## For Dinner 341



Whether the judges knew or not was hard to say. Moreover, the place where he met Cindy Clarke yesterday was indeed where the audience and contestants would not go. He and Charles Payne had gone there because there were too many contestants and audience members. So, the two of them took a detour around the racecourse and finally found a path. Although quite distant, it had fewer people and was quiet, so they happened to meet Cindy Clarke. As for the contestants, they would rather walk in more populous places to increase their exposure, right? They certainly wouldn't choose a sparsely populated path. Moreover, that stretch of road was particularly winding and far away. Why would Cindy Clarke and Adrian Zhekova be on that road if it weren't for the sake of deception? Seeing the two of them being so evasive, Ian Morris couldn't help but feel that there might be some trickery involved.

Otherwise, what would they have to hide so much?

Ian Morris was lost in his thoughts and couldn't snap back to reality for a while.

After initially being dumbfounded, Cindy Clarke noticed that something seemed off with Ian Morris's expression.
As if he had misunderstood something.
But no matter how smart Cindy Clarke was, she couldn't have possibly guessed that Ian Morris's mind would harbor such dirty speculation.
Cindy Clarke wanted to explain her relationship with Adrian Zhekova to Ian
Morris: "I"
"Ian!" A female voice sounded, revealing a sense ot urgency.
The voice was loud and urgent, piercing Cindy Clarke's ears, causing them to ache a bit.
Following that, a wave of fragrance drifted by.
Then, Cindy Clarke finally saw the owner of the voice.
It was a delicate and petite girl.
She was dressed exquisitely and looked quite beautiful.
Her whole body exuded a sense of delicateness, and her clothes and accessories were all from well-known brands.
There wasn't a single brand-name item on Cindy Clarke.
Although her income was enough to buy those luxury brands, she had never bought any.

Jewelry and accessories were never worn by her in daily life because they were inconvenient when preparing cuisine.

As for clothes and bags, Cindy Clarke felt that ordinary attire looked good enough, and as long as they were wearable, they were fine.

So, although Cindy Clarke's clothes looked nice, people could tell they weren't expensive.

"lan, everyone is waiting for you." The girl ignored Cindy Clarke and looked up at Ian Morris. "We've been waiting for you for a long time over there. We saw you come out of the restroom but didn't come to find us."

To get to the restroom in the shopping mall, you had to walk through a corridor.

The restrooms were hidden in the corridor, so Ian Morris's friends were waiting at the entrance of the corridor, not directly at the restroom door. As for Cindy Clarke, since she couldn't leave Morgan Zhekova alone, she waited in the corridor itself..

Chapter 342: I am a Chef

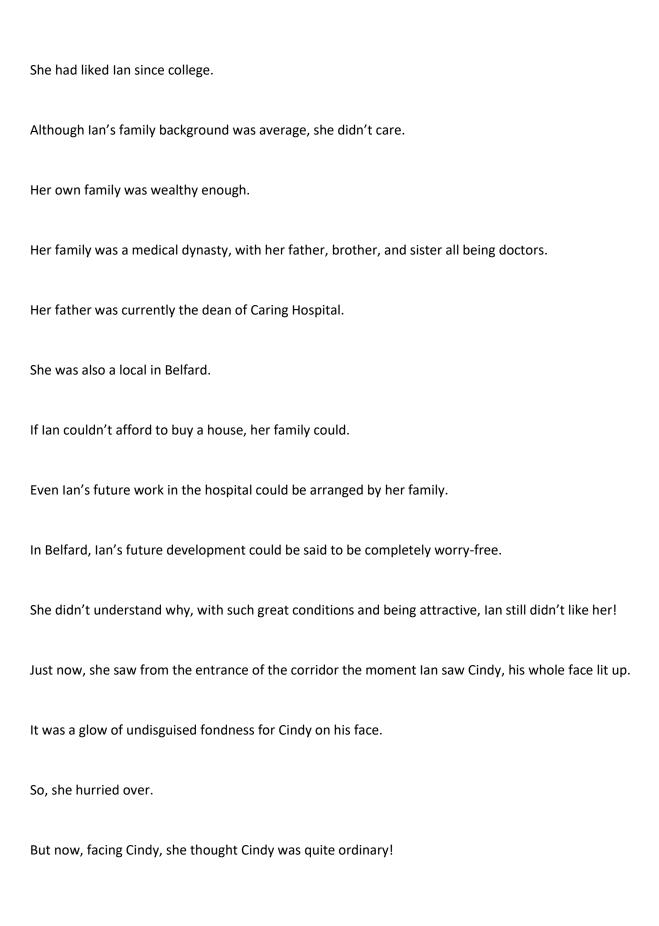
At this moment, the girl seemed to notice Cindy for the first time and looked at her, "lan, is she your friend?"

