

Chapter 305

It was the first time that Crystal had been treated like a princess. Last night, Christmas eve, Chandler took her to the best restaurant in C City for dinner and then spent the night with her in the most luxurious presidential suite.

Actually, even Crystal herself wasn't sure about the reason why she had agreed to spend last night that way. Was it because she had been always curious about the high-class lifestyle or she just wanted to spend the night with him?

Was last night a date? She kept asking herself this question while her cheeks turned red.

"Miss Zhu, wake up. We're going to

work."

Chandler, who had already put up his suit, turned around and saw that Crystal was in a daze. "What are you thinking?"

"Oh, nothing."

Chandler stared at her face for a while and then laughed. "Why are you blushing? Let me guess. Thinking about some man?"

"What? Don't talk nonsense. I... I was just thinking that you should be ashamed of what you did last night. You squatted on the side of the road and pretend to be sick!"

Crystal scolded him, which sounded like she was angry and embarrassed

because Chandler had guessed out what she had been thinking.

Chandler thought about what had happened last night for a while and then admitted frankly, "You're right. That's sort of hooliganism."

Then he added, "I learned it from your friend Christina. It really works."

Patrick had mentioned it to Chandler and the other guys when they were drinking together that Christina would sit on the road directly to stop him from leaving. Patrick had no choice but to come back and take care of her every time she did that.

Crystal thought it for a while. It was really something that Christina would do.

They left the hotel suite and took the elevator down together.

Chandler found that Crystal would be more relaxed when they talked about Christina.

They were the only ones in the elevator. "Actually, I've seen Christina once when she was only this tall." Chandler put his hand beside his knees. "She was probably only three or four years old then."

"You are familiar with the Eisenhower family?" Crystal took interest immediately.

"No, I was interviewing her grandfather as the representative of the student reporters." Chandler was

seven years older than Christina and Crystal, who were still in kindergarten at that time.

Christina's grandfather, General Eisenhower, had been highly respected in C City, who had been living a withdrawn life after retirement. Although many people wanted to interview him, the only reporter he had agreed to meet in all these years were some junior students representing their school.

"I've never seen her grandfather." When Crystal met Christina in high school, General Eisenhower had passed away.

"You don't need to see him in person. He and Christina have the same temper."

Chandler smiled as he said that.

"Christina must have just started her life in kindergarten at that time. She was a cute girl with a round face, big black eyes, and two pigtails. When we reporters were taking notes nervously, she ran to her grandfather, crying that other children had bullied her."

"Coward! If you get kicked, just kick them back!"

General Eisenhower's angry reply had shocked Chandler. It was conceivable that this girl would grow up to be a female bandit under such education.

Crystal laughed happily. "No wonder... It's all her grandfather's credits."

The door opened as the elevator

arrived in the lobby.

Seeing how relaxed and delighted Crystal was, Chandler raised his eyebrow and smiled too. "Miss Zhu, we're going to meet my client later. Be serious."

Crystal glanced at him, complaining, "You're so troublesome. Last second you told me to put away the bad face and now you say I'm not serious enough. It's so hard to be your assistant."

"I don't need an assistant when I meet with my clients. And also, my assistants are all men. They are not as slow as you women."

"You look down on women? I have to remind you that most of the chief

secretaries and special assistants are women now."

Crystal was used to talking back to him like this.

"Female assistants. I'm afraid that they will get infatuated with me."

Chandler got into the car that had been waiting, turned around, and said with complicated feelings, "It will be even more troublesome if I fall in love with them too as time goes by."

The car started to drive them towards the restaurant they had booked. Crystal was sitting next to him, but neither of them spoke anything again.

Staring at his side face secretly, Crystal was a little upset.

She couldn't stop thinking about the words he had just used, "infatuated" and "fall in love as time goes by ". Was he implying that there was actually nothing romantic between them and that all of this was just her own wishful thinking?

"Why are you in a daze again?"

Before getting out of the car, Chandler ruffled her short hair deliberately.

Crystal was annoyed. "Hey, my hair is messy. How can I meet the client with you when I'm looking like this?"

Chandler seemed to be in a good mood today. "What do you want to look like? Crystal, your job today is to eat and drink while the client and I talk about the business. You're not my assistant...

