

## In A Flash 91

### Chapter 91

1/2

Rosa, no longer the friendly woman who visited her company, was now dressed in black. She propped up one leg on a chair beside the bed amid a pile of shattered objects at her feet.

The people around her feared her, forming a circle two meters away.

Rosa didn't care and pushed her sleeves to her shoulders. She placed her hands on her hips as if ready to confront anyone who dared to approach.

It was laughable. Aurelia's mother had been in critical condition for nearly a month from the onset of her illness, and this was the first time Rosa had come to visit. She didn't expect it to be such a scene.

Thinking of her mother, Aurelia anxiously glanced at the hospital bed.

Fortunately, Sophia was guarding her; her mother still lay peacefully on the hospital bed, and the vital signs on the machine were relatively stable.

Once Aurelia relaxed, her anger intensified. She quickly walked up to Rosa.

"What are you trying to do?" Aurelia asked.

"Oh! You finally decided to come," Rosa yelled at the people around her. "You folks can be the judges here. My son approached her for reconciliation in a friendly manner.

"Instead of agreeing, she not only declined but also reported him to the police. Now my son is behind bars, and she's sleeping peacefully at home!"

The family members in the same ward looked at Aurelia with some surprise, as if they had never expected this from her.

Aurelia took a deep breath and reminded herself that this was a hospital ward and, even more so, an intensive care unit. She couldn't afford to argue here.

She softened her voice and said, "Mrs. Martinez, your son and I aren't married anymore. We've actually split up. I haven't even pressed charges against you for pretending to be my mother-in-law.

"Furthermore, your son is in custody due to his harassment towards me and for using a counterfeit watch to deceive people."

The people around them gasped at Rosa's antics and looked at her with mockery.

Seeing that no one was helping her, Rosa simply started causing a scene. She grabbed a chair and threatened Aurelia's mother, who was lying on the hospital bed.

"Aurelia! If you don't go to the police station to reconcile with Seth, I'll take you and your mother down with me!"

Seeing this, Aurelia was trembling with anger. Why couldn't they just let her end this relationship gracefully? Why can't they just let her be?

The people around them were alarmed. Even the security guards began searching for a way to defuse the situation.

However, the room was small, and all the patients were in critical condition. Any mishap could

affect the entire hospital.

One of the security guards looked at Aurelia and whispered, "Miss, calm her down. Your mother might not survive that blow."

Aurelia clenched her fists, her teeth grinding audibly. She was filled with hatred, but she felt helpless at the same time. Her mother's surgery was scheduled for the day after tomorrow, and she couldn't afford to let anything happen to her.

"I'll reconcile! Is that enough? Put the chair down, and we can talk outside."

With a loud crash, Rosa crudely smashed the chair against the bedside. She clapped her hands as if nothing had happened.

"Thanks a lot! This method really worked."

"What do you mean?" Aurelia sensed that something was amiss. It seemed like someone was coaching Rosa.

Rosa slyly shifted her gaze and started fiddling with her dress, changing the subject.

"Aurelia, why even bother? My son chose you, a woman with baggage, and you should consider yourself lucky. You're fortunate, but you don't seem to appreciate it. You have to be stubborn and confrontational with us! Well, I have nothing to lose!

"If anything happens to my son, your mother won't have an easy time either!"

Rosa's words had stirred up the anger of the people around them. However, facing such a thug-like person, most could only resign themselves to their misfortune and avoid confronting her.

Aurelia's face was cold as she asked, "Are we going to talk?"

Rosa finally stopped her commotion and walked out.

Once Rosa left, Aurelia anxiously approached her mother's bed, and the nurse called for the on-duty doctor. Thanks to the protection Sophia provided, her mother was not harmed.

However, she had a small cut on her rough hand.

Aurelia quickly reached into her bag and handed two hundred to Sophia.

“Mrs. Martinez, please let the nurse disinfect your

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“Alright, I’m fine. You should go. I’ll stay here with your mother,” Sophia said as she accepted the money.

“Thank you.”

Aurelia gratefully glanced at her and then left the ward.

## Chapter 92

Rosa commanded gruffly, “Let’s go! Come with me to the police station right now and tell them to release my son. Otherwise, your mother won’t have a peaceful surgery!”

Aurelia clenched her fists, her nails digging into her palms. She knew Rosa would do anything for Seth’s sake. She had no choice but to swallow the bitterness in her throat.

“I can go, but I want you to promise that you and your son will never disrupt me or my mother’s life again.”

Hearing this, Rosa glanced at the ward door and then cast a casual look at her. Her tightly pursed lips revealed a few lines that made her seem particularly harsh.

Rosa's gaze wasn't just focused on her; it was evaluating her. However, Rosa's acting skills were not as polished as Seth's. Thus Aurelia saw through her intentions.

