sense for us to treat you to a meal," Veronica spoke up.

After she finished speaking, Matthew immediately started the car and drove in One Piece Restaurant's direction.

#### Chapter 1274 Have Both Woman and Power

"Therefore!" Veronica suddenly raised her voice. "Do not bring this up in front of me anymore."

She knew that the hidden clan was open-minded, so she could put up with Eleanor's words without getting angry.

If this happened in her home country, Eleanor's words would be considered frivolous.

"Haha! I was just kidding. Why are you taking it so seriously?"

Sensing that Veronica was genuinely angry, Eleanor smiled charmingly and changed the subject.

Then she said, "I didn't know much about you before, but I've come to realize how skilled you are. When do you have time for us to learn from each other?"

Those who knew their enemy well would never fail.

Only by competing with Veronica could she understand her true strength.

There would be more opportunities for victory in future confrontations, too.

"Those are just basic moves. They are nothing worthy of praise from you, Your Highness," Veronica humbly replied.

Half an hour later, they arrived at One Piece Restaurant.

While Matthew showed Eleanor around the restaurant, Skyler and Shirley also joined them.

Eleanor, Skyler, and Shirley got acquainted after Veronica introduced both sides to each other.

"There is a saying in your country... Something like 'birds of a feather flock together.' Indeed, handsome people have handsome friends."

She generously praised Skyler before adding, "Your girlfriend is also beautiful. What a lovely young lady. How likable."

With her compliment, Shirley quietly turned pink.

Skyler, being friendly, complimented her as well. "I have heard of Your Highness' name since way back. Seeing you today, I must say you're truly stunning."

"You sure have a way with words, Mr. Robins."

Eleanor's lips curled slightly as she glanced at Matthew. "If only Master were like you."

Matthew held Veronica's hand and ignored Eleanor, while Skyler looked at the two of them with a meaningful gaze and didn't say anything more.

The group of people wandered around One Piece Restaurant before going to the top floor where there was only one small attic. They enjoyed the breeze and sat together to drink tea.

Standing by the window, Eleanor watched the bustling city center of the hidden clan with a gradually fading smile on her face.

## Chapter 1275 Discarded Chess Piece

Meanwhile, on the other side.

After Tiffany was sent to the house to rest, Hendrey called a doctor to diagnose the unconscious woman.

The final result was quite shocking to him.

He knew that Veronica didn't like Tiffany, but he never expected Veronica to go crazy the moment she lost control.

"It was a hard slap. Her eardrum ruptured. You need to take her to the hospital."

When Hendrey heard the doctor say that, he frowningly looked down at the woman lying on the bed.

Her face was almost identical to Veronica's, but their personalities were completely different. Even standing together, their temperaments were like night and day.

"I understand. You can go leave now," Hendrey responded.

He went on and sat in the bedroom for some time.

Tiffany, lying on the bed, woke up from her unconsciousness. She moved her facial muscles and winced in pain, whispering, "Ouch... It hurts..."

She reached out to touch her face, but even a gentle touch caused excruciating pain.

Not only that, her cheek felt swollen like a loaf of bread.

"You're up." Hendrey got up and walked over, his gaze cold and indifferent as he looked at Tiffany. His icy expression revealed no joy or anger.

Tiffany supported herself with her hands on the bed and sat up. "How long was I unconscious?"

Hendrey raised his wrist and glanced at the time. "You were unconscious for over two hours."

Suddenly, Tiffany raised her hand to touch her ear, furrowing her brows. "Hendrey, why can't I hear clearly?"

When Hendrey spoke to her just now, Tiffany was initially worried about her face being disfigured, so she didn't pay attention.

It wasn't until Hendrey spoke the second sentence that she realized belatedly that she couldn't hear anything from her left ear.

She paled in fright and lightly tapped her ear with her hand. However, no matter how she tapped, she couldn't hear a sound in her ear.

"What's wrong with me? Why can't I hear anything? Call a doctor! Quickly call a doctor for me!"

Terrified and unwilling to accept the reality, she began to turn as white as paper.

