

## **CHOSEN 1131**

### Chapter 1131

Melinda lifted her chin slightly and laughed, "Yeah, I got where I am today thanks to money, and I've never denied that! But, so what? In the entertainment industry, how many really made it through with pure talent? Who hasn't used all sorts of methods to grab roles? I don't need to rely on anyone or make any dodgy deals! Being born lucky is a skill too!"

She said it without any pretense. Even though Melinda's words might have stepped on a few toes, using various methods to get the roles they wanted had almost become the norm in today's entertainment industry and it was an open secret.

Everyone knew this, so who wouldn't be envious of Melinda. She could get anything she wanted without lifting a finger. All because she had a rich dad! "Being born lucky is a skill?" Crysti sneered, nodding her head and looking up at Melinda.

"You're right." She said calmly, stroking the thin blanket over her legs. It looked like she didn't care, but there was a hint of self-mockery in her tone. "You saw things more clearly than I did. I was too naïve."

"Hmph." Melinda scoffed; her arrogance and confidence almost seemed innate.

"So, do you have any skills now?" Crysti asked indifferently.

Melinda's face suddenly changed. Her father had gone bankrupt. Her pride and joy, her only bargaining chip, was gone.

Looking at her, Crysti couldn't help but laugh, "What right does a person with no skills have to be arrogant in front of me?" "You..."

"Oh, wait," Crysti cut off Melinda and turned her gaze to Philip, "Lost the protection of your father but gained the support of a fiancé. Not bad. But are you sure Philip likes this 'skill' of yours?"

As her words fell, there were a few snickers from the crowd. In this circle, who didn't know that Philip chose Melinda solely because of her father's wealth?

He'd wanted a woman who could help his career, but now it seemed this woman had become a burden!

The mocking laughter around her was like the devil's sneer, stinging Melinda's nerves; the humiliation, and anger in her heart multiplied. She glared at Crysti, her eyes red, her face flushed with anger, her chest heaved violently, her body swayed, and her hand went to her belly.

Philip quickly held her tight, grabbing Melinda's hand on her stomach, and turned to look at Crysti in the wheelchair with a face full of displeasure. "Crysti, you've gone too far! If you have a problem with come at me directly, you know Melinda is pregnant, and you still provoked her..." Crysti's face looked like she had heard something strange, her face wrinkled up, staring at Philip who was blaming her, which was both infuriating and laughable.

But she still couldn't help but laugh, "I provoked her?"

She scratched her smooth forehead with a finger, looking a bit bewildered.

After a while, she finally lifted her head, glanced at Philip, pointed at Melinda, and laughed, "It seems... from the start, you guys were the ones who got in my way, kept harassing me, and she was the one who kept blabbering. I said a couple of words and now I'm the one who deliberately angered a pregnant

woman?"

Philip closed his lips tightly, and looked down at her, his eyes filled with unfamiliarity and sadness.

"She's pregnant, emotionally unstable. Can't you just let her be..."

Crysti's face suddenly turned cold, "No matter who she is, she has no right to yell at me! If you want to stay here then let me pass, if you don't want to stay here then get lost!"

A stern shout revealed an undeniable aura from the usually gentle woman. Everyone in the room was shocked by this angry roar!

Everyone was used to her obedient demeanor when she was around Philip. Who would have thought such a calm woman would suddenly say such things! The most shocked person, of course, was Philip, as he was the one who was touched by her words the most. "You..."

Melinda also snapped out of her daze, angry at being treated this way by Crysti, her heart filled with intense anger again. She struggled out of Philip's embrace, and pointed at Crysti's nose, her voice raising a few notches.

"I have no right to yell at you? Who do you think you are?"

"Willie, slap her." A very indifferent voice rang out from the side, the calm and steady voice carried an extreme coldness.

Before anyone could react to what was happening, Melinda's face was slapped hard.

"Ah- This slap was so sudden, she didn't even have time to react.

Just a sharp pain on her face, she swayed for a moment; thankfully Philip instinctively steadied her in his panic, preventing her from falling to the ground.

Crysti sat in her wheelchair, not turning around and unable to turn around, but she could clearly feel a strong and cold aura approaching from behind, the man's aura was so powerful that she could feel his cold breath even a few steps away. She pursed her lips, unconsciously gripping the blanket on her legs, biting her lip, her beautiful eyes gradually becoming wet, tears welling up in her eyes.

After slapping her, Willie turned to look at Crysti, opened his mouth as if to say something, but seemed to think better of it, closed his mouth, just nodded at her, then stood aside.

Chloe was coming from the direction of the resting room, she glimpsed at the situation from the crowd, raised an eyebrow slightly, and a smug smile gradually appeared on her lips.

“Who are you? Why would you hit someone for no reason...” Philip checked Melinda’s condition, confirmed she was okay, then turned to argue with the person responsible. But before he could say a few words, he saw the man standing behind Crysti.

His thin lips were tightly sealed into a sharp line, his eyes like cold swords forged in the dead of night. His strong aura shocked Philip. He searched his memory for this face. This was someone he should be very familiar with.

Before he could process anything, hushed whispers had already started amongst the nearby folks.

“Doesn’t this guy look familiar?”

“Wait... isn’t that Claud Watson from The Watson Group?”

“Yeah, doesn’t he own this hotel?”

There was no need for him to ponder anymore, the answers were already presented by the people around him.

Philip was taken aback, finally catching on!

Right, it was Claud.

But why...

He glanced again at the man across him. However, Claud’s gaze didn’t linger on him, but slowly dropped down. He reached out to rest his hand on the wheelchair next to him, turned half a circle, and looked down at Crysti who had been hanging her head all along.

His voice was icy and deep-

“Have you had your fun?”

## Chapter 1132

Crysti’s grip on the thin blanket tightened, her lips clenching hard before she gradually relaxed, her voice filled with a stubborn defiance yet also a hint of grievance.

“I’m not messing around...”

Claud lowered his head, coldly eyeing her. A chilly, somber aura surrounded him. After a long silence, Crysti risked a glance at him, catching sight of his handsome face, indifferent yet frosty. She quickly looked away.