Rosa couldn't immediately agree to her request because she feared Seth would never find another woman like her again.

A local woman whose father had passed away, whose mother was critically ill, who had no siblings, and who didn't demand a dowry. Marrying her meant that everything left by her parents would belong to Seth. It was a huge advantage, and how could their family bear to give it up?

Aurelia understood this but didn't show it. She calmly reminded Rosa, "Mrs. Martinez, if I don't intervene and help resolve this, given Seth's actions, he's likely to be held in custody for at least two or three days.

"That means he won't be able to return to work as planned on Monday. Imagine what his boss and colleagues will think when they find out about his arrest?"

With this reminder, Rosa became fearful. The greatest pride of her life was giving birth to Seth, and there was no way she would let him jeopardize his career.

"Alright! I agree!" Rosa huffed.

"Mrs. Martinez, it's better to be clear. What are you agreeing to?" Aurelia asked.

"I agree if you go to the police station to reconcile and have Seth released, neither I nor Seth will come to bother you and your mother again!" Rosa reluctantly repeated, wearing a defiant expression on her face.

In that situation, it was just the two of them, and who had been keeping tabs on what had been said or promised?

Even if Rosa had decided to backtrack later on, what could Aurelia have done about it?

When Rosa arrived at the hospital earlier, she had asked around. Not many people in this intensive care unit made it out alive.

Moreover, the critical point was that Aurelia claimed to be married, but her husband hadn't even visited his mother-in-law. No one on the other hospital beds had heard her mention being married.

Wasn't it evident that she was lying? What police station could verify her marriage? It was probably just a ploy to deceive Seth and break up with him.

No way!

If Aurelia wanted to drag it out, then let her. She was already 25, and the longer she dragged it out, the less valuable she became. Once her mother passed away, Seth could go and console her, and everything would be fine again.

Aurelia captured all of Seth's mother's smugness and insolence and raised her phone.

"Mrs. Martinez, I've recorded it."

"You..."

"Mrs. Martinez, if you ever come to disturb me again, everyone in Seth's company will have a copy of this recording."

"You bitch! You deserve to be an orphan! What are you without Seth?"

"If you dare to talk nonsense again, I won't go to the police station."

Rosa was about to say something, but she restrained herself and let out a cold snort.

Aurelia didn't want to argue with her anymore to avoid affecting her mother's surgery at the hospital.

"Let's go."

After saying that, she walked towards the elevator, with mumbles coming from Rosa, who followed her downstairs.

On the way to the police station, Aurelia still felt uneasy. She absentmindedly took out her phone and discovered more than a dozen missed calls from Millie. Due to the commotion in the hospital just now, she hadn't heard a single one.

All of them were from Millie. She wondered if something had happened during her blind date.

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Chapter 93

Worried that something might be wrong with Millie, Aurelia quickly called her.

However, there was no answer. She made several calls, all of which went unanswered. She had no choice but to send a few messages to Millie.

"Millie, are you okay? How did the blind date go? Something came up earlier, so I couldn't answer your calls."

"Millie, why aren't you responding? If there's a problem, please call me."

"Millie, let me know when you get home."

Each message seemed to vanish into thin air, and Aurelia couldn't help but frown her brows. Just as she was about to call Millie again, Seth's mother pushed her forcefully.

“Why are you still sitting in the car? You’re not thinking of backing out, are you?”

“I’m coming.”

Aurelia didn’t have the energy to argue with her and put her phone away before getting out of the car. When they entered the police station, they were greeted by a young man.

After explaining their purpose, he looked at Aurelia as if he couldn’t quite believe it. “Miss, it’s said that he harassed you for several days. Are you sure you want to reconcile?”

“Yes,” Aurelia nodded helplessly.

They both knew that harassment like this often didn’t stop after just one incident. If not resolved properly the first time, it could lead to even more trouble later. But Aurelia had to ensure her mother’s safety, so she had no choice but to agree.

The young man prepared the paperwork for them to sign, and after signing, someone led Seth into the room.

At this moment, Seth had lost his former confidence and swagger. His hair resembled a bird’s nest, with a noticeable bald spot at the back, as if someone had forcibly pulled a chunk out.

His nose was red and swollen, and there were clear handprint marks on his face. Even with his designer clothes, he couldn’t hide his comical disarray.

When Seth saw Aurelia, he clearly felt embarrassed and actually hid behind his mother like a child. Seeing her son in this state, Seth’s mother began to wail and complain.

“Seth, how did you end up like this? Did the police use violence against you? Tell Mom, I will definitely seek justice for you!”



“Ma’am, making false accusations against others can lead to legal consequences. If you have any doubts, we can discuss it further in the interrogation room,” warned the police officer. Upon hearing this, Seth’s face turned pale, and he hastily pulled his mother away.