On the other hand, Hendrey stood calmly by the side. "I already called a doctor just now. He said that you have gone deaf in your left ear."

In fact, Hendrey had ulterior motives.

His feelings for Veronica, whether in the past or now, had never changed.

He both admired and liked her.

But because he was powerless, he couldn't protect Veronica. Still, he couldn't tolerate Tiffany's repeated recklessness.

Let this time be a lesson for her.

#### Chapter 1276 Exactly the Same

Tiffany, with her swollen cheek, would even feel her cheek twitch in pain when she spoke.

But compared to the deafness and pain in her cheeks, she no longer cared about the pain on her face.

No matter where it hurt, it was not as painful as Hendrey's words.

The kind of ice-cold feeling as if plunging into an icy cellar struck her, and she felt the chill engulfing her, causing her whole body to tremble.

Tiffany gradually released Hendrey's hand and fell weakly to the ground.

Due to inertia, her cheek muscles also trembled, pulling on her swollen face and causing excruciating pain. Despite that, she remained unaware of the pain.

With lifeless eyes, she stared ahead in disbelief as she raised her hand to touch her ear. She couldn't accept the fact that she had gone deaf.

"N-No, it's not possible. I can't be deaf. I'm not..."

She used to be the most dazzling star in Bloomstead. But now that she had taken a fall, she suddenly didn't know what to do.

As Tiffany thought of the instigator, her blurred gaze gradually focused. She curved her fingers over her ears, clenching her fists tight, and spat through gritted teeth, "Veronica Murphy! You and I are enemies!"

She murmured word by word, almost using all her strength for each word, her voice trembling uncontrollably.

Even as Hendrey looked at her expression of unbearable pain, he showed no sympathy.

Instead, he sarcastically said, "You did what you did even though you knew it wouldn't turn out the way you wanted it to. You brought this upon yourself." He turned around and walked to a nearby chair. He looked sharp as he crossed his legs and reminded her, "I repeatedly warned you before joining the hidden clan not to provoke Veronica. Didn't you understand what I meant?"

"I..."

Because of her deafness, Tiffany couldn't hear his words clearly. She couldn't hear anything from her left ear that felt like there was cotton stuffed in it. It drove her crazy.

The enraged woman wanted to refute Hendrey's words, but she didn't know what to say.

After a while, Hendrey continued, "Do what you're supposed to do and stay away from her. Otherwise, not even your Creator can save you."

He had helped the last time at the palace's banquet when Veronica wanted to kill Tiffany.

If it weren't because she was still useful in certain ways, Hendrey would never have saved this foolish woman.

"You'd better shape up."

Hendrey left the bedroom after saying these words.

Walking to the living room door, he instructed the guard standing at the door, "Keep an eye on her. Don't let her out."

"Yes, Mr. Johnson."

The guard nodded slightly and immediately signaled to someone nearby to stand guard at the door.

## Chapter 1277 By Tomorrow Night

Hendrey parked the car by the roadside and watched as Eleanor, wearing a red dress, got into a sedan and drove away.

Veronica then turned to face Iron Pillar, who gently brushed a strand of hair from her cheek, their posture intimate.

If Hendrey had any doubts before, he was now almost certain that the person in front of him was Matthew!

"He...not dead!"

The sudden revelation shocked Hendrey for a long time.

He eventually understood why the mastermind behind Zac's injury couldn't be found.

It turned out that Matthew was the culprit.

Last night, Zac met with Veronica and drugged her, but Xavier arrived just in time to save her.

After learning about this, Matthew confronted Zac and crippled his hand.

With this explanation, everything fell into place.

Hendrey tightly clenched the steering wheel, contemplating what Matthew was up to when he noticed Matthew looking in his direction near a shop not far away.

He moved his mouth as if saying something to Veronica, and then Veronica turned to look at him.

Their gazes locked onto him. However, it only lasted for a moment before they looked away and entered the shop holding each other's hands.

Hendrey's pupils were slightly dilated as he watched this somewhat incredulous scene.

