

## Mr. Scott 341

### Chapter 341

The atmosphere in the office froze a little. Melanie's eyelids trembled before she said slowly, "We're not discussing terms. We're amicably negotiating a possible cooperation."

Eugene lifted his gaze slightly, and there was a faint coldness in his expression. "Negotiating? Melanie, I already rejected your offer of a deal.

"Or have you forgotten already?" Eugene looked at her impassively. "I never touch a toy I've thrown away."

Melanie's breathing caught in her throat.

He was talking about Burning Star Studio anymore.

Her heart pricked, and it took her a while to pack up the documents she had brought. "Then I'm sorry for taking up your time, Mr. Scott."

Eugene's cold gaze landed on her. His thin lips were pursed tightly, and his jawline was clearly taut. His entire body was enveloped in a faint cold aura.

He said sarcastically, "I thought you'd be faring better after you joined Xander."

At the mention of Xander, Melanie's hands moved a little faster.

Eugene's expression was cold and dark. His tone took on an edge of warning that even he did not notice. "His family is not as simple as you think. I would advise you not to get too close to Xander."

Melanie paused. She looked slowly at Eugene. "What do you know?"

Eugene snorted and tapped his slender fingers on the desk casually. His voice was very calm. "Didn't Xander tell you that he has already been chased out by his family? They're already nurturing a new heir. Why else would he have gone overseas and started an indie studio?"

Eugene gave her a contemptuous half-smile. "Sorry to say that you've chosen the wrong guy to cozy up to."

Melanie did not know much about Xander, but she could tell from the occasional conversation at work that Xander did not get along with his family.

When Eugene saw that she was silent, a dark look flashed across his eyes. He was about to speak when Melanie looked up.

She had lost a lot of weight recently, but her skin was still very fair. The evening light shone in through the window and landed on her face, making her beautiful facial features look more determined.

She looked at Eugene, her lips moving slightly. "I never 'cozied up' to anyone. You don't have to tell me about Xander, either. Eugene, your high and mighty attitude really annoys me."

As soon as she said, Melanie packed her things. She took the documents and was about to leave, but before she left the office, she exhaled and said in a low voice, "I've left you the

information on Burning Star and Dreamcatchers. You can let Lee verify everything. If you're willing, Mr. Scott, Burning Star will always be happy to work with you."

With that, she left the office.

Viola was upstairs, staring at the door. As soon as Melanie came out of the room, she met Viola's gaze.

Melanie pretended not to see her, said goodbye to Lee, and left.

When she went downstairs, she bumped into Yana who had just left work.

Yana's head was drooping. When she saw Melanie, she perked up and greeted her with a smile.  
"Melanie, do you want to have dinner together?"

Melanie thought for a moment and agreed. She texted Reny and Xander, then she drove Yana to a nearby Japanese place.

Yana sighed. "Melanie, I missed the time when you were around. Everything was arranged and orderly. I didn't even need to bring my brain to work."

"Haha, I wasn't that impressive!"

"You were! While you were away, we went through a bunch of different people. It took forever for us to settle on Hannah."

Yana was full of complaints. "And Viola acted like she was going to join the secretary's office too! Didn't you see that look on her face? She's totally a two-faced witch."

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"She's completely clueless! We lost a client because of her mistake, but she insisted that it was Cecilia's fault."

Melanie lowered her gaze, her face expressionless. Before she had even left, word had been going around the office that Viola would take over after her.

Yana snorted. "But she can keep dreaming. In any case, she was transferred away from the secretary's office less than two days after she joined. I don't even know what she's doing now. She isn't doing anything actually useful, wandering around like a ghost."

Melanie was not very interested in Viola's affairs. She asked Yana out for a meal mainly because she wanted to ask Yana about LeapCo and Vanke.

Even though Eugene had made his position clear, Melanie did not want to give up.

Moreover, she had never expected Eugene to agree to the deal immediately. The important thing was that he had fired Quentin, so there was no chance he would work with him.

In other words, there should be another link between Quentin and LeapCo.