“Let’s go, hurry up, don’t embarrass yourself any further.”

Apparently, he was aware that his actions were far from commendable. Seth’s mother couldn’t resist giving Aurelia a spiteful look as they left.

“Aurelia, just you wait!”

After saying this, the two of them hastily fled. The young man who organized the documents chuckled and discussed the situation with his colleagues nearby.

“This guy bragged about himself so much at the men’s social gathering. He claimed he received 3,000 dollars worth of designer items as birthday gifts from women. But he got caught red-handed when he wore a fake watch worth only 900 dollars.

“He thought wealthy people wouldn’t care about that small amount of money. But even wealthy people can’t let themselves be fooled like that.

“Two hours ago, that woman brought her five brothers over demanding money. This guy quickly caved and returned the money. As she was leaving, she asked for a hug, then forcefully pulled out a bunch of his hair.

“She even used the fake watch to hit his nose, resulting in a medical bill of 250 dollars. He didn’t dare to utter a word. We can’t really say much about it.”

Aurelia thought, 250 dollars? It must be his whole bank account. She couldn’t help but smile and felt like applauding this woman. Let’s see how Seth would act now!

With the situation resolved, it was already 1:00 AM. Aurelia called Sophia to check on her mother’s condition. After hearing everything was fine, she finally relaxed and went back home.

On her way home, she noticed Millie hadn't replied to her messages, and her phone was switched off. Aurelia assumed she must be asleep. If there was any issue, Millie would have already sent a long message filled with gossip.

Back at her place, Aurelia quietly entered her room, lay on the bed, and fell asleep.

In a hotel room, Millie was tightly wrapped in her blanket, crying bitterly. There were visible bruises on her neck from being choked.

## Chapter 94

"Alright, stop crying. Have some water and calm down."

A cup of warm water was handed to Millie.

The person speaking wasn't anyone else but Kimberly, who had followed Millie to the restaurant for her blind date.

As soon as Kimberly saw Millie's date, she knew he was a playboy. This kind of guy wasn't here for a genuine blind date; he was just using it as an excuse to fool around with women. He relied on his money to deceive innocent girls.

Most girls had some self-awareness and could tell from the first meeting that a guy with such excellent conditions wouldn't be looking for an ordinary girl as a wife. There must be ulterior motives.

But there were always a few who clung to the fantasy they were Cinderella. They wanted something for nothing, eagerly throwing themselves at such men.

Millie was one of those girls.

Did she really think she could match up to a rich and handsome man just by wearing a pair of high heels that cost 12 thousand dollars?

She should wash her brain before anything else.

The man she was meeting was quite average-looking but had money and behaved like a gentleman. He could adapt to Millie's type very well.

Millie was thrilled, thinking she had struck gold. Little did she know she was already being fooled.

After dinner, the man took Millie to the nearest bar. A couple of 200-dollar cocktails had her feeling on top of the world.

Kimberly found it ridiculous. Some people really needed more awareness.

After three drinks, Millie was feeling woozy, and the man started getting handsy. Millie wanted to resist, but did she have the strength?

Sitting in the private room, Kimberly watched and smiled because she knew her opportunity was here. Millie would definitely seek help from her good friend, Aurelia.

That's why Kimberly used another phone to inform Seth's mother to create a scene at the hospital. It would catch Aurelia off guard and divert all her attention.

Millie continued to struggle, repeatedly trying to contact Aurelia for help. Meanwhile, Kimberly drank and recorded videos, considering it a lesson for Millie. After all, Millie had often been confrontational with Kimberly in the past.

Finally, inside the private room, with Millie's clothes torn to shreds, Kimberly put down her phone and called security to enter. She even arranged for a luxury room in the hotel for Millie to stay in.

As her thoughts returned, Kimberly asked, "Are you feeling better now?"

Clutching the bedsheets, Millie's voice trembled as she said, "I want to call the police! I want to sue him!"

Hearing this, Kimberly burst into laughter. "Why are you laughing?" Millie gritted her teeth.

"Sorry, but I've always found you cute because you seemed silly, but I never thought you were really this naive.

"Do you

think someone who dared to do this wouldn't have a way to protect themselves? You ate and drank what he provided, held hands with him, and whispered to each other. If he

claims you were a couple on a blind date, do you think you can win?"

"I... It's not like that. I didn't agree to any of this!" Millie choked out.

"He can say he thought you agreed by not objecting. At most, he'll compensate you with some money, which won't cost him much. But for you... The whole world will know you were almost raped," Kimberly warned, trying to scare her.

Terrified, Millie stood up from the couch and paced anxiously around the room. "No! I can't allow anyone to know! How can I face the world like that?"

