

Eight Uncles 1271

[Chapter 1271 His Spirit Returned](#)

Cloud looked at his family in front of him. His parents were concerned about him, and his brothers had a hint of mischief in their eyes.

It was like they were saying, "You're finally grown up now, and you've grown to be a fine young man!"

...

Tears welled up in Cloud's eyes.

He stood in attention and saluted his parents.

He owed his parents too much. Fortunately for him, his brothers were at home to accompany them.

"Thank you, Dad, Mom," he choked.

He turned to his brothers and said, "Thank you, my elder brothers, for taking care of Mom and Dad."

Gilbert said, "Tsk, you missed me!"

Cloud put his saluting hand down and smiled. "No, I haven't missed you. It's just that you're the youngest, and we're used to taking care of you."

"Don't look down on me, heh," Gilbert said.

Hugh was moved. It was the first time he saw his son in uniform. Tears were threatening to spill from his eyes, but he didn't want to show his soft side in front of his children. He assumed a stern face and said, "Don't worry about us, Cloud. You've already devoted yourself to the country. You should take care of yourself."

"Yes, you don't have to worry about us. We're all fine. You should take care of yourself," Bettany said.

"Didn't you say you're only coming home after Christmas? Why did you suddenly come back? Anthony could've picked you up at the airport."

Cloud took the hot towel and wiped his face. "It's fine, I can come back myself."

He wanted to say, "Anthony is always busy with his wife. I don't have the heart to disturb them," but he noticed Anthony and Lisa glaring at him.

"Things are pretty bad there. They wanted to bring us back after Christmas, but luckily we made it in time," he said, changing the topic.

Cloud handed the hot towel to Zachary. "Alright, I'm going to eat! I'm so hungry!"

"I hope you ate something on your way back here," Bettany said. She patted the stray snowflakes on Cloud's hair. "You must've been so cold outside. Why didn't you come in straight away? You're not a child anymore."

She took Cloud's hand. It was slightly warm to the touch.

Bettany breathed a sigh of relief.

Cloud had wrapped his hands with the hot towel earlier. The warmth was not going to last for very long, but it was long enough to fool his mother.

He patted the back of Bettany's hand while his palm was still warm.

Zachary held the towel in his hands tightly.

It was already as cold as the snow outside.

Without showing any reaction, he walked away with the towel.

Anthony pressed his lips together. He understood...

Cloud sacrificed himself. Only his noble spirit returned...

He tried his best to suppress his emotions and held Jean's hand tightly with trembling fingers.

Lilly gave Jean the power. She should also know that Cloud is...

Bettany brought a bowl of chicken soup for Cloud. "Here, have a bowl of chicken soup to warm the body!"

Lilly returned to her chair and said, "Granny, you should let Uncle Cloud taste the chicken I brought!"

The King of Styx nodded and said, "That's right! That's no regular chicken. You don't get to eat something so exquisite every day!"

He grabbed the drumstick on his plate and gave it a huge bite.

The free-range chicken in the underworld is delicious, but the chicken in the Human Realm tastes really good too!

Bettany nodded. "That's right."

Cloud's appetite was half of Lilly's. If she fed him too much food, he wouldn't be able to eat dessert.

Margaret took a bowl from the cabinet and handed it to Bettany, who filled it halfway with soup.

Cloud gulped down the soup made from underworld chicken, then finished the other bowl of soup made from normal chicken.

"Phew! That was amazing!" he said.

The normal chicken soup tasted like home, but the underworld chicken soup seemed to bring warmth to his ice-cold body, as though something was recovering.

"Mm, can I have seconds?" Cloud said.

Bettany took the bowl and said, "You shouldn't drink so much soup. Have some meat first!"

Liquids should go in last. It was best to fill the stomach with solids first.

Bettany put a "chicken drumstick" the size of a lamb shank on his plate.

"Eat up! If it's not enough, let me know!" she said.

Suddenly, she noticed that Jean seemed to be crying. She said, "Huh? What's wrong, Jean?"

Several people in the dining hall became nervous when they heard that.

[Chapter 1272 Covering Each Other](#)

Jean was stunned as she felt something off. On the one hand, I was afraid that Mom would discover the truth; on the other hand, I could not bear the thought of her finding the truth in a few days. She would definitely be upset...

Tears welled up in Jean's eyes, and she began to burst into tears. She wanted to say something but was interrupted when Anthony quietly interrupted her.

However, Anthony could not think of anything to say either, and that's when Lisa suddenly leaned in with a smile.

"Mom! Jean is upset about something! Here, try this vegetable!" Lisa said cheerfully.

Bettany was puzzled and said, "What's all this secrecy about?" I could not tell whether Jean was crying or laughing as she covered her eyes.

Then, Bettany reluctantly took a bite of the vegetable Lisa had offered. But the next moment, she choked on it, and tears streamed down her face.

"What in the world is this?" Bettany exclaimed while drinking water. "Why is this so spicy?"

Bettany felt unwell and somehow dizzying.

Edward laughed and said, "Wow, Lisa, you're fearless! Mom, she even dares to pull a prank on you!"

Jonas was utterly speechless. He said, "I wondered why Edward sneakily hid this dish earlier. Now it all makes sense."

Max said, "I was tearing up just like this a moment ago! It's too early to reveal the truth, I wanted to see Anthony's reaction after eating it all!"

Gilbert was astonished and said, "You're really brave, Lisa."