Ian Morris smiled and replied, "She's my high school classmate, Cindy Clarke."

After saying this, Ian hesitated for a moment but didn't reveal that Cindy was Cain Velman.

He remembered that Cindy didn't seem willing to mention this.





Maybe her appearance was fine, but her outfit was just too plain, and she looked like someone with average means.

She knew Ian had high standards and wouldn't settle for just anyone.

But how could he be attracted to an ordinary woman like Cindy!

Cindy didn't reveal her identity as a food blogger.

Seeing the reaction of the girl in front of her, it appeared she didn't know her, and probably wasn't following the news about the Pingla Competition.

She hadn't seen either the live broadcast of the Pingla Competition or any subsequent news and comments online.

However, while the attention to the Pingla Competition was not low, it hadn't reached the point of nationwide participation.

Furthermore, as busy medical professionals, they certainly wouldn't have had much time to pay attention to it.

Therefore, Cindy simply said, "I'm a chef."

Having entered the field as a food blogger, many people didn't consider Cindy a professional chef.

At this stage, Cindy's goal was to be recognized as a chef by others..

Chapter 343: Disdain

Being able to say "I am a chef" made Cindy Clarke feel immensely proud.

However, Eleanor Ward's mouth curved into a sneer.

"I always thought chefs were mostly men," said Eleanor. "After all, working in a kitchen is so tough and physically demanding. Handling spoons and such, those pots are so heavy. You're just a delicate girl, can you bear it?" "I can't believe it, where do you work?" Eleanor asked again. "We should go there sometime and try your cooking."

"But I heard it's difficult to get promoted to head chef. At your age, you must still be an apprentice, right?" Eleanor shook her head. "Why would a girl like you choose a physically demanding job with so much grease?"

"And besides, being a chef is pretty much the same no matter where you go, right? Why bother coming to Belfard, with all the stress and pressure of living here? People come to Belfard to seek better opportunities, better jobs, and expand their networks. But at the same time, many give up under the heavy burden of life in Belfard and return home."

"But a chef... I haven't heard of anyone coming to Belfard just for that. If you were the head chef at a fancy hotel, that would be a different story, but as an apprentice, you make so little money. Can you even make ends meet in Belfard?"

"Which school did you graduate from? What did you study? How did you come up with the idea of becoming a chef?" Eleanor eagerly asked one question after another.

It sounded like the innocent questioning of a nave girl.

But, being an intern, she'd already seen all sorts of people every day.

Not just patients, but the complex interpersonal relationships between colleagues and superiors.

Even the most innocent person should have learned a bit of tact by now.

At the very least, they should know some basic manners when speaking.
Cindy glanced towards the men's bathroom door behind Ian Morris. Morgan Zhekova hadn't come out yet.
But, Cindy had gotten fed up and didn't want to engage with Eleanor any longer.
Although Ian didn't know why Cindy had chosen to become a chef, he knew that she wasn't an ordinary chef.
At least her income now was something they couldn't compare to, even if they became full-fledged doctors.
Feeling embarrassed, Ian tried to stop Eleanor. "Eleanor"
But, Eleanor suddenly reached out and grabbed Ian's arm.
Her movement was so natural, as if she'd been used to it for a long time, and had done it many times before.
lan's arm stiffened, and seeing Cindy's gaze fall on his arm, he couldn't help but awkwardly avoid her eyes.
He knew that Eleanor was fond of him.
Not only that, but his peers knew too.
Dating back to their school days, it went without saying.