Melanie thought for a moment and asked Yana, "Is LeapCo venturing into a new field recently? The company even got in touch with Dreamcatchers."

Yana was also smart, and Hannah had told her Melanie's reason for coming over today. This was not a secret anyway, so she was more than happy to do Melanie a favor.

She lowered her voice and said, "Actually, we all feel that Mr. Scott isn't particularly enthusiastic about this collaboration. Dreamcatchers reached out to him several times, but he rejected them every time.

"Besides, the export department is single-handedly behind this. They only submitted the proposal after all the terms had been agreed on. They said that good publicity is necessary if we want to enter the market."

What Yana knew was not very different from what Melanie had heard. However, Melanie was a little surprised to hear that this was the export department's plan.

She had worked at the export department before. Quentin was also the export manager at the time.

Gears turned in Melanie's mind, but she did not say much to Yana. After dinner, she returned to the north side of the city.

The next morning, she received a call from Reny. "Melanie, the department has suddenly informed us to set up a salon at Osmanthus Park in the west side of the city. Do you want to come with us or head over there yourself?"

Although there was a fight brewing between Dreamcatchers and Burning Star, the department still wanted the two groups to work together amicably. After all, that would be best for them.

Melanie said, "I'll head straight over."

Osmanthus Park was a small suburban farm that specialized in leisure and entertainment.

When Melanie reached the farm, Xander and the others had not yet arrived.

The staff took her to a leisure area while Melanie told Xander that she had arrived.

There was the sound of footsteps at the door. Melanie assumed it was one of the staff and paid it no mind, until a sleazy voice spoke up behind her.

"Melanie, you're looking good today."

Melanie's eyes went cold. She looked across at Quentin. "And you look awful. Which nightmare did you crawl out of this time?"

Quentin's face twisted, but he had other members of Vanke with him, so he could only sit across the room from her and fume in silence.

Melanie sat in the conference room for a moment. Although Quentin said nothing, his eyes kept darting to her from time to time.

It was like a bug crawling under her skin.

She got up in frustration and left the room.

The air was crisp in the suburbs, and the amenities of Osmanthus Park were beautifully constructed. Melanie stared at the pond in the distance, and her irritation slowly faded.

Suddenly, a black car drove in from the direction of the entrance. Melanie did not see the license plate clearly, but since the car was black, she assumed it was Xander and the others.

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“Mr. Scott, Farway and Widetower have always had a better working relationship. This time, Qaisa came to renew their contract with Farway.”

Lee flipped through the information he had gathered and reported everything to Eugene bit by bit. “If Mr. Zayner is willing to pull some strings for us, Qaisa should be willing to do us a favor.”

“Farway and LeapCo only worked together the year before last?” Eugene asked.

“Yes, for the project the year before last.”

Eugene nodded and fell silent. Lee did not know what to say. He looked at Eugene’s expressionless face and wanted to say something but hesitated.

Lee’s previous job scope was to go to various companies to check on the situations there. Before this, Melanie was the one who followed Eugene out to meet clients.

Now that Melanie was gone, however, he had no choice but to take over her position.

To be honest, though, he could not quite read Eugene’s mind.

Lee sighed and stopped thinking about it. However, when he glanced at the small pond, he suddenly froze. “Why is Melanie here?”

Eugene was thinking about something when he heard his words. His eyelids twitched, and he said expressionlessly, “When Farway renewed the contract last time, did they say they wanted to renegotiate their terms?”

Lee was still looking at Melanie. When he heard Eugene's question, he took a second to recover. "Yes, but we didn't agree to their new demands."

Melanie looked at the car driving straight past and knew that she was mistaken.

She waited outside for another ten minutes before Xander and the others arrived.

Xander was dressed formally for the day. "Why aren't you going in outside?" he asked Melanie.

"Dreamcatchers and Vanke are in there."

Oliver clicked his tongue. "What's Vanke doing? This is between us and Dreamcatchers. Why did they step in and interfere?"

Melanie had the same question in mind. Logically speaking, the main problem was between Dreamcatchers and Burning Star. It was a little unreasonable for Vanke, a mere partner, to keep interfering.