Cloud was stunned as well and said, "Lisa..."

Lisa felt guilty and fell silent.

Anthony pondered for a while. Lisa is truly sympathetic. I could not believe how brave she was to risk being scolded to cover the fact of Jean crying.

Anthony looked at Lisa gratefully.

Hugh angrily said, "You guys have no respect! Bettany is getting on in years. What if she has a health problem from choking?"

Max protested, "Dad, it was Lisa's idea, not me."

Hugh turned to Lisa, who was nervously fidgeting with her fingers. Hugh's expression softened, and stared at Anthony instead.

"Look what you've done!"

Anthony was speechless. Well, I am not surprised for getting scolded...

Anthony said, "Yes, it was my fault. Lisa and I often play pranks, and I..."

Still wiping her tears, Jean interrupted and said, "Dad, don't be angry. It was my carelessness."

Bettany wiped her tears and said, "Alright, let's eat. I'm not as weak as you think." They had never gone too far to upset me before. Lisa must have been too excited and momentarily lost her mind. After all, I am not an unreasonable mother-in-law. Instead, I found it quite harm-warming since Lisa did not treat me as an outsider anymore...

Hugh furrowed and said, "Who bought this vegetable? I've never seen it before. Don't buy it again."

Lilly felt guilty and said, "Grandpa, it's a local specialty I brought."

Hugh fell silent. He nodded and was somehow relieved.

Pablo was afraid that Lilly might be upset and quickly said, "Sorry about that. I picked the Soul retrieval herb"

"As the name suggests, it can bring the soul back as long as the person hasn't passed away."

"It can also treat minor illnesses and pains."

Bettany nodded and said, "So it's a useful herb, just a bit too strong." I would have considered making it a regular dish if not for the strong flavor.

King Styx picked up a large portion of it and ate it with relish. He said, "It's not spicy or chokey!"

The King of Styx looked puzzled but otherwise unfazed.

Gilbert and Jonas asked skeptically. "Really?"

Seeing him eat it happily made them doubt themselves.

Max said, "Could it be?"

Edward encouraged, "Come on, Max, have another bite."

Max replied, "No way!"

In an attempt to change the subject, Jean suggested, "Max, are you up for a challenge? I'll take one bite, and you take two bites. Let's see who can handle it. What do you say?"

Max agreed immediately, "Okay!"

Gilbert and Jonas were surprised to see Jean's action. They immediately said, "We're in!"

Liam, who had been silent all this time, suddenly mumbled, "I'm in."

Edward chimed in, "Hey, can I add more? I'll eat three bites! Anyone else?"

Unexpectedly, Anthony joined in and said, "Count me in, I'll eat four bites."

[Chapter 1273 Tears with the Soul Retrieval Herb's Sting](#)

Bryson pursed his lips and said, "You're so childish! But in that case, I'll take a bite too. Is it really that spicy?"

Cloud laughed and said, "Count me in for sure!"

Everyone was laughing and joking around. Edward, Jonas, Max, and Gilbert remained oblivious to the truth.

However, Anthony, Liam, and Bryson already sensed something was amiss.

They instinctively steered the conversation away from the truth without showing signs of a slip-up.

Bettany's attention was successfully diverted. I could not help but think they still acted so childish despite growing up.

"There isn't enough vegetable for each of you! Should I stir-fry more for you? Mr. Pablo brought back quite a lot." Bettany exclaimed. She seemed to be somewhat exasperated.

Lilly raised her hand and said, "It isn't necessary!"

"Uncle Anthony, you guys don't find the stir-fried version challenging enough, do you? How about a raw eating contest?"

The uncles fell silent. They were unsure if Lilly was teasing or genuinely suggesting it.

Jean was the first to agree, "Exactly! If we're going to play, let's go all out. Stir-fried isn't exciting enough."

Edward chimed in, "Agreed! I am not afraid of a little spice!"

Lilly promptly brought out a large bowl of Soul retrieval herb.

Bettany sighed. Thankfully, Soul retrieval herb was incredibly tender, with leaves as large as lettuce but much more delicate.

Edward didn't hesitate and urged, "Hurry up; is everyone ready?"

Everyone had their portion of Soul retrieval herb ready, with Anthony taking a bit more.

Bryson and Liam discreetly grabbed extra as well.

Edward teased, "Hey, you three, aren't you looking down on us? Adding extra voluntarily?"

Lilly was somewhat distracted and said, "I'll start the countdown, okay?"

"Ready, Set, Go!"

And with that, everyone dove in, but the intense spiciness of the Soul retrieval herb caused them to erupt with coughs and tears. They all struggled to keep their composure.

Anthony covered his forehead with tears in his eyes to conceal his expression.

Bryson wiped his tears with a tissue and said, "It's really quite spicy. His tears flowed freely, but he couldn't help but laugh because everyone looked somewhat similar.

Liam, who had been quiet all along, wiped his tears silently.

Edward's tears streamed down as he exclaimed, "Wow, it's really too spicy!"

Max insisted, "No, it's not spicy at all! I had already talked big earlier! I must win this round!

Gilbert lowered his head and muttered, "A bunch of liars."

Jean was simultaneously crying and laughing. He said, "You all lost! Lilly, let's see who cries last."

Lilly was stunned to see what had happened. She mumbled, "Is it really that spicy? She took a bite and was instantly shocked. "Wow..."