Even after they were separated for hospital internships, every time they attended a get-together, his friends would always call Eleanor to come along, creating opportunities for them to be together.
In the past, Eleanor would occasionally grab him in ways that were almost intimate.
For example, holding onto his arm or snuggling up close from behind.
Not wanting to create an embarrassing scene for Eleanor or their friends, lan refrained from saying anything.
He just hoped that when they were assigned to different hospitals.
And as work got busier, their opportunities to meet would decrease.
And he wouldn't have to confront Eleanor directly.
But he didn't expect that now, in front of Cindy, she would reveal it.
Embarrassed, Ian tried to pull his arm away from Eleanor's grasp
Chapter 344: The More You Speak, The More Outrageous
But Eleanor Ward had simply pulled his arm into her embrace.
Where they touched, it was both awkward and way too intimate.
At this moment, Cindy Clarke couldn't help but understand where Eleanor's hostility towards her came from.

First, it was Adrian Zhekova who thought Ian Morris had feelings for her, and now Eleanor Ward felt the same way.

It wasn't that she was narcissistic, but if more than one person thought so, it might very well be true.

Although in this regard, her reactions had always been slow, and she had no experience or sensitivity about emotional matters.

But even if she didn't trust Eleanor's feelings, she trusted Adrian's judgment.

Just as Cindy was about to speak, Eleanor spoke up first: "Since you're lan's classmate, we're all insiders here. Being a girl, working as a chef isn't really a solution. You spend every day in the smoky kitchen, working with so many rough people. There are very few female colleagues in your line of work, right?"

"Besides, at the restaurant, the only colleagues you have besides the chefs are the waitstaff. To put it bluntly, they have neither education nor experience. If you hang out with these people for too long, you'll narrow your horizons too. And the pay isn't much, it won't work in Belfard."

"How about I find you a connection and introduce you to a new job? Even if it's just an ordinary clerk, it's still better than working in the kitchen," Eleanor suggested. "Otherwise, it's better to go back to Nork City."

"Eleanor." Ian Morris reminded her disapprovingly.

"What's the matter?" Eleanor asked, seemingly confused. "I'm saying this for Cindy's benefit. A girl, working in a kitchen where all sorts of people can be found – what's that like?"

"Moreover, the level of contacts you have determines your horizons," Eleanor continued. "Us doctors have a high social status and the people we meet are of a higher level. What kind of people do chefs meet? There are only a handful of truly top-level head chefs — do you think anyone can become a State Banquet



"Of course, even with a new job, it still won't compare to being a doctor. But at least it's better than before." Eleanor's words served as a reminder of the gap between Cindy Clarke and Ian Morris'

Disregarding income and judging only by profession,

Cindy Clarke belonged to the social underclass.

And Ian Morris was already in the upper-middle class with a high social status.

lan secretly tugged at Eleanor, not wanting her to embarrass herself further.

As the number one food blogger and being with Adrian Zhekova, regardless of the nature of their relationship,

Cindy Clarke was by no means what Eleanor thought she was.

"By the way, where are you living now? Chef's wages aren't high, and rent in Belfard is particularly expensive. Are you living in one of those basement apartments that cost a few hundred a month? Or are you living in a shared space, where there are several beds in one room? Or, perhaps, in one of those narrow rooms that have been subdivided for rent?" Eleanor's words became increasingly offensive.

"Those places, as a girl, aren't safe for you, are they?" Eleanor looked at Cindy as if she had already been taken advantage of and bullied.

"However, with the salary of an ordinary chef's apprentice, you can't afford much better accommodations. But that's okay, if you really can't change your living environment, you can always go back to Nork City." Eleanor suggested.

"By the way, are you free today? If you are, why not join us for dinner?" Eleanor invited with a smile..