At the same time, though, they probably had a vested interest in this, even if indirectly. Quentin probably placed a lot of importance on this deal.

The people from the department came late and did not talk about the exhibition. Instead, they had called everyone out here to play.

"Let's not talk about work today. Just treat it as a fun bonding day."

"Everyone is usually too busy with work to relax, so let's take this opportunity to let out our stress. After all, it's not good to stay indoors every day."

The person in charge introduced himself as Hubert. He was a team leader with a perpetual smile.

Reny whispered to Melanie, "One look and you can tell he's a smooth-talker."

Melanie raised her eyebrows and subtly nodded

The department wanted to play both sides, so they had to smooth things over and hope that the two studios could get along peacefully.

Osmanthus Park's main recreational activities were flower viewing, fishing, fruit picking, and other physical activities.

There was nothing fun about physical labor on a scorching hot day.

However, they had to humor the person in charge, so Melanie, Reny, and another girl went into the orchard to pick fruit, all wearing sunhats.

There were trees in the orchard, and the sun was not as hot under the leaves. Melanie cut a few bunches of grapes and put them in the basket, but when she looked up, she realized that the orchard faced straight ahead. There was a small pavilion, and she could vaguely see figures inside.

In the pavilion, Wade Zayner was all smiles. He followed Eugene's gaze and sighed. "It's good to be young. When I was younger, I often went back to my hometown to help my family with the autumn harvest!"

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"How about it, Mr. Scott? If you're interested, why don't you try out the farm experience too? Last time I brought my wife and children over, and I can confirm the fruits here are delicious." Eugene retracted his gaze and looked at Wade calmly. "Have you considered what I just said, Mr. Zayner?"

Wade had deliberately tried to change the topic, so he froze up for a second. After a while, he said with a troubled expression, "Mr. Scott, it's not that I don't want to help you, but I can't. "It's true that we at Farway have always worked with Widetower before this, but that's only because the family owed me a favor.



“Who am I to dictate what they do?”

Eugene’s expression did not change at all as he listened to Wade’s excuses. Once Wade was done, he said, “I was just asking for an introduction, not a guarantee of a deal. Or do you think LeapCo’s benefits aren’t good enough for you?”

Wade hesitated awkwardly for a moment and scratched his chin. “You’re really giving me a hard time, Mr. Scott.”

Eugene was indifferent. His fingertips moved slightly, and Lee spoke up for him, reminding Wade politely, “Mr. Zayner, I heard that you like to fish. Coincidentally, the environment here is quite nice. Do you think-”

The weather flipped like a coin in the summer. Just a moment ago, the sun was blazing in the sky, but now, dark clothes were already gathering.

Melanie had been out in the sun for some time. She glanced at the sky then told Reny she wanted to head back to the lounge.

Xander had walked away to take a phone call a while ago and had yet to return.

The orchard was not that far away from the lounge, but there were many paths and plants throughout Osmanthus Park to accentuate the pastoral atmosphere.

Melanie had to slowly make her way, following the signs.

However, when she walked into a cane forest, she saw an unexpected figure approaching her. It was Quentin.

Melanie subconsciously tried to avoid him, but Quentin deliberately blocked her way.

This place was quiet and secluded, with the fishing pool up ahead. No one would go fishing on such a hot day.

Quentin gave Melanie a mirthless smile. "Why are you alone, Melanie?"

He was obviously up to no good. Melanie took a few wary steps back. "What do you want?"

"Heh." A vicious light flashed in Quentin's eyes behind his glasses. He stared at Melanie's face and said in a sinister tone, "You know how to make an audio recording, right?"

Melanie looked at him defensively. She could hear the resentment in Quentin's voice. All she could do was check to see if anyone was nearby while she tried to fend him off. "You want me

to delete the recording?"

"Melanie, tell me, where do you get that pride of yours from? You always act like you're looking down on me, when you should be honored that I like you."

He inched closer to Melanie. He had probably just smoked, and the smell of smoke mixed with his body odor was very pungent.