Then, Lilly burst into tears as well.

Josh chimed in quietly, "Hold on, let me time this. Let's see who loses."

With tears in his eyes, Cloud said in a deep voice, "Thank you for helping me cover up this matter.

Bettany handed Cloud some food and said cheerfully, "You just got back and are already fooling around with them. Be careful not to upset your stomach later. Hurry up and eat!"

Cloud nodded and said, "Got it! He shoveled a large spoonful of food into his mouth." Actually, I could not really taste it or know what I was eating anymore. It just felt like a lump in my throat.

After a hearty dinner, it was time for the customary ritual. They continued to chat and eat in the living room. The atmosphere seemed to be heartwarming.

"Ah... is there more? Mom, please spare us!"

"Mom, I can't eat anymore. I really can't!"

"I don't want it. You guys can have it."

Bettany chuckled and said, "It's New Year, and all this food is meant to be eaten. If you don't eat, King Styx will!"

King Styx patted his stomach. Exactly! Help me up, and I could probably eat another feast.

"That's right! It's been a while since I celebrated New Year," the King of Styx reminisced while taking a bite of a pear. "It is so nice!"

Margaret and the others cleared the dining table.

On the other hand, Bettany sat down and watched them play around. She sighed contentedly. Life is good. Everyone is finally reunited. Although Jean wasn't exactly "human," she had come back. Others might be fearful or superstitious, but I am genuinely delighted about it.

Bettany looked at everyone and felt somehow relieved. Some of them were crouching on the side or doing their tasks on their laptop.

Bettany pondered for a while. My grandchildren might exchange a few playful jabs, but they never fight over things and get along lovingly. Hugh was often exasperating, but at least he was still by my side. What more could I ask for with such a family?

[Chapter 1274 A Different Kind of Reunion](#)

Bettany was happy, lounging on the couch with her legs crossed. She occasionally checked her phone to exchange New Year's greetings with her friends.

"Hurry, it's almost midnight!"

Everyone was staying up late to welcome the New Year. However, Hugh had already gone to sleep, as he felt that the young folks could handle it. I am too old for all the festivities.

Bettany tried to stay awake for a while but could not make it past 11 o'clock. With nothing pressing on her mind these days, she quickly drifted off to sleep.

"5, 4, 3—2—1!"

Everyone cheered as fireworks lit up the sky.

Amid the excitement, gift bags were distributed.

"Come on, this one is for Lilly!"

"This one is for Josh, Hannah, Zachary, and Drake."

Cloud did not have a red envelope, as he had already passed away. However, Anthony discreetly handed him one. Cloud was touched and said, Anthony...

Anthony patted his head gently and said, "Take it."

Lilly received so many gift bag that she could hardly keep up. She kept thanking her uncles one by one.

"Thank you, Uncles! I appreciate your kindness! May you have a prosperous year ahead and strike it rich. And also, may all your wishes come true!"

"Dad, Mom, Michael, and Harem, thank you so much!"

"Thanks, Master! May you get rich and marry a wife!"

Pablo chuckled helplessly upon listening to Lilly's words.

The snowstorm outside was too heavy, preventing them from going to the rooftop. They gathered in the living room and chatted into the late hours. Finally, when Lilly could no longer stay awake, everyone reluctantly retired to their rooms.

Blake carried Lilly back to her bedroom.

Lilly's gift bags were placed under the pillow. However, Lilly had so many gift bags that they couldn't all fit.

Blake symbolically placed two under the pillow and piled the rest to one side.

Lilly held her bunny and soon fell asleep.

Jean whispered, "She hasn't fallen asleep hugging Bunny for so long, and today..." She had found out that Cloud had sacrificed himself, yet she dealt with it so calmly. She is just a young kid.

The more Jean thought about it, the sadder she became. Tears welled up in her eyes, and she started to cry. Jean quickly covered her mouth to stifle her sobs.

Blake embraced Jean and said quietly, "It's okay to cry. No one can hear you here."

Jean shook her head and replied, "I do not want to wake Lilly. If Lilly woke up, that would be worse."

Blake understood her thoughts. But I could not just take her back to her room and say, "Cry here. I will feel bad for doing that."

Blake raised his hand, creating a soundproof formation that enveloped them.

"This is a soundproof formation... I'll teach you when you've advanced in your cultivation," Blake said gently.

Jean could not hold back anymore and clung to Blake, crying loudly. I can't accept the fact that Cloud is dead. He is just too young for it.

"What should Mom do in a few days when Cloud's body returns?" Jean said while clutching Blake's shirt.

"She has to go through the pain of losing a child again. What should she do?" When I died in the past, Mom almost collapsed from grief. What should we do this time?

Blake comforted Jean repeatedly: "It'll be alright; don't worry. We'll get through this."

"Old Mrs. Crawford isn't as fragile as you think. She's become invincible now."

"I and Lilly are here too. Nothing will happen."

"At worst, the King of Styx is here too. What do you have to worry about when two Hell Rulers are here?"

Jean chuckled at the mention of two Hell Rulers, but then she cried again. It was unusual for any family to have two Hell Rulers. But when I thought about it, it was Cloud! He had never let us or the county down. He is the greatest person I have ever seen. He deserved the presence of two Hell Rulers.

Jean continued crying in Blake's arms, unable to stop for a long time.

On the other hand, the weakling spirit stood beneath a tree in the jar of souls. He watched the petals fall silently, lost in thought.