Chapter 345: Invite Your Boyfriend to Join Us

"No need." Cindy Clarke smiled lightly, "I have a date."
As the saying goes, never hit a person who's smiling. No matter how sarcastic their words might be, they still say it with a grin.
So, Cindy Clarke responded with an icy smile.
At this point, whoever shows their annoyance first loses.
Anyway, Cindy thought that if someone wasn't being slapped, it certainly shouldn't be her who showed impatience first.
"You have a date? Why not join us then?" Eleanor Ward thought that the kind of people someone associates with reveals their caliber.
How good can the person Cindy has a date with be?
Why not just let them come and see for themselves?
"Don't worry, you won't have to pay. You're a chef, right? Perfect, we need a professional to give their opinions!" Eleanor's smile was a bit malicious.
"We've reserved a table at Fuellero. Pingla Group has many restaurants under its umbrella, and they occupy a large part of this shopping mall. Apart from the Michelin-starred restaurant, there are several other high-end restaurants here. We chose Fuellero. It's considered very good, just below Michelinstarred."

"Michelin-starred restaurants require reservations well in advance. We're usually busy with work, so it's hard to know when we'll have time for sure. Who knows when something unexpected will come up, and we'll have to work overtime. So we didn't dare book too far ahead.' "So we chose a restaurant that, although not Michelin-starred, is still very good. It's quite famous among high-end restaurants." Eleanor elaborated, "Fuellero has a great reputation, and there are many people queuing up every day." "Why not come with us and give it a try?" Eleanor implied that Cindy wouldn't be able to afford Fuellero. Cindy couldn't help but laugh. For once, Eleanor truly amused her. It had been a long time since she had seen someone so full of themselves. Even Zoe Silverstone would have to concede defeat in front of her. Cindy thought about it she hadn't said much the whole time. The most complete sentence she said was when she introduced herself as a chef. As for which restaurant she worked at, how much she earned, and where she lived, she simply never mentioned. But Eleanor seemed quite capable. Based on only her statement "I am a chef," Eleanor determined all these things.

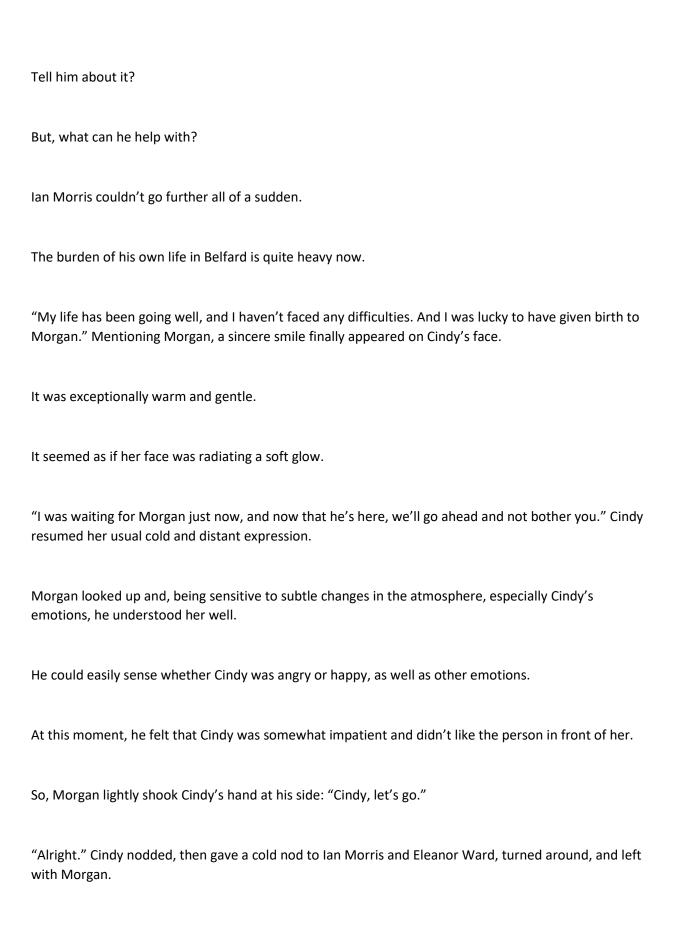
"No need, my boyfriend is waiting for me at another restaurant," said Cindy.