And you will never be a trouble to me." Chandler was a thoughtful man who had guessed that she must have misunderstood what he had said just now, so he added the last sentence gently.

Crystal looked at him in surprise.

She was surprised about his thoughtfulness.

Chandler patted her short, fluffy brown hair in delight and told her, "You're more than that. You're a lot of trouble."

Crystal followed him into a restaurant angrily as she stepped on his shadow all the way. She should have known that he would not say anything nice!

It was eleven at noon, almost lunchtime.

Christina had been waiting in line for a long time in a hospital in A City. Finally, it was her turn to go in for a consultation.

The doctor, who had been going through online medical records on the computer, looked up at her. "Miss Dickens, according to your previous medical records, you should have received psychological treatment immediately after the accident and miscarriage..."

"I didn't miscarry!"

Christina stood up from the chair emotionally.

Seeing her reaction, this famous female psychiatrist lowered her voice immediately. "I'm sorry. That was a wrong statement and I apologize to you for that."

"Miss Dickens, please sit down first. Let's have a good talk."

The psychiatrist, who had seen a lot of strange patients, comforted her. "I know that what happened in the past had a great impact on you. You refused to receive psychological treatment before for some reason, and now that you are now taking the initiative to turn to me for help. You should be frank to me if you really want this to work..."

"I don't need help. I'm here to ask you about the side effects of this medicine."

Will it give me hallucination?"

Christina's voice was stubborn and distant. Obviously, she was unwilling to talk to strangers about her own affairs. As she spoke, she took out a bottle of medicine from her bag and put it on the table.

"This was prescribed by my former doctor. I took it whenever I felt uncomfortable. But recently, my mind turns blank from time to time and it's getting harder for me to tell reality from dreams. I suspect that this medicine has something to do with it."

Just like the 'marks' that often appeared on her body.

"Miss Dickens, a long-term depression will cause you to have trouble in telling

reality from illusion."

The psychiatrist picked up the bottle. After looking at it carefully for a long time, she took out a pill and sniffed it. "It's authentic. This medicine is currently only available in the United States. There's also a certification number on the bottle. I don't think this medicine is the reason for your problems."

"Do you mean that I'm not having hallucinations? So everything that I've seen and experienced these days is all true?"

Christina muttered, whose expression became more and more serious.

The psychiatrist asked curiously. "Did something strange happen?"

Lowering her head down, Christina didn't reply.

The doctor advised again in a gentle voice, "No one can help you if you refuse to let anyone in. How about a hypnotic therapy..."

"No! No hypnosis!" Christina raised her head quickly, whose eyes were filled with hostility and vigilance.

The psychiatrist frowned as she found that Christina was very anxious.

After thinking for a while, she asked softly, "Are you in trouble?"

Christina's expression changed a little.

"And the trouble is too big for you to solve it alone. You're scared because of

that?"

The doctor was experienced and professional, leading Christina to open her heart step by step.

"You're afraid of having a bad result, so you keep praying like someone waiting outside the emergency operating room, even though you don't believe in the existence of gods. But you have no choice. This is the only way you can take."

Christina's body became stiff as she listened to the female psychologist. She was getting more and more panicked, afraid that the doctor would see through her.

"Miss Dickens, what are you afraid of?"

"You shouldn't run away, nor should you ignore the problem, because you will only get more and more nervous by doing that. If you continue to depress yourself like this, you will break down one day. Before that happens, try to talk to the person you trust the most about it..."

Finally, Christina got up and left the psychological consulting room.

The psychiatrist inside also stood up, looking at her back with a complicated expression. Christina's last words echoed in her ears.

"It's useless."

"I was running desperately in the maze in my nightmare, but he wouldn't help me. He left me there alone..."

Chapter 306

[A high-class private restaurant]

Six beautiful waitresses in bright red cheongsam entered the room one by one with standard smiles, serving the VIP guests with expensive, court-style dishes in the room.

Crystal sighed to herself, "Even being a waitress isn't easy nowadays."

It was such a waste that twenty-eight dishes were placed all over the table to serve only three people.

"What are you looking at, beauty? Let's start to eat." A teasing voice reminded her.

Crystal looked away from those

beautiful waitresses at once embarrassedly.

