

Midnight 42

Don't Worry About Me

"Wow, you're awesome. California Institute of Art is one of the best art colleges in the USA, and it's hard to get in. Good girl, Valerie, beautiful and still brilliant in the study, unlike some girls, looking nice but actually good-for-nothing." Susan praised Valerie and gave a glance at Savannah. "Savannah must be as good as her cousin, right?"

Savannah paused with her fork. She was Devin's ex-fiancée; how could Susan not have known that she didn't go to college? It was clear that she wanted to make a fool of her.

"I'm sorry," she said quietly. "I didn't go to college."

The atmosphere at the dinner table abruptly turned strained.

Valerie smiled quietly. In the eyes of the rich family, a girl with no basic education was completely worthless.

Susan vented her spleen, with a sense of contempt in her eyes, she said softly but sarcastically: "Well, that's too bad. Without an educational background, you cannot find a good job or a good husband. Girls of the upper classes are all highly educated. In our family, Dylan graduated from Yale University, while Devin is one of the top students at the U.S.C. All are famous universities..."

Before Susan finished her words, old Sterling opened his mouth: "Girls should be judged for their moral character. Though we attach the importance of education, it does not mean snobbish. The one with a high degree has the wrong principles of conduct is worse."

Valerie's smile faded away. How did his words sound like sarcasm toward her?

Wrong principles? Did he mean that she seduced Devin?

She was tingling with embarrassment, her face red, and her appetite for food was gone. It seemed hard for her to redeem her honor in front of old Sterling.

Susan forced a smile, "you could be right, dad. Even if highly educated, you might fail to find a good career," she continued, "if Savannah works well, it can make up for her lack of education."

Savannah sneered inwardly. It was clear that Susan wanted to humiliate her at the table today, but she didn't want to hide it. "I'm a plane model," she said calmly.

She never felt ashamed of the job. It's not a crime, and she did work hard. Why should she feel sorry for that?

"Oh, plane model? Is it the kind of thing that you are photographed half-naked? Some unspoken rules, no job security, and sometimes you take in work once a month?" Susan said in a satiric voice.

Old Sterling's face darkened.

Dylan's voice broke the ice on the table: "Half-naked? You're talking about the nude model. Savannah is a very healthy model working for legitimate companies. As for the job security, taking in work once a month--"

He paused and smiled at Savannah indulgently: "What's wrong with that? I need her to make money? She can rely on me, and I will support her. Her model job is just killing time."

Savannah was stunned

Even if she knew that Dylan was just responding to Susan's provocation, her heart was pounding for his words.

Valerie and Devin could not think of anything to say, and they glared at Savannah with a grudge.

Susan snorted and said nothing.

At this moment, Henley broke the silence and changed the subject: "This sole steamed fish tastes really good! Come on, it's getting cold!"

The indefinable air of tension gradually faded away.

After the meal, George stopped Dylan before he went upstairs to take a nap, "Dylan, come to my study with me."

Dylan knew that George had something to say to him. They had not had a good talk for a long time, and since he came back today, he could not avoid it. He nodded and glanced at Savannah: "You wait for me here and have a rest, ask Cooper for help if there is a need."

"Dylan, it's just a few minutes, are you afraid that Savannah will be bullied by us?" Susan said.

Savannah frowned, and then nodded. "I will," she said in a deliberately sweet voice to Dylan, "Don't worry about me, just go with your dad."

Dylan knew that the girl was fighting back against Susan, but he enjoyed her obedience. He narrowed his eyes and touched her head. "Good girl." Then he turned and walked up the stairs behind George.

Devin's face turned white. It's unpleasant to see the display of affection between his uncle and his ex-fiancée. Then he went out to smoke.

Savannah looked at the back of George and Dylan. It seemed that there was no profound hatred between them, just that Dylan had some grudge against old Sterling, who wanted to please Dylan somehow. Dylan, however, treated George coldly back.

"Look at your younger cousin, Valerie. For the first time she comes here, she has found ways to please my dad, making him stand up for her. You can learn from her." Said Susan in a disdainful voice.

Valerie gave a glimpse at Savannah, "How can I match my ability to flatter others against hers? She hooked up with her fiancé's uncle in one day. I can't do that."

No old Sterling, no Dylan, now Susan and Valerie could have a casual chat.

Savannah could not help but reply, "And I don't have a knack of hooking up with my cousin's fiancé."

What made Valerie have the nerve to say that?

Valerie looked at Susan with a grievance: "auntie... "

Susan grunted, "Well, just let her go, in case she tells Dylan we bullied her."

Savannah tried not to be sick but really could not stand staying with them. She stood up and looked at Cooper. "When will Dylan come downstairs?"

The butler learned of her awkwardness, and said kindly, "Mr. Sterling should be coming down soon. Miss Schultz, you can go upstairs and wait for him. It's your first time here, and you can also look around."

Savannah nodded and followed Cooper upstairs.

George always read books in the study on the second floor after lunch on weekdays, and then he would take a nap.

Cooper saw the door of the study shut and smiled at Savannah. "It seems that they're still talking. Let me show you around."

Then Savannah was brought to a small hall decorated in Japanese style. She could see books and CDs scattered on the tatami, behind which was several bamboo curtains, and there were also speakers and projectors on the floor. Here should be the leisure room of the old man George.

She stopped at a cabinet, on which she saw many photo frames.

They were pictures of the Sterlings.