"Don't worry. As long as we keep quiet, no one will find out. I've paid for the room tonight. Rest well," Kimberly reassured her before leaving the room slowly.

At this moment, Millie finally calmed down. She stared at Kimberly with a puzzled expression. "Why did you help me?"

Kimberly adjusted her bag. She had been waiting for Millie to ask this question.

She sighed and said, "To be honest, you may not speak nicely at times, but we are colleagues. I couldn't just stand by and watch you get taken advantage of by a scumbag, could I? I'm not such an unreasonable person."

Millie's expression became slightly confused, and she didn't quite understand Kimberly's intentions.

Kimberly casually ran her fingers through her hair and smiled. "Not even a 'thank you'? I thought someone would come to your rescue when you kept making calls, so I didn't want to interfere. But in the end, I had to step in."

"Thank you," Millie reluctantly said, looking at her damaged phone.

Why didn't Aurelia answer her calls? Aurelia almost got her killed!

From Millie's expression, Kimberly could tell her purpose had been achieved. She turned and left the room, thinking, Aurelia, I've said it before. You can't beat me!

## Chapter 95

As soon as Aurelia woke up, she sent messages and called Millie.

Strangely, Millie didn't reply to her messages, and her phone was switched off. Well, she would ask her at the office later.

Aurelia stretched lazily, then headed to the bathroom for a shower before preparing breakfast. Seeing that it was almost time, she realized that even the seemingly serious and stern Leslie could sleep in.

Could he have overslept?

Unexpectedly, she found it a bit amusing and suppressed her smile. Worried that Leslie might be late and have his salary docked, she knocked on his door. "Mr. Synder, are you up? You'll be late if you don't get up."

She strained her ears for a moment and vaguely heard the sound of someone getting out of bed. Satisfied, she returned to the dining table and packed some breakfast to eat on the way.

She had just finished putting on her shoes when she heard Leslie's footsteps.

"Where are you going?"

"To work."

"Today is Sunday; your company doesn't have a day off?"

"Um... I forgot," Aurelia stood there awkwardly.

Leslie looked at her puzzled expression and realized that she had genuinely forgotten. It was the first time he had ever encountered someone so dedicated to work.

She had been so busy all week that she was disoriented and still thought it was Saturday. She hadn't realized it was already Sunday.

Most companies now have a five-day workweek with weekends off. But weekends are often the busiest for those involved in event planning like her. Sometimes, they even have to take time off on weekdays to compensate for their work on weekends.

That's why she had completely forgotten about her day off.

"You're still standing? Aren't you going to eat breakfast?" Leslie walked slowly toward the dining table.

“Yeah.”

Aurelia felt a little embarrassed. She took off her high heels and returned to the table. She unpacked the breakfast she had prepared earlier and continued eating.

After finishing the meal, Leslie wiped his mouth. “Do you have anything else to do later?”

“No, why?” Aurelia asked.

“The fridge is empty, so let’s go grocery shopping together,” Leslie said calmly.

“You heard that?”

Aurelia was surprised. She had casually mentioned it, not expecting Leslie to take it to heart.

Chaplet 95

30

The fridge was indeed empty, and she had planned to buy groceries herself. However, she couldn’t carry too much on her own.

With Leslie’s help, buying groceries for a week wouldn’t be a problem. After all, Leslie’s refrigerator was quite advanced, with automatic sensors on the doors and two vacuum chambers.

Out of curiosity, Aurelia looked it up online and found that it was designed to keep food fresh for up to ten days. The fridge looked beautiful,

But the price was even more impressive. It was nearly 50,000 dollars for such a refrigerator!

She couldn't help but think about how, before she arrived, this expensive refrigerator used to store only eggs and toast. What a waste!

Today, she was determined to fill that refrigerator to the brim!

"Why are you staring? If I don't go, you won't be able to carry too much stuff alone," Leslie said. He then got up and collected the dishes and cutlery. He did not seem reluctant.

Aurelia, caught off guard by his offer, remained frozen in place. She cautiously glanced at Leslie's back in the kitchen,

The difference between men could be so significant. Perhaps she had interacted with too few men before. That was why she had been easily deceived by Seth's so-called "sincerity".

When she was with Seth, not only did he not want to accompany her grocery shopping, but he also refused to go to the supermarket with her altogether.

Seth claimed supermarkets were where housewives went, so what could he do there? But Leslie voluntarily suggested going with her, solely because he considered she couldn't carry too much alone.

In reality, Seth should have understood these things as well. He had given so many excuses only because he was unwilling to make an effort.

Going to the supermarket was just a tiny matter in life. If she were to confront Seth about this issue on her own, she wouldn't have a strong argument. He didn't want to go, and she couldn't force him, right?

She was an adult, after all. Shouldn't she be able to handle a simple trip to the supermarket on her own?