While every bad thing raged in the mortal world, the jar of souls always remained peaceful and serene. However, every ghost inside felt uneasy.

The unlucky ghost had sensibly kept his distance, returning to the jar of souls after a brief outing for a New Year's dinner.

"Well..." the unlucky ghost sighed and said, "Why does it have to be like this?"

The unlucky ghost asked somberly, "Why do heroes often face misfortune and end up in such sorrow?"

Harem Spirit replied, "Could you please stop saying that?"

The weakling spirit remained silent for a long time. After the other ghosts had dispersed, he still stood beneath the tree. He softly whispered, "Perhaps life is a journey of cultivation, where those who have fulfilled their virtues depart first..."

[Chapter 1275 Home](#)

Ivan said, "Can we visit the Crawford family to celebrate the New Year after the holidays?"

Colton hesitated for a moment and sighed. Then, he said, "Maybe next time, Ivan. The Crawford family might not be in a convenient situation this year."

Ivan found it strange and asked, "Why?"

Colton's voice was heavy as he replied, "Cloud had sacrificed himself during a mission abroad."

Ivan was stunned. I could not believe it! It was so sudden and hard to accept!

"Did many people sacrifice themselves?" Ivan could not help but ask.

Colton shook his head and said, "Just him."

Melody was shocked and quickly asked, "Why only him? I didn't mean that. I meant..." She did not know what to say, feeling overwhelmed.

Colton explained, "The mission was very dangerous, with various factions in conflict, and not everyone supported our country."

"However, Cloud was incredibly brave. He ensured the safe return of everyone and was the last one to withdraw."

"Everyone had witnessed him creating one miracle after another, and they firmly believed he would make it out safely."

"But no one could have expected that he would fall in the final round of attack."

As Melody listened, she felt her nose tingle and her eyes well up with tears.

Meanwhile, Ivan pondered. How could Bettany accept this fact? When Jean passed away, Bettany collapsed and only recovered when Lilly returned. Could Bettany endure this time? No, I had to go check on her.

Ivan searched through his rings and found a gentle elixir suitable for stabilizing the soul. I hoped it would help Bettany get through this difficult time.

All members of the Crawford family gathered at the Crawford Mansion.

The other servants of the Crawford family had already taken their holidays and gone home.

However, Margaret and Jack stayed behind.

Everyone was in the living room, chatting and enjoying the moment.

Lilly played for a while before stepping outside. Then she found Margaret tidying up the dining room and joined her.

"Why didn't you return home for the New Year, Margaret?" Lilly asked.

Bettany knew about Margaret's family situation, but Lilly had no idea about it.

Margaret replied, "Go back for what? My son got married and is spending the New Year at his wife's place. I didn't want to join them."

Margaret's husband had passed away, leaving only Margaret and their son. Our relationship had not been great since he was younger. He got a prestigious job after graduation and left me after knowing I was working as a servant. He cared a lot about his image. Moreover, I had never told him that I worked for the Crawford family. I do not want him to come to the Crawford family if problems happen. It is troublesome.

"He's asked me to quit and go back several times, but what would I do there? His wife doesn't want to live with me, so they usually stay in their new house. That would leave me alone in the old house."

Margaret said, "Being all alone, I'd rather stay here. It's much better." Why should I return and face such loneliness?

Margaret continued to tidy up and said, "You're like my children now. Watching you all grow up, I can't bear to leave!" She had long considered the Crawford family her second home and loved everything about it.

Margaret felt somehow unhappy and said, "Honestly, I'm getting paid to work for the Crawford family, right? Why should I go back and serve them? They thought I shouldn't touch expensive things, but they also thought she should do all the cleaning and cooking. It was just too much! I served my son when I was young. Why should I serve him and his wife now? I'm not stupid!"

Margaret said, "I'm happy to stay here, just like it's my home.

Margaret looked at Lilly, who had rolled up her sleeves to help, and shooed her away. Margaret said, "Little Miss, go outside. I can handle this on my own!"

Lilly did not want to return to the living room as soon as Bettany was chatting with Cloud. I did not think I had the skills to control my facial expressions just yet. I might just burst into tears when I see Cloud.

So, Lilly sat down in a nearby chair and asked, "What about Jack?"

Jack had not gone back for the New Year either.

Margaret replied, "Jack only has one daughter, and she got married and moved abroad. It's too far away. It was an unavoidable situation."

Lilly nodded and said appreciatively, "Thank you, Margaret and Jack. With you here, Granny won't feel so lonely at home."

Margaret chuckled and said, "It's our job! We're happy to help!"

Margaret added playfully, "We didn't want to, but the Crawford family is just too generous!"

Lilly burst into laughter upon listening to Margaret's words.

Suddenly, Lilly's phone chimed.

Lilly picked up her phone, but she rarely used it. There was hardly any communication in the underworld, and she did not have many people to contact daily. Her classmates had created a group chat for the upcoming New Year and added her to the chat. However, she had silenced the group messages because they were too talkative.

Lilly unlocked her phone and saw a message from Ivan.

Ivan wrote, "Lilly, are you home? I'm at your doorstep."

Lilly was surprised. Why had he come? Wasn't he planning to visit for the New Year in a few days?

[Chapter 1276 You Are My Best Friend](#)

Lilly hastily threw on a mink coat and rushed outside.

Josh noticed her leaving and followed, asking, "Lils, where are you going?"