It was too quiet here. Quentin might be thin and weak, but he was still a man. Melanie did not think she had much of a chance of winning a physical fight against him.

She forced her tone to stay calm. "Mr. Emerson, we're still business competitors right now. We shouldn't talk too much in private."

"Why not? I think it's the opposite

—

Quentin took a few steps closer to Melanie, his smile sinister and suggestive. "Melanie, you've been with Eugene and Xander, so why won't you join me next? Besides, Xander won't trust you anymore after he sees you with me.

"I'm a man too. I know how men think. Even if you deny it, I'll just say we're having an affair. Do you think they'll believe me?"

Quentin reached out to grab Melanie, who tensed up. She was waiting for the perfect moment to evade him when she heard a low, deep voice behind her.

"What are you two doing?"

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The steady footsteps were especially loud and clear in the quiet environment. Melanie's heart skipped a beat, and she looked up.

Eugene was followed by Lee and a middle-aged man. His face was cold as he looked between Melanie and Quentin for half a second.

Quentin froze when he heard Eugene's voice.

"You look as graceful as ever, Mr. Emerson." Eugene's gaze finally rested on Quentin. His tone was emotionless. "It seems like you've been doing well for yourself recently."

Melanie had already regained her senses. She pinched the corner of her shirt to calm herself down before looking at Eugene again.

She was a little puzzled. Why was Eugene here?

However, Eugene sensed her gaze and looked over with a pair of dark eyes. There was some unknown emotion in them, but his tone was slightly mocking. "Melanie, you keep surprising me."

His tone suggested that was not a good thing.

Melanie pursed her lips and was about to say anything when Quentin suddenly spoke up next to her.

He plastered on a fake smile and said brightly, “Mr. Scott, why are you here? What a coincidence. Why don’t we have dinner together later?”

After saying that, he even looked at Melanie and chuckled. “It’s just that Melanie and I still have some private matters to deal with. I’m afraid we’ll have to trouble Mr. Scott to wait a little.”

He deliberately emphasized the word “private” and looked at Melanie suggestively.

The implication was clear.

The air seemed to freeze instantly. Eugene narrowed his eyes. He was tall, so when he looked at them, he naturally seemed to be looking down from above.

However, Quentin had to add, “Mr. Scott, you know all about my previous relationship with Melanie. I took very good care of her at work, after all.”

He wore a fawning smile, but the words he said were very repulsive. He acted as if he had an improper relationship with Melanie.

Of course, Quentin had said that on purpose.

He wanted to embarrass Melanie and get under Eugene’s skin.

Quintin had always held a grudge against Eugene for firing him from the company. At that time, LeapCo was about to promote a batch of middle-level managers. He originally had a chance, but Eugene came up with an excuse to fire him.

He had heard a lot about Eugene's relationship with Melanie later on, and he was even more certain that Eugene had tripped him up on purpose.

That was why he wanted to imply that he had played with Eugene's woman long ago.

How could Melanie not understand what he meant?

She steered and looked up expressionlessly. "Your shamelessness truly knows no bounds, Mr. Emerson. I just hope that Vanke and Dreamcatchers can protect you, lest you become a stray dog on the streets again."

Quentin's face darkened, and a vicious look flashed across his eyes. However, he did not vent his anger in front of Eugene. Instead, he sighed and said helplessly, "Melanie, why do you have to do this?"

"I know it was hard on you after you had to leave LeapCo, but I'm just a small-time manager. I can't help you get into Vanke."

"No matter what you say, I just can't go do it."

Melanie's face had grown colder, but she could still feel an even colder set of eyes on her from above.

She took a deep breath. She knew that Quentin was a shameless scoundrel. There was no point arguing with him unless she could get rid of him directly.

She pursed her lips and was about to leave when Eugene, who had been silent all this while, suddenly scoffed. "Melanie, are you falling into further depravity because Xander can't give you what you want? You're really putting yourself out there."

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Xander frowned slightly. “Mr. Scott, don’t you have anything better to do?”