There were countless reasons for everything.



But wasn't life just a series of small things? Crushing someone's feelings did not always require a catastrophic event. Sometimes, it was just the accumulation of little straws.

When Aurelia came to her senses, Leslie had already finished washing the dishes and walked out.

"Are you planning to go like this?" He wiped his hands and asked.

Aurelia lowered her head to look at her work uniform and quickly stood up.

"Wait a moment, I'll go change."

She rushed back to her room and took out a ginger-yellow dress from her closet. This dress had been a gift from her mother, and she treasured it, rarely wearing it. Today, she had no idea why she thought of it.

When she thought about changing her clothes, the first thing that came to mind was this dress. Her mother had given it to her, saying it would look beautiful on her fair skin.

In fact, it was true; she would draw a lot of attention wearing it.

But why did she suddenly think of it? Was it because of Leslie?

Soon, Aurelia shook her head to dismiss the thought that shouldn't have crossed her mind. It was probably because her mother was having surgery tomorrow that she thought of the dress.

After changing into the dress, she tied her hair into a bun. It was hot lately, and this hairstyle felt more refreshing.

She walked out of her room and adjusted her dress.

“Mr. Synder, I’m ready.”

Upon hearing this, Leslie, who was sitting on the couch, casually lifted his gaze. His eyes couldn’t help but linger for a moment.

This was the first time he saw Aurelia in anything other than her work uniform. It wasn’t an exceptionally fancy outfit; it was a style many young girls liked to wear.

It was only a round-neck long dress, but it somehow looked dazzling on her.

Her already fair skin appeared even more radiant against the ginger-yellow fabric. The round neckline emphasized her delicate collarbones, while the dress’s length revealed the slimmest part of her calves.

She looked playful and cute, with a simple bun and a few stray strands of hair falling gracefully.

How old was she, really?

People would believe she was in her thirties when she wore her work uniform. But now, in this outfit, she looked like a college freshman.

Sensing Leslie’s gaze, Aurelia asked cautiously, “What’s wrong? Is it not nice? I can change back if you’d like. I don’t have many casual clothes...”

Leslie interrupted, “This is fine. There’s no need to change.”

She should throw away those ugly, old-fashioned work uniforms that made her look older than she was.

He didn’t mention it out of consideration for her pride. He realized he was being overly meddlesome—when did he become so concerned about what other people wore?

Leslie furrowed his brows and headed toward the entrance.

Aurelia took her sneakers from the closet, ready to put them on, and Leslie's brow nearly creased into one.

"You don't have any other shoes?" A yellow dress paired with black sneakers was a combination that even he could not understand.

"Sneakers are convenient." Aurelia clearly didn't catch his point.

"Hmm."

Leslie pursed his lips and regretted being too nosy. Why did he care so much?

Aurelia didn't seem to mind. "Let's go."

And so,

the two of them went to a supermarket close to the apartment. It was Aurelia's first time at this supermarket.

Surprisingly, they had free samples near the entrance. The staff were generous, slicing a big piece of sausage for tasting.

Unlike the supermarkets she had been to before, where the samples were just thin slices. They would also aggressively try to make you buy something, as if not buying was taking advantage.

But here, it was different. There was no forceful sales pitch, and people queued up in an orderly fashion.

Aurelia looked at the freshly grilled sausage, feeling tempted. However, Leslie was still standing next to her. Would he think she was being cheap if she just helped herself?

But it really did look delicious. She couldn't help but lick her lips and then glanced at the man beside her.

"Mr. Synder, would you like some?"

Leslie was speechless.

Leslie glanced at her, her gaze filled with anticipation, practically wearing an expression that screamed, "I want some". This demeanor was far from a white-collar worker's competent and professional look.

Chapter 97

Leslie didn't like crowded places and just wanted to buy their things and leave. So he pretended not to notice Aurelia's gaze and turned to walk away.

A pair of eyes stared at him intently. He sighed lightly. What a hassle.

"Go queue up," he said.

"Alright."

When Aurelia smiled, her eyes sparkled like grapes soaked in water, rippling with waves. She joined the line and quickly came back with two paper trays.

"Mr. Synder, here you go."

"Hmm." Leslie took the paper tray.

Aurelia couldn't wait and put the sausage in her mouth. However, she underestimated the temperature, and it burned her tongue.

She looked at Leslie, who was about to eat, and quickly grabbed his hand. She tilted her head slightly and tried to say something, "Tongue burnt..."

She struggled to say the words correctly and began panting continuously.

Leslie frowned and took a step closer. "Open your mouth."

"Huh?" Aurelia pursed her lips.

"Let me see if it's a severe burn."

"Okay." Aurelia nodded, opened and closed her mouth, and said, "Ah".