Lilly hurriedly replied, "Ivan's here. I'm going to greet him."

Josh fell silent.

After the New Year, Lilly turned nine years old. She had grown up and become quite gorgeous. She wore a red mink fur coat with a long cape and seemed graceful as she walked through the snow.

"Ivan?" Lilly asked.

When Lilly reached the doorstep, she found Ivan standing there in silence. The weather has been extremely cold these days, with temperatures dropping to minus four or five degrees.

However, Ivan was wearing a down jacket without an additional hat, just pulling the hood of the jacket over his head.

Snowflakes fell on his shoulders, and his breath created clusters of white mist as he turned around.

"On such a cold day, why are you only wearing a down jacket?" Lilly asked in surprise. During the coldest times in Alford, a down jacket certainly wouldn't provide as much warmth as my mink coat. He had also been standing outside for quite a while.

Ivan replied, "It's fine; I'm not cold."

Ivan handed Lilly a ring and said, "Here, this is a storage ring."

Worried that Lilly might misunderstand, Ivan quickly explained, "I was actually looking for other storage bracelets or necklaces but couldn't find any."

Lilly accepted the ring and asked, "Why are you giving this to me? My dad already gave me one."

Lilly raised her hand to show Ivan a light purple ring on her index finger, which had been specially made for her by Blake. She had similar rings from childhood to adulthood. However, she started wearing them again when she was reincarnated.

Ivan pursed his lips and glanced toward the main Crawford mansion.

He had stood here for quite some time just now and figured out a way to see Cloud's figure through the glass windows.

Ivan said in a low voice, "There's some elixir inside the ring for old Mrs. Crawford."

Lilly finally understood Ivan's move. He had come specifically to deliver an elixir for Granny. He must be worried about her.

She tightly held the ring and said, "Thank you."

Although she already had one, Ivan's gesture meant more than anything else.

Ivan fell silent as he was unsure of what to say. I wanted to tell her not to be too sad, but I am afraid that saying this might make her cry.

"You..." Ivan hesitated for a while and said, "If you need anything, just let me know."

Lilly felt heart-warmed and nodded. Suddenly, she remembered something and hurriedly said, "Ivan, come inside quickly; it's so cold out here!"

Unexpectedly, Ivan shook his head and said, "No, I won't go in. I won't be coming to visit for the New Year in a few days." Daddy had mentioned that celebrating the New Year might not be suitable, as it would essentially be Cloud's memorial meeting...

"Goodbye," Ivan said, and he left.

Lilly fell into silence. I feel even sadder whenever I think about Cloud's situation.

Lilly stood beside the door while watching Ivan depart. For some reason, I suddenly felt like I was always on my own, all alone. It was a bit lonely, a bit bewildering, and a bit sorrowful.

Suddenly, Ivan turned back.

"What's wrong?" Ivan asked because he felt something was amiss. I could feel Lilly staring at me directly from the back. The snowflakes seemed to be fierce as well.

Ivan immediately turned around and went back.

Lilly sniffled and said, "It's nothing." Unexpectedly, I felt better after Ivan turned around and asked me... The feeling of my loneliness was suddenly gone in a moment.

"Thank you, Ivan," Lilly sincerely said. "You're my best friend."

Ivan remained silent for a moment and said, "Copy that."

Lilly said, "Won't you come inside for a while? Have a cup of hot tea to warm up."

Ivan smiled and declined, saying, "No, I won't. If I go in, Drake might kick me out immediately."

Lilly found it strange. She said confusingly, "Why would he do that? Friends are always welcome; he wouldn't really do that!" Drake wasn't stingy, and a cup of tea wouldn't cost us much! It wasn't like he was robbing the place; he did not need to be worried!

The only reason Lilly could think of for Ivan declining to go in was related to money.

Ivan chuckled and said, "Hurry up and go inside now!"

Lilly stared at him, realizing he had genuinely decided not to go in. He really just came to deliver the elixir.

Lilly could not help but say, "Okay, then, Ivan, goodbye." She waved to him, wanting to see him off before returning inside.

However, Ivan said, "You go inside, and I'll leave after I see you've gone in."

Lilly was surprised and said, "What?" She did not understand why but eventually went inside after seeing Ivan's determination. Standing by the mansion's entrance, she looked back outside and could still faintly see Ivan's figure.

Ivan waved to her and then left.

On her way back, Lilly had calmed down a lot. She was deeply grateful for Ivan's company.

Ivan had watched Lilly walk to the doorstep, and as she turned around, her beloved family awaited her inside.

Lilly took a deep breath and walked inside.

[Chapter 1277 Quinnie Is Pregnant](#)

Bettany asked, "Who is it?"

Lilly said truthfully, "It's Ivan. He..."

She could not say that Ivan had come to deliver the elixirs, so she said in a panic, "He was passing by and came to greet me."

Bettany complained, "He's already at the door. Why don't you ask him to come in and sit for a while?"

Lilly smiled naughtily. "He was in a hurry, so he only greeted and left."

Bettany felt strange. Why did Ivan come over if he was in a hurry? There was something wrong with that kid.

Bettany was suspicious but did not ask any more questions.

Everyone spent most of the time eating, sleeping, or walking around during the New Year.

King of Styx liked days like this the most. It was perfect for him! He enjoyed it!

Some people came to visit the Crawford Mansion. The Crawford Mansion was lively and busy, and the fourth day of the New Year passed quickly.

