

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted by Eleven Jewell

Chapter 180-200

Chapter 180

Stella kept looking at Keegan's reaction after saying that.

However, he did not have much of a reaction, and the look on his face did not change either." Oh." That was all he said before he asked, "Why?"

'Could it be true that Keegan really doesn't know about it?'

Stella wondered to herself as she continued, "Somebody found out about something she said on the internet once, and most people disagreed with her. So, she got canceled, and all her shows were dropped."

Keegan kept quiet.

Stella spoke again, "I'm sure she crossed somebody or offended people that she shouldn't have. Otherwise, why would people purposely dig out something she said more than ten years ago?"

Keegan responded frankly, "She wouldn't end up like this if what she said wasn't problematic."

"I heard she got a role in a new show, but somebody else wanted it too. That was how everything started. She got canceled by everyone because of just that. Don't you think the people who did this are too evil?"

"Business is business. She can only blame herself for not tying her loose ends."

Keegan pointed to his left and said indifferently, "Harder."

'It seems like this scum is pretty good at keeping secrets,' Stella thought as she decided to cut to the chase.

"According to your logic, I'm sure Ms. Young would do something like this with all the connections she has, right?"

Keegan paused. Then, he frowned. "What are you trying to say?"

"I'm just having a casual chat with you, that's all. This incident is kind of similar to what happened to Ms. Young when they previously changed the voice actress for Honor of the Deities.

"In what way?" Keegan said unhappily. "Who canceled that voice actress?"

Stella answered his question almost instantly, "That person didn't have any scandal to be exposed, so they couldn't do anything to that person."

"How do you know if the voice actress didn't give up on that job herself because she took somebody else's money?"

"I-I haven't heard anything about money!"

Stella almost exposed herself.

'Money? Money my foot!'

She spent so much effort going to the audition. However, she was told that the production team had decided to get her replaced when she was about to sign the contract. Not only was she not compensated in any way, but she also had to pay for the cab she took to get there!

Keegan said coldly, "Do you think she'll tell everyone on the internet after taking somebody else's money?"

Stella got mad. "Why would she say something like that if she really got paid? She's not insane.

Then, Keegan said impulsively, "Couldn't it be a publicity stunt? Isn't that the favorite thing to do for people in that industry?"

'Publicity, your face!!'

Stella got so angry that she was very close to cursing out loud.

'Keegan Kane, you're such a bastard! You used money to take another person's job away and showed no remorse for it. Is this what you do every day, and you don't even think that it's something wrong?'

Then, she realized there was no point in probing him like this. Even though he might not be involved in what happened to Ibelia, Stella figured he would do the same for Bella's career in the future.

'If one day, what Bella wanted is against my interests, would Keegan choose her over me without hesitating?'

'Of course, he would.'

'I'm just a wife he has no feelings for, while Bella is the first love he was forced to break up with. I know that he's always felt guilty.

'The answer is obvious.'

Stella became a lot calmer as she thought about that. She might have been competing with Bella to gain a special place in Keegan's heart, but not anymore. At this point, she was just fighting for herself.

Time passed, and it was the day of the jewelry exhibition.

Stella started picking her outfit after the afternoon break.

Keegan was in the study room, but the sound of Stella running up and down annoyed him so much that he could not read at all.

He came out of the study room and was about to snap at her. Then, he saw her in a dress in the living room.

The full-length mirror in the living room was the biggest in the house. It was better than the one in the bedroom because it was placed closer to natural light, making the effect more realistic.

Chapter 181

There were more than thirty sets of clothes stacked up on the sofa. She probably placed them at the side because she did not like them after trying them on.

Stella was always a more conservative person, and she would only wear dresses that had buttons all the way up to the collarbone.

However, she was not happy with all the dresses she tried.

She took off the dress she was wearing after spinning for a bit in front of the mirror.

Her waist looked very attractive. Keegan could see a small part of her skinny and fair waist when she removed that dress. Her legs were slender and long too. She had all the curves in the right places, like a goddess.

Keegan leaned against the railing of the stairs on the second floor. He sipped on his coffee while openly enjoying the beautiful view downstairs.

Then, Stella answered a call. It was probably Felicity.

"I'm trying on clothes for a jewelry exhibition tonight." She spoke while fumbling through the pile of clothes before she continued irritably, "I have nothing to wear."

Keegan was speechless.

'What about those thousands of pieces of garments in your wardrobe?' he thought to himself.

"Okay, sure. We'll meet tomorrow, then."

A white dress in that pile of clothes suddenly caught Stella's attention after she hung up.

Keegan thought that it looked familiar. The look only on his face darkened as soon as she

put

it on.

It was the exact same dress that Marshall had gifted to her at the charity event previously.

Keegan curled his lip subconsciously and went downstairs with the cup in his hand.

Stella was very fond of that dress. Even though the design was simple, its cutting fit her very

well

She looked at herself in the mirror for quite some time. After that, she turned around to pair it with her jewelry, but she bumped into Keegan. The cup of coffee in his hand was knocked over, and it dropped right on her dress.

"Ah!" Stella shouted as she quickly grabbed a piece of tissue to wipe it off. However, it was already too late, and the coffee had already seeped into the dress. Suddenly, there was a huge coffee stain on the pure white dress. It looked awful.

"Why would you stand behind me without making a sound?"

Stella complained as she tried to wipe the stain off. She only wore it once, yet she had no idea if it could ever be clean again.

Keegan did not have any remorse. "How would I know that you'd suddenly turn around?"

Stella was very unhappy with his attitude. "You saw me changing over here. Why would you

stand behind me with a cup of coffee in your hand?”

Then, Keegan said, “This is my house. I’ll stand wherever I want to.”

Stella was so shocked to hear what he said that she could only refute back after some time. ” Why were you ever born into a human?”

‘You should become a dog instead!’ Stella thought.

Keegan glowered at her as if he could understand what she was implying. “What did you say?”

Stella suppressed her anger and kept quiet.

Suddenly, the doorbell rang.

Keegan stood there like a statue, leaving Stella no choice but to answer the door with a stained dress.

She thought that it was Vermont, but she saw Cordelia standing in front of her after she opened the door.

“Grandma? What brings you here?”

Stella immediately brought Cordelia into the house.

Cordelia walked inside and said, “I came to visit Keegan because his mom said that he took some days off because he wasn’t feeling well.’

Then, she saw Keegan standing in the living room without a scratch while holding a cup of coffee in his hand.

Cordelia paused for a moment before she asked, “Which part of you isn’t feeling well?”

Stella was about to speak, but Keegan beat her to it. “My stomach. Like the usual.’

So, Stella kept quiet.

Chapter 182

Keegan obviously did not want to let Cordelia know that he was attacked, mainly because he was afraid that she would be worried. “Are you eating well, dear?” the old lady furrowed her brows. “You’ve become skinnier since the last time I saw you. Has everything been alright these past two days?”

“Yes, grandma. I’m feeling much better now. I’ll be able to return to the company in a few days.”

“There’s no rush. Your health is much more important.” Cordelia looked at the cup of coffee in Keegan’s hand and frowned. “Why are you still drinking coffee with an upset tummy?” she

asked.

Keegan immediately dumped the blame on Stella. “It’s hers,” he said.

“Stella, you can’t be drinking coffee either. It’ll affect your sleep” Stella bit the bullet and said, “Okay, grandma. I’ll stop drinking coffee” The old lady was satisfied with her answer.

Seeing a pile of clothes on the couch, she asked, “Are you going out?” Stella did not know what to say. If she said that she was going to a jewelry exhibition, knowing that Cordelia’s precious grandson Keegan was “ill”, Cordelia would definitely be unhappy

She was still trying to find an excuse when Keegan said, “She’s too noisy. There happens to be a jewelry exhibition tonight, so I asked her to go because I wanted some peace and quiet”

“Is it the one Irene is organizing?” Cordelia wondered Irene Moore, the organizer of the jewelry exhibition, was also Marshall’s aunt Keegan nodded. The old lady smiled and said, Good. We’ll go together.”

“You’re going too?” Keegan asked as he was startled. “Irene told me that she had a fine piece of jade. She even invited the Venerable Raphael Morghen from the Temple of Abawo to bless the stone. So, I’m going to have a look.”

Cordelia was a very superstitious woman and liked jades a lot. She had a good relationship with the Venerable Raphael Morghen and even donated to renovate the temple. When Stella and Keegan got married, Cordelia went to the temple to look at their horoscopes; they were a match made in heaven.

Stella had always felt that the Venerable Raphael Morghen was a bit of a charlatan, but to each their own. ‘There’s no need to make her unhappy,’ she thought.

Keegan frowned and said, “Marshall didn’t mention anything about a jade. He only mentioned something about a Luminous Pearl.”

“I’m not sure. Maybe one of Irene’s friends brought it. I’ll just have to go and see.”

“I’ll go too,” Keegan pursed his lips and said.

The old lady glanced at him and replied, "If you think Stella is noisy, wouldn't it be noisier with so many people there?"

Keegan's expression remained the same. "I'll get used to it," he said. "I can't possibly just throw her out, can I?"

The corners of Stella's lips twitched when she heard that. 'Asshole!' she thought.

Marshall's grandfather had four children-the first three being sons, and the last, a daughter. He loved his youngest very much. Irene was an intelligent child; she graduated from a prestigious college and had a successful career. She was even born into a wealthy family. Every aspect of her life was perfect, except for her marriage.