She had a large cavity in one of her teeth, and she didn't want Leslie to see it.

Leslie said nothing. He paid no attention and simply lifted her face closer to him. "Open your mouth."

Aurelia stared wide-eyed at the man so close to her, feeling a little overwhelmed. She could only open her mouth.

"Ah..."

Leslie glanced for a moment. Her upper palate and tongue seemed a bit red. There shouldn't be anything serious. He just said, "It's not a big deal. Eat less sugar from now on."

Aurelia was dumbfounded.

She immediately closed her mouth tightly. He had discovered her large cavity!

She just hadn't had the time to visit the dentist. But the thought of Leslie seeing it made her a bit embarrassed. She could feel his body heat quite distinctly, especially with Leslie so close to her now.

Just thinking about it made her face even hotter.

At this moment, Leslie's hand was still on Aurelia's cheek, and he could feel the temperature change on her face most directly. He couldn't help but pause. Just as he let go of her, a familiar

2/2

voice came from behind.

"Leslie? Aurelia?"

They turned to look, and Linda and her friend were approaching. Linda looked at the two of them and couldn't stop smiling, quickly introducing them to her friend.

"My son, my daughter-in-law."

Linda's friends looked at Leslie with surprise in their eyes and then glanced at Aurelia. They forced a dry smile, but their smiles didn't quite reach their eyes.

"Oh my! Your son is so handsome! Why didn't you tell us earlier?"

Why didn't Linda tell them earlier?

Because she thought they might not be a suitable match for Leslie.

“They are so affectionate; it’s making me blush. But, young lady, you should be more composed. What’s with all the hugging and cuddling in public? People might get the wrong idea,” one of Linda’s friends commented, implying that Aurelia should be more modest. “Dear, don’t be offended by our frankness. We’re just looking out for you. If we acted like that back in our time, we’d be criticized left and right. We’re trying to teach you how to conduct yourself,” another friend added.

Yes, they were nitpicking her in every way.

Aurelia felt increasingly uncomfortable as she listened. She had a feeling that they were suggesting she was behaving improperly.

However, she couldn’t easily avoid or refute them, especially since these people were Linda’s friends. She didn’t want to make things difficult for Linda.

Just as the criticism continued, a figure suddenly appeared in front of her, blocking the critical gazes of the older women.

“Is there something you want?” Leslie asked coldly.

Startled by Leslie’s imposing presence, the women fell silent, their noses twitching as they avoided further confrontation.

Linda clicked her tongue disapprovingly and glanced at her friends. “What’s wrong with my daughter-in-law hugging her husband? It’s the modern era. I didn’t expect your thinking to be so old-fashioned. Don’t invite me for outings anymore in the future. I won’t want to fall behind too.”

Hearing this, the women’s expressions turned sour, and they hurriedly chuckled to defuse the situation. “We were just joking,

## Chapter 98

Leslie cast a casual glance at Aurelia. “Are you mute?”

Aurelia was speechless.

Aurelia was momentarily taken aback but found reassurance in the towering figure beside her. She smiled politely at the women who had been scrutinizing her moments ago.

“Aunties, have your retirement pensions exceeded ten thousand bucks? Has your son gotten married? Has your daughter married a wealthy man? Are your grandchildren studying at Harmony Elementary?”

Harmony Elementary was the most prestigious elementary school in the entire Seacester, attended by students from affluent families.

They had the time to criticize her but didn't take a look at themselves.

“You...” They were fuming.

“Aunties, I'm sorry if I'm being straightforward, but I genuinely care about all of you.”

The women were left speechless.

Aurelia didn't want to make things difficult for them, so she asked Linda, “Mom, do you want to shop together?”

“No, we won't disturb you any longer. I'm heading back,” Linda replied. She didn't want these people to ruin Leslie and Aurelia's romantic outing. If she had known what these people were like, she wouldn't have attended any senior citizen university activities.

Who did they think they were, daring to criticize her daughter-in-law? She'd withdraw all the financial support for the senior citizen university as soon as she got back!

As Linda was leaving, she stopped in front of Leslie. “Why are you such a ‘hidden pervert’? I urged you to find a girlfriend back then, and you acted like a dead man.



“Now, you’re so impatient that you’ve left a woman with swollen lips after kissing her at the supermarket. What’s the rush?”

Leslie and Aurelia were speechless.

Swollen lips? Aurelia immediately thought of something and took out a small mirror from her bag to check. It was true! Her lips were swollen from the burn!

“Mom, actually...”

“Alright, I understand. It’s newlyweds being all lovey–dovey. You can kiss, I mean, shop together.”

Linda and her friends disappeared as quickly as a gust of wind, leaving Aurelia with no chance to say goodbye.