The tension between them was so intense that Melanie’s temples throbbed. She reached for Xander. “Stop it. Reny and the others are probably waiting for us. Let’s head back to them.”

She grabbed Xander’s sleeve and shook it as she spoke. Xander’s cold aura slowly disappeared. He looked back at Melanie and said, “Okay.”

He looked at Eugene again and said calmly, “Mr. Scott, please make way.”

Eugene’s dark eyes were cold as his gaze landed on Melanie’s hand, focused on the way she was tugging at Xander’s sleeve.

Melanie knew Eugene’s temper, and she did not want to delay any longer. Without waiting for Eugene to make way, she took Xander’s hand and led him further into the cane forest.

According to the signs, they could get to the lounge by going through the forest.



Xander let her drag him along without saying a word.

Melanie did not let go until they were some distance away. "I'm sorry," she said softly.

"What are you apologizing for?" Xander looked at her and asked.

Melanie thought for a moment and smiled bitterly. "I keep saying that I don't want to get you involved every time, but I end up troubling you every time.

"And about LeapCo..."

Xander had said before that he did not want her to go to LeapCo. Melanie had taken matters

into her own hands.

Xander said, "Don't blame yourself. I know you want to solve the studio's problems, but you made the right choice. LeapCo is the crux of the problem right now."

When he spoke, his words were clear and his breathing was steady. He always gave her a sense of security.

"It's just that LeapCo has poor taste. That's not your fault." Xander's last sentence carried a hint of helplessness. He looked at Melanie. "You like to take all the blame on yourself too

much."

Melanie was silent. No one had ever said such things to her, whether it was at LeapCo or when she followed Eugene back to his family home.

Most people habitually asked her for help. They took her for granted and thought that she could handle everything perfectly.

If anything went wrong, it was because she was not capable enough.

When she did not say anything, Xander magically took out a small peach from somewhere and handed it to Melanie. "Here you go."

Melanie looked at the little green peach and stiffened.

Xander raised his eyebrows. "When I was on the phone just now, I couldn't help but pick a

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peach. I feel a little guilty now."

This peach was probably still a fledgling. No wonder he felt guilty for plucking it before its time.

Melanie accepted it, remembering how long Xander had just been on the phone. "Who called you?" she asked casually.

Xander stopped in his tracks. "It was someone from Blue Inc. I didn't manage to convince them last time, so I wanted to try again."

Melanie vaguely remembered that. She nodded and followed Xander back to the rest area.

Reny and the others had returned first, along with the people from Dreamcatchers.

The weather outside was hot, so they were not interested in going out to play.

Besides, the two sides were still competing with each other, so there was nothing to say between them. The department's plan was a flop. In the end, everyone ate an uncomfortable dinner together and left.

Melanie did not see Eugene's car in the parking lot before she left. He was probably long gone.

She bid Xander goodbye and returned to the north of the city.

Their day of outdoor exercise had yielded nothing but mild heatstroke.

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Melanie was also tired. She took a quick shower and went to bed early.

The next morning, she went to the hospital to see her grandfather.

She could not visit yesterday because she had to go to the west side early in the morning. Her grandfather was still in the intensive care unit, his condition pretty much unchanged. When Melanie went to the nurse to find out what was going on, she heard that his wound had started to hurt yesterday. The old man had been in so much pain that he had not been able to sleep all night.

Melanie went to Dr. Wells again to ask about the situation. Dr. Wells pushed the frame of his glasses up the bridge of his nose. "You don't have to worry too much. We've already checked the patient's wound, and it's fine. There hasn't been any infection for a long time. We're even discussing transferring the patient to a normal ward."

The intensive care unit was a sterile ward. Melanie hesitated. "Can't we stay in the intensive care unit for a while longer?"

She was worried that something would go wrong after her grandfather was transferred to a normal ward.

"It's not impossible if that's what the patient and his family want."

Melanie stayed in the hospital for a while before leaving.

When he left Osmanthus Park yesterday, Xander had said that he would probably meet with the person in charge of Blue Inc today.

Since the department could not confirm their project after so long, the studio had to consider other prospects.