Irene divorced her ex-husband only after a few years of marriage and had a daughter. Although she was still with her current partner, she never got remarried. Her current partner was more than ten years younger than her. They met two years ago. Many opposed their relationship, but they finally got their marriage certificate this year.

They had yet to hold a wedding, perhaps because they had not discussed it with the family.

Chapter 183

Kisa was envious when she heard about their love story. 'It's so different for the rich. Finding a 30-year-old partner at the age of 51.'

Initially, Stella thought that the jewelry exhibition would be private with a small venue. However, she was stunned when she arrived. The place was huge and magnificently decorated. There were nearly a hundred security personnel keeping guard, and more than half of the nobilities in Rivera were there. The luxury cars outside the venue were enough for them to hold a car exhibition.

Baldwin stopped in front of the venue as Cordelia and the others got off and went into the exhibition center. Cordelia had an excellent reputation and rarely attended the various events held each year after she retired. That was why she instantly became the center of attention for the audience when she stepped foot into the place.

Many of the noble women came over to say hello. Although Cordelia was old, her memory was strong. She greeted most of the people by name, and for those whose names she did not know, she still greeted them politely.

It was undeniable that the old lady was famous in Rivera. Stella also gained some traction just by standing beside her.

“Why is grandma here?” Aurora turned to look at the few people not far away and frowned. Didn’t grandma tell you that she was coming, mom? She even brought that woman with her.”

Dahlia stared at them with a cold face and stayed quiet for a long time before she said, “Come on, let’s go say hello to your grandma.”

Aurora’s lips curled as she spoke, “Grandma favors Keegan and that woman anyway. I’m not going over there just to please her.”

“Your grandma is partial to her because she is your brother’s wife. You’re her granddaughter. I’m sure she loves you more. Now, go. Don’t stand here and be a joke.”

Only then did Aurora go over reluctantly. “Grandma,” she called out to Cordelia.

The old lady turned around and saw that it was her eldest granddaughter. A loving look appeared in her eyes while she said, “When did you arrive, darling?”

“Oh, just now. I’m here with mom. We came to support Aunty Irene’s exhibition.”

Dahlia then went over and said, “Mom, I thought you said you didn’t want to come. Why the change of heart?” She was concerned when she saw that her mother-in-law had decided to attend the event with her son and daughter-in-law instead of her and her daughter.

Dahlia’s high status in the circle of rich wives was primarily due to her outstanding son and Cordelia’s prestige for years, while her birth family’s status was just average. This was one thing she had in common with Stella—they both came from mediocre backgrounds and married into wealthy families.

Earlier, a group of ladies had asked her why Cordelia was not there. Dahlia told them she would not be able to stand for long, but now she was here in a blink of an eye with her grandson and granddaughter-in-law. This was a massive blow to Dahlia’s face.

Cordelia was indeed Keegan’s grandma since she, too, dumped the blame on Stella.

“Stella

could not stop begging to come, so I decided to come here to have a look-see.”

Stella was speechless when she heard that. ‘What a great grandmother-in-law!’ she thought. Dahlia gave Stella a cold look and said in a heavy tone, “I thought Keegan was not feeling well, so I didn’t ask them to come. Why didn’t you tell me you wanted to come, Stella?” She was trying to imply that she was a bad wife for wanting her ill husband to attend an event with her. Unsurprisingly, Stella threw the blame onto Keegan. “Keegan said that he was bored and that he wanted to come. There was nothing I could do to stop him, mom.”

It was Keegan's turn to be at a loss for words. Dahlia knew that she was lying, but Keegan did not expose her. So, she decided not to say anything further. "Since you're here, remember to take good care of Keegan," she reminded her.

"Of course, mom," Stella replied.

Dahlia turned to look at the old lady, and with a respectful and polite attitude, she said, "Mom, Irene is right in the front. Come, I'll bring you over to her."

Cordelia nodded in response. She then turned around and told her grandson, "Bring her around this place and buy her anything she likes."

Hearing that, Dahlia froze. She stared at Stella coldly and helped the old lady to the front.

Chapter 184

The ladies in the room looked at Dahlia and Cordelia with different types of gazes as they both walked to the front to meet Irene.

It had been rumored that the mother and daughter in law had a good relationship, but the old lady had never cared for Dahlia like this in public all these years, not even when her husband was still alive.

On the other hand, Cordelia seemed to love Stella a lot. Keegan lost his father when he was young, which made the old lady partial to her eldest grandson. So, it was understandable that she loved her eldest grandson's wife dearly

This alone made all the noble wives and ladies jealous. Every one of them looked glamorous on the surface, but their relationship with their in laws was more or less discordant. Even if they were well-matched, they could not avoid the friction between mother and daughter in law.

People envied Stella for being doted on by Cordelia, especially since she came from a mediocre background and married into the family.

At that moment, the talk of the hour, Stella, was quietly negotiating with Keegan. "If I like something and you buy it, it won't be deducted from the one billion dollars you promised, right?"

Keegan's forehead twitched. "Did Albert deprive you of necessities or something when you were young? Why is money always in your mind?"

"No, but who wouldn't be thinking about money?" Stella suddenly asked, "How old is Marshall's aunt? 21

Keegan could not keep up with her change of topic but still replied, "She's two years younger than mom."

"That means she's in her early fifties. Does she look young?"

"You've seen her before."

"No, I haven't." Stella frowned.

"Remember Mrs. White, who played cards with you last time?"

Stella was surprised and said, "Marshall's aunt is Mrs. White?"

Keegan nodded.

"Oh, she does look really young," Stella continued. 'Dahlia has taken good care of herself and looks like she is still in her forties. However, Mrs. White, who is about the same age as her, looks even younger! No wonder she could find a husband who was so much younger than her.'

Keegan glanced at Stella and said, "Does this have something to do with your liking for money?"

"Don't you understand? If a woman is well-kept, she could have a young husband. Beauty costs a lot of money, you know. That's why I have to save in advance."

The corner of Keegan's mouth twitched. 'So, this is why she is so obsessed with money?'

"That bracelet looks good." Stella tugged at Keegan and said, "Let's go have a look."

But, Keegan pushed her hand away and said with a dark face, "Go ask your young husband to take a look." After saying that, he turned around and left.

'Ugh! That jerk has quite the temper,' Stella thought, but she ignored him. 'Since the old lady is here, Keegan would definitely not leave this place without me.' Stella then turned to look at the jewelry on her own.

The Moore family was indeed a powerful family. The pieces of jewelry present there today were not easy to find. Irene's ability to gather all the families together was enough to show her status in their world.

Stella liked jewelry and crystals, especially jade. After wandering around for a long time, she finally saw a bracelet and fell in love with it. The bracelet was in a beautiful shade of green and was relatively thick. Older women generally prefer this style of bracelet. The price for it was more than one million, which was considered reasonable.

'Cordelia's birthday is around the corner. She has never mistreated me since I married into the Kane family. I have to at least get her a gift, even if I won't be able to attend her birthday celebration.'

Stella actually also fell in love with the bracelet that Xianna had bought. She wanted to gift it to Cordelia, but she could not afford it. "This bracelet is just right,' she thought. Stella stared at the bracelet for a long time, and just as she was about to take it, someone was one step ahead of her and picked it up.

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Chapter 185

"Does this bracelet look nice, dad?" The familiar female voice made Stella's lips tighten in an instant.

Then, a male voice that she had heard since her childhood sounded. "It looks great, honey. Buy it."

"It's more than one million dollars..." The girl hesitated, "It's too expensive. Let's forget about it. You need money for your project. It's better that I don't add to the burden."

As soon as the girl said that, someone who was beside the man said, "Wow, Mr. Jewell, your daughter is so sensible. She thinks of you when she's making choices."

Albert smiled warmly and said, "This child has suffered a lot since her childhood, so she is more sensible and loving than ordinary children."

"Just buy it for her if she really likes it. It's not that expensive. Girls like her need to be taken care of. It's good that she's been through a lot because she won't be so easily deceived by bad men in the future," the man joked.

Albert smiled. Just as he was about to speak, Stella's cold voice came from beside him, "Are you going to buy it, dad?" Albert froze, only to realize that the person with her back turned to them was actually Stella.

Stella turned around with a smile on her lips, but her eyes were empty.

"Stella, why are you here?" Sophie asked surprisingly. Stella did not look at her, and Sophie bit her lip with an aggrieved expression.

Albert still remembered the coldness in her eyes the day he slapped her in the hospital. He did not expect Stella to show up at the event that night. He would not have been able to control his expression if Hylda had not given him a pinch in the arm.

“Stella, your dad said you were taking care of Keegan at home. We would have picked you up if we knew you were coming,” Hylda said enthusiastically.

Stella’s gaze fell on Hylda. The woman was most likely in her forties. She was not particularly beautiful, but her eyes were very attractive. She also had a good figure, and because she dressed young, she looked like she was still in her thirties.

She hooked onto Albert’s arms and spoke as if she was the lady of the house. ‘She’s the woman I met with dad in the underground parking lot of the shopping mall.

“Wait, I think she is dad’s secretary. She came over to our place to deliver some documents before. It was the year of mom’s incident. I wasn’t feeling well that day and asked for sick leave. When I came back, I bumped into this woman. At that time, dad was sending her out, saying that she was a secretary and had come to deliver some documents.”

Hylda had left an impression on Stella because of her eyes, which made people feel uncomfortable.

The woman noticed Stella’s gaze and let go of her hand naturally. “I’m temporarily acting as Mr. Jewell’s female companion,” she explained with a smile.

