

Chapter 111 Umbrella

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She felt a little nauseous. When she went downstairs, she saw Helen sullenly sitting on the sofa.

Helen was well-maintained. She used to be attractive. Otherwise, Cason would not have fallen in love

with or married her. After all, he had had a stable career back then while she had been a single mother.

When she stared at Penny with her sparkling eyes, she looked charming.

Seeing this, Penny

inexplicably frowned and wanted to ask why she didn't go to the hospital today. Cason always spoiled

Helen. If she wanted to rest at home, he wouldn't blame her. At the thought of this, Penny gave up

asking about it and neatly opened the door.

But seeing the man standing outside the door, she narrowed her eyes and felt nauseous.

It was Talon. He wore a suit, so she guessed he had returned from the company. When he looked at

her curvy figure, his eyes darkened. But he suppressed the urge when greeting her with a smile.

"Penny, are you leaving?"

Penny didn't like how he looked at her, so she perfunctorily nodded. When she walked past him, he smelt her fragrance. He suppressed the desire and said, "I didn't see your car outside. What about I send you back."

"No, thanks."

"I am your brother."

When Penny walked away without replying, Talon stood and stared after her.

After he turned around and entered the living room, he noticed the smell in the living room. A disgust

flashed across his face when he said, "Can you be more careful next time? She will discover it sooner

or later!"

Hearing his sarcastic tone, Helen said, "I did not expect her to come tonight."

Talon removed his suit and draped it on his arm, saying, "I know you're cheating on Cason. But don't

bring the man to the villa. Cason is not in good health. If you anger him, he may die. Don't forget Penny

still has shares of the Stuart Group. You haven't coaxed her into giving you the shares. What's the rush?"

"Fine! It's all my fault. I let him leave through the back door. Fortunately, the guard alerted me in advance."

"It's good that you know you made a mistake."

When Talon was about to go upstairs, he added, "Let people deodorize the living room."

Helen felt embarrassed after her son found out about her love affair. So, she quickly asked the maid to

clean and disinfect the living room and the study.

It took Penny half an hour to return to the hospital with the documents. The latter would have harshly

ridiculed her if she had borrowed money from Helen to take a taxi.

When she was about to reach the hospital, she bumped into a nurse in a hurry to get off work and

almost fell backward. Fortunately, she used the umbrella to steady herself, but a branch cut the

umbrella open.

The nurse hurriedly apologized with her head down and left. It was just an umbrella, so Penny did not

intend to ask for compensation.

Cason was in the ward alone. After reading the documents, he asked, "Why are you in such a mess?"

Penny sniffed and said, "My car got a flat tire. And I left my phone and bag in it. Can you give me some

money to take a taxi?"

Penny had never asked Cason for money since he was eighteen. So, he felt a subtle sense of

accomplishment when taking out a credit card.

Glancing at the Rolls-Royce umbrella in her hand, he asked with a frown, "Who gave you the umbrella?"

"A colleague."

"Does your colleague drive a Rolls-Royce?"

Penny wondered why he could guess Orlando was driving a Rolls-Royce by looking at an umbrella.

Then, she lowered her head and saw the eye-catching logo on the umbrella handle. And she suddenly had a headache at the thought of the hole she had caused.

She was not surprised Orlando used a Rolls-Royce umbrella. After all, she had seen the Hermes dog leash last time. But she felt frustrated when thinking about the compensation.

"Penny, you and your colleague..."

Penny did not want him to nag, so she truthfully said, "It's from Orlando. I bumped into him. And he lent it to me."

Cason's face suddenly glowed with joy when he willingly handed the credit card to her.

After asking a nearby supermarket for change, Penny didn't return to Hills Villa. Orlando had been driving there just now. If she went back, she might meet him.

It took the traffic police two hours to deal with her car. Then, they contacted the hotel where she was staying and drove it over.

When Penny saw the umbrella was 20 thousand dollars on the Internet, she felt a sting in her heart.

After Orlando finished the shower, the woman hadn't come back yet. But he didn't care. Anyway, she was a stranger to him.

When he picked up his phone and saw Penny transfer him 20 thousand dollars, he raised his eyebrows and sent her a question mark.

"Mr. Fletcher, I'm sorry. I broke your umbrella."

She felt unlucky, so she added a crying emoji.

Orlando seldom chatted with people online. He only spoke with his friends and occasionally called his

business partners. So, he was a little surprised to see Penny send him such an emoji. After all, she

was always cold. But at the same time, a subtle feeling arose in his heart.

Chapter 112 Embarrassment

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Penny didn't expect Orlando's response, so she went to shower after sending the message.

When she got dressed and walked out of the bathroom, she found he had transferred the 20 thousand

dollars back without any words. She frowned, wondering whether it meant he didn't want her compensation.

She knew he was not short of money but was always cold to her. To be precise, they were mean to

each other. They were not so close that she could be exempt from the compensation of 20 thousand dollars.