Xander was just about to set off when Melanie arrived. He had only Oliver with him, so Melanie asked, "Is it just the two of you?"

"Yes, the others still have things to do."

Oliver cheerfully joked, "Melanie, I realized that you're almost like our agent. We have to bring you along whenever we discuss contracts."

Melanie said, "I don't mind being your agent if that's what you want."

When they arrived at the agreed place, Melanie realized that the representative from Blue Inc was Cameron Crane, whom she had interacted with at LeapCo.

Cameron still remembered her and was quite surprised to see her. "Why are you with Xander now, Melanie?"

Melanie smiled and said, "I wanted a new challenge."

Blue Inc wanted to launch a new entertainment project with a childlike concept. It was a design that combined the characteristics of ancient folklore and cartoon dolls.

Cameron said, "The target audience this time is mainly young people. We also want to take the opportunity to promote folklore and culture, so we need to be creative and attract more

attention

“Moreover, this is a long-term project because this exhibition will go to more than twenty cities.”

It was normal to have a whole series of exhibitions, but Cameron added, “The thing is, we want to have a different design for every city.”

They discussed the terms for the collaboration very quickly, and both sides were quite satisfied. The next step was to submit this proposal to Blue Inc’s boss and gain his approval.

After the discussion, they returned to the villa. When Reny saw them return, she had a strange look on her face.

Oliver asked, “What happened? What’s with that look on your face?”

Reny handed him the phone and said in a strange tone, “LeapCo seems to be butting heads with Vanke. I just received word that LeapCo might want to withdraw from the partnership with Dreamcatchers.”

The news surprised everyone.

“Why would they suddenly pull out of the agreement?”

Melanie also frowned. When she thought of Eugene’s attitude towards Quentin yesterday, she could guess part of it.

She remembered the audio recording she had of Quentin. She had wanted to send it to Mr. Jennings last night, but she had forgotten about it because it was so late when she got back.

Just as she was about to take out her phone to send him a message, her phone screen suddenly vibrated. Someone was calling her.

Looking at the numbers flashing on the screen, Melanie's frown deepened.

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Melanie gripped her phone. "I'm going out to take this call."

With that, she took her phone and left the villa.

The ringing continued. The call was an unknown number from Hearth City, but Melanie could guess who it was.

Recently, she had received calls from Hearth City every day. At first, it was Dylan, but after Melanie blacklisted her, the calls came from a different number every time.

She had a pile of messages from different numbers now. They were either scolding her for being an unfilial daughter or begging her to answer the phone. The latest message was a threat, saying she would regret it if she did not answer the phone.

Melanie picked up the call. After a moment of silence, George's sinister voice came across the receiver. "Melanie, you finally picked up the phone."

"I told Dylan not to contact me again."

George sneered. "If you don't want to contact her, so be it, but she's your mother. Why shouldn't she try to call you? Don't you care about your mother?"

Melanie interrupted coldly when she heard his voice. "If there's nothing else, I'll hang up now

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"Give me another five hundred thousand dollars!" George quickly growled at her. "You have so much money, anyway. I heard that you're still keeping that old fart in the hospital? If you ask me, that's just a

waste of money! It's only a matter of time before he does. Why don't you just give the money to your mother and me instead?"

George spoke matter-of-factly, and the coldness in Melanie's eyes grew. She asked, "Where's Dylan?"

She did not care about the money she had transferred to Dylan last time, and she did not want to investigate if Dylan was lying to her. She only hoped that Dylan would keep her word and stay away from her from now on.

However, it was now obvious that Dylan had been lying to her again.

"Stop asking questions and just pay up!"

If I do pay you, how much will you ask for next time?" Melanie's expression did not change. She did not even bother to change her tone. She only said, "I won't give you a single cent."

Melanie went back to the villa. Xander had told them all about what had happened, and the group was discussing where they were going to celebrate.

Reny asked her, "Before I came here, I saw that there's a famous grilled fish restaurant in Jepton. It's in the north of the city. Do you know where it is?"

Melanie did not care much for food, but she had heard Yana talk about it before. She nodded. "I know."