Stella did not bother to care about the nonsense between the woman and her father. ‘As long

as he didn’t bring anyone into the house, he could do whatever he wanted,’ she thought. However, Stella did not like how the woman spoke. The woman acted like she was above her. “Why are you interrupting my conversation with my dad?” she said coldly.

Hylda was stunned.

“How could you talk to your elders like that?” Albert immediately jumped out and said.

“My elders? She’s just a secretary. If you needed a female companion, you could have told me. I know many divorced and widowed wives. I’m sure they’ll be happy to help. Isn’t it embarrassing that you brought your secretary?”

Sophie frowned. “You’re being rude, Stella. Ms. White has been a great help in dad’s work for the past years. It’s fine if you don’t want to thank her, but how could you say something like that?”

Stella chuckled and looked at Albert. “After my mother’s accident, I was afraid that you wouldn’t be able to run the company by yourself. But then, everything turned out fine. I didn’t know that it was because Ms. White was your pillar of support. I’m sorry.”

Hylda's face was pale at first, but now it turned green.

Chapter 186

Albert's toxic masculinity led him to constantly argue with Rainee when people told him that he would not have achieved what he was today without his wife. After what happened to Rainee, he hurriedly took control of the company just to prove to everyone that he would still be able to run a successful business without her. What annoyed him the most was people saying that he relied on women to succeed.

So, when Stella stated that the reason behind her father's success was Hylda's support, she crossed the line.

Albert's expression turned ugly, and he said coldly, "I don't need any help. She's just a female companion for this event."

Hylda's face turned pale, but the woman had great tolerance and said, "I'm sorry I overstepped."

Sophie wanted to say something, but seeing Hylda slightly shaking her head at her, she gritted her teeth and shut up.

"Ms. Jewell, do you still want this bracelet?" The salesman in the jewelry exhibition said warmly.

Sophie suppressed her emotions and glanced elsewhere. As if an idea had suddenly popped into her mind, she lowered her gaze and said with a little nostalgia and hesitation, "It's way over my budget. I'll go look around."

Just as Stella was about to speak, a sarcastic male voice came from the side. "Ask your sister to buy it for you, then. It's just a little more than one million dollars. That's only a few meals for the Kane family. Shouldn't she take care of you since she married into a wealthy family?"

Stella turned to see the person who spoke and saw a young man in a suit, who was about the same age as her. The man was handsome, like an idol who had just debuted in the boyband. Stella thought that he looked familiar. After a long stare and some deep diving into her memories, she recognized the guy as her high school classmate-Kevin Blamer.

Her eyes darkened unconsciously. The sudden appearance of this person reminded her of some unpleasant memories.

Sophie pretended to be nervous. She glanced at Stella in fear and anxiously said in a low voice, "Don't say that, Kevin. My sister is very good to me."

“Good to you? Would she give you the things she no longer wanted if she was that good to you? They adopted you into the family and gained fame and fortune because of you. I say she should treat you better,” Kevin sneered.

Kevin’s family status was also quite high in Rivera. After he insulted the wife of the infamous Keegan Kane, others continued, “Wait, the adoptive daughter of the Jewell family is the internet celebrity, ‘Soph’s Trove’?”

“Oh! No wonder she looks so familiar. Does that mean Stella is the so-called sister who keeps pushing her away?”

“Yeah. Their family adopted Sophie back then, and it went on the news. The Jewell family made a lot of money from it, but it didn’t take long before it was revealed that her adoptive

sibling disliked her. She wasn’t doing so good in the Jewell family. But, she turned out great. She graduated from a prestigious school, and I heard that she works in a top 100 company. The Jewell family’s biological daughter seems to have graduated from some kind of public university, though. The only thing she has is good looks. That’s why Keegan Kane married her.

“Now that you mention it, I remember that we were in the same school. Back then, the news about her excluding her adoptive sister from things went viral. She even beat people up whenever they talked to her about it. Wow, I didn’t expect her to marry into the Kane family.”

Albert frowned and wanted to say something, but Hylda stopped him. “Think about what Stella did,” she said. Albert paused and pursed his lips.

Stella’s expression was extremely cold. These words no longer hurt her as much as they did back then. They only made her realize what kind of person Sophie was.

Sophie was an orphan and had lived in an orphanage since she was a child. The orphanage she stayed in was funded by Rainee and Albert. Because they were sponsors, they were invited to attend the social donation activities of the orphanage.

Once, an accident occurred during an event, and the warehouse where social donations were stored caught on fire. A child was trapped in the warehouse.

Fortunately, the fire brigade came and extinguished the fire in time. The child was safe. The social event went viral at that time, and even the fire rescue scene was captured on a live broadcast.

After the child was admitted to the hospital, many reporters and kind individuals visited her.

A number of good Samaritans suggested adopting the child, but the matter went up in the air due to the child's aggressive response.

The orphan reacted strongly when she was around strangers. But, she only trusted Albert Jewell and his wife a lot.

When she was in front of the reporters' camera, the child always had a look of fear as she curled up in Albert's arms.

Netizens following the news suggested Albert and his wife to adopt the child. As time passed, the netizens' cries grew louder and louder.

Albert and Rainee did charity work for the sake of their reputation, so now that an opportunity was right in front of them, they had no reason to reject it.

After all, they just had to feed another mouth.

And so, with help from various sectors and the cries of the netizens, the couple adopted the orphan despite not fulfilling the adoption conditions. They gave her their last name, Jewell, and named her Sophia.

The news of Sophia being adopted into the Jewell family received the public's attention from the very start.

Albert even created a Facebook account on purpose to update Sophia's daily life, so he could directly showcase her growth and development to the public.

After Sophia had started middle school, she started handling the account herself.

Over the years, the account had accumulated several million followers, so Sophia was a considerably influential online influencer.

She went from being a parentless orphan to a belle from a wealthy family. Sophia's inspirational persona, which was bright and cheerful, brought her great convenience.

However, that was only what the public saw. In Stella's eyes, Sophia was far from her public persona.

When the Jewell family first adopted Sophia, Stella was not happy. Ever since she was a child, her parents gave her little attention and were always busy working. Now that they finally had a successful career and could spend time with her, an adopted daughter appeared. Naturally, she was not quite happy.

However, she changed her mind after Rainee explained Sophia's background.

"To be honest, it doesn't hurt to have a sister. At least there'll be someone to play with me since my parents don't give me attention," she thought.

That was how she thought back then, so she showed kindness to Sophia after contemplating briefly.

At first, Sophia undoubtedly acted cautious and obedient. She had a much more docile personality compared to Stella's bold one.

Not only did Albert like her, even Rainee often complimented Sophia for being sensible. Sophia quickly became a part of the Jewell family.

Everything would have been fine if things had continued that way.

However, things only remained that way for two years.

Stella was in grade 6 when Sophia got adopted. Two years later, she got into Rivera High.

The school practiced closed education and required students to live on campus. As a result, Stella's time in school became longer.

This was supposed to be the best time for Stella to make friends and spend time with her classmates. However, she realized that she was slowly getting ostracized.

Chapter 188

At first, Stella thought she was being sensitive. However, the strange gazes at her grew more and more until someone vandalized her desk and wrote foul words like "bitch" and "cunt" one day. Only then did she realize that things were not as simple as she thought.

The person who vandalized her desk was promptly caught. That person was Kevin Blamer.

Back then, he was like a martyr. He acted obnoxiously even when he faced his class teacher. In the end, the teacher finally managed to get him to explain his motive after threatening to meet his parents.

It turned out Kevin was a loyal fan of Sophia. He had been following Sophia since the adoption incident.

He said that Sophia was not happy after she got adopted. Everyone in the family kept an eye on her. Sophia's sister-Stella-often bullied her. She made her eat her leftovers and wear her old clothes.

Stella was confused. She was certain that she did not do such a thing.

Then, Kevin opened Sophia's Facebook page to confront Stella.

[Stella gave me a mango-flavored cake. I hate mango the most, but Stella seemed to have forgotten again. Or perhaps, she never even remembered.]

[It's my birthday today. I hope I can cut a whole birthday cake like Stella next year, and not a leftover cake...]

[Stella gave me a dress. It's really pretty. If only it were new.]

[Stella's friend asked if I was an orphan. I don't know how to answer the question. If only I were mom and dad's biological daughter...]

As Stella continued scrolling, she grew even more shocked, and her heart sank further.

'Whoever saw such words would think that Sophia was mistreated at home and that her sister

me was the culprit for it. It's true that I gave Sophia a cake, but it definitely hadn't been eaten. The cake in the photo was not smooth because it got squashed while I was on public transport on a rainy day. After that, I cut off the squashed part, ate it, and gave the nice part to Sophia.

'Sophia had never told me that she doesn't like mango-flavored cakes because she likes mango. I asked Sophia what she liked, and she said mangoes. That's why I got her a mango- flavored cake on her birthday!

'As for the dress, I bought it when I was shopping with Felicity. I told Felicity to help me get it after I got Sophia's size. Since it was on the expensive side, I was worried that she'd feel burdened. That's why I told her that I was giving it to her because it didn't fit me, and the return period had passed. How could it possibly be worn when the tag was still on?

"That was the day I learned that Sophia had thoughts that were completely different from the way she acted. She could stab me in the back while she's also playing her part as the loving sister,' thought Stella.

The incident about Sophia received a lot of attention in Rivera. Sophia was cute-looking and had a soft disposition, so many students in Stella's school was a fan of hers.

That was why everyone was angry and felt bad for her after seeing the Facebook posts about her "bending over backward" for Stella.