A few seconds later, Aurelia felt a scrutinizing gaze on her from above. She raised her head slightly and asked, “What’s wrong? Did I say something too offensive just now?”

“Not really. After all, you’re someone who can punch a man and make his nose bleed,” Leslie said with a half–smile.

Aurelia couldn’t help but feel completely embarrassed, unable to summon a smile. Why did Leslie have to remember the incident where she had punched someone?

“Are you coming?” Leslie turned around.

“Yes,” Aurelia replied, following behind him.

She soon realized how attention–grabbing Leslie was. Even while grocery shopping, he seemed to attract everyone’s gaze.

She felt hesitant to get too close to him. Inadvertently, she got pushed to the edge of the crowd.

Feeling a bit helpless, she slowly pushed her cart forward. However, someone accidentally bumped into a shelf, causing a whole box of milk cartons to fall in her direction.

She wanted to dodge, but the cart blocked her way. Yet the crowd pressed in from behind.

To make matters worse, a woman was holding a child beside her. Her instinct was to raise her hand to block, hoping to mitigate the impact.

At this moment, a slender arm reached over her head and effortlessly supported the almost toppling box of milk.

“You seem to have a lot of bad luck.” Leslie frowned.

“I’m sorry,” Aurelia said, feeling helpless.

“Let’s go.”

Leslie secured the milk carton and took Aurelia’s shopping cart, protecting her from the crowd. Despite his aloof demeanor, he didn’t show any disdain or complaints.

Aurelia stole a glance at him, who still maintained his handsome yet cold appearance. She felt they were slightly closer now.

Perhaps it had been too long since she had experienced the feeling of being protected by someone. Especially after her father’s death, as the only daughter, she had to take the lead in front of her mother. She had long forgotten what it felt like to be shielded by someone.

However, Aurelia didn’t think too much about it. After all, she and Leslie were just roommates sharing an apartment.

After a few steps, she felt a stinging pain in her mouth and a dry, wrinkled sensation on her lips. It was probably due to the burn. If only she could drink something cold right now.

Just as she was thinking about it, the shopping cart next to her stopped, and a small cup of milk was handed to her.

## Chapter 99

Aurelia stared blankly at Leslie.

“Don’t want it?” Leslie asked.

“I do.”

Aurelia took a sip of the milk and paused. It was cold, which helped relieve the burning sensation in her mouth.

“There’s another cup here.” Leslie pointed to another paper cup in the shopping cart.

“Thank you.”

Aurelia couldn’t help but grip the cup tightly to control her emotions. It was nothing much, just Leslie being a gentleman. But she still felt touched for a moment.

Many of her female colleagues at the company often complained that men were thoughtless and didn’t care about others. It seemed like these traits had become stereotypes of men.

So, when Seth ignored her feelings in the past, she also thought that all men were like that. Now, she realized that people had been brainwashed. Men could be gentle and caring, even more so than women.

“What do you want to buy?”

Leslie’s voice brought her back to reality. She quickly put down the cup and began to pick out vegetables.

“Mr. Synder, is there any specific dish you’d like to eat? We’ve been busy lately, so I’ll buy more and keep it in the fridge.”

Leslie looked at Aurelia, who was picking out vegetables and pursed his lips.

“I don’t mind.”

“Alright, I’ll buy a bit of everything, and if you see something you don’t like, just let me know.

Aurelia naturally pulled over a nearby plastic bag and started selecting vegetables.

After weighing and checking the prices, she said, “The prices here are slightly higher than outside, but the quality is good. It’s convenient too.”

After the back-and-forth conversation, Aurelia also relaxed and became more talkative.

“Mr. Synder, let’s go and take a look at the meat section up ahead. I saw beef there.”

“Mr. Synder, what is that section over there for? You’re tall. Can you help me take a look?”

“Mr. Synder, what are all those people doing over there?”

“Mr. Synder...”

Leslie narrowed his eyes as he realized Aurelia was quite talkative in private.

Once Aurelia noticed his expression, she immediately pursed her lips.

“I’m sorry; I used to accompany my parents when shopping, and I tend to talk a lot.”

“Alright.” Leslie nodded.

Aurelia thought the conversation would end with her chattering. But she was surprised to hear Leslie’s voice again.

“Too many people are buying beef right now; let’s check out something else to avoid the crowd.

“That section over there is where they sell desserts; they must have new items.

“I’ll buy a new dishwashing liquid later. The one you bought made my hands itch.”

After speaking, Leslie continued pushing the cart forward.

Aurelia stood in place like she’d been struck by lightning. She could tell that Leslie didn’t particularly like excessive talking. But he always responded appropriately, even though his tone was cold.

After returning to her senses, Aurelia followed Leslie. She couldn’t understand why someone like him, with a good job, good looks, and an open-minded mother, couldn’t find a girlfriend.