A woman could appreciate other beautiful women too, couldn't she? The side-slits of those beauties' cheongsams were so high that their slender, fair thighs were showing, attracting everyone's attention.

"Come on!"

Chandler took a glance at her and handed her a bowl of fin soup.

"It's still early in the morning. Why did you order so many dishes? It's too much for the three of us."

Crystal said in a low voice since she didn't want to be rude when a strange male client was sitting right in front of

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her.

"Yes, Chandler, we can't finish so many dishes." The male client also seemed to be surprised about how many dishes Chandler had ordered.

Crystal blushed in embarrassment.

The client seemed to be close with Chandler, laughing when he saw Crystal's expression. "Hello, beauty. Are you Chandler's assistant? I've never seen him take his assistant out with him..."

"I'm not." Crystal denied nervously.

"Ah, then you are his sister..."

"I, I'm not." Crystal got even more nervous, lowering her head down.

"John, stop making fun of her."

Chandler sighed as he finally helped Crystal out.

The client, John, burst into huge laughter. "Chandler, it turns out that you are fond of this type of woman. No wonder..."

Crystal wanted to explain but she couldn't look up as her face was so hot and red at this moment.

The manager of the restaurant walked into their room, asking with a smile, "What kind of wine do you need? We have a variety of..."

"We don't drink today. Thanks."

Chandler answered quickly. But even Crystal, who was only a rookie that

John tried so hard not to laugh out until the manager left. As soon as the door was closed, he patted the table and burst into laughter. "You two make such an adorable couple!"

"How could he know what we were talking about?" Crystal thought as she was frozen in shock.

Chandler explained to her calmly, "John can read lips."

Why didn't you tell me that earlier?

Crystal was embarrassed. Therefore, during the following time when the two men were discussing business, she just lowered her head and ate angrily in silence.

Chandler and John didn't eat much

other than some vegetables. Their discussion went on smoothly. After deciding on some details, they signed the contract and got everything settled quickly.

"Don't eat too much."

Chandler reminded Crystal as he was packing his bag. She was eating in a way as if she was going to stuff all the twenty-eight dishes in her stomach.

He couldn't help but sigh.

She must have hated to waste any food.

"But there's still a lot left." Crystal said as she was chewing an unknown animal's paw.

She looked up at them, knowing that

John, like Mr. Shepherd, was Chandler's friend. So she didn't have to act restrainedly in front of him.

She was now wondering if she should ask the waitress to pack all the food left for her.

Chandler knew that she must have been thinking about ways not to waste the food on the table. He couldn't help but smile since he found it so cute.

"Don't forget that we live in A City. We have to rush back tonight."

Crystal, a poor citizen, was very upset. "But what should we do about those dishes? Look, the six dishes over there are not even touched."

"Oh, no, I drank too much juice just

now..."

Crystal acted casually now since she knew there was no need to pretend to be a noble lady. She refilled her glasses with juice three times just now when she noticed that the menu said all juices were free. Therefore, she felt an urge to use the washroom now and left immediately.

Chandler was shocked to see her rush out.

She ran so fast that he couldn't even stop her. It was surprising that such a soft creature could react so quickly.

In fact, he wanted to tell her that she could just use the washroom in the room.

John took the chance when they were alone. He sat down beside him immediately, hugged his shoulder as if they were brothers, and asked in a gossipy tone. "Chandler, after all these years, you finally find yourself a woman. I'm so happy for you."

Chandler ignored him with an expressionless face.

Why all his friends were just idiots like John? He really should have thought twice before establishing a friendship.

They waited in the room for twenty minutes but Crystal still didn't come back.

Chandler frowned. He decided to go downstairs to pay the bill and check if she was lost.

"Chandler, this is the first time I've seen you take care of a lady like this." John made fun of him again as they walked out together, "I'm looking forward to receiving your wedding invitation now."

"To be honest, Charles and I didn't really want to go to your wedding the last time. Now that you have divorced Erica, you should totally get rid of her. Don't let your past ruin your current life..."

"I'll handle my own business."

Chandler turned around as he took the last step down the stairs. Then he added in a colder voice, "Crystal and I are just friends. Don't talk about us with others."