'Compared to Sophia, Stella was born into a privileged family, got whatever she wanted since she was young, had good grades and outstanding looks, and was even well-liked by students and teachers in school. Despite that, she still wanted to bully Sophia, who had nothing. How could this not make others hate her?' they thought.

Stella was shocked and furious. When she got home, she asked Sophia why she had misrepresented her on Facebook

Naturally, Sophia did not admit it. She cried and said that she posted those statuses only to remember the nice things her sister did for her and had no other intentions.

On the other hand, Albert thought that Stella was blowing things out of proportion. To him, the comments had no problem at all. He even told Stella off. He said she should get her sister something new when she wanted to give her a gift. He also said she should not blame others for bad-mouthing her since she gave Sophia something she did not want.

Rainee had her doubts but ended up not saying anything because of how Albert defended Sophia. In the following days, she merely brought Sophia to buy many clothes. Then, she changed Sophia's room to the room beside Stella's.

'After Sophia received the so-called "fair treatment," I also finally saw who she really was. My relationship with Albert worsening over the years also has to do with my "dear sister's" exacerbation. Sophia is a master at using her background and her fragile persona to make others pity her, thereby achieving her goals,' thought Stella.

Stella snapped out of her thoughts and returned to the present. The discussion around her overlapped with the discussion back then.

"I didn't know she was actually someone like that."

"Otherwise, why would Sophia hate her so much? There must be a good reason for it."

"It wasn't easy for Sophia to grow up well in their family when she had such a sister."

"I heard that Sophia was supposed to be the one to marry Mr. Kane. However, Sophia fell sick on the day of their blind date, so Mr. Jewell had no choice but to let his eldest daughter go in. Sophia's stead. She used her looks to seduce Mr. Kane."

"Really? Isn't it really weird to change the person for a blind date because she fell sick?"

Kevin glanced at Stella. Then, he smiled and said, "Who knows if anyone sabotaged it?"

His words pushed Stella into the eye of the storm. People were already envious of her being married to Keegan. Since Keegan did not like her and all the young people in the wealthy circle colluded with one another, they all scrambled to add insult to her injury now that her act had been exposed.

None of them cared about the truth behind the incident back then.

Sophia looked at Stella's tense expression and secretly felt triumphant. However, she said, It's alright. Stella and Keegan love each other. Besides, it's all in the past. We all didn't know

any better when we were younger. I'm already really grateful that the Jewell family could. adopt me."

'While Sophia seems like she's exculpating me, her words insinuate that she's still grateful and doesn't dare to wish for anything more despite being treated unfairly because she's an adopted daughter. Wouldn't this confirm that I'm ostracizing Sophia?' wondered Stella.

She calmly looked at the faces of the people around her.

'It's been years since the incident. I don't want to be as irritable as I was back then,' she thought again.

Stella smiled and turned to ask Albert, "Dad, Sophia is 22 years old this year, right?"

Albert was a little lost due to the sudden change in topic. He paused for a moment before he answered, "She'll turn twenty-three in a few months."

"She's twenty-two. When I got married three years ago, Sophia only came of age. She hadn't even reached the minimum legal marriage age, so I wonder where these rumors came from. Seriously, only brainless people would believe them."

Stella's words called out the people around her. The people who were feeling righteously dignified earlier on were now as red as a tomato.

Naturally, those rumors were things Sophia had "unintentionally" leaked to the public through her friends.

Sophia was well aware that people did not care about the genuineness of the rumors; what they cared about was the feeling of trampling Stella under their feet.

The more they demeaned Stella, the more they could achieve some sense of psychological satisfaction.

'It's not like these people hadn't done this before. This isn't Stella's first time getting demeaned in public, and she never dared to talk back. It's just like what Aurora said; Stella's worried that she'll lose her position since she worked hard to marry into the Kane family. So, she only lives with her tail tucked between her legs. From my understanding of Stella, she'll either continue enduring things, like what Aurora said, or kick up a fuss and rebut them like she did in the past. I'm confident I can deal with either of those situations and ruin Stella's reputation. However, the current situation is not within my expectations,' thought Sophia.

Chapter 189

Kevin snorted icily and said, "We're talking about how you ill-treated your sister. Why are you avoiding the topic?"

"Ill-treated?" Stella ruminated over the word. Suddenly, she asked Sophia, "Sophia, in our family, did mom and dad or me mistreat you?"

She immediately feigned a terrified expression "N-No. Everyone's really good to me. Stella always shares whatever she has with me and is kind to me. Stop it, Kevin."

The more she continued her act, the more Kevin thought he was punishing the evil and upholding goodness. His sense of heroism was off the charts. "So kind to you that she made. you wear her old clothes and eat cake that's close to being expired? Stella Jewell, did you think no one would remember these incidents just because Sophia deleted her Facebook account?"

"That's what I was wondering too," Stella suddenly said with a distressed expression.

Then, she continued in a sorrowful tone, "Sophia, I genuinely treated you like my own sister since you came to the Jewell family. Whenever I got something, I'd immediately share it with you. As long as it was something I liked, I would give it to you, including the dress I liked, the cake I liked, and even my marriage Right now, aren't you wearing the jewelry set my husband gave me?"

Sophia was startled and retracted her hand as a reflex.

The necklace on her neck, the bracelet on her wrist, and even the earrings she was wearing were all a part of the dowry the Kane family gave Stella.

Obviously, Stella did not give these things to Sophia. Instead, it was Albert who gave them to her because Stella thought they did not look nice.

Sophia hated Stella but also adored the jewelry set.

It cost over 3 million in total.

'I usually can't bring myself to wear them, but I purposefully took the set out and wore it for the sake of looking good in front of the wealthy circle. Who would've thought that Stella would recognize the jewelry set and use it as leverage? Sophia thought.

Sophia turned pale. "There are people from the Kane family here, and this jewelry set is the real thing. So, I can't deny it. That bitch Stella. I really underestimated her!" she thought.

Sophia gritted her teeth and swallowed her anger. Then, she quietly said, "I remember all of Stella's kindness to me."

"If you remember my kindness, why did you say such things on Facebook?" Stella asked sharply and skillfully changed the subject.

Sophia panicked and immediately realized that she had fallen into Stella's trap.

However, Stella did not let go and continued to pursue the issue.

"You can tell me directly if you're unhappy with anything. Why did you post such things on Facebook? Back then, I was alienated in school because of the things you posted. Even my college admission recommendation went south because of this incident. I don't blame you for any of this. I just don't understand why you did all this."

Stella made up the matter about the college admission recommendation. While she was one of the shortlisted candidates for the admission recommendation back then, she did not like the selected college, so she voluntarily gave up on it.

However, the genuineness of the incident did not matter as long as the bystanders bought it.

Stella's questions immediately changed the narrative of the incident.

"I did hear about this incident that happened back then. I have a cousin who was classmates with Stella back then, and they were pretty good friends. Whenever they went out together, Stella would buy two of whatever she bought. My cousin asked Stella why she bought two sets, and she said her little sister had just joined her family. So, she's someone who has a little sister now. When the Facebook incident happened, my cousin was really shocked because just a week before the incident, she and Stella went to buy Stella's little sister's birthday present. together."

"I don't think Stella graduated from some random college. She went to Trinity Film Academy, so it's very likely the college admission recommendation incident is true."

Everyone knew how hard it was to get into Trinity Film Academy. The academy had high requirements for the student's cultural studies even though they were art students, so those who got into the academy were all outstanding individuals.

Since Sophia's school was not even one of the top five in the state, this was a slap in the face for those who said Sophia was better than Stella.

"Besides, she gave her jewelry worth several million. Not even my mother is that generous to me."

"If what Stella said is true, doesn't that make Sophia an ungrateful person? Stella's so nice to her, yet she made thoughtless remarks online that ruined her reputation."

"Normally, when a person is in extreme fear, they will usually recognize the first person who saves them from their suffering and get attached to them. But back then, after the fire, Sophia only recognized the Jewell family for some reason. I thought it was weird. She's a crafty child, so it's not surprising for her to do such a thing."

The situation had completely changed. Compared to Sophia's baseless rumors, Stella's claims were well-grounded.

Stella had everything from witnesses and evidence, so Sophia could not even find any reasons to refute it.

Sophia was shocked, resentful, and angered. She had an incredibly furious expression.

Seeing how Stella wanted to continue speaking, Albert quickly said, "All of this is in the past, so why bring it up?"

Stella glanced at Albert.

His eyes were filled with worry for Sophia. However, he did not even look worried at all when others uttered slander at Stella.

"Dad, I'm not the one who brought this up. Besides, I just wanted to get the story straight. Didn't you always want the two of us to be in harmony? This is something that's been bothering me for years. Isn't it good for us to settle it today?"

Albert frowned. "Sophia didn't know any better when she was younger. Besides, didn't she delete those posts after that? What's the use of holding onto the past?"

"So, what you're saying is that the things Sophia said online back then were nonsense?" Albert realized that Stella was discreetly getting him to admit the truth.

"Sophia was adopted, so she's already sensitive, to begin with. Back then, she only posted those things on Facebook to vent her feelings. As her older sister, can't you just go easy on her?"

Stella's heart sank.

'Who knew that Albert would continue to defend Sophia even at this point?' she thought.

Just as Stella was about to speak, someone chuckled behind her.

"Your father-in-law is so biased that it's making me speechless. Is your wife even his biological daughter?"

Albert was startled. When he lifted his head and saw the person speaking, his expression changed.

Keegan was standing nearby with an indifferent expression. Meanwhile, the person who had spoken earlier was Vermont, who stood next to him.