Hearing that Cindy already had a boyfriend, Eleanor's eyes lit up.
But then, she quickly resumed her vigilance.
How could someone like Cindy possibly find a good boyfriend?
Now that she had reconnected with Ian Morris, how could she easily miss out on such a high-quality man?
Eleanor felt she needed to continue her guard.
She even kept an eye on the doctors and nurses of the same age as Ian in the hospital.
She specifically bought spies to keep her informed about lan's situation at any time.
Not to mention Cindy had the added convenience of being an old classmate of lan's.
Meeting up with him would be a natural development, reminiscing about old times.
However, Ian had long stopped paying attention to Eleanor's reactions, and had no idea she was overthinking things.
His attention was focused on the word "boyfriend" from Cindy's statement.
Was the boyfriend she mentioned Adrian Zhekova?
Were she and Adrian Zhekova true boyfriend and girlfriend?

Or was Cindy simply trying to save face in front of them, so she called her relationship with Adrian that of boyfriend and girlfriend?
Many questions arose in Ian Morris's mind all at once.
"In that case, invite your boyfriend to join us," said Eleanor Ward immediately
Chapter 346: Morgan Zhekova is My Son
Perfect, let her see what kind of man Cindy found as her boyfriend.
And let Ian Morris see what kind of unbearable person Cindy was with.
A suitable lid for every pot.
A person like Cindy didn't deserve Ian Morris at all.
"We have already ordered our dishes." Cindy smiled coldly and distantly.
"Cindy!" Finally, Cindy heard Morgan's voice.
The little guy finally came out!
Because Ian Morris and Eleanor Ward blocked him, the little guy was too short.
So when he came out, Cindy hadn't seen him.