His icy eyes took in the girl’s red-rimmed eyes. He squinted slightly and gave a soft snort.

“You’re pathetic,” he said coldly, his fingers tapping on the armrest of his wheelchair. His words held an air of authority and mockery. “You really let yourself go, huh?”

Crysti didn’t reply. She had been pampered her whole life. She had fought against her family, experienced the coldness of the world, and now, seeing a familiar face by her side, she didn’t care about her image anymore. The stubborn pride she once had was long abandoned.

Now, all she felt was an endless sense of sorrow. Tears welled in her eyes, falling like pearls off a broken string. “I... I’m pathetic... I despise myself... You don’t have to mock me...”

Claud didn’t expect Crysti to start crying. Her tears seemed to come from a deep sense of injustice, making the situation somewhat comical.

Willie glanced at Claud. Despite his seemingly indifferent exterior, Willie could tell Claud was in turmoil. He had always been at a loss when it came to Crysti, and now...

Focused on Claud, Willie noticed a slight twitch on Claud's indifferent face. He quickly averted his eyes, suppressing a laugh.

Everyone else was just as baffled.

"What the hell is happening here?"

"Why did Mr. Watson suddenly order his men to beat someone up?"

"What's the deal between him and Crysti?"

The crowd was whispering, their eyes fixed on the sobbing Crysti, their faces brimming with confusion.

"Enough, stop crying!"

Claud's face went through several changes, his patience seemingly exhausted. He finally snapped. Crysti was taken aback. Her crying abruptly stopped, and she looked up at Claud, her nose now red from the crying.

Claud glared at her. She looked so pitiful... like she was about to burst into tears again.

Melinda watched Claud intently. From the murmurs around her, she learned he was the owner of this luxurious hotel and the heir to The Watson Group. She felt a pang of envy.

The heir to The Watson Group... But why...

"Why, Mr. Watson? I didn't provoke you. Why did you have me beaten up?"

She was confused. Why would such an unattainable man attack her without a reason? She refused to believe that he did it because he couldn't tolerate what she said about Crysti.

Claud glanced at her. "Do I own you a reason?"

Melinda went pale. Any woman would feel hurt by such rejection. "I just want to know why..."

Claud looked away, his gaze back on Crysti who was still crying. He murmured, "Stop crying."

Crysti pouted, frowning, but her crying gradually stopped. "If you're mean to me again, I'll tell Grandpa."

She felt stupid thinking about it. She had so many people who loved her at home. She must've been out of her mind to run away!

"Think about what will happen when you get home."

Thinking about her father, Crysti instinctively shrank back. She looked up at Claud through teary eyes and tugged gently at his suit sleeve. She bit her lip and whimpered,

"Brother..."

Everyone in the room was shocked. Philip was no exception. His shock was no less than anyone else's.

"What?"

"Mr. Watson's sister... Mr. Watson has a sister, but she's supposed to be in B City... and she's not Crysti right?"

"...The Watson family... Crysti..."

Everyone was taken aback.

“Ladies and gentlemen...”

A clear voice suddenly rang out in the hall, reaching every corner of the banquet hall via the microphone. Everyone’s attention was drawn to the sound. They all turned to look at the main stage.

Chloe was wearing a champagne-colored suit dress, with a low stand-up collar. The dress was simple in design, focusing on the lines, with the only attention-grabber being the large bow around her slender waist.

Her figure was long and lean, with the dress flowing beautifully around her.

The simple dress, on Chloe, exuded a unique aura. It showed a woman’s elegance, yet also exuded a sense of calm and strength, giving off an intense sense of distance that made one hesitate to approach.

She stood on the stage as if standing on a higher, farther place.

Claud looked up at Chloe, her calm and composed demeanor making him raise an eyebrow in admiration.

Such a woman was indeed rare. Was it too cheap to let her be with Damon?

Chloe was looking their way, a faint smile on her face.

“Thank you all for coming today. Starlight International has developed rapidly in just a few months and has received so much attention and success. Thank you all for your support and hard work. Today, I won’t use any formal language. Instead, I have a few announcements to make-”

## Chapter 1133

There was a low murmur that spread through the crowd, heads turned to look toward the stage, and almost all eyes were on her.



“First and foremost, I’d like to give a shout–out to the artists who worked their butts off to shine on the Fashion Week stage for my Starlight International, winning us the world’s attention. And of course, the real stars of the show are the clothes that dazzled at Fashion Week. Inherent will be launching as a sub–brand under Starlight International, hitting the market tomorrow morning at 10 sharp!”

As soon as she finished speaking, the audience broke out in applause.

In a world where everyone was chasing after renowned luxury brands, it was bloody hard for a new clothing brand to rise, especially domestic ones. Making a name internationally was like climbing a mountain. Inherent may’ve been a nobody, but their clothes had made waves globally.

Most people were in awe of Ms. Summers’ business acumen. You wouldn’t realize her genius until she pulled something off and you were left thinking, “Oh, that’s how it’s done.”

These days, most people would build a brand first, spend a ton to get A–list celebs onboard, and then increase exposure through media ads and sponsorships. But Chloe flipped the script. If the media hadn’t asked, no one would’ve known the brand was called Inherent.

The clothes got famous first, then came the brand. Compared to luxury brands that only sold their name and not quality, this was what people were willing to drop their money on.

And this rise came just as these other world–class brands were taking their titles for granted and acting irresponsibly.

The things she’d done, you couldn’t list them all, because each one was so well thought–out it made you stop and ponder.

Looking at the reaction from the crowd, Chloe just gave a small smile. Inherent’s success was no surprise; it was all part of her plan.

As the applause gradually faded, Chloe continued, “Lastly, I’d like to announce Starlight International’s newest signing, Crysti.”

Her gaze turned to Crysti, and all eyes in the room followed, focusing on the girl in the wheelchair,

But they didn't overlook the handsome man with a powerful aura sitting next to her.

Before the applause had completely died down, Chloe started speaking again, "I'm thrilled to welcome Crysti to Starlight International! Thanks to her, we get to use this swanky venue for our celebratory banquet free of charge. A big thank you to our Ms. Watson!"