John, who had been friends with him for many years, shrugged, "Sorry I said too much. I was a little excited."

Now that the contract was signed and the business was done, there was no need for John to stay longer. What's more, Chandler seemed to be a little angry about what John had said just now. John could see that from Chandler's face, so he left soon.

Chandler, who realized he had been rude just now, shouted at John's back, "Merry Christmas."

John smiled in his heart. Chandler was known to be one of the most rational and calm among their friends' circle, who didn't usually get angry as he had been just now. John shouldn't have

said those words because everyone had their own secrets that they didn't want others to touch.

"Merry Christmas."

John muttered through the glass door, looking at his friend inside. People like them seemed to live a brilliant and wonderful life, but in fact, they were so busy every day that they couldn't spare a minute to celebrate the festival.

A lover to cuddle with was such a luxury for them in this cold world full of vanity.



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Chapter 307

"Do you think all stepmothers are bad?"

Crystal came out of the restaurant in a low mood.

When walking out of the bathroom on the first floor, she saw a woman pass by, dragging a boy about the same age as Geoffrey. She could see clearly that the boy was sobbing with tears in his red eyes. His left arm was seriously scalded. The wound was as big as a palm of adult, and blood was oozing out of it.

Crystal felt painful for the little kid when looking at the wound. However, what shocked her even more, was that the woman held the child impatiently

and put his scalded hand under the tap with maximum flow of water to wash it. Such rude treatment made the child cry in great pain.

The more the child struggled, the greener the mother's face became.

"Cry for what? You brought shame on me. Everyone was looking at me. You were only scalded by the hot pot stove. Why are you crying like this? You such a useless thing!"

"Shut up, shut up now! Do you hear me? No wonder your mother doesn't want you anymore..."

"Hey, the child's hand is so badly scalded. You have to take him to the hospital now!" Crystal mustered up her courage, walked over, and argued with

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this woman.

But the woman looked aggressive. "It's not your son. It's none of your business even if he dies."

Crystal was really angry. She said to the woman, "You have to be polite." However, obviously, she couldn't win the woman by eloquence. Just as she was thinking about whether to turn to the staff of the store for help, Chandler saw her and walked over.

"There should be surveillance footage here, Miss. Your behavior is a kind of child abuse." Chandler's tone was flat, but it was absolutely useful.

The woman's face changed. She raised her head and yelled at them angrily, "Child abuse? I warn you not to talk

nonsense. Although he is not my birth son, he is also my son. I saw his hand be scalded, so I put it under the cold water. This is the most basic treatment."

"The wound is so bad. Aren't you going to take him to the hospital?"

"Who said I wouldn't take him to the hospital?" At last, the woman angrily dragged the boy away.

Crystal stayed where she was for a long time, feeling depressed. "As expected, stepmothers have been vicious since ancient times."

Chandler lowered his head and kept an eye on the change in the little woman's expression.

Crystal was a "simple-minded" girl, who can be particularly susceptible to external influences. Finding that she had not gone upstairs for 20 minutes in the bathroom, he thought she was lost. It turned out that she was there.

He reached out his hand and ruffled her short, fluffy hair. "It's not that every stepmother is bad."

Crystal looked up at him. With a gentle smile on his face, Chandler said in a serious voice,

"... A stupid stepmother can't be vicious."

Getting out of the restaurant, they walked side by side on the spacious commercial street. Crystal's sadness for the past second suddenly turned

into anger.

Such a polished scoundrel. What do you expect from a pig but a grunt!

In fact, life in City C is quite comfortable. At least it is not as busy and urgent as City A.

"I went to the hospital for a psychiatrist at Christmas." Christina was actually speechless about herself.

After leaving the hospital, she was a little depressed. The taxi driver asked several times about her destination. But she only laughed at herself because she didn't know where she was going neither.

Looking at the scenery outside the window, she suddenly remembered an

address.

Christina decided to go to Betty's place. It was Christmas that day. She used to spend the holiday with her aunt. It had been a long time since they met. Although there was some estrangement in her heart, they were still relatives.

Betty's new residence was arranged by Derek. It was right behind the east square of the city in the downtown area. The rent was not cheap. Betty insisted on paying the money. And Derek failed to reject but can only accept her money.