Judging from their stance, the two seemed to have stood there watching them for a long time.

The moment Keegan appeared, the people who were criticizing Stella instantly fell silent.

Stella glared at Keegan in annoyance.

'Why is this bastard here right now? He's going to hinder my performance!' she thought.

On the other hand, Albert felt uneasy. Previously, he had hit Stella at the hospital. That very night, he lost a few big contracts.

Chapter 190

Those few contracts were from companies that the Kane family had linked him up with, so he could not help but suspect that Keegan did that on purpose because he knew something.

'Whether he knows or not, the biases in his words were just too obvious. No matter how cold Keegan is toward Stella, he won't stand by idly and watch her get wronged,' thought Albert. Albert felt a little annoyed.

'I should've known. But, how could Stella come to the jewelry exhibition alone when Keegan's still injured?' he thought.

At that thought, Albert immediately changed his tone.

"What are you saying, Mr. Snyder? Stella's my only daughter, so I obviously love her. It's just that Sophia was adopted. I feel bad that she's all alone with no one to rely on,

so I can't help. but sometimes take better care of her. Since you're not a father yet, you obviously wouldn't know how hard it is to be one."

Vermont smiled. Suddenly, he said, "I heard Sophia got a new car a while ago. It cost around 2 million. Keegan, I recall that your father-in-law gave your wife a little Cayenne as a part of the dowry when you,two got married back then. How much did it cost again?"

"890 thousand," Keegan responded coolly.

Stella was a little surprised.

'Keegan usually doesn't even bother looking at that car, which was a part of my dowry, but he actually knows its price,' she thought.

Albert had a bad feeling the moment Vermont brought up the car. As expected, he heard. Vermont say the very next moment, "The car that's a part of your biological daughter's dowry costs 890 thousand dollars, but a random car for your adopted daughter costs around 2 million? Mrs. Jewell's been in a coma for six years, and you don't pity your own daughter for not having a mother at a young age. Instead, you made your own daughter suffer because of an orphan. You're right; I don't understand."

No one else spoke up for Sophia after hearing Vermont's words.

Not only was Sophia wearing her sister's three-million-dollar dowry and driving a more expensive car compared to her sister, she even threw shade at her sister online despite having all these advantages. What Sophia did was practically bite the hand that fed her.

"The incident was so trending so much online. Turns out, she was just biting the hand that fed her."

"When Keegan got married, he sent carts and carts of dowry to the Jewell family. I heard it cost nearly a billion. Albert only gave a car worth less than a million? How did he have the cheek to do so?"

"What was Albert Jewell thinking? He's not pampering his own daughter but his adopted daughter?"

"The adopted daughter really knows how to act pitiful. Didn't we all get deceived by her?" Sophia did not look happy. Meanwhile, Albert turned red in anger.

"What can a car prove? Maybe Mr. Jewell was compensating Sophia for what Stella did when she was younger? When the incident happened, Sophia was only fourteen. How evil could the mind of a 14-year-old girl be? She was only writing down what she witnessed and thought. Now that it's been years, who knows who's right or wrong?"

Since you keep on bringing up the car, it's hard for people not to suspect that you're siding with Stella because Mr. Kane instructed you to."

'Even at this point, that joker still can't see the truth for what it is,' thought Stella.

Naturally, the joker Stella was referring to was Kevin.

Stella genuinely did not understand what she did to offend this person. So much so that he wanted to fight her till the very end.

'When Sophia misrepresented the truth, he said she was young. But, when it comes to me, he says my words don't mean a thing and that it's hard to know the truth behind the incident. because it's been years? He's a pro at double standards!' Stella thought.

Just as Stella was about to lose her temper, she heard Keegan speak.

"So what if I did?" he asked icily.

Stella was startled as she threw him a weird glance.

Meanwhile, Kevin was completely speechless.

'Long ago, I heard rumors that Keegan doesn't care about Stella. Just now, he stood nearby watching us for a long time. Even when he arrived, he barely spoke. Who would have thought. that he would demonstrate extreme biases the moment he spoke?' thought Kevin.

Meanwhile, Vermont was stunned by Kevin's selective blindness. After a while, he finally said, "Do you think you're doing God's work by defending her?"

The crowd burst out laughing, and Kevin turned red in anger.

Albert's gaze subtly swept past Stella and Keegan. Then, he suddenly had an idea.

All of a sudden, his attitude changed completely. Even his tone turned into one that was amiable.

Chapter 191

"You really misunderstood, Mr. Snyder. They're both my daughters, so I naturally won't side with any one of them. When Stella got married, money was tight for me, so her dowry seemed a little meager. The car Sophia drove is mine. She went to pick it up for me. In the future, she'll drive the old car. After all, she'll need a car as a mode of transportation to go to work."

Vermont raised a brow. "Is that so? Since you are now well-off, you should compensate your daughter's dowry. Otherwise, how embarrassing would it be if others heard about this?"

His flattery put Albert on the spot.

'Doesn't he have a public persona of loving women? He'll have to demonstrate it somehow, right?' wondered Vermont.

Albert's expression stiffened, as he was resentful and furious. However, he suppressed his emotions and said with a smile, "Of course. I'll prepare it when I get home."

Suddenly, Keegan peered at the bracelet Stella was looking at earlier on. Then, he said coolly, "The color of this bracelet is not bad."

Vermont immediately took the hint.

"Mr. Jewell, if you ask me, you shouldn't even wait till you get home. This bracelet is pretty good," said Vermont.

Albert was so shocked he almost coughed out blood.

'If I prepare the dowry at home, nobody will know what I've prepared. If I prepare it here, then it'll surely leave a dent in my wallet. They set me up, but I still need to jump in even when I know it's a trap,' he thought.

"Earlier, I heard you wanted to buy it for your younger daughter. Are you not willing to do it now that you're buying it for your elder daughter?"

Vermont really knew where to hit someone where it hurt.

Albert swallowed and forced a smile. "That's not true."

He said to the salesperson. "Pack up this bracelet for me."

Then, he looked at Stella with a loving smile and said, "I'll only feel at ease when you're living well."

Stella sighed internally.

'Albert will probably hate my guts after this incident. It isn't easy for him to put on a loving father and daughter show with me right now,' she thought.

She lowered her gaze and obediently accepted his attempt to extricate her from the situation.

“Thank you, dad.”

Then, she subconsciously looked at Sophia. Sophia did not even bother hiding the envious and malicious look in her eyes.

Stella smiled and gently said, “But, I took away what Sophia wanted. She might feel a little unhappy.”

Sophia did not expect Stella to say such a thing at that moment, so everyone immediately looked at her after hearing Stella’s words.

Sophia did not manage to change the expression on her face in time. Naturally, many saw it.

She bowed her head in panic and said in a low voice, “Don’t say that, Stella. You’ve already given me such expensive jewelry and treated me like your own sister. So, a bracelet is nothing. I’m happy as long as you like it.”

Stella smiled slightly and replied, “I’m glad to hear that. We can’t let a bracelet ruin our relationship as sisters.”

Sophia wanted to scratch Stella on the face. However, in reality, she could only swallow her anger and answer, “It’s enough if you don’t blame me.”

Kevin could not bear to listen any further and had left somewhere along the way.

Stella felt a little disappointed.

‘I should’ve let him see how his goddess’ public persona came crashing down. Why did he leave ahead of it?’ she thought.

Stella finished her performance and even got a bracelet for nothing. So, she was in a great mood. She even found Keegan not as much of an eyesore.

She smiled with her eyes and asked Keegan, “There are some cufflinks here. Pick a pair. I’ll buy them for you.”

Chapter 192

Keegan glanced at Stella’s expression. Her eyes were narrowed and seductive as if she was a fox that had eaten to its heart’s content.

He swallowed. Just as he was about to speak, Vermont cut in and teased, “Stella, why don’t you ask if the bracelet comes with a free gift? Keegan looked like he likes free gifts.”

Keegan's expression darkened. "Since when did I like free gifts?"

Vermont blinked.

"Did Stella give your pair of socks to Marshall after you two had a fight last time?"

Stella chortled. "It's not that he doesn't like free gifts; he just isn't happy with me casually disposing of his things. It's simply him being possessive."

'Possessive...' thought Vermont.

He smiled with his eyes for a while. Just then, someone came over looking for him. After he bid them goodbye, he walked away.

Stella grabbed Keegan's hand. "Come on. Pick one."

Keegan lowered his gaze and looked at Stella's pale, smooth palm. Then, he slightly tightened his grip.

'I always say that all Stella thinks about is money, but the truth is she always shares it with me whenever she receives a windfall,' he thought.

At that thought, Keegan glanced at the price of the cufflinks. The most expensive one was thirty-eight thousand.

He paused and thought again. 'Although the amount she's sharing isn't much.'

The cufflinks were from a niche brand, so their products were not too expensive. However, the salesperson was really friendly and kept on recommending various styles to Stella.

Stella grabbed each of them and held them over Keegan's cuffs.

Meanwhile, Keegan let her be and said coolly, "How did you know Kevin Blamer?"

"That guy? He's a schoolmate from high school. We also went to the same middle school and were classmates in a few grades."

"Why is he picking on you so much?"

Truthfully, Stella could not figure out the reason either.

Stella remembered her middle school days with Kevin. They were classmates as well as deskmates, and their relationship was not exactly bad. The only difference worth mentioning was that they had incompatible perspectives.

When Stella was in her teens, Stella had a more liberal view on young love and believed in enjoying the moment. She perceived that girls and boys should just be together if they liked each other. And, if they did not like each other, they should just break up.