Crysti grimaced. Claud's face darkened noticeably. His lips were pulled into a tight line, an icy air emanating from him. Who said it was free?

Noticing Claud's obvious displeasure, Chloe smiled and added, "Of course, I'd like to thank Mr. Watson for his generosity in providing us with this luxurious venue free of charge."

With this kind of praise, Claud had no way to argue. Was this woman really this cheap?

When everyone's eyes turned to him, Claud cracked a small smile and said casually, "No need for thanks. Crysti receiving praise from Ms. Summers and signing with Starlight International is a cause for celebration. After all, she's my cousin, it's only natural I want the best for her."

As Claud's words fell, the surrounding crowd once again looked surprised.

So, Crysti was Claud's cousin! Cousin!

All eyes were on Crysti.

She was Claud's cousin. And also, one of the shareholders of The Watson Group. She was like a real-life princess!

Philip looked even more shocked. Although he had a hunch that Crysti might have had some connection with The Watson Group, he didn't expect her to be Claud's cousin. They were blood relatives!

A significant portion of The Watson Group's shares were in her hands! She was an heiress of the Watson family...

"But why..."

He looked at Crysti, his doubt only half-spoken, stuck in his throat.

Holding Melinda, he unintentionally tightened his grip, causing her waist to ache slightly, Melinda's face turned pale. She looked at Crysti in the wheelchair in disbelief, her mouth slightly agape, wanting to say something but unable to.

"How is this possible?"

She still didn't want to believe it. Crysti's real identity was...

Willie stood silently to the side, glancing at Chloe on stage and then at Mr. Watson, feeling somewhat reflective.

These two were clearly in cahoots. Otherwise, how could Crysti's identity be revealed so easily?

-Crysti had been out in the world for so many years, and her family had kept her identity under wraps, probably out of fear that someone might have had ill intentions towards her. The elders in her family adored her, but they were worried she might've been targeted by bad people or be deceived by men, so she didn't reveal her identity, and the family kept it hidden.

Now that she'd faced unfair treatment, this opportunity was taken to reveal her true identity, so she no longer had to endure this alone.

Once her identity was made public, it meant she had to go home.

Ms. Summers really did the Watson family a huge favor this time. It was just a free venue, nothing compared to getting Crysti to willingly go home.

However, no one saw it that way, after the shock wore off, the whole venue suddenly became very noisy.

“So she really is from the Watson family! They really kept it under wraps.”

“She’s like a princess descended to the mortal realm, no wonder she had the nerve to tell some people to scram! Her status is really high.”

The few who had conflicts with Melinda before started to smirk.

“Before, they were all about how being born lucky is the real skill, now that seems like such a laugh! Even if Melinda’s family situation is steady now, how could they ever compare with The Watson Group?”

#### Chapter 1134

“She used to be so damn snooty, acting like she’s too good for anyone. Crysti never acted like that.”

“But in my opinion, the most despicable one has got to be Philip! He had Crysti right by his side but chose Melinda for some investment? Some guys really have terrible discernment, ditching a golden opportunity for some measly stuff!”

That hit Philip right where it hurts.

Melinda didn’t even compare.

“I watched Crysti take care of him for years with my own eyes! He was always snapping at her, giving her the cold shoulder, only Ms. Watson was patient with him!”

“Everybody knows they were dating, and Philip cheated on her during that time, even had a kid with Melinda, and announced it publicly at the hospital. Talk about irresponsible!”

“And Melinda, knowing they were a couple, still had to stick her nose in!”

The sarcastic comments came wave after wave, leaving Philip and Melinda looking worse than a dog's dinner. They felt regret and humiliation wash over them, wishing they could just disappear.

Looking at the pair in front of her, Crysti felt a sense of relief.

She had always tried to avoid conflicts, being patient when she could, never putting others in a tough spot unless it was absolutely necessary. Tonight, she felt the most satisfied she had in years.

She thought she would be heartbroken over Philip choosing Melinda, but she realized she didn't feel much for Philip now.

The only feeling left was seeing the shock in his eyes when he found out her true identity. He was shocked because her true identity was far more valuable than Melinda's.

She even considered compromising with her family when she saw how hard he was working for his new show, how stressed he was trying to raise funds. If she pleaded tearfully, her parents would surely relent, and if all else failed, she could turn to Claud, who could offer the money with a flick of his fingers.

She was just one step away, just one step.

And before she even made a move, he betrayed her for Melinda.

“Good thing I didn't reveal my true identity to you earlier.” Crysti said coldly, “I always wanted to accomplish something together with you through my own efforts. For you, I was even willing to give up my privileged life, hoping for a genuine relationship. But turns out...”

She laughed at Philip, “Thanks for teaching me a lesson, showing me how cheap and untrustworthy your love is! You even sold yourself out for a show's/ investment!”

Philip felt utterly humiliated under her mocking laughter.

"I've never felt superior for being a part of the Watson family. I'm just luckier than others. What people yearn for, I can have with a snap of my fingers. Things that come too easily don't seem to mean much to me. I thought I had to work hard and make sacrifices for what I want. And thank you Melinda..." She turned her gaze to Melinda. "Thanks for reminding me that being born lucky is a strength. Everyone wants to get what they desire with ease. Working hard is a lifelong thing, and getting what you want is also a lifelong thing. Looking back, I don't know what I was thinking, having the opportunity to enjoy good fortune but choosing to face hardships instead..."

Neither Philip nor Melinda could say a word.

Crysti took a deep breath, "Melinda is pregnant now. To avoid causing her any further distress, Philip, you better take her and leave. Otherwise, if anything happens, the blame will definitely fall on me. I can take it, but I doubt you guys can..."

Crysti's expression turned icy, "So, off you go! The farther, the better. Melinda, you think you're so capable? Let's see who's more capable, you or me!"

Melinda's face changed at her words. She sneered at Crysti. "Why are you always competing with me? Still have feelings for Philip? A man who could be easily taken away by me, you still can't let go?"

Crysti laughed coldly, "Competing with you for him? You're overthinking. I just can't stand you two, what makes you think I have to put up with his betrayal and your insults?"