She couldn't figure out what he was thinking but clearly remembered what had happened during the meal with him. So, she took a photo of the hole in the umbrella and sent it to him.

Then, she urged the intermediary, hoping the bank to allocate funds as soon as possible. She wanted

to move out of Hills Villa because it was inconvenient always to avoid him. She was self-aware and

knew he would hate her and drive her out as soon as he found out her identity tomorrow.

When Orlando saw the photo, he had just finished wiping his hair. Then, he replied, "I see."

"Do you want me to repay?"

"No."

Sensing his coldness, Penny stopped the topic and said, "Thanks."

Their conversation was boring, so she put the phone aside and stopped chatting.

Orlando turned on the computer and began to review a new batch of documents. Suddenly, he saw the gift box on the table. It was a gift from Rex to Penny. Orlando frowned, stood up, and walked out with the gift box.

Anika was wiping the decorations in the villa. Seeing him coming out, she quickly put down the duster cloth and asked, "Mr. Fletcher, what's the matter?"

She did not dare to neglect him because she did not want Ms. Moran to make trouble for Ms. Stuart again.

Orlando looked at the bedroom at the end of the corridor and asked, "Is she back?"

"No."

"Give it to her."

His tone was flat because he didn't want to talk about it.

Anika quickly waved her hand and said, "It looks expensive. Why don't you put it in Ms. Stuart's bedroom and tell her about it in person? After all, Old Mr. Fletcher asked you to pass it on to her."

Orlando did not want to make things difficult for a servant, so he went to Penny's bedroom. He smelt a familiar refreshing fragrance when he opened the door and walked in. He guessed it was her shower

gel instead of perfume.

The room was tidy. He walked to the bedside table. When he was about to put the gift box down, he

saw a painting book on it. He had two degrees, and one of them was indeed related to art. So, he

subconsciously reached out for the book.

Penny had a habit of writing her nickname on the second page of her books. So, if he opened it, he

would see it.

His slender fingertips landed on the cover. When he was about to open the book, he saw something

else on the bedside table. It was silver and looked like a man's private part. Judging from its shape, he

believed it was a sex toy. So, he put down the book with a frown and subconsciously clenched his fists.

Then, he turned around and strode out without glancing at the thing. He had never felt so embarrassed,

so he was a little upset.

When he got out of the bedroom, Anika was still out there. When she was about to ask, he strode past

her. She was stunned but couldn't say anything. So, she carefully closed the bedroom door.

After Orlando returned to his bedroom, he drank a glass of water to suppress the embarrassment in his

heart.

Chapter 113 Apology

Chapter 113 Apology

They had been married for three years. He had never slept with her but found she had a sex toy. He

had no ground to blame her. But she should not have placed it in such a prominent place.

His brows furrowed when her face flashed across his mind, and a hint of disgust flashed in his eyes.

But because of Rex, he must maintain the marriage.

Orlando soon calmed down, turned on the computer, and continued to work.

Penny did not know he had mistaken her facial massager for something else. While trying to find a new

construction team, she was worrying about the banquet tomorrow. She took out her phone. Orlando

had sent a message to her private number and asked her to meet him at the Fletcher's mansion.

Although she failed to see him because of the accident, he had her number. So, she planned to

inoculate him with her number.

After hesitating for a long time, she carefully typed a message, saying, "Mr. Fletcher, we have met

before."

After sending the message, she got no response after a long time.

Penny raised her eyebrows, thinking it was funny. He disliked his nominal wife so much that he didn't

care about her identity.

Fine! She would talk with him about it tomorrow. Anyway, she had already sent him a message.

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Cason called Penny early in the morning before she woke up and asked if she had prepared a dress

for the banquet. Penny had never attended such a banquet before. So, she decided to buy a dress after being reminded.

"Penny, I've sent a dress to Hills Villa. You can wear it."

He was concerned about her dress. After all, the banquet would be held at the Fletcher's mansion. Not

many people in Chatville could get in there. Rex would attend the meal this time. And Cason was sure

he would introduce Penny to the other people in high-society circles in Chatville. It was a good chance!

"Penny, I can't go because of my poor health. I cough badly even if taking only two steps. Rex holds

the banquet to counteract his bad luck. I will offend people if I go. Remember to have a good chat with

him, OK?"

If it were in the past, Penny would have felt sad because Cason was using her as a tool to save the

Stuart family. But she did not care now. After all, he was dying.

"I see."

"You also must remove the misunderstanding between you and Orlando."

Penny also agreed.

Before going to Hills Villa, she called Anika and asked, "Is Mr. Fletcher still there?"

"He left with a gloomy face early in the morning. By the way, he put a gift in your bedroom."

After a pause, she added, "Old Mr. Fletcher asked him to pass it on to you. It looks valuable."

Hearing Orlando had left, Penny drove to Hills Villa without hesitation.