Quinnie came over to greet the Crawford family, and her eyes lit up when she saw Lilly. "Wow, Lilly! You've grown up!"

She missed Lilly so much. When she first met Lilly, Lilly was still a cute little sweetie!

Quinnie hugged Lilly.

Lilly was also surprised. "Quinnie... Aunt Quinnie! Are you pregnant?"

Quinnie's belly was already slightly bigger. She smiled shyly. "Yes, it's already been four months..."

Lilly said happily, "Wow, Matt! Another baby is coming soon!"

Matthan responded, "Eh!"

Everyone could not help but laugh.

Lilly greeted them all politely, "Grandpa Osmond, Grandma Eloise! Happy New Year! I wish you good health and all the best!"

Quinnie's parents, Osmond Woods and Eloise Tyler were smiling and stuffing gift bags for Lilly. "Lilly, Happy New Year! Wish you all the best!"

"Thank you!" Lilly took the gift bag. Collecting money was good. She liked collecting money the most!

"Grace! Happy New Year!" Lilly looked at Grace with a smile.

Grace responded, "Happy New Year." She also took out a gift bag expressionlessly. "This is for you."

Then, she emphasized, "It's not that I want to give it to you. My parents insist on asking me to prepare it."

Lilly grinned. "I understand! You use Grandpa Osmond and Grandma Eloise as an excuse!"

Grace's brows twitched, and she snorted.

Osmond and Eloise were her parents, but Lilly called them Grandpa and Grandma, which felt weird.

Grace was born late. There was nothing she could do about the family's seniority.

The Woods family, a family of four, had arrived. Bettany suggested visiting the Woods family before, but the Woods family felt there were many people in the Crawford family, so they brought the whole family over.

The Woods family had a simple population with only two daughters, Quinnie and Grace. If the Crawford family had gone there, there would have been more than ten or twenty people.

"Come on. It's your turn!" Eloise said to Quinne.

Quinnie faced Bettany and shouted openly, "Mom! Happy New Year!"

Bettany smiled happily.

She finally had another daughter-in-law! She had eight sons and three daughters-in-law, not including Winona, the daughter-in-law they first met, and now only two were left.

Liam did not want to remarry. Bryson, the captain, did not want to be tied down by marriage.

Edward was unromantic. When he saw a woman, he only thought about how many steel bars she could carry.

Max spent the whole day in his laboratory to develop patents, which promoted the advancement of technology. He also had no intention of finding a girlfriend.

Not to mention Cloud, he had been on the front line before, but it was great that he was back this year. Bettany thought she could urge him to find a girlfriend.

She did not insist on whether her sons wanted to marry. The main thing was to enjoy the joy of urging them.

Gilbert was the youngest and had always said he was not in a hurry. After all, his elder brothers were not married yet.

Bettany was worried before. Her sons were getting older and were still unmarried.

Later, she thought about it. Getting married or not was a way of life.

If her sons could not have a happier life, it would be better not to marry.

The two families together made the mansion even more lively. The living room of The Crawford family seems crowded.

Eloise smiled and said, "Quinnie will be a mother but still stay home to celebrate the New Year. She keeps clinging to me!"

Bettany smiled and waved. "It doesn't matter!"

Osmond felt relieved. Bettany was tolerant and did not think there was any taboo in having Quinnie celebrate the New Year at her parents' house after getting married. Quinnie and Jonas received their marriage certificate. According to ordinary people, Quinnie must celebrate the New Year at her husband's house this year.

However, Quinnie was reluctant to leave home, so Bettany asked Jonas to spend the New Year with her

at the Woods family.

On New Year's Eve, Jonas spent the morning with the Woods family. Both families were in the city. It was a short way to drive back and forth.

In the afternoon, Quinnie wanted to come back with Jonas, but Jonas worried she would catch a cold while pregnant, so he did not let her come over. That was why Quinnie was absent in the Crawford family on New Year's Eve.

Adults and children had different topics, so Lilly pulled Grace away.

"Grace, when will you officially return? Madame Maya can't wait to retire!" Lilly asked.

Grace reluctantly said, "There's still one last tear left..."

[Chapter 1278 What Was Supposed to Come Has Come](#)

Lilly was curious. "There are so many tears in this world. Isn't it easy to collect them? Grace, you've regressed!"

When the destined rivals met, Lilly could not help but tease Grace again.

Grace rolled her eyes at Lilly angrily. "The last tear is a tear of love!"

Lilly responded, "It's so easy to find! There are so many people crying for love in the world!"

Grace said nothing more. Lilly won't understand it! I need to collect my tears of love!

Grace was almost pissed off. She felt that she would never be able to achieve her goal in her lifetime.

What love could she have that she would weep for a man? It was possible in her previous lives but was impossible in this life!

She had sealed her heart and would not fall in love with a man. She even wanted to laugh when she read those love stories.

Lilly looked sad. "It's over. You're going to become an old granny!"

Grace instantly slapped Lilly's head unceremoniously.

Lilly held her head and yelled, "Ah! You cheated! How could you do a sneak attack!"

How dare she hit the King of Hell's head!

Josh was very protective. He was fine to see Grace arguing with Lilly, not fighting.

He ran over to protect Lilly and half-jokingly said, "Don't bully my sister, or don't blame me for beating you!"

Josh pumped his fist. Unexpectedly, Grace gave him a condescending look and said contemptuously, "You can't defeat me!"