Claud smiled subtly beside them. Although it was somewhat beneath him to quarrel with these petty people, they needed to know that the Watson family was not to be messed with.

Philip was speechless, staring at Crysti's beautiful face.

Melinda turned pale. She felt a wave of panic, and as she looked around, she spotted Chloe on the stage, smiling down at them. A chill ran up her spine.

She remembered her only confrontation with Chloe, who had even threatened to blacklist her. She thought it was ridiculous at the time, but now

she felt fear.

Chloe didn't blacklist her directly, instead, she brought out Crysti to stop her at every turn. Now, Crysti was probably unmatched in the entire entertainment industry.

Seeing there was no more drama to unfold, Chloe called up the artists attending the fashion week, including Jeanette and Winston.

The attention gradually shifted to them.

When Melinda and Philip left, no one noticed.

Chloe had to socialize at the party, and Cicely, as Crysti's manager, was introduced to Claud.

Please take good care of her."

Cicely smiled, "With you here, it shouldn't be too troublesome."

Crysti chuckled on the side, "Though it's my brother who's supposed to be looking after me, now it feels like you're the one being taken care of?"

"If no one's giving me a hard time, I'm obviously going to be happy," Cicely admitted frankly, raising her glass to Claud, "Mr. Watson, looking forward to your care."

As she spoke, her delicate eyebrow's curved into a smile. The words she spoke sounded no different from normal, but her voice, naturally soft and flirtatious, seemed to be alluring at all times.

Chapter 1135

Claud arched an eyebrow, a smirk playing at the corners of his lips as he clinked his glass against another's..

"No problem."

Cicely smiled back, tilting her head back for a sip of her drink before resting her hand on Crysti's wheelchair handle. "Looks like I gotta thank Chloe for hooking me up with an easy and energy-saving way to make money."

Crysti looked up at her, "Are you tight on cash?"

"Hell yeah." Cicely swirled her drink around, her eyes scanning the crowd in the banquet hall, "What do you think all these folks are here for if they aren't after money?"

Crysti, after going through the ordeal with Philip and Melinda, seemed to have a clearer understanding of certain things. She didn't dwell on Cicely's words, but her meaning was clear as day.

Everyone was hustling around the edge of a money-centric whirlwind, like walking dead. No matter how rich anyone in the room was, they were all still scrambling for money and power.

She seemed lost in thought, and Cicely gently tapped her on the back of the head.

"What are you thinking about? Don't overthink it, you'll just end up getting bored."

It sounded like a joke, but she was dead serious. Once you thought too deeply about everything, you ended up feeling... pointless.

Crysti's head dipped forward slightly from Cicely's gentle tap, "What's there to be bored about, I've got a lot of fun things lined up." Cicely smirked, her eyes sparkling. "Mmm, just keep living your life, your most important job right now is to make me some more money..." "You're totally obsessed with money! If you want easy money, why don't you just find someone to keep you!"



Cicely ran a hand through her hair, nodding in agreement, but there was a hint of disappointment in her eyes. "I've thought about it, but I pick my men based on their face, their voice, their body, I've gotta like what I see. But most importantly, I gotta feel something. It's hard to find a guy like that..." Hearing this, Crysti burst out laughing, "You might as well give up! Even people looking for a husband aren't as picky as you! You're just like my brother..." Crysti's words trailed off as if something occurred to her, and she glanced at the man standing across from them.

Cicely's words had caught Claud's attention, and his gaze lingered on her face, a curious expression playing across his own. The so-called curiosity was simply because his face was typically stoic, any small change in expression was enough to reveal his keen interest in Cicely..

Seeing this, Crysti chuckled, "What do you think of Claud? He fits your requirements, doesn't he?"

Cicely looked into Claud's eyes, nodding in approval, "Mr. Watson, you have a great look and an excellent demeanor. Very nice."

Claud raised an eyebrow, finding Cicely's brazen appraisal and her choice of words amusing.

"Ms. Cicely, are you implying that I should be your sugar daddy?"

"Hmm..." Cicely frowned, tapping her chin as her gaze roamed over Claud as if she was seriously considering it.

Crysti rolled her eyes, "Didn't you just say my brother is very handsome and has an excellent demeanor? What else are you looking for?"

"I'm looking for a feeling! If I don't feel anything for him, wouldn't your brother end up getting hurt in the end?"

"You... enough already!"

Cicely's attention shifted from Claud and she looked at Crysti, breaking into laughter.

"I can't just ignore my own feelings and take anyone's kindness, can I?"

Claud chuckled, "I've never kept a woman before, but if Ms. Cicely really needs it, I wouldn't mind... lending a hand."

Crysti's mouth dropped open, she hadn't expected the usually stern Claud to join in on their joke.

Even though his words were veiled, anyone could tell he was agreeing to be Cicely's sugar daddy.

Was this some kind of joke? A guy with extreme mysophobia, thinking about keeping a woman?

Crysti couldn't help but burst into laughter, "Ha... can you stop messing with me? I doubt you two could even have a simple chat, let alone have sex!"

Claud's face turned icy, his eyes filled with a cold glare.

"Crysti!"

Crysti quickly shrank back, "I was wrong. Feelings can be cultivated. I think you two should give it a shot!"

Cicely was intrigued by Claud's sudden change in demeanor and leaned in to whisper to Crysti, "Does your brother have a disease or something?"

Crysti nodded, making Cicely's eyes twitch. No way, this guy seemed perfect, how could he...

Seeing the look on Cicely's face, Crysti pinched her arm, "What are you thinking about! My brother just has severe mysophobia!"

Cicely let out a sigh of relief, "Oh, I see."

She straightened up, looking at Claud who was now stone-faced. Thinking back to what Crysti had said about only being able to have simple chats, she couldn't help but laugh.

Her laughter was genuine and pure.

In the center of the banquet hall was a pool with a water feature that resembled a giant crystal ball. The sound of the stream echoed like water in a valley; the calm surface of the water was deep and reflected the worldly vanity and illusion.