Could it really be because of his parents’ divorce?

Then he must be quite pitiful. When parents divorce, apart from the mutual harm between the parents, the first person to get hurt was usually the child.

Although she didn't know the full story of Linda's divorce, the fact that Linda was unwilling to talk about her ex-husband indicated that the divorce was likely unpleasant.

At that moment, Aurelia noticed Leslie staring at the steaks in the freezer. Could it be that he wanted to eat steak? She immediately picked up two steaks and placed them in the shopping

cart.

"Mr. Synder, how about having steak for lunch? I haven't had it in a long time."

Leslie's eyes flickered, and he nodded slightly.

"In that case, I'll also get some salad dressing to make a vegetable and fruit salad," Aurelia smiled.

"Okay," Leslie replied, his expression remaining unchanged as he continued to push the cart, his thoughts drifting far away.

This brand of steak was the first thing he had on his birthday after leaving the Synder family with his mother. He had not seen this brand again since then, so it was surprising to find it here. Seeing the steaks brought back a lot of memories.

Noticing that Leslie seemed lost in thought and possibly not in the best mood, Aurelia decided to stop talking and focus on selecting the groceries she needed.

When they reached the checkout counter, Aurelia naturally took out her phone to pay but was surprised when Leslie paid for their groceries ahead of her. He then carried the two large bags of items and walked away.

Aurelia received the receipt from the cashier and quickly caught up with him, matching his

pace.

## Chapter 100

“Mr. Synder, let me take one bag.”

“No need, it’s not much trouble for me.” Leslie effortlessly carried the bag.

“Then let me pay you back half.” Aurelia checked the amount on the receipt.

“I don’t need to split expenses for some groceries with my wife.”

When Leslie casually used the word “wife“, both felt a little awkward.

He turned around and cleared his throat, “Can you unlock the car for me? I have my hands full with these bags.”

Aurelia’s cheeks flushed slightly, and she nodded eagerly. “Okay, where are the car keys?”

“In my pocket.”

“Okay, got it.”

Aurelia reached into the pocket, but his phone was in the way, forcing her to fumble around inside.

“Aurelia, are you doing this on purpose?” Leslie pondered.

Aurelia lowered her head and realized that her hand was pressed tightly against Leslie’s waist and abdomen through the pocket, feeling his firmness.

“No! There’s nothing worth touching in there,” She cleared her throat and explained.

Leslie was shocked.

“Let’s go, let’s go.”

Aurelia hurriedly went to unlock the car door.

Leslie raised an eyebrow. Well, she certainly had a way with words.

After getting into the car, Aurelia felt that the silence inside the car was a bit excessive.

“Mr. Synder, can we play some music?”

“Sure.”

Leslie nodded and pressed the play button.

“Come on, let’s have fun- Come on-”

Instantly, a woman’s seductive voice filled the car. It was the DJ remix version, giving people a feeling of not knowing whether to move or stay still.

Aurelia cautiously looked at Leslie. She thought he might listen to some light music, but she didn’t expect him to have this preference.

It’s not a big deal. The woman singing sounded quite good.

On the other hand, Leslie’s face darkened.



The car was not his, and he didn't usually listen to music. Who would have known what his subordinate was listening to?

"Cut it off," he said coldly.

"Okay."

Aurelia suppressed a smile and skipped the song.

"Come on- Let's have fun-" This time, it was a funny male version.

Before he could even sing the second line, Aurelia quickly skipped the song.

"Daddy, come on- Let's have fun~" It was a sluttier live broadcast version.

Ah, really?

Just different versions of the same song?

Leslie

gave up. "Turn it off. You can use Bluetooth for your own music."

This guy can forget about his bonus for this month!

Aurelia tilted her head and smirked. "Well, it's nothing, really. This song is indeed quite good, very uplifting."

Leslie glanced at her during a red light. "Very funny?"

Aurelia suppressed a laugh, "Sorry."

Then she lowered her head to connect to Bluetooth but froze again.

Leslie inquired, "Can't find it?"

Aurelia raised her phone, "No, it's easy to find. Come on, let's have fun."

There was a brief silence.

Before the song hadn't even started playing, they had already arrived home.

As soon as the car stopped, Aurelia quickly got out, took a light shopping bag, and rushed to press the elevator button.

Leslie's expression had been frightening earlier, as if he were about to devour someone.

However, that song was indeed quite a contrast to Leslie.

"Let's go," Leslie said with a dark face as he entered the elevator.

Aurelia followed him into the elevator, and they exchanged glances.

Back in the house, Leslie put the groceries in the kitchen and walked solemnly to his study.

"I have some things to take care of; if you need anything, call me."

“Okay.”

Aurelia did not dare to offend him again.