

Chapter 2

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Perhaps because I seemed easygoing, or they thought their act was seamless, Lana's behavior became increasingly overstepping.

In the past, when I caught her being overly close with Yasmine, she would at least offer an explanation. Now, she would openly hold Yasmine in her arms and feed her right before me.

"Dana, you're busy with work. Leave Yasmine's matters to me!"

"Dana, I attended Yasmine's parent-teacher meeting on your behalf today. You've been up working until midnight lately, so Harlan asked me not to disturb you."

"Dana, Yasmine is down with the flu. I'll stay with her for a few nights so that she doesn't disturb you or affect your work."

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Later, I would wake up several times in the middle of the night, only to find that Harlan wasn't in bed. In Yasmine's room, just separated by a wall, the sound of laughter from the three of them rang out.

I silently turned over.

Seeing that I didn't notice anything amiss, Harlan became bolder. Sometimes, he even held Lana's hand under the dining table and stroked it right in front of me. My very own daughter, Yasmine, grew more attached to Lana as well. Sometimes, she would refuse my bedtime stories and insist on Lana putting her to sleep.

Neither did I reprimand them nor did I get angry. Instead, I silently allowed all of this to happen.

Then came the day Yasmine's university entrance exam scores were released.

Looking at her poor scores, Lana was more anxious than I was as her mother. "How did you score so little? Look, there isn't a single school in the country that will accept you!"

Admiring her freshly done manicure, Yasmine replied irritably, "If I can't study in the country, I'll go abroad. My mom's the CEO of a corporation. Do you think she'll let me go without an education?"

Seeing that I didn't immediately respond, Harlan acted like he was about to scold Yasmine. "Your mom and I have spoiled you too much! Your mom has sacrificed so much for you, and this is how you repay her? How do you expect to manage the company in the future or gain others' respect?"

Yasmine turned her head to avoid him and angrily clung to my arm. "Mom, I want to study abroad. Can you figure something out for me?"

Looking at these three putting on such a dedicated performance, how could I ruin the mood? I smiled faintly, speaking in a gentle tone, "Yasmine is right. If she can't study locally, she'll go abroad. My daughter will never lack opportunities. Once you've completed your studies, I'll hand the company over to you. My Yasmine deserves nothing but the best!"

For a moment, a look of jealousy flickered across Lana's face, but she quickly suppressed it. The three of them exchanged a smile as if they had reached some secret understanding.

I smiled too.

I was smiling at their audacity.