Josh was pissed off!

Lilly quickly grabbed Josh. "Forget it! It's New Year!"

Josh shouted, "Don't stop me! I'm going to beat Grace up!"

Grace said provocatively, "Come on! Beat me up if you can!"

The arrival of the Woods family washed away a lot of hidden sadness. It was lively for a few days. In the blink of an eye, it was the eighth day.

Starting from the eighth day, people had to return to work. Anthony had to go to the company. Edward, Liam, Gilbert, and Bryson must return to work.

Edward asked strangely, "Bryson, aren't you going back to work?"

Bryson did not say that he specifically asked for leave. He only said, "I haven't taken any leave all year round. I still have 15 days of annual leave. It's a waste if I don't take it."

Edward looked at Liam. "How about you? Why don't you leave!"

He took his briefcase and waited for Liam. Unexpectedly, Liam, who was efficient in the past, was now delaying.

Liam frowned. "I'm leaving." Forget it. It'll be weird if I don't leave.

Liam looked at Cloud talking to Bettany and occasionally hesitated to speak but quickly covered it up.

Liam felt depressed and walked out silently. Edward could only catch up with him. "Hey, you're so weird. Wait for me!"

Idiot. Liam secretly cursed. But when he thought about it, sometimes it was better to be stupid than clever.

Bryson looked at Jonas and asked, "What about you?"

Jonas said, "I'm not in a hurry."

Anthony and the others could hide their acting skills from Bettany, but not him. He had been acting for many years. There would be traces in all their performances.

Jonas observed for two days and gradually felt desperate, and he silently adjusted and recovered.

Quinnie was originally going to live with the Crawford family for a while, but thinking of what they would face later, Jonas let her return.

When the house gradually became quiet, Bettany felt something was wrong.

"Cloud, what do you want to say?" Bettany wondered. "Just say it!"

Cloud knew he could not hide it anymore. Judging by the time, the military department would notify family members to pick up his body today.

He could not stop trembling, and his eyes turned red.

Bettany's heart tightened. "What's going on? Did something happen? Don't worry. Your brothers will help you..."

Cloud suddenly knelt upright and was full of guilt. "Sorry, Mom! I..."

Bettany's heart skipped a beat, and she felt the bad premonition again. Her heart beat rapidly.

"Cloud, you..."

Before she finished speaking, she heard hurried footsteps outside. "Mr. Crawford, Mrs. Crawford, someone from the military department is here..."

Standing on the stairs, Lilly suddenly felt cold. What was supposed to come had come. Could Bettany be able to accept the truth?

Lilly panicked and ran downstairs. She threw herself into Bettany's arms and hugged Bettany tightly.

Bettany only felt her heart sinking deeper.

Her eyes were already red, and she forced a smile. "Is there someone from the military department? They're here to appoint Cloud, right? Margaret, hurry up to prepare tea. You all don't stand here! Tidy up! The leader is coming!"

Jonas turned his face away and felt his throat clogged.

Anthony and Liam returned at some point and stood at the door silently.

Bryson quickly looked up to prevent his tears from falling and to avoid being laughed at by his brothers.

Bettany kept a smile and joked, "What are you doing? The military department isn't here to catch traitors! Cloud isn't..."

Cloud suddenly cried out in pain. "Mom!"

[Chapter 1279 Refuse to Accept the Fact](#)

Cloud burst into tears. Looking at his mother's unwillingness to accept the fact, he felt he owed his parents so much.

Hugh sat aside in a daze and could not say anything.

Bettany said, "Hey, what are you doing? Go and tidy up quickly! Cloud, why are you kneeling? Get up to meet your leader! Bryson, Jonas, stand up. Anthony, Liam, didn't you go to work? Why are you back again?"

Bettany stood up and asked people to prepare tea while hugging Lilly. "What's the matter, Lilly? What are you doing with your uncles today?"

Lilly could not help but cry. "Granny..."

Bettany's fingers trembled slightly. She wanted to say something else and forced a smile, but she could not.

Blake stood behind Bettany at some point and pressed on her shoulders. The golden light flowed quietly to support Bettany.

Bettany turned around and saw someone from the military department coming in while holding a black box. Inside was a set of bloody clothes.

They did not see Cloud, and Bettany only heard those few words.

"Comrade Cloud Crawford has been martyred...."

The surrounding sounds were noisy, including the teacup held by Margaret falling to the ground, everyone's exclamations, and someone shouting, "Dad! Mom!"

...

Bettany's ears buzzed, and she turned dully to look at Cloud, who was still beside her.

She suddenly laughed. "You all are joking, right? You're playing a prank on me, aren't you? Don't make this joke next time..."

The comrades in the military department endured their sadness. Some even pressed their mouths hard for fear of crying out of control.

They saw Bettany talking with a smile and said they were joking with her.

Her hands caressed her side in vain, and she forced a smile. "Isn't Cloud here? You guys are talking nonsense."

Several younger comrades could not help but cry. Bettany was devastated by the news of her son's death.

They could endure the hail of bullets and the pain of injuries, but they could not bear the heart-wrenching pain.

"Mrs. Crawford!"

They wanted to say something, but Bettany's gaze fell to the side and said, "Cloud. Your leaders and comrades are here. Why don't you go to greet them? I'll make some dishes. Let's have a good meal with them!"