Christina got out of the car at the entrance of the community. She looked at the huge building complex in the east square in front of her with

thoughtful eyes...

"I'll go to the square later and find the little girl who sells flowers..." She whispered to herself.

After calling Betty and talking to the security guard at the door, she walked in slowly.

There were rows of villas. In fact, there was a reason why Betty lived here. She wanted Christina to come and live with her, but she didn't convince Christina.

She had been here once and knew the way.

However, as she walked closer, Christina found a sneaky figure wandering in front of her aunt's house.

Christina stopped and looked at the

short and fat middle-aged man in front of her with a surprised expression. He was Derek's uncle, Larry.

Usually, Larry liked to wear a gold necklace, dressing like a nouveau riche. But, today, he was dressed in a suit and took off all the gold necklaces. On closer inspection, his big belly seemed to have lost a little weight.

It was a little funny to see such a large figure of a man carrying a large fruit basket and a few boxes of cubilose supplements, looking through the window as if he wanted to go in but didn't dare.

"What are you doing?" Christina walked over quickly and asked directly.

Larry seemed to be frightened by her.

He suddenly turned around and explained in a panic when he saw her.

"I just passed by. I happened to pass by."

Christina's was expressionless. She asked him with her eyes fixed on the fruit basket and tonic in his hand. "Pass by?"

This is really not a good way to lie.

If it weren't for his dark and rough skin, Larry would have blushed.

Betty might have heard some noise outside. She thought that it must be Christina, so she quickly opened the door and walked out.

As soon as Larry heard the sound of the door opening, he ran to Christina in

panic and stuffed the fruit and supplements into her hands as if he had been stimulated.

And dropped a sentence, "It is from Derek. You, you and your auntie can eat together."

Then, he ran away without a trace.

Christina was a little stunned and looked at Larry's short and fat figure running away funnily.

"Who was that person running away?" Betty was not a fool. She clearly heard a man's voice.

Christina looked down at the gift in her hand and stayed silent for a while.

She knew Derek well. He would not do things like entrusting gifts to others.

... It would be a pity to throw them away.

"Just a person asking for directions." Christina said in a flat tone. She had learned to lie better recently.

As she spoke, she handed the fruit basket and gift box to Betty.

"Why bother to buy these things?" Betty took it. Although she was not interested in these gifts, she still showed a bright smile for her niece's gifts.

Christina looked at her, hesitated for a second, and finally chose to remain silent.

She used to be very arrogant and would expose everything directly,

feeling that right was right and wrong was wrong.

But now, she could pretend not to know. And for those white lies, she would choose to let time to explain...



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Chapter 308

Christina had never thought of spending the night here.

It was Christmas today. She thought she should have dinner with her aunt. However, when she first stepped into Betty's house, she found that she didn't even have the courage to walk in.

"I, I'll go first."

She suddenly froze and stopped at the door. She tensed up and looked fiercely at the two cups of ashes, which were in a large cabinet in the middle of the house.

Even her voice became hoarse. She then turned around and ran away.

"Christina, what's wrong with you?"

Betty followed Christina and shouted when seeing her leave suddenly.

"Did anything happen?"

Betty did not see how pale Christina's face was, but Christina seemed to be afraid of something while walking fast.

Christina walked farther. Betty was very flustered and worried, immediately throwing down the fruit basket in her hand and going after her, but she couldn't catch up with Christina.

"Christina, you should tell me anything you encounter. I'm your aunt. Don't you believe me..."

Betty's father and sister both died.

Christina was Betty's dearest relative in the world. She was be with Christina when Christina was born and grew up. She treated Christina as the dearest person. They two once left the Dickens family to live a miserable life together. After being together for so many years, they were now like strangers instead.

"No matter what I did before, I won't hurt you." Betty was in a bad mood and choked with sobs.

"Everyone thinks they won't hurt me, but you keep me in the dark. I don't ask anything, but it doesn't mean I don't know!"

Christina stopped and looked back at Betty, and then she said in a trembling voice. She spoke in a shrill sound being so excited.

Christina didn't want to care too much, nor did she like to hold grudges since she was a child.

No matter how bad others treated her such as the Dickens family people, the Hampton family people, and Carrie and Connie, Christina just ignored it. If she couldn't bear, she would fight, and if she couldn't fight, she would hide.