On the other side of the pool, a man in a sleek suit stood tall and slender, with a handsome face that drew many women's eyes. Despite his expressionless face, there was an undercurrent of ruthlessness and coldness that deterred anyone who wished to approach him.

Chapter 1136

He squinted his eyes, staring intently at the woman with the pure smile.

Lately, he had been suppressing a rising anger within him, which seemed to be provoked every time he saw Cicely's smile. Even for a fleeting moment, he felt a dark emotion surging in his blood, darker than gloominess.

Cicely waved at him with a smile, then lifted her wine glass. The bright light in the banquet hall reflected a soft glow in her eyes.

Her pleasing smile was blinding.

Upon seeing Claud's awkward expression, Cicely waved her hand saying "just a misunderstanding", then raised her wine glass and clinked it against Claud's glass in a pleasing manner, "I'm sorry for the misunderstanding. Cheers to you, don't be mad."

Her tone was full of appeasement. After all, suspecting a man of having a secret could really hurt his pride. Most importantly, her future work would largely depend on Claud.

She put the wine glass to her red lips, emptied the champagne in one go, then withdrew the glass. As her gaze shifted, she caught a glimpse of a man by the pool out of the corner of her eye.

Her movements paused for a moment, then she slightly turned her gaze and saw a woman walking towards the man. She quickly averted her gaze, put down her wine glass, and looked at Claud, her smile still as bright as ever.

Danielle gracefully took the man's arm amid the admiring glances of others.

Seth stood tall and straight, his eyes slightly lowered, and he glanced casually at the woman who was approaching him.

"Are you guys done talking?"

"Mm."

Danielle's face was full of radiant smiles, but her heart was in chaos. She didn't know when it started, but she always felt that the distance between this man and herself was getting farther and farther.

There seemed to be an insurmountable chasm between them. Although they had come a long way, they never seemed to be able to truly get close to each other.

Now, the distance between them seemed to be getting farther and farther, just like the moving earth's crust, deepening and widening the chasm between them.

This feeling was terrifying. When did this start?

She looked at the smiling woman across the room, a hint of doubt flashing in her eyes. Perhaps... it started when she saw this woman released from jail. In her gaze, she saw the mixed shadows of Chloe and Winston and another person she was not very familiar with.

Danielle lowered her head and gently tugged on the man's arm. "Seth, let's go say hi to Chloe and Winston. The movie we're working on is about to start/ shooting."

Seth's eyes narrowed slightly as he looked at the woman across the room who was talking non-stop. A sarcastic smile played at the corners of his mouth.

From the moment they met outside the hotel to now, for almost the entire evening, her gaze had never lingered on him.

Instead, she was joking with a group of seemingly unimportant people, full of smiles.

Was he the one who agreed to let her work?

He lowered his gaze, submerging the bright lights and the woman's smile in the depths of his eyes, and responded lightly.

"Crysti, this is Quinn, the director of 'The Gilded Circle'. The role that Keira originally played and is now vacant. Mr. Quinn thinks you're perfect for it and would like you to take over."

Crysti immediately greeted the middle-aged man next to her.

"I'm really honored, but am I really suitable for that role?" She hadn't received the script yet and was unsure whether she was a fit!

Quinn gave a bitter smile, "Actually, you were our first choice for the role, and the character's name is also your name. But at the time... Philip didn't want you to play it, he recommended Keira instead, and invested a lot of money... So we..."

“Philip didn’t want me to play?”

“When we first approached you, it was Philip who handled it, so...”

Quinn didn’t continue, but those who could understand naturally understood.

Crysti’s face instantly chilled at the thought of the arguments she had with Philip over him buying a role for Keira, never suspecting that the role was originally hers.

He gave her role to Keira and invested a million dollars in it.

“Huh...”

Crysti sneered, feeling that her anger toward Philip was unstoppable.

She played in his drama, but her salary was not included in his budget. Her original endorsement fee, appearance fee, and salary, except for necessary living expenses, were all saved as funds for his new drama. And yet he interfered in this matter.

Chloe was indifferent. She just found out about this too, and other than a sneer, she didn’t feel much of a ripple.

Chapter 1137

Crysti grinned slightly, “We were just talking about this. My brother said he wouldn’t mind trying out a sugar daddy role, you know?” Chloe looked at Claud Watson in surprise, then bit her lip lightly. “Are you really planning to be a sugar daddy?”

Claud stared at her coldly. “Do you have a problem with that?”

“Of course not.” She was pleased, finally able to shift the focus and bother someone else.

“But Cicely, I think being kept by Claud wouldn’t be so bad...”

“Exactly...”

Crysti hurriedly agreed..

“What sugar daddy? Who’s keeping whom?”

A sweet laugh came from behind. They all turned around and saw Danielle walking slowly over with Seth.

1

Chloe raised an eyebrow, glanced at Cicely, and promptly flagged down a passing waiter to get two drinks as a server passed by.

“Mr. Diaz and Danielle.”

Quinn quickly stepped forward to greet them. As a director, he was naturally eager to get on good terms with The Watson Group. But the last person one wanted to offend in the entertainment industry was Seth.

“Hello, Mr. Quinn.” Danielle greeted with a smile, “What were you guys talking about? Who’s keeping whom?”

Quinn laughed heartily, “We were joking about Claud and Cicely.”

He pointed at Claud and Cicely, “Just kidding.”

Nobody would dare to openly discuss such a topic if it was true.

However, Cicely handed a glass of wine to Claud. They had been talking and their glasses were empty. It was time for a refill.

Claud's eyes fell on the glass in Cicely's hand and paused. Cicely then remembered his obsession with cleanliness.

"I'm sorry, I forgot that Mr. Watson is a germaphobe..."

Claud raised an eyebrow and took the glass from her as she was about to pull it back. "It's fine since you've already mentioned the sugar daddy thing, what's a glass of wine?"

Their fingers brushed as they exchanged the glass, and Claud's face slightly hardened.

For a moment, which might have been two seconds or even less, Seth narrowed his eyes, his hand in his pocket, his knuckles tense, hidden by the fabric.

As a veteran in the entertainment industry, Quinn was good at reading people. He had directed many actors and was very sensitive to their expressions and aura.