Cloud collapsed. Even if he became a ghost, he felt distressed to see Bettany's desperate look.

He held his mother's hand and said repeatedly, "Sorry, Mom, I was wrong! I shouldn't have let you suffer!"

Bettany held his hand tightly, and her tears fell silently. She murmured, "Don't say nonsense."

Cloud had not sacrificed. He even celebrated the New Year with her two days ago. He was still fine, smiled at her, and talked with her for a few days.

However, Bettany was sober. She already had the ominous omen on New Year's Eve but forcibly suppressed it. When the Woods family came over, Cloud said he had something to do and did not show up in front of anyone.

How could she still be unclear?

"Cloud... Cloud!" Bettany burst into tears, but she did not make a sound. Instead, she smiled. "Cloud, what do you want to eat today? I'll make it for you..."

Cloud collapsed and cried.

He knelt on the ground, hugged Bettany's legs tightly, and said repeatedly, "Mom, I won't go to reincarnation! I'll always be with you..."

Lilly turned pale and stood aside blankly. She had practiced it thousands of times but was still not ready.

The elixir for Granny!

Lilly took it out in a panic and regretted not putting the elixir in Bettany's meal or coaxing Bettany to eat it in advance. How could she forget it?

Lilly clutched the elixir tightly but no longer knew how to trick Bettany into taking it.

"Granny..." Lilly cried, hugged Bettany, buried her head in Bettany's arms, and kept saying, "Granny, don't be like this. I'm scared..."

[Chapter 1280 | Lost Cloud](#)

Jean floated aside and cried uncontrollably but did not dare to make a sound. "Mom, you have Lilly. I'm here. We're all here. We'll always be here..."

Bettany suddenly came to her senses. She heard Lilly crying. Lilly was scared.

She hugged Lilly tightly and finally could not help but cry.

Bettany bent deeply and cried loudly. "Lilly, I don't have Cloud anymore! Cloud can no longer come back to me alive! I lost Cloud..."

Cloud was like the morning glow beside the clouds. It once appeared so brilliantly, full of vitality and hope, but soon disappeared from the world. She would never see that morning glow again.

She named him Cloud because she wanted him to be like the morning glow.

When he was a child, he signed up for school. The teacher pronounced his name wrong. Bettany would correct the teacher and say it was Cloud instead of Claud.

Later, as he grew older, she no longer corrected his name with others. She laughed it off when others pronounced him Claud, and she made it clear that it did not matter whether they pronounced him Claud or Cloud.

However, she would not get another chance to correct his name again.

She regretted why she did not correct it a few more times.

"Cloud won't come back anymore..." Bettany cried uncontrollably.

Everyone's eyes were reddish, and they were holding back their cries. They were afraid when Bettany did not cry, but they worried when she cried.

They were afraid that she would not be able to control her emotions. What if she fell ill and could not afford it?

Cloud kept gulping, and his throat seemed stuck. He could only cry.

He saw the elixir clenched tightly in Lilly's hand. He suppressed his tears and said, "Mom, I want to eat candy."

Bettany burst into tears and said repeatedly, "Eat candy, okay... Cloud wants to eat candy."

It must have been hard for Cloud when he was outside. Did it hurt when he died? When he was a child, he was most afraid of pain. She would give him candy to coax him when he got a vaccination.

"Candy..." Bettany looked for candy in a panic.

Lilly quickly poured out all the elixirs and said, "Granny, I have candy..."

Bettany quickly grabbed it and said, "Okay, candy is here..."

Seeing Bettany talking to herself, the people in the military department could not bear it anymore and temporarily retreated outside to wipe their tears.

Bettany gave Cloud the elixir and said, "Eat it. You won't hurt anymore."

Cloud smiled. "I want you to eat candy with me."

Bettany nodded repeatedly, grabbed the elixir, and put it into her mouth.

The elixir melted instantly. Bettany could not taste the sweetness, but her attention was not on it now. She did not notice why the candy disappeared after entering her mouth and even forgot when she swallowed it.

She pulled Cloud up. While tidying up his military uniform, she kept telling him, "Pay more attention on the road. Get there early. Don't worry about me too much. I'll be fine. After you settle everything, remember to come to my dream to tell me what you want to eat..."

Bettany wished Cloud not to forget her if he went to reincarnation again. But after reincarnation, how

could she still be his mother? How could she make her son difficult and ask him to remember her?

Bettany could not help but cry while admonishing Cloud.

Cloud said sadly, "Mom, I won't leave. I'll come back to see you often..."

Bettany only nodded. "Okay..."

She did not dare to ask for anything. After death, the Hell Ruler would be in charge. There were rules everywhere. If Cloud could return casually, the mortal world and underworld would not exist.

Anthony was outside talking to people from the military department to know when they would pick up Cloud's body and bury it.

Hugh stood behind Anthony at some point as if losing all the spirit while listening silently to Cloud's burial arrangements.

Edward had been stunned at the door for a long time and never returned to his senses. He was dumbly listening to Bettany cry, watching Anthony arrange Cloud's funeral with the military department, watching the sorrow Hugh listened to the conversation.

Liam stepped forward to support Hugh. "Dad, go back first. We can do it."

Hugh shook his head. "I'm fine. Your mom can't take charge of these things..."

The howling wind and snow drowned out Hugh's voice. It also overwhelmed Gilbert and Max, who were standing outside the door. Their hands and feet were cold, and they felt like they had fallen into the abyss.