Hatred would make her become ferocious, and she would lose herself. She didn't like such noises.

Grandpa said that she would be at a loss and ignorant. More importantly, she should live for herself.

Christina's grandfather exerted a great influence on her character. After her

mother gave birth to her, her mother was weak and rarely took care of her. The only female elder who was closest to her was Betty. Betty treated her even more lovingly.

If this hadn't happened, Christina would never have argued with Betty. She lowered her head and whispered, "Auntie, when this is over, I promise to go to Iceland with you again."

Tears welled up in Betty's eyes who looked at Christina's face without speaking.

Finally, Christina said, "Merry Christmas. Take good care of yourself. Don't worry about me." In the end, she didn't come into the house to have a meal with Betty.

When Betty returned to her residence and stood at the door, she saw the two cups of ashes on the wooden cabinet in the living room. Only then did she understand Christina in shock.

So Christina ran away in a panic just now because she saw this.

Betty felt a little guilty. A few minutes ago, she received a call from Christina who wanted to come to her house. She was so happy that she opened the fridge to cook but forgot about the two cups of ashes.

She was not superstitious, but this time she believed it seriously. She had heard before that the dead fetus would bring trouble. So she put the two cups of ashes in water so that they could be reincarnated in a year.

However, now she also regretted it.

She just wanted to do something to feel better.

Betty returned to her room and had no time for Christmas dinner. After thinking for a while, she suddenly looked up at the two cups of ashes on the cabinet with a suspicious look.

"Christina just said that she would leave when it's over. Is this... Not over yet?"

Christina walked aimlessly until she found herself in the middle of the East Mall.

Compared with the beautiful and romantic lights on Christmas eve last night, today's it was even more

crowded here.

"... Would you like to buy a rose?"

Christina suddenly fixed her eyes on the right. It was the little girl who was seven or eight years old selling flowers last night. The girl was selling roses to a man passing by obediently.

The man seemed to think that the girl was pestering him. He glared at her with disgust and left arrogantly. The girl lowered her head timidly and hugged the roses in the basket with her small hands. Obviously, she was disappointed.

Christina strode towards her.

Then Christina squatted down looking at the girl and speaking as gently as

possible. "Shall I talk to you?"

The girl's bright eyes widened as she looked at Christina's face. At first, the girl was a little afraid of strangers and did not speak.

After about a minute, she seemed to be sure that Christina was not evil. She asked in a low voice, "Miss, what can I do for you?"

Christina pointed to a basket of roses in her arms. "I wanna buy all, but I want to ask you a question first."

A surprised expression showed on the girl's fair face. "Are you going to buy all?"

"But my brother said that only boys would buy roses for girls. So he let me

not sell them to girls..." This was what her brother taught her last night.

"Girls can also give roses to boys."

Then the girl suddenly realized, "Ah, my brother was wrong."

"Then last night, you wanted to buy flowers for someone, didn't you?"

Christina looked a little surprised, not expecting the girl to remember her.

"After you met me last night, did you meet an uncle who bought a rose from you?" Christina was afraid that the girl would remember wrongly, so she tried to describe it in detail. "The man was very tall and handsome. He wore formal clothes and shoes. He was a little serious and didn't like to talk."

"Is it that rich uncle?"

The girl seemed to have a special impression of one of her customers last night.

Christina thought the girl had a good memory and was very smart, smiling. "He's quite rich."

"So are you a friend of that uncle's?" The girl suddenly asked her back anxiously.

"That uncle took a rose from me, and then he gave me so much money..." As she spoke, the girl placed her basket of roses on the ground and her young hands gestured in the air to show that uncle gave her much money. "A lot of money."

"I was scared. I didn't dare to take it. Then my brother ran over on the other side. That uncle put so much money in my basket and he left."

Christina looked a little strange when she heard this, wondering he should spend so much buying a rose.

The girl was very nervous, lowered her head, and stood up straight as if she had done something wrong.

She was very scared and said in a low voice, "Why don't you help us return the money to that uncle? My brother is afraid that the police will take us away because we have much money."

Finally, the girl's eyes turned red as if she was about to cry.

"... Don't be afraid of him."



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