However, she did not expect this meal to be so unpleasant.

The north of the city was an old district, and it was not as well-developed as the south of the city. She was a little surprised to see Simon here.

After all, once when she accompanied Eugene to a gathering, Simon heard that she was from the north of the city and turned his nose up in disdain.

In Simon's eyes, a backward old town was no different from a slum.

Simon seemed to see her too, but for once, he did not come over to pick a fight. Instead, he turned and went into the soup bar next door. It looked like it had just opened.

Reny pulled Melanie into the grilled fish shop. The fish there was fresh and grilled to perfection.

Halfway through their meal, the phone on the table vibrated. An unknown number had sent her another message. It seemed like George had changed his number and was harassing her again.

Suddenly losing her appetite, Melanie picked up her phone and got up.

"Melanie, are you full already?"

"I'm a little stuffed. I'm going outside to take a breather."

This place was not that far from her home. Melanie stood under the old oak tree by the door of the shop.

People came and went behind her. She stood there, shivering. She felt isolated from everything around her

– until she heard a cold snort and Viola's hesitant voice behind her. Melanie? What are you doing here?"

Chapter 350

Melanie paused and turned to see Viola coming out of the shop next door.

Simon, along with a few others from the same circle, followed right behind her. There was no sign of Eugene,

"Heh, are you waiting for Eugene?" Simon nonchalantly walked up to Melanie and raised his chin to look down at her. He commented lazily, "You're quite patient. You'd rather skip dinner to wait for him."



“Melanie, don’t you think you’re quite pathetic like this?”

“You’re imagining things,” Melanie said casually.

With that, she turned to head back into the grilled fish shop. She was already feeling down, so she felt even worse having met Simon and the others.

Viola smiled and chimed in, “Melanie, it’s quite a coincidence to meet you here. My shop is opening today. Why don’t you give it a try too?”

Her eyes crinkled as if she was happy. “Eugene said before that my mother’s cooking skills are excellent, so I’m sure the food here is food. Otherwise, I don’t think he would have supported us in opening this shop.”

Melanie’s eyes flashed, and she could not help but glance toward the shop behind Viola. She pursed her lips slightly. So Eugene helped out with Viola’s family’s shop?

Melanie looked away, her heart unruffled.

When she asked Eugene for help, she always had to make a lot of offers before she could barely get him to nod.

She wondered what price Viola had to pay for this store.

No, forget it. Eugene adored Viola. There was no need for her to beg.

Melanie didn’t linger outside. She turned and headed back to the grilled fish shop.

However, just as she walked inside, a figure turned around in the parking lot beside her. Eugene came over and looked at the group of people outside with a cold expression. “I’m late. I was working overtime.”

Simon's expression was unreadable. He did not greet Eugene as warmly as before. He only said, coldly, "I have something to do. I'll leave first."

Eugene glanced at him but said nothing.

Viola glanced at their faces, blinked, and said softly, "Eugene, everyone's waiting for you. Simon said he wanted to go play again."

Simon did not move. He looked at Eugene expressionlessly. "Mr. Scott is so busy now. Does he even have the time to play with us?"

Eugene shrugged non-committedly. "Play what?"

Someone added, "We're going to GT Bar. We haven't been there in a long time."

Simon's posture was casual as he said, "You're half a step late. If you had come earlier, you could have met Melanie. She probably knew that you were coming and waited here for you."

He snickered. "She was so desperate and pathetic that it turned my appetite."

After he finished speaking, Viola added, "That's right. Melanie is here too. Why don't we invite her along?"

When she said this, she had a sincere smile on her face.

Simon gave her a half-smile. "You're enthusiastic, Viola."

"But—" His tone changed, taking on a hint of displeasure. "Don't say I didn't warn you. If she goes, I won't go. I don't want to get into trouble."

Melanie knew nothing about what was going on outside. She had just returned to the grilled fish shop when she heard Reny say, "Yvonne's coming over later."

Yvonne came in like a whirlwind, rushing over in her high heels.

However, she came with another piece of news that made Melanie uncomfortable.