The cold and gloomy aura radiating from Seth surprised him. Why was this? Who had provoked him?

Chloe raised an eyebrow and lifted her glass with stars twinkling in her eyes. She sipped her champagne lightly and looked around with a smile, "Well, isn't this a coincidence? Most of the main

cast of the show is here."

Quinn quickly responded, "Indeed... let me introduce, Danielle, Ms. Watson, and Crysti from our show."

Danielle was a bit taken aback, but greeted Crysti, "Hello."



Crysti also smiled, "Hello, I look forward to working with you."

Danielle smiled, but her gaze shifted to Cicely who was standing aside, seemingly indifferent and detached.

"Will Ms. Cicely be joining Ms. Watson on set?"

Cicely, whose name was mentioned, turned to Danielle, her smile indecipherable. She looked at Chloe, "Is there such a thing as an agent not following their artist on set?"

Chloe smiled faintly, "No. Don't get your hopes up."

Cicely pursed her lips, "There must be, right? Otherwise, why would she ask such a pointless question?"

Chloe didn't respond. Cicely was being pushy, and it was clear to everyone.

Danielle's face flashed with discomfort.

A pointless question....

According to what she knew of Cicely, this was no more than a mockery of her talkativeness and pointlessness.

After a little get-together, they all dispersed. Throughout, Seth hadn't said a word, and Cicely hadn't glanced at him. She had mentioned everyone else, except for him and Danielle, completely ignoring

them as if they were invisible.

Knowing that Chloe couldn't stand the increasingly cold atmosphere, she took Cicely to participate in other activities.

Seth slowly savored the drink in his hand, the umpteenth drink for the night. He was graceful and composed, cool and indifferent. But in his long, narrow eyes, a layer of gloom was intensifying, accumulating at the bottom of his eyes, almost solidifying. It seemed that even the fiercest of winds could sway

1. it.

No one fully understood his temper. Even Danielle, who had been with him for years, couldn't accurately gauge his temper.

It generally depended on his mood. If he wanted to endure, he would. If he didn't, he would explode.

Seth had never consciously evaluated his self-control. Because no one could catch his attention, let alone provoke his boundaries. He hadn't even considered that he needed self-control.

However, every time he was made acutely aware of his need for self-control, it was because of one person.

Now, every moment, he felt his self-control being depleted. Even he didn't know what else that woman could do to completely shatter his patience. Danielle once again excused herself from a group of female friends, her face flushed as she came over and took Seth's arm.

"Seth, should we stay the night?"

Looking at the woman who had been drinking with Chloe from his narrow eyes, a smile appeared on his handsome face. His lips curled up slightly, carrying a charming yet gloomy air.

"Seth?"

“Alright, I’ll have someone arrange a room for you.”

For a moment, Danielle’s eyes were filled with surprise, followed by a mix of shyness and excitement.

From the start, Cicely was introduced and acquainted with many important figures by Chloe. She had quite a few drinks but wasn’t drunk beyond what she could handle. Finally, considering that she wasn’t feeling good, Chloe arranged for a driver to take her home.

“You go first. The driver is waiting for you in the underground parking lot.

Cicely wasn’t drunk, but she was totally beat. She’d never been a fan of such crowded, noisy events where men’s cologne and women’s perfume mixed together, suffocating her.

Being allowed to duck out early was just what the doctor ordered.

When she got to the underground parking lot via the elevator, the doors slid open and she tip-toed out, turning left.

Suddenly, her right hand was grabbed tight...

## Chapter 1138

Cicely’s eyes widened, her heart pounding in panic. It wasn’t until she crashed into a familiar chest that she felt some comfort.

She stumbled into his arms, her legs awkwardly positioned. She squirmed a bit, but the man’s grip tightened around her waist, lifting her up and then setting her back down, this time she landed on the floor.

But the man didn’t let go. His long arm wrapped tightly around her waist, pressing their bodies together. She struggled a bit, but his grip only tightened. Finally, her hands braced against his chest, her tense body gradually relaxing.

Her hair was disheveled from the struggle, a blush staining her carefully made-up face. They were face to face, their breath heavy with the smell of alcohol, hard to tell whose was stronger.

Or rather, whose stench of booze was thicker.

“Mr. Diaz, can’t we have a straightforward conversation? Do you find it enjoyable to corner me like this every time? Or do you find it thrilling to flirt with me behind your girlfriend’s back?”

Seth reached out and held her delicate chin, his fingers feeling the warmth of her smooth skin, his eyes squinting at the sarcastic smile on her face.

His fingers tightened, pulling her closer. His breath, tainted with alcohol, brushed against her nose, stirring her long eyelashes.

“Who told you to work, huh?” His voice was low and threatening.

Cicely smiled, a subtle warmth in her eyes. “No one forbade me from working, I need to earn money, Mr. Diaz.”

Seth watched her fake smile quietly, finding it even more annoying than the flirtatious smiles she gave to others. Not to mention... The way she and Claud were laughing so naturally together.

“I treat you like a VIP at home, yet you’re out here serving others? Cicely, you really know how to stir up trouble.”

6

“Can’t take it anymore?” Her fingers traced his chest, climbed up his shoulder. Her red lips slightly parted, her words laced with a hint of alcohol. You could see her agile little tongue behind her pearly teeth.

"If you can't take it, let me go. What's the point of spending money on someone who constantly irritates you?"

Seth's face hardened, his lips pressed tightly together, the hand holding her chin unconsciously tightened.

"Let you go? You found a better sugar daddy, and want to be kept by him immediately?"

"Does that concern you?"

Cicely looked closely at the handsome face of the man; even when he was angry enough to turn blue, he was still infuriatingly good-looking.

"Seth, what's your intention and position in meddling with my life? Based on our previous relationship, we're just ex-husband and ex-wife. In short, we're! no different from strangers. From the current perspective, you're a man, I'm a woman. Men and women can have friendships, romantic relationships,

even sexual relationships, lovers... But is our relationship normal? Haven't you been annoyed, fed up, and disgusted with me? What now? Can't live without me?"

Seth looked into her eyes calmly, saying coldly, "Seems like you're determined to piss me off tonight."