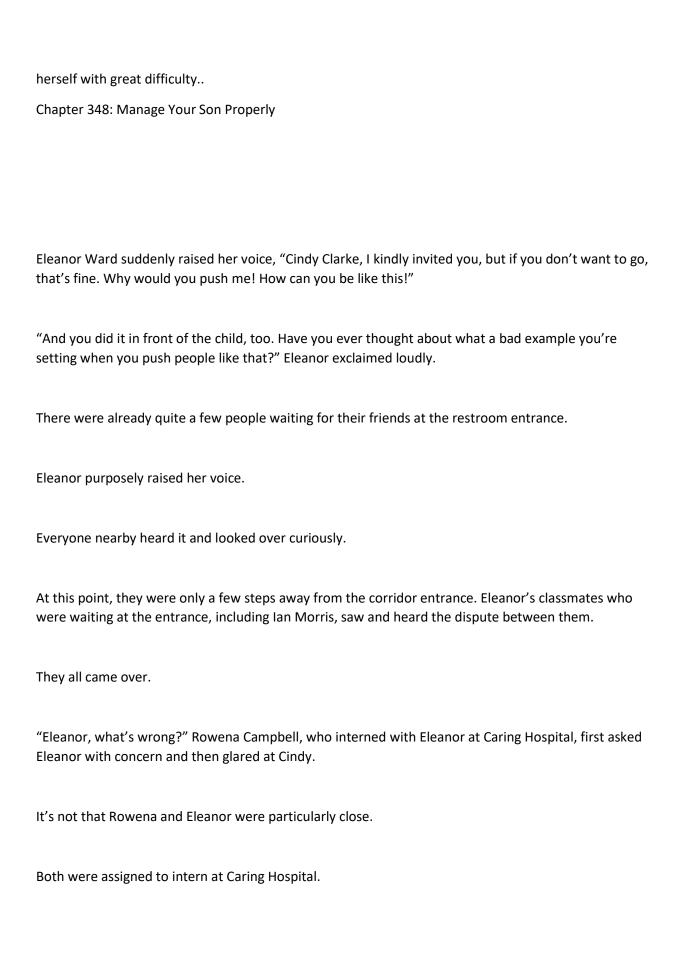


Fortunately, Cindy had found a boyfriend and had a son.
Maybe the son was fathered by her boyfriend.
Of course, according to the timeline, if so, the couple should be married by now.
So, Eleanor guessed again that it might not necessarily be her current boyfriend.
Living in Belfard, with the pressure of life, it was easier for two people to get together and warm each other's bodies; it's both cost-effective and mentally less stressful.
After calculating, Cindy was only 20 when she had Morgan, probably still naive, and had been deceived by scumbag men.
After giving birth to the child, the other party ran away.
After all, she was uneducated and living at the bottom of society.
It wasn't surprising for Eleanor that she would do such a thing. Eleanor had made up a story in her head about Cindy's past and the consequences.
"Morgan is my son," Cindy repeated to Ian Morris
Chapter 347: How do you want me to lose face?
"Cindy, what on earth have you been through these years? Did you encounter any difficulties in Belfard? Youyou can" What can she do?



"Wait!" Who would have thought that Eleanor would still not give up, even at this point?
Cindy took a deep breath, seeing that Eleanor had already rushed up to her face.
It's quite impressive that Eleanor could run so fast in such high heels.
"In that case, bring your boyfriend and Morgan, right? Join us for dinner. Since we've met, let's sit down and get to know each other. No need to be shy." said Eleanor.
"I'm not being shy with you." Cindy's mouth curved into a cold and mocking arc.
She really didn't expect that Eleanor would still not give up now that she had a son.
How come?
Did Eleanor still think she was a threat?
Cindy took a half-step forward and whispered to Eleanor, "I'm not interested in joining your dinner party. And don't bother me anymore. Otherwise, you'll be the one without a face."
Eleanor's face changed.
Unexpectedly, Cindy still acted so arrogantly!
She's just a cook trying to survive in Belfard.
Her life is hard enough on her own, let alone with a son.

How could Cindy act so arrogantly towards her?
Who would be the one without a face?
"How do you want to embarrass me?" Unable to hold back any longer, Eleanor threw off all pretenses.
She was always willful and flamboyant in her temperament.
The family conditions were good.
She had grown up in a big villa in Belfard, a city where land is so precious and valuable.
Her father was the Dean of a major hospital, a long-established expert.
Her mother was a renowned chief physician at Belfard's Pentz General Hospital, the very hospital where lan Morris interned, as well as being a professor at their Academy.
Her brother and sister-in-law were both doctors.
Eleanor's spoiled upbringing had done little to improve her temperament.
She had long disliked Cindy, simply trying to maintain a good image in front of Ian Morris.
It was unbelievable to Eleanor that she had been so patient, and yet, Cindy, a mere lowly person, dared to threaten her. Did Cindy really want to embarrass her?
Eleanor found it laughable!
Eleanor stumbled backward, as if she was about to fall, finally steadying



Eleanor's father was the Dean of Caring Hospital, and her mother was a chief physician there. Caring Hospital was practically Eleanor's territory. Eleanor didn't have to worry about performance evaluations. But Rowena did, which was why she firmly became friends with Eleanor. It would ensure her stability at Caring Hospital. After all, she still needed Eleanor's help with evaluation topics and scoring later on. "Why are you like this? And pushing people?" Rowena immediately questioned Cindy with displeasure. Gerald Young, who came with Rowena, didn't say anything and just watched from the side. He didn't know the situation and didn't want to get involved in the dispute between the two girls too quickly. Morgan Zhekova, who was standing next to them, puffed up her cheeks angrily and said loudly, "Cindy didn't push her! She's the one who suddenly stepped back!" Eleanor's face changed, "What do you mean by that? Are you saying I'm lying?" "What a joke!" Eleanor raised her voice even more, 'What kind of person is she to make me falsely accuse her?" Eleanor pointed at Cindy, "She's the one who pushed me!"