On the other hand, Kevin had a more traditional and reserved view on relationships. Stella

would talk to Kevin about the rumors of dating in their class, but Kevin would have a tense expression and say that it was frivolous for students to seek pleasure when their parents were spending money on their education.

Stella remembered that one day, one of her friends borrowed her notes and found a love letter inside. The letter was well-written but cheesy, so she had no idea who it was from. When she was not in class, her classmates passed the letter around, causing a stir and rumors of Stella dating to spread. After that, Kevin seemed to distance himself from her and eventually changed his seat with the teacher's help.

Stella assumed that he might have been disgusted by her for dating at a young age. Since they were not that close, Stella had forgotten about it. She was now surprised to learn that he had become Sophia's fanboy.

After Keegan heard about the love letter, he pursed his lips.

"How about the person who gave you the love letter? Did you two end up together?"

"Who knows who wrote it?" Stella buttoned a silver-white cufflink for him. Then, she continued, "Back then, I received love letters every day. Was I supposed to date every single one of them? Besides, that love letter was so cheesy. I couldn't stand it."

'She received love letters every day...' thought Keegan.

His eye twitched.

He thought again, 'Isn't she scared of biting her tongue when she's lying?'

"Didn't you think of dating someone when you were that popular?"

Chapter 193

Stella did not lift her head. "Back then, I already have someone I like, so why waste other people's time?"

Keegan froze. Then, his gaze involuntarily darkened.

"How's this one?" Stella stood up.

She added, "Take a look. What do you think?"

Keegan lowered his gaze and glanced at it, "As expected of your aesthetic."

Stella smiled. Just as she was about to take the credit, she heard the rude bastard casually finish the rest of his sentence. "It's tasteless as usual."

The smile on Stella's face froze. She removed the cufflinks in irritation and returned them to the salesperson.

Keegan thought she would pick him a new pair. In the end, she leisurely went over to look at the diamonds.

After she looked at the rings, she looked at the necklaces. Once she finished looking at the necklaces, she looked at the bracelets. However, she just would not look at the cufflinks.

Keegan followed by her side. Finally, he could not help but ask, "Aren't you buying me cufflinks?"

Stella finally had the chance to be sardonic.

"Mr. Kane, I don't have good taste, so the things I choose aren't good enough for you. So, forget about it."

Keegan's eye twitched.

"This woman. Her temper has been getting worse recently!' he thought.

He pursed his lips. "Buy it. I can still bear with it and wear them."

'Hah! I showed you who's the boss, but you still haven't learned your lesson?!' thought Stella.

She gave him a half smile and said, "Mr. Kane, wouldn't that be a huge sacrifice for you? I'd feel really bad."

gemstones in

"It is a huge sacrifice. Otherwise..." Keegan paused and glanced at the row of front of him. Then, he smiled and added, "Buy me a diamond. Then, you won't have to feel bad."

Stella was speechless.

'What kind of dog breed is Keegan?' she thought.

Meanwhile, Sophia was standing nearby and staring in Stella's direction with a dark expression.

At first, Sophia wanted to let Stella make a fool of herself, but she ended up making a fool out of herself instead. The young people in the wealthy circle were very realistic. Those who chatted and were friendly with her just now immediately scrambled away after Keegan and

Stella left. They acted as if they wanted to avoid her.

Then, Sophia heard Albert's voice.

"Stop making that expression of yours. Aren't you embarrassed enough?"

Sophia clenched her fists. She was so furious that her lips were trembling.

Hylda frowned. "She's already feeling upset. Why are you still lecturing her?"

Albert glanced at her unhappily.

"How many times have I told her not to have direct conflicts with Stella? But, when did she ever listen? I reminded her time and time again to keep a low profile when she went to get the car. But, in the end, everyone still found out about it!"

Hylda looked unhappy. "How could you blame Sophia? If it wasn't because Stella had scammed that 30 million from the Anne family, would we be in this state right now? Would you be humiliated by that girl from the Kane family because of such a small matter? Sophia just wanted to avenge you. Who would've thought that Keegan would come? Besides, she and Keegan were working together when they got you to buy that bracelet just now. Couldn't you tell that they were doing it on purpose?"

'How could I not? But, I have no choice but to buy her the bracelet just now. I obviously also have my own considerations. Even though Keegan barely spoke, the way he was standing there clearly showed that he was there to back Stella up. Apart from that, my investment in Semiconductor Technology has been really successful. Looking at it now, this might be because Keegan is doing this for Stella's sake. Keegan caring about Stella is definitely a great advantage for me, so a bracelet is nothing,' he thought.

Albert said in a low voice, "Avenge me? Do you think I don't know what she was thinking? You made her this way. She loves being in the limelight for everything. In the future, don't bring this matter up again. Take some time to reflect upon this incident."

Then, he turned around and left.

Sophia had an awful expression.

Hylde glanced at her and sighed, "That's enough. Don't be too hasty. If you can't stay calm, you'll remain under her feet for the rest of your life."

Chapter 194

Sophia blurted out, "It's so unfair! What right does Stella have!

"She married into a wealthy family and has the Kanes backing her up. She is useful to the Jewells now. So, of course, your father would take her side," Hylde replied calmly. "Put more effort into getting a good match. Then, your father would pay more attention to you."

"No family in Rivera could compare to the Kanes," Sophia said nonchalantly.

Hylde frowned. "Don't target the Kanes. The only marriageable option left is Jackson Kane. In all aspects, there is too much of a difference between him and Keegan. Plus, he has a bad reputation. He's a womanizer, not a good choice for marriage.

Sophia scoffed. "What about Keegan Kane?"

Hylde's heart sank. "Don't even think about it. Keegan wouldn't take any interest in you. Even if he does, he would just fool around with you. He won't marry you. Do you really want to go through what I've been through?"

Sophia pursed her lips and remained silent, but she was unconvinced. 'If Stella can be his legal wife, why can't I? Why would I only be someone he toys with?' she thought.

"A while ago, I asked Mrs. White to scout for potential suitors. She picked out some with great qualifications, and I will arrange for you to meet them once you settle in at work.

Meanwhile, after Keegan teased Stella, the salesperson enthusiastically recommended them some diamond cufflinks.

Keegan thought that Stella would stingily argue back, but she began to go through the cufflinks carefully instead.

In the end, Stella picked out a pair of quadrate cufflinks embedded with melee diamonds. She lifted Keegan's sleeve up next to the cufflinks and looked up. "What do you think of this one?"

Keegan looked at Stella's gleaming eyes and felt a part of his heart sink.

He looked away and nonchalantly said, "It's acceptable, I guess."

As Keegan spoke, a man's voice piped up from beside him. "The cufflinks really go with your look, Mr. Kane. Mrs. Kane has good taste."

Stella looked up and was surprised to see Carter and Lena.

Keegan did not have many close friends, so even though Stella was not that close to the couple, she was still acquainted with them.

Among Keegan's friends, Stella has the best impression of Carter.

Of course, the biggest reason Stella took a liking to Carter was because of his twin brother,

Zane.

'Carter's wife, Lena, who works in a Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) team, is involved in the forensics department,' thought Stella. 'Anyways, she is an impressive individual from a regular family. Unlike me, I married into the Kane family by chance, but her marriage with Carter was out of love.'

'For Carter to go against the pressure his family puts on him and marry Lena, who has a mediocre background, he must be deeply in love with her.'

Carter was around the same height as Keegan. In comparison, Carter's personality was gentler than Keegan's. It was not that Carter was as good-natured as Marshall, but Carter was gentle in the way he talked. As for his appearance, he looked as aggressive and dominant as Keegan.

Lena had extremely beautiful features. She looked stern when she was not smiling, more or less due to her profession. She was taller than Stella by a bit above 5.8 feet.

When attending the jewelry exhibition, other women of wealthy families tried their best to wear their prettiest dresses and accessories.

Lena, on the other hand, looked more casual. She had silky, shoulder-length hair and wore a simple white shirt with a pair of black slacks. Her shoes were a pair of white flats, and the only accessory she wore was the wedding ring on her ring finger.

Even though she wore informal attire, she still looked good, thanks to her tall and well-proportioned figure.

"It's been a while, Mrs. Lowe," Stella greeted gently.

"Hello," Lena nodded.

Lena was a quiet person, and she was not close to Stella. After greeting and exchanging pleasantries, Lena stayed silent.

Chapter 195

Carter, however, was very talkative. He chatted for a long time with Keegan.

Lowe's Corporate specialized in web development and could be considered one of the most advanced technologies in the country. They had many dealings with the Vinci Rivera Group.

The data processing system that the Vinci Rivera Group was equipped with was created by Lowe's Corporate. It could be said that the two companies had a close partnership in their businesses.

Stella stood aside in boredom as she was uninterested in the topic of their conversation. She thought, 'Keegan's conversation might take a while. Should I leave?'

As she was thinking, Carter suddenly asked, "What's keeping you busy these days, Mrs. Kane?"

Stella snapped back to reality. "Nothing much, apart from tending to the garden at home. I'm quite the idler."

"I heard you took theater when you were in college, Mrs. Kane. Don't you take acting gigs?" Suspicion rose in Stella's heart. 'Why would he ask about my acting career out of the blue?' Stella sneaked a glance at Keegan, who did not seem to react at all.

Stella was unsure of why Carter asked about that. She replied with caution, "I only took plays back then. I stopped acting after I graduated."

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Carter smiled. "If so, can I ask you for a favor?"

"What favor?" Stella inquired.

"My wife's team assigned her the task of getting an actor. Would you be willing to help her out?"