"I'm just stating the facts, can't you accept them?"

"Cicely." Seth said suddenly, his sharp gaze fixed on her, "Don't push my patience any further."

Cicely slightly avoided his gaze, "You losing your patience won't do me any good. I have no reason to provoke you."

Seth smiled, his eyes slowly sweeping over her flushed face, "You know this, yet you keep provoking me. Are you a masochist?"

Cicely rolled her eyes in exasperation. "I need to work, if possible, I don't want to go back to that house, even more so, if you could let me off the hook, that would be great. Don't you find our ambiguous entanglement disgusting?"

"Disgusting? Cicely, don't forget, the one who started this clingy mess was you."

He leaned in close to her, his nose touching her soft cheek, his eyes slightly squinted, looking down at the woman who was much shorter than him, smelling a unique scent from her. Back when she was the lady of the Ellis family, he always thought she used some fancy perfume, a kind he didn't dislike. But now it seemed, it wasn't the case.

"So you didn't pick up anything else, only my special tricks?"

As she spoke, her eyes were on her hand resting on his shoulder, seeing her fingers against his expensive suit, creating a stark contrast. Her pose was delicate yet languid, exuding an alluring charm.

Was she trying to seduce him? How could that be? Because this woman, by nature, was like that, no matter who she was dealing with.

Thinking of her shamelessly weaving through the crowd with a beaming smile, his face instantly cooled, the grip on her chin tightened. "When will you learn to behave? Always causing trouble, even more so now..."

Cicely snorted, "Now I eat, sleep, work, make money, obey the rules, and don't break the law. I'm a perfect model citizen. If this is considered misbehaving, how do you define behaving?"

"Don't provoke me."

His nose gently rubbed against her cheek, his masculine scent mixed with alcohol almost enveloped her, her every breath filled with his dominant scent. His deep voice echoed above her head, every pore in her body opening up from his intimacy.

She tilted her head slightly, trying to dodge his approach. What he meant by 'misbehaving' was for her not to provoke him.

Ha. After all that talk and wasted time, it all came down to bullshit!

Fine, I won't provoke you. Now let me go, I need to go home and rest."

"Together." His deep voice resonated in her ear, the breath he exhaled even hotter than before.

Cicely closed her eyes; after all the pointless talk and wasted time, the alcohol was making her head spin. "Don't forget your girlfriend is waiting for you, I can go home by myself."

have you

She paused, irritation unavoidable in her heart, and added, "I think you really need to reassess your position. You're being sneaky with me now, considered Danielle's feelings? You're really ungrateful, making trouble for me now because I'm ignoring you, why don't you, think about how I'm doing this for your sake and your girlfriend's?"

Chapter 1139

In the middle of her words, she seemed to remember something funny and burst out laughing. "Ha... I could really consider finding a man to keep me. After all, as a mistress, I not only can't ruin their relationships, but I even have to make sure their love beautiful and their family life harmonious. It's a rare deal... Seth!"

Cicely suddenly yelled, her ear that had been stroked by Seth was suddenly bitten. His hand was also wandering around her waist. His cool hand silently slipped under her dress and covered her skin.

Her nerves tensed up instantly, and she reached back to grab his hand. More precisely, his thumb.

She stopped his movements, just like every other time. Her hands were tender and small, and she couldn't hold his wrist in one hand, always missing a little bit, always leaving a small gap, a position that he could easily break free with a shake. So, in the past, she either grabbed his wrist with both hands or held his thumb with one hand. That was the case most of the time. This gesture became a little secret between the two of them.

Seth paused, looking down at the blushing woman in front of him. The alcohol must have hit her, her eyes filled with a layer of misty fog.

If it was before, she would hold onto him tightly, burying herself in his arms, but now she was staring at him vigilantly.

"Are you nuts?" Seth's eyes were dark, feeling his fingers tightly wrapped in her soft palm.

He smiled, his eyes filled with a devilish charm. "Are you too naive, or have I spoiled you too much, making you think that everyone can be as obedient to you as I am? Wanting to find a sugar daddy?"

You're such a spoiled brat, are you going to serve them or are they going to serve you? Even if they're willing to serve you, can they satisfy you? Huh?"

Cicely's eyelid twitched, the man's explicit yet sexy expression and voice stirred up a sense of humiliation in her heart. "Seth, are you a pervert?"

He chuckled, pinching her chin, gently lifting her face, his voice was soft, but he couldn't hide the domineering and restless anger. "See, if you call anyone a pervert, will they be reminded and do something more excessive to you?"

Cicely blinked, her eyes flashed with confusion.

Seth stroked her smooth chin, bent down to kiss her lips, his deep voice filled with a faint loving smile. "Don't worry, I don't have any kinky fetishes." Seth's kiss imprinted on her lips, making Cicely's body stiffen. Her mind went blank, and she could only feel the tingling sensation from her scalp. This kiss was so gentle, it made her doubt whether this was the same Seth who had once wanted to hurt her.



In the past, it was always her taking the initiative, she seduced him to kiss her, or he would grab her, and regardless of whether she agreed, he would kiss her. This reflected the man's dominance and possessiveness.

Such a kiss... It was really rare.

She looked up at him, feeling his hot breath mixed with alcohol; his eyes also seemed to have a blurry drunkenness.

Turns out he was drunk.

She slightly raised her eyebrows, the corners of her lips curved up, and the hand on his chest loosened a bit, gliding over his suit. Her beautiful face was filled with a smile, her gentle eyes radiating a

charming allure. "Did you drink too much?"

Seth looked at her slightly parted red lips, his hand fixed on her waist, gently massaging her. His intentions were very clear, filled with desire.

Seth's hands had nearly touched Cicely's entire body, his breathing had deepened, he had suddenly tightened his arm, pressed her body against him, buried his head in her neck, and she could even feel his lips biting the skin on her neck as she attempted to support her gradually softening body.

Cicely's eyelashes trembled. She closed her eyes, bit her lip, and her hand slid over his waist, stopping at a certain spot. About a second later, her hand started to move quickly, maybe too quickly, ignoring that his movements on her neck also stopped.