She then turned to Morgan, "Why are you lying?!"

Eleanor was trembling with anger, as if she had been genuinely wronged, "Cindy, you need to educate your son better. He's so young and already lying and blaming others!"

"I'm not lying!" Morgan's face turned red with anger, and she clenched her fists, her small body tense as she shouted, "I'm not lying!"

Cindy held Morgan's hand, giving her support.

She coldly told Eleanor, "Morgan is not a liar. My child is well brought up, polite, reasonable, and honest."

"Unlike you, such a grown person, yet you're falsely accusing a four-year-old child." Cindy's cold gaze was filled with contempt for Eleanor.

Cindy looked down at Morgan and said, "Morgan, let's not be angry. Don't take someone like this to heart, someone who habitually lies and has no manners.

It's her fault to blame you. She's 24, and you're just 4 years old. What she's doing is an insult to herself."

"I'm only four years old, and I don't lie! A grown person like you is still lying!" Morgan looked up and yelled at Eleanor, "Your upbringing is the one with problems!"

"Control your child!" Eleanor was furious.

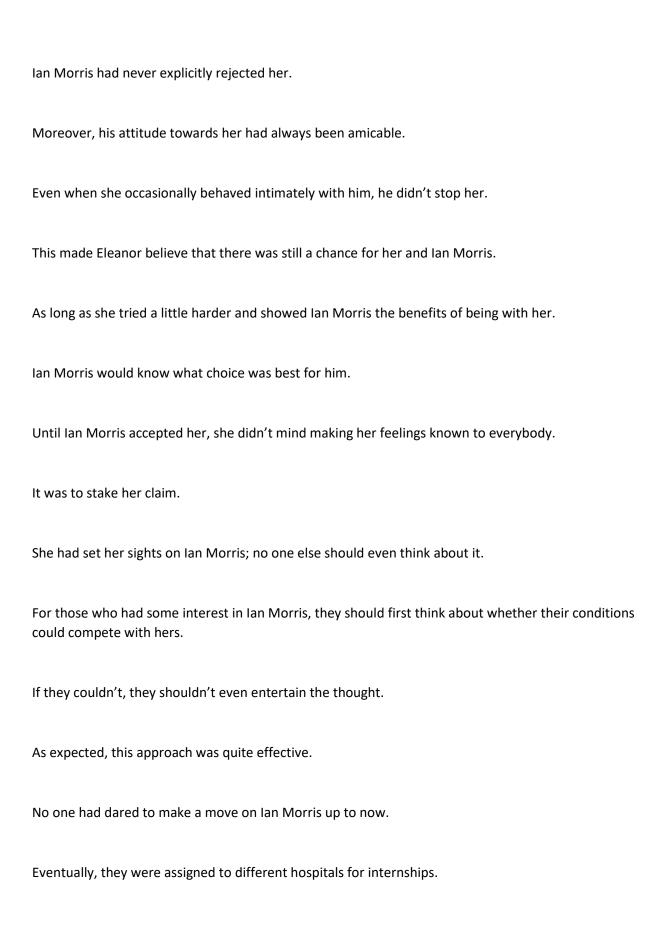
A four-year-old was actually daring to accuse her of having poor upbringing!

Her father was the Dean of Caring Hospital!

Her mother was a chief physician and a university professor!



But whether she had actually confessed her feelings or not didn't really matter.
Eleanor's affection for Ian Morris was practically known to all.
Yet to this extent, Ian Morris never made his feelings clear or even got close to her. What else could Eleanor not understand?
Ian Morris didn't like her.
She couldn't understand why Ian Morris didn't like her.
She had both looks and a remarkable family background.
On the other hand, Ian Morris was all alone in Belfard, without any background or connections.
She could offer everything Ian Morris lacked.
If they got together, Ian Morris' future would be secured.
He could establish a foothold in Belfard without having to bear so much pressure anymore.
He wouldn't have to struggle as much as others in order to settle down in Belfard.
She could give Ian Morris everything others longed for but didn't have.
But still, lan Morris just didn't like her.
It wasn't just that he didn't like her; it seemed as if there was always something missing between them.