Stella was astonished. 'What kind of help could the CSI need from me?'

"Why do you need an actor? If you don't mind me asking."

“Let me elaborate,” Lena said gently. “Our unit recently collaborated with the local TV station to produce a new legal show for law popularization purposes. We wanted to recreate some classic cases on TV to educate the public on some common laws, but we’re having trouble finding actors. The show is a nonprofit project, so a minimal budget was allocated for it. Professional actors are unwilling to take up the show because of the lower pay. That’s why our unit assigned each department to seek out actors.

‘So that’s why...’ Stella thought.

“I don’t personally know any actors, so Carter said he would help me find someone. I didn’t expect him to be referring to you, Mrs. Kane,”

Lena only came to the jewelry exhibition because Carter promised to find an actor for her. When she saw Stella just now, she had a hunch that Carter was referring to Stella, and it turned out to be true.

Stella looked too beautiful to be true. She had striking features and a slim yet curvy body type, unlike some actresses who would pursue thinness to look good on camera but looked frail in

person.

Stella had a healthy-looking figure, but her face was small. This was the reason why her beauty was no less than other actresses on camera, although she was around ten pounds heavier than them.

‘If Stella agrees to this, it would make our department look good. But, Stella is a rich housewife. She doesn’t need the money, and maybe she would want to keep a low profile,

given her identity.’ Lena did not have high hopes for Stella agreeing to this, so she did not go into much detail about the gig.

Stella, however, was intrigued.

This law popularization project might not be profitable, but it was for public education purposes and would help improve an actor’s professional image. The incident with Ibelia reminded Stella that prevention was always better than a cure.

After contemplating for a while, Stella asked, “Can you tell me more?”

Lena was surprised at Stella’s interest and went on to explain the details of the show.

The show was titled “Jurisdiction”. It was scheduled to air during lunchtime every week on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and it fell under the genre of legal drama.

The script was written based on real-life cases taken from the national criminal database, and the cases in the show were adaptations of interesting cases from recent years. The actors would recreate the cases according to the script, and after that, experts would dissect the case and explain the related laws and regulations.

At the same time, the show would be aired on the official account of the TV station on various short-form video-sharing platforms and was expected to reach a wide audience of netizens.

Chapter 196

Stella also discovered that the director of Jurisdiction was a well-experienced producer. He did a similar show for another TV channel more than ten years ago, and it was a big hit. A few years later, however, due to changes in the TV channel and some business disputes, the show got canceled.

Until this day, the show was unforgettable in the minds of audiences. It was so popular that even now, many content creators derive their videos from elements of the show.

With him on the show, even if the new show was a complete replica of his hit show back then, the views and ratings would be more than decent.

Stella's heart was racing with excitement. 'It was the right choice to attend this jewelry exhibition. A work opportunity came to me by itself!'

To avoid seeming overeager, she pretended to hesitate. "I am indeed interested, but I haven't had an acting gig all these years. I'm worried that I might hinder the filming progress."

Carter suddenly chuckled.

Stella glanced at Carter. His expression was strange, as if he had seen right through her. Before Stella could analyze the situation, Carter continued, "You're being too modest, Mrs. Kane. I've seen you acting, and it was a good performance."

Stella was startled by his statement. "You've seen me acting?"

After a slight pause, Carter said, "You played Edmund in King Lear. I was in the audience during that performance at Trinity Academy's anniversary celebration."

Her part in the play as Edmund was the reason why Stella was popular back in college. It was considered her best work back then.

'I didn't expect someone to remember that performance after so many years,' thought Stella. Stella smiled at the ground and replied, "They say rest is rust, and I haven't been on stage for years."

Stella paused for a while, then she continued, "But, since you asked for this favor, Mr. Lowe, I'll give it a try."

Keegan, who had been listening beside her the whole time, frowned. "You're really going for it?"

Stella nodded. "I have nothing to do at home anyway. I could help a friend out and contribute to our country's public education. Shouldn't you be proud of me?"

Keegan gave her a side glance. "As long as you don't think it's embarrassing."

'You're the one that's embarrassing!' Stella thought.

Stella grinned and replied, "You're the one who would be embarrassed. I have no shame."

Keegan smirked at her self-awareness.

Stella had just finished exchanging contacts with Lena when the exhibition started.

The organizers hired a professional host for the opening speech. The Lowes had a few exhibits that needed to be priced by Carter, so he left with Lena.

The host was a famous celebrity, and it was difficult to book him even with high pay. The fact that the Moores were able to secure him as a host showed how grand the jewelry exhibition

was.

Stella was fascinated by the host when she heard Keegan's voice ask, "Are you close with Carter?"

"Not really, but I owe his brother a favor."

Stella knew what Keegan wanted to ask.

In Keegan's point of view, Stella had no previous connections with Carter and Lena. So, it did not make any sense why Stella was so eager to help them out when they asked.

Stella was not willing to let Keegan know why she had agreed to help. Instead, she boldly misled him for another reason.

"Zane Lowe?" Keegan frowned. "What favor?"

Stella pursed her lips. "When I got married to you, he helped me out."

Years ago, when Stella married Keegan, he left her alone at the wedding, and everyone was waiting to make fun of her. Dahlia, with the intention of keeping up appearances, instructed Stella to make rounds and drink with the guests at every single table.

Chapter 197

But then again, Stella was just a young girl. How good could her alcohol tolerance be?

After raising a toast to seven or eight tables of guests, she was already a little dizzy.

Like a wolf in sheep's clothing, the people who were well-dressed in their day-to-day lives were toasting the bride with the strongest of liquors at this disgusting wedding scene.

Stella had already drunk too much. If she had continued on, she would have spent her wedding night in the Intensive Care Unit instead of her new home.

"You toasted with all the other tables of guests, so why not us? Come on, aren't you gonna pay us respect?"

The guests at the table went back and forth, coercing her to raise a toast. However, out of nowhere, someone snatched the glass out of Stella's grip and splashed it across the face of the person who initiated the coercion.

With an angry expression on his face, the man who snatched the glass chuckled as he mocked, "Why don't you piss off and look at your own reflection. Do you really think you deserve respect?"

"And, the rest of you, every single person at this table." He wobbly raised his finger at the table. "Looking all dignified and well-dressed while perverted thoughts about the bride are running through your minds. What a bunch of savages!"

His words insulted the entire table of guests, and the man who was splashed by him was enraged. "Oh, I was wondering who it was. It's the youngest son of the Lowe family. Weren't you convicted of aggravated assault? Your brother was quick to bail you out! Thank God you were born into a decent family. No matter how much trouble you got yourself into, your family will always clean up the mess, while you can be a useless piece of trash!"

The corner of Zane's mouth twitched upwards into a chilling smirk. In a split second, he bolted up, grabbed the man by the collar, and narrowed a fork toward the man's neck. As if he was discussing with the man, Zane said, "I haven't tried manslaughter. What do you say I try it on you? Let's see if they would clean this up for me too."

The man had obviously never dealt with such a threat. His arrogance was gone, and his face went pale with fear.

A voice broke the deadlock of the situation. "Zane, let go of him!"

Stella turned around to see a man, who looked exactly like Zane, approaching them hurriedly. He was Carter, Zane's twin brother, the most outstanding descendant of the Lowe family, who was also the established heir of Lowe's Corporate.

Although they looked exactly the same, the twins gave off very different vibes. Zane looked dark and dangerous, while Carter looked more reserved. Carter spoke slowly and gently, like a diligent valedictorian who the grown-ups had high hopes for.

"Is this a place for you to cause a scene? Let go and apologize now!"

"Apologize?" Zane slowly turned his gaze downward to look at the cowardly man that was being held at the end of his utensils. "Sure. Come on, call me daddy and apologize to me, then I'll let you go."

There were a lot of rich playboys in Rivera, but nobody was as reckless as Zane.

Not only was he a playboy, but he was also a madman.

Zane had been a loner since his childhood. When he was in elementary school, he killed a kindergarten class rabbit that the children were supposed to study. He stuffed the disemboweled rabbit into the schoolbag of a little girl.

In high school, he got into an argument with someone while playing basketball. He promptly pushed the person down the stairs during self-study class that evening, and the person suffered serious injuries.

All these years, from extreme sports and drag racing to physical fights, Zane kept having all sorts of ridiculous episodes. Since his family would always take care of the consequences, he was reckless enough to do anything.

Even if he were to kill someone, nobody in Rivera would be surprised.

The fork had already penetrated the cowardly man's skin, and he yelped in pain. He was fearful that Zane would give the fork a push, and his life would come to an end right there and then.

He was not going to risk his life over his dignity.

So, the man surrendered and immediately addressed Zane, "Dad.."

Carter looked livid. "Are you done messing around?"

Zane glanced at Carter, released the man's collar, and threw the fork into a wine glass.

“Buzzkill,” mumbled Zane, and he swaggered away.

No matter what other people said about Zane, Stella was still grateful for his help that day.

She never expected someone as unruly and arrogant as him to pass away last year from drowning.

Chapter 198

The day Zane drowned was the day Carter got married

Stella and Keegan attended the wedding, but they did not see Zane.

The wedding took place by the beach, so the location was far from the city center. The Lowes booked many rooms at the beach resort for their guests to stay in.

However, not long after the ceremony, they received a call informing them that Cordelia had tripped and fallen. They did not spend the night at the resort and hurried back home.

Meanwhile, Zane drowned on the night they left.

There were a lot of rumors surrounding the truth of Zane’s death, but the Lowes never explained what happened that night. They just stated that it was an accident.