Her hand reached into his trouser pocket, grabbed the phone, and pulled it out quickly.

She knew this man's habits. He didn't like to set passwords for their phones, she lowered her head, turned on his phone screen with one hand, checked his call log, found the call marked "Danielle", and directly dialed it.

The screen showed that the call was being connected.

This man, maybe he was once hers, maybe she never really had him. But now, he was no longer hers, and she didn't want him either.

A big hand easily took the phone from her hand. At the same time, his warmth left her neck.

Her face darkened, she lifted her head, but saw Seth's lips with a sarcastic smile, staring at the phone screen which showed the call was connected, without saying a word, he hung up.

Then, his finger pressed down hard on the phone's power button, his smile was cold, but his arm still tightly wrapped around her waist.

"What are you trying to do?"

Cicely had even heard Danielle's voice coming out of the phone just now, but she watched the man hang up emotionlessly, and now he even turned off the phone.

Looking at the face filled with a gentle and cultured smile, she instinctively stepped back. But was forcibly pulled back by the man.

"Why are you calling—her?" Although it was with a laugh, the voice seemed to have turned into ice in his throat.

"You're drunk, I think she'd be very willing to take care of you."

"Don't you want to?"

Cicely laughed, "I have no responsibility or obligation."

"Heh."

Seth chuckled softly, slowly putting away his phone. Then he looked at her, "After keeping you for so long, you should do something." Cicely's heart shook. After a cold two seconds, she suddenly broke free from his arms. "I didn't ask you to keep me, let me go!"

## Chapter 1140

But Seth grabbed her wrist, almost violently dragging her towards the parking lot.

Struggling, Cicely whispered, "Seth, let me go!"

Seth seemed oblivious to her words, pulling her along. The woman in the dress and high heels behind him was stumbling and tugging backward. "Ms. Cicely!"

The driver waiting for her in the parking lot ran over, bewildered by the situation. He knew both Cicely and Mr. Diaz.

"Help me, I don't know him..."

Cicely cried out to the driver, who then snapped out of his confusion and hurried over.

"Mr. Diaz!"

"Buzz off!"

The usually expressionless man now had a grim look on his face.

Car unlocking sounds echoed as Seth forcefully yanked Cicely to his car and flung open the passenger door. Cicely clutched the door, refusing to move, "Seth, you..."

“Didn’t you say you don’t know me?” Seth cut her off sneering at her desperate grip on the door frame. “You think that will do any good?” “Seth! You lunatic, you psychopath!”

Cicely screamed, her voice resonating throughout the empty parking lot.

The man didn’t seem to care. He just smiled, whispering. “Either get in the car, and I’ll take you home. Or, I’ll carry you in, and we’ll do it right here.” Cicely’s eyes widened, gripping the car door tighter. But she began to calm down. “I choose neither. I’m not going home with you, and I’m not doing anything with you!”

A sarcastic chuckle echoed in her ears. The next moment, she was airborne. Seth took a step back, her grip on the car door loosened, and a sharp pain shot through her fingers. By the time she caught her breath, she was already in the passenger seat.

The man leaned in, bringing a gust of cold wind.

Either he carried her into the car, and they did it right here...

Cicely’s eyes flickered to the flustered driver standing nearby. Her head felt heavy, but her mind was clear. The smell of alcohol was like a fog clouding her mind.

“Seth, Seth...” Her voice softened, she pushed the man’s shoulders and grabbed his fingers tightly.

“I don’t want to, I don’t want to...”

She murmured, her eyes wide with panic, her voice choked up, yet not a single tear fell.

She was not obeying! She was merely compromising, yet her defiance remained.

He held her chin, trapping her in his embrace. “I gave you a chance, Cicely, I’ve told you so many times. Don’t provoke me...”

Cicely bit her lip, squeezing his hand with all her might.

“Seth, what do you want, what do you really want?!”

Seth gazed down at the familiar face beneath him, longing for her past expressions. He let go of her chin, but his hand brushed her soft cheek, caressing her skin, tracing her delicate features...

What did he want? What did he really want?

She was always disobedient, always challenging him. Anything he forbade, she insisted on doing!

Didn't she want to be with him? She didn't have to work, didn't have to worry about anything. He could give her whatever she wanted satisfy her every desire!

He brushed her hair back, admiring her smooth forehead and fluttering eyelashes. His eyes were like dark ink, his voice deep. “Kiss me.”

Just like before, she would kiss him whenever she wanted, as part of their daily life.

Cicely's eyes flickered, staring at him in silence, making no move. Seth's handsome face held a hint of anger, intensifying as the seconds trickled by. “Didn't you hear me, or you just don't want to?”

Finally, Cicely spoke, her tone indifferent, “Seth, would you forget if I don't remind you that I should hate you?”

He stiffened.

Why was she always defiant? Why did she always resist him? Why didn't she want to stay by his side?

He wasn't confused, but he simply chose to ignore the only answer.

“You hate me?”

Cicely scoffed, “Isn’t it obvious?”

“You hate me but won’t take revenge?” His voice was soft, cautious, and gentle, his eyes radiating warmth.

She loved him... Did she?

don’t want to hate you.”

Seth smirked, “Why?”

“Because it’s pointless.” She mocked him, piercing through his self-satisfaction, I don’t want you in my life!”

The car door was already closed, but her voice echoed throughout the underground parking lot.

The silence that followed was deafening. Her face was resolute, not a hint of regret.

His joy was abruptly cut off. Her lips parted, breathing out the fragrance of alcohol, the softness and warmth beneath him igniting his passion.

His restraint tonight had been pushed to its limits. When the sturdy character was weakened, all that remained was an endless release of fiery rage. Cicely’s pupils contracted as she tried to push him away. But her hands were held tightly above her head, while another hand pressed hard against her waist.

The leather car seat was not soft, his strength was so great that her body rubbing against it made an unpleasant noise.

Pain.

She winced in pain, her slender body almost sinking into the seat. "Seth! Let go of me!"

Seth simply grinned, his eyes filled with icy coldness. "Without me?...Cicely, you've exhausted my patience tonight!"