Being new to the hospital, there were actually quite a few single and age-appropriate nurses who were fond of Ian Morris. Eleanor didn't trust the others, so she roped in Gerald Young to help keep an eye on him at the hospital. He didn't need to step in. He just had to let her know as soon as there was any sign of trouble. Whenever she had time, Eleanor would visit Ian Morris' hospital to stake her claim. She made it appear as if their relationship was ambiguous and somewhat intimate. After doing this so many times, other people who harbored affection for Ian Morris began to have doubts. Eleanor and Ian Morris' relationship was unclear; who knew what was going on between them? Even if they weren't dating. Having a woman constantly hanging around him with unclear intentions wasn't a good thing either. As for what others thought, Eleanor didn't care. And she didn't care about how much trouble she was causing Ian Morris either.. Chapter 350: Not even qualified to be compared with my boyfriend

Anyway, Ian Morris also has some responsibility in this situation.
If he doesn't explain himself, who's to blame?
So their relationship has been hanging like this.
But even though everyone knows what's going on.
It really is the first time someone has openly and explicitly pointed it out in public.
Eleanor Ward felt a moment of panic, afraid that if it was really pointed out, she might lose her chance.
Eleanor subconsciously turned to look at Ian Morris, who had just paused for a moment and then continued walking towards her.
Then she stiffened and said to Cindy Clarke, "I I don't know what you're talking about!"
"You like him, that's why you have such hostility towards me, even though I find it baffling," said Cindy coldly. "I have no interest in Ian Morris, and I have a boyfriend. We're dating with the intention of getting married."
"Not to mention, I also have a son." Cindy continued, "Let's just talk about the most realistic aspect: I have a son, and he has nothing to do with Ian Morris."
"Whether or not Ian Morris likes me, let's assume he does. But he's all on his own in Belfard, and his family's resources aren't enough to help him settle there. As long as he wants to keep living in Belfard, everything depends on him."

"Do you think he would choose someone like me, with a son, who can't help at all and would only hold him back?" Cindy said very rationally, not feeling like she was putting herself down.
Because the fact is, she wouldn't be a burden to anyone.
With her income, honestly, she could even afford to keep a pet dog.
So she could say this hypothesis without any burden.
As for Morgan Zhekova, he wouldn't have any negative feelings or inferiority complex because of Cindy's words either.
Are you kidding?
His father is Adrian Zhekova!
Who could make him feel inferior?
Just try to compare!
"So, I don't understand your reason for considering me your rival, being hostile towards me, and being guarded," Cindy said.
"Moreover, my boyfriend is so much better than Ian Morris." Cindy thought about it and realized that might not be the most appropriate way to put it, so she added, "No, it's not even comparable. Ian Morris doesn't even qualify to be compared to my boyfriend."
Eleanor listened as if she just heard the world's biggest joke: "Cindy, at least make your boasting believable. Have you not looked at your own level, but you don't think Ian is good enough?"
Cindy turned her head and saw lan's face turning red, looking very indignant.

She said indifferently, "I have no intention of humiliating Ian Morris, meeting an old friend from school should be a happy occasion. As for his character, I have no right to meddle."

"But today, you dragged me into this mess and falsely accused Morgan of lying," Cindy said coldly. "As someone who was involved by both of you, I have the right to say a few words, don't I?"

"You like Ian Morris, but has he ever made his feelings clear?" Cindy asked.

"I don't know what you're talking about!" Eleanor said uneasily.

"I don't care if you've confessed your feelings or not," Cindy said, regardless of whether Eleanor was denying it.

Anyone who wasn't blind could see Eleanor's attitude.

"Your attitude is so obvious that even I, who only met you for the first time today, can see it. Let alone lan Morris, who has known you since college and still sees you frequently. A person can feel whether someone else likes them or not from even the slightest behavior, let alone your behavior that's so obvious..'