Even the guests that spent the night in the hotel that night had no idea what went down. When they knew that something had happened, Zane was already in an ambulance to the hospital and was announced dead not long after.

The wedding became a funeral for the death of a young man.

One could only guess how the Lowes felt that day.

Zane’s funeral was low-profile, and there were very few reports of the incident in the media

too.

Everyone in Rivera thought that karma had gotten to Zane, but Stella had always thought that it was a pity that he died young.

On her wedding day, although Zane appeared to be drunk, Stella did not smell the scent of alcohol when he passed by her.

Stella believed that Zane was not a drunken troublemaker. She believed that he was pretending to be drunk as an excuse to help her out.

But, since Zane had passed away, there was no way for Stella to find out the truth. But even so, she would always be thankful to him. Looking at Carter's features, which looked exactly like Zane's, she was quick to take an instant liking to him.

"So, that's what happened. If it wasn't for Zane back then, I would've been sent to the hospital on our wedding night." Stella narrated calmly, "I didn't have the chance to repay him for his kindness when he was alive. Now that Carter needs my help, it's only fair that I lend him a hand for Zane's sake."

Keegan stared at Stella with a complicated expression. After a while, he asked, "Why haven't you told me about this before?"

Stella forced a smile and raised her gaze to look at him. "Keegan, when you left me alone at our wedding, did you not think of what would happen?"

Keegan sealed his lips and gulped. After a moment of silence, he said, "I was busy with urgent matters that day."

Stella dropped her gaze. "You're always busy with something."

'It doesn't matter if it was the time we got married, or when my mother was sick, or when I was at the hospital in need of a family member's signature...

'As long as Bella gives him a call, I will always be the forgotten one.' Time after time, Stella grew tired of saying anything about it.

Keegan's lips were shut tight, and he stayed silent for a long while.

Although Stella meant to mislead Keegan with this story to cover up her real reasons, telling the story again was just adding salt to her wound. She was also upset about it.

"Anyway, I already promised to help them out. If you think I'm bringing shame onto the Kane family name, we should get the divorce done quickly. If your family asks you about it later on, I'm not one of the Kanes anymore. You won't be involved in this."

Keegan's expression darkened, and he shot her a side-eye. "Do whatever you want. It won't be the first time you humiliate me anyway."

Stella was just about to return the banter when the lights dimmed down. The exhibition went dark, with only a few lamps here and there illuminating the place.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please come forward! This is a gentle reminder to not push against each other and to avoid trampling. I understand your excitement, but safety

comes first. Please put your mobile devices and cameras away. Flashlights will affect the display of the Luminous Pearl. We have a team of professional cameramen that will record the entire display. The whole recorded process will be sent to your respective mobile phones.”

Chapter 199

It turned out the Luminous Pearl was about to be presented. Stella unconsciously moved toward it, and Keegan followed her.

When all the lights from the cell phones were turned off, the lights overhead were also turned off. There was only the soft glow from the infrared light of the surveillance cameras and the green light from the emergency exits. The surrounding was pitch black. Even if someone was standing nearby, one could not see their face clearly. It was total darkness.

“We appreciate your cooperation,” the host’s voice boomed again. “Next, we will have our staff pull the curtains, and we shall admire this rare treasure that had been uncovered after two thousand years together.”

As his speech ended, everyone saw the soft glow emitted from the stage. As the curtains were pulled down, the glow started to spread toward its surrounding. The soft purple light immediately covered the front stage when the curtains were pulled down completely. At the same time, the original source for this glow was a bead the size of a ping-pong ball covered in a glass dome.

Everyone erupted in gasps. It was not like everyone there had not seen Luminous Pearls before. However, they usually emitted light green or whiteish yellow lights. Most people saw those that cast light purple glows like this one for the first time. Those further away could not see clearly, so they pushed to squeeze forward.

Stella staggered from the squeezing, but the person beside her stretched out his hand to hold onto her waist. He brought her into his arms and used his body to shield her between the display set and himself.

‘Keegan acted like a man for once and knew to protect me. Could it be that the things I said earlier have caused him to feel some guilt?’ Stella thought.

The host on stage was introducing the Luminous Pearl’s origins. The surrounding people were squeezing to the front. Once in a while, a nail or handbag would touch Stella, and she would shrink further into his embrace.

Keegan’s body froze, and his body subconsciously moved away and kept a distance from her.

Stella furrowed her brows. 'Bastard. If he resented me so much, why did he sleep with me?'

She gritted her teeth and leaned closer, but he still dodged her. Stella grew frustrated and stretched her hands out to hug his waist. "If you push me away, I'll tell grandma that you have a mistress and want to divorce me!"

Keegan's movements halted and did not move any further.

Stella maintained this position while looking at the Luminous Pearl on stage. The glow emitted from the pearl was breathtaking, and the host on stage told the pearl's origins at a moderate pace.

The pearl originated from the Swallow Kingdom and was gifted by an unknown king to his beloved consort. Then, it changed masters a few times before becoming an accompaniment for the burial of a madam during the Astor Dynasty. After that, the tomb was raided, and the pearl was lost overseas. Under a stroke of good luck, Irene Moore saw it during an auction and used eight million Union dollars to bid on it.

In order for the people in the country who were interested to gaze upon the brilliance of the pearl, the pearl would be exhibited once in the middle of every month. At the end of the year, it would be officially donated to the national museum. Stella listened to it for a long time. She realized that the pearl was just a gimmick to attract people to the jewelry exhibition. Their true intention was actually to sell their jewelry.

"On this night, the volume of jewelry about to be sold would far exceed the money required to bid for the pearl. By exhibiting the pearl eight or ten times, the money they would have earned would be enough to buy tens of those pearls. From the looks of it, Mr. Moore's aunt is quite similar to you. Both your hearts are rotten to the core," said Stella.

The person in her arms froze, and Keegan's voice came from behind. "Stella, who are you talking to?"

Stella was stunned.

'Why was his voice coming from behind me? If Keegan was behind me? Who am I hugging in my arms?' She thought.

Chapter 200

At that moment, the lights were all turned on. Stella squinted her eyes and was shocked when she saw who she was holding in her arms and yelled, "Mr. Moore?"

Keegan's expression immediately turned ugly. He could see that Stella was hugging Marshall like an octopus. She had her head facing upwards with a dumb look on her face.

He gritted his teeth and said, "What are you doing?"

Stella came back to her senses and quickly released her grasp, but Keegan was quicker by a bit and grabbed her wrist. He then forcefully pried Stella from Marshall's body. Stella's wrists were hurting, but she did not care to cry out. Due to the embarrassment, she could only stay awkward.

Forget about hugging the wrong person; she even blackmailed the person and ridiculed their aunt. Now, she wished she could crawl into a hole and hide from the embarrassment.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Moore. I've mistaken you for someone else," Then, she complained quietly to Keegan, "Weren't you beside me just now? Where did you go?"

Keegan said with an unhappy expression, "You were the one hugging someone else and not letting go, yet you have the audacity to blame me?"

Stella choked on his words. 'Son of a bitch, doesn't he know how to give me a way out?'

In the end, Marshall said, "Based on the situation, it's normal to mistake anyone for someone else. Besides, I have the same physique as Keegan."

That sentence helped Stella ease the awkwardness. In actual fact, what Marshall said was also true. He did have the same physique as Keegan, and the smell of their clothes had a slight tinge of rosin. Therefore, it caused Stella to confuse them both.

"I met Vermont earlier. He said that both of you came over here, so I came to look for you," Marshall said.

Then, Stella remembered that she had rejected Marshall's invitation previously. Instead, she had appeared at the jewelry exhibition. She figured that he might feel unhappy about it, so Stella quickly explained, "Grandma told me she wanted to come and take a look. We were worried, so we came with her."

"I saw Mrs. Kane Sr." There were many people around, so everyone talked loudly. Marshall said, "There are too many people here, and Keegan still has his injuries. He might get bumped into easily. I'll bring us to the front where there are seats."

If Carter had left a good impression on Keegan, then Marshall was definitely an angel. He was kind, polite, and gentle. Regardless of whatever he was doing or saying, he was thoughtful and would not leave anyone feeling uncomfortable.

'He's such a perfect man... How did he become friends with a bastard like Keegan?' Thinking of that, Stella threw a disdainful glance at Keegan.

Keegan was very confused by that. Then, Stella turned her eyes into crescents and spoke to Marshall in a gentle manner. "Sorry for troubling you, Mr. Moore."

Keegan was shocked by the interaction. Marshall then led them through the crowd. Just as

they reached the front row, a silhouette ran over and pounced into Marshall's arms, Marshall, where did you go?"

"

Who else could have such a coquettish voice besides Aurora? Marshall's expression was slightly helpless. He stretched his arms to pat her shoulders. "Aurora, you're an adult now. There are so many people looking, and it wouldn't be good for us. Let go of your hands."

Aurora begged coquettishly, "No, I haven't seen you for days."

When Dahlia's resigned voice came from behind, Marshall still wanted to say something. Look at the child. Aurora is already over twenty years old, yet she still acts like a child. She still loves to stick to Marshall. What was she thinking?"

A slightly plump and pretty woman laughed. "She is still a child, right? She had been playing with groups of kids since she was young and was closest to Marshall. How could she change within such a short time?"

"Even if she can't change, she must change. She is already a grown-up. If she keeps staying like this, what would she look like when Marshall has a girlfriend in the future?"

The pretty woman smiled and said, "Then, wouldn't it be best to let Aurora be my daughter-in-law?"