If Matthew was pretending, why were they so bold when they saw him?

Hendrey looked around and confirmed that there was no one else they knew here other than him. Finally, he realized that they simply didn't care about him.

That was why they didn't even bother to pretend.

At One Piece Restaurant.

Veronica was somewhat worried when Matthew led her up the stairs. "Hendrey saw us. He will immediately inform Zac, won't he?"

After all, they were on the same side.

"He will find out sooner or later. It's just a matter of time."

The man's fingers caressed the back of her hand, seemingly reluctant to let go. As they climbed the stairs, he mentioned, "The most troublesome person is Eleanor."

"Right, I'm also worried about her." Veronica sighed. "Since the hunting ceremony is just around the corner, I keep feeling that Master Crayson and Hayley are up to something big. They won't easily give up this pawn of theirs."

Veronica hit the nail on the head.

At this moment, several important figures arrived at Hayley's house.

## Chapter 1278 Underground Chamber

At night the next day.

Tiffany, who was under house arrest, lay on the bed and stared at the medicine on the bedside table. Her tearful eyes were gradually filled with hatred.

Her fair hands then clenched tightly together, trembling with anger. "Veronica Murphy! Veronica Murphy! I will kill you! I will kill you!"

Veronica was responsible for all her misfortunes. Tiffany would never be able to let go of her hatred if Veronica didn't die.

That night, she tossed and turned in bed, unable to fall asleep.

In her mind, she fantasized about how to eliminate Veronica and what would be the quickest and most effective way to achieve her goal.

But as she pondered, she suddenly caught a faint fragrance. Her mind then became dizzy, and she fell into a deep sleep.

Unconscious, Tiffany didn't know what had happened.

After an unknown period of time, when she woke up from her dream, she opened her eyes and saw Crayson and Mateo.

"W-Why are you here?"

She was somewhat panicked as she struggled to get up from the bed. However, she realized that her limbs were tightly bound, and she couldn't struggle when she moved.

Filled with fear, she instinctively looked around, only to find herself in a large underground chamber.

Even though there were lights around, she couldn't see the walls. The only things she could see were a few pillars standing on the ground, supporting the dome.

Even the lights were antique bronze figures that held a stick with a palace lamp on top.

The combination of antiquity and modernity added a touch of mystery to the underground chamber.

And yet, it was this mystery that made Tiffany feel even more insecure.

"Hey, I'm talking to you. Why did you kidnap me?"

Tiffany spoke to Crayson. However, he only glanced at her coldly and continued to communicate with Mateo using some secret language that she couldn't understand.

She could understand what others were saying before because she was wearing a translator. But now that she didn't bring the translator with her, she couldn't understand anything.

That feeling was absolutely terrible. It made her feel helpless while she was being driven crazy.

"Master Crayson, you better release me, or else that person won't spare you!" Tiffany struggled like she was a madwoman, but it was all in vain. "Floch Larson and Rachel Zimmerman won't forgive you either."

Hearing her mention the Larson couple, Crayson paused for a moment before he turned to look at Tiffany, his murky eyes filled with coldness. "Is that so? Let them come find me, then. That way, I don't have to waste my effort looking for them."

The Larson couple used to address him respectfully. But now, because of Tiffany, they had become enemies.

#### Chapter 1279 Your Own Survival

A group of middle-aged individuals with dark complexions walked briskly. Most of them were skilled in martial arts.

"Who are you? What do you want from me?"

Tiffany was filled with a sense of fear toward the unknown that tormented her and instilled terror. The anxiety from not being able to comprehend their words turned her eyes red.

She felt helpless time and time again, but all that helplessness was "given" by Veronica, intensifying Tiffany's hatred toward her.

After a brief conversation, Crayson exchanged a glance with Mateo.

Mateo then nodded slightly. After he washed his hands and put on gloves, he picked up a syringe from the tray on the table, approaching Tiffany.

Tiffany's eyes went wide, and her face turned pale with fear as she couldn't help but struggle frantically.

"Stay away! Get away from me! What do you want from me? You can't kill me. You can't! No—Ah!"

As she kept screaming, Mateo injected the syringe into the side of her neck before she could finish her words.

Impatiently, Mateo spat, "Why are you shouting? You think we'd go through so much trouble if we wanted to kill you?"

"Then w-what do you...want..."

As the syringe entered her body, Tiffany's voice grew weaker and weaker, and then her eyes gradually closed. She soon plunged into endless darkness.

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Mountainside Gardens.

Veronica read a book while lying in bed as she couldn't fall asleep.

At this moment, the window was pushed open, and Matthew leaped in from outside before he closed the window.

Seeing him, Veronica closed the book and sat up, asking, "Where were you?"

It was already 2 a.m. now, and as Matthew was dressed in night clothes, he must have gone out for something.

"Tiffany was taken away by Master Crayson and the others."

As Matthew took off his night clothes, he said to Veronica, "Mateo went with them. I believe they are already carrying out the plan."

Veronica wasn't surprised by this.

She furrowed her brows slightly and let out a soft sigh. "Tiffany was always just a pawn. Of course, Master Crayson wouldn't give up on her. After all, she still holds some value. I'm just worried..."

Veronica paused, choosing not to elaborate.

After Matthew folded the clothes he wore when he went out tonight, he was still wearing the suit he had on during the day.

Walking slowly to Veronica's side, he sat down and held her hand, softly reassuring her, "With me protecting you, the same thing will never happen to you."

## Chapter 1280 Punishment

Veronica had prepared herself for the worst. She didn't want Matthew to die for her.

"Can't you think positively? Don't you believe in what I'm capable of?" the man teased as he gently pinched her smooth skin.

"I believe in you, but...there will always be someone better, and there will always be someone beyond our reach. We still don't know how Master Crayson and the others sealed Tiffany's memories. We can only discover the true power of the hidden clan's secret skill when we see Tiffany on the day of the hunting ceremony."

Veronica was worried. "Matt, I want to go back to Bloomstead. I miss my parents, our children, and Twilight Condominium."

Only in Bloomstead did she truly feel at home.

All her loved ones were in Bloomstead. After being forced to come to the hidden clan, Veronica lived in constant fear and exhaustion every day.

"Have a good rest. We can leave the hidden clan in a month at most. You can treat it as a vacation. We will go back eventually."

Matthew held Veronica's shoulders with both hands as he leaned down, looking at her, and then kissed her on the lips. "Roni, I missed you."

The brief but powerful kiss seemed to possess a strong magic that gradually made Veronica forget her worries and immerse herself in his passion.

Intense passion and a state of self-forgetfulness.

No matter what they did, both of them were fully committed. Even when making love, they would give their all.

Perhaps, this was their approach to love.

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The next day.

Matthew hadn't left yet as Veronica woke up early. He stayed with her until dawn.

This was the first time since they came to the hidden clan that Veronica stayed in her room until dawn.

As she opened her sleepy eyes, she saw Matthew's handsome face. It was the sight she had yearned for day and night.

"When did you remove your makeup? You're still here. Aren't you afraid they'll come back and find out about you?" Veronica told him to leave, but her hand was wrapped around his strong waist as she greedily pecked him on his lips.

With his elbow propped on the pillow to support his head, Matthew quietly watched the woman in his arms, feeling the beauty of the morning and experiencing their life after marriage.

Little did he expect that the woman would initiate a kiss as soon as she woke up.

A faint smile appeared on his handsome face, and a fire seemed to start in his ink-black eyes.

With his slender arms wrapped around her waist, he leaned in and kissed her lips, gently nibbling on her red lips. "Don't you know that you shouldn't provoke me in the morning?"

He had already restrained himself. However, he couldn't resist her when she took the initiative.

Veronica regained her composure then. Placing her hands on his chest, she shook her head. "Stop. Master Crayson and the others have already woken up. It wouldn't be good if they found out."

"What are you afraid of? We're legally married. Why should we sneak around to make love?"

With his identity already revealed, Matthew became even more uninhibited.