She frowned when she returned to her bedroom and saw the book out of place. She had read this book

every night recently and always put it in the same place. She picked up her facial massager, put it on

the dressing table, and then held the book.

Her heart skipped a beat when she saw the name on it. Then, she hurriedly shouted, "Anika."

Anika asked, "Ms. Stuart, what's the matter?"

"Have you moved my book?"

"No, Ms. Stuart. We don't move anything in your room when doing the cleaning. Maybe it is Mr.

Fletcher who moved it."

If Orlando had seen the name, she could understand why he had not replied to the message last night.

She sighed, thinking she had offended this client. And she believed he would feel sick when he recalled

the night they had had sex. She felt amused and angry simultaneously and decided to let nature take

its course.

If Orlando wanted to fire her, she could temporarily design for Colin's houses. Anyway, the studio had

gotten many orders because of Orlando. Although this order was important, it was no longer necessary.

There was no need to apologize for having sex with him now. After all, they would meet at the banquet

later.

Chapter 114 Patching Up the Lie

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"Ms. Stuart, did you lose anything?"

Anika felt slightly worried and subconsciously wanted to help her look for it.

"No. I just found my book out of place."

Hearing this, Anika breathed a sigh of relief and went to cook.

After Penny picked up the gift box and opened it, she saw a delicate jade bracelet. Since it was from

Rex, it must be expensive. Out of politeness, she quickly took out her phone to call him.

When Rex answered the call, he coughed and asked, "Penny, how is your dad?"

Rex was kind to her, so she felt guilty at the thought of her lie about giving birth to a baby. She had

secretly signed an agreement with Orlando.

"He is much better. Thank you for the gift. It's too valuable."

"I asked Orlando to visit your father, but I don't know if he went there."

Rex wanted Penny to tell him if Orlando had listened to him.

"He went to the hospital to see my father. Orlando is treating me well. Don't worry, Rex."

Hearing this, Rex beamed with joy.

"I'm glad that you like him. Penny, please wear the bracelet tonight. I plan to introduce you to the

guests at the banquet. Otherwise, some ignorant people may offend you in the future."

Penny felt so moved that her eyes turned red.

"OK."

"Penny, I hope you and Orlando lead a happy life. And I want to have a great-grandchild."

She subconsciously wanted to call Orlando Mr. Fletcher. Fortunately, she realized the problem quickly

and said, "We will work hard. But I was in poor health when I was young, so it may take longer."

After one told a lie, he would need countless lies to patch it up.

"It's OK. I'm not that anxious. I'm glad that you're working on it."

Penny asked a few questions about Rex's health before hanging up. Looking at the bracelet, she felt

stressed. It was the same as the gift from Colin's mother because they were both symbols of status.

She raised her hand and rubbed her eyebrows before going downstairs to get the dress she would

wear tonight. It was a starry sky dress dotted with diamonds. And she knew it worthed a lot at first

sight. It seemed Cason had spent much money on her for this banquet.

It fit well. After trying it on, she put it aside. There were several hours before the banquet, so there was

no hurry to put on makeup.

She went downstairs and asked, "Anika, is Niko locked in the backyard?"

"Yes, Mr. Fletcher has been living here these days, and I don't dare to let it out. Fortunately, the room is

soundproof. Otherwise, he would have heard it bark at night."

Penny went where Niko was locked. When she stood outside the room, she heard it bark with

grievance. So, she felt distressed and thought she must move out of Hills Villa as soon as she got the

money from the bank. She couldn't let Niko live like this because of Orlando.

Smelling her, Niko suddenly became excited. It barked, jumped, and wagged its tail like crazy.

When Penny opened the door, it instantly pounced on her. She did not want to leave the dog's hair in

the villa, so she picked up the leash and took it out for a walk. After telling Anika about it, she took it for

a walk along the road. Niko was a sheepdog with an active nature, so she must trot to keep up with it.

She had wronged it in the past two days, so she didn't blame it.

After they walked for about 1,000 feet, Niko suddenly barked and rushed forward. Penny couldn't pull it

back, and the leash hurt her hands.

She snapped, "Niko!"

Then, she saw Zoey sketching in front of her.

The route was suitable for walking dogs and sketching. The mountains were on the river's other side,
so the scenery was beautiful.

Hearing the dog bark, Zoey turned her head around. When she saw Penny holding the dog leash, her
eyes lit up.

"Penny!"

Penny had not expected to meet her here. Tonight was her birthday party, so she should have been
preparing for it now.

"Is it your dog? What's its name? It's so cute!"

Zoey became more excited when Niko jumped up and down around her. And they were having a great
time.

Penny found Niko was enthusiastic about all the members of the Fletcher family.

Zoey was playful, so she grabbed Niko's two front legs and jumped. But suddenly, her face became
depressed.

"Niko resembles another dog I know. They have similar marks on the foreheads. It is a puppy raised by
my cousin. But they sent it away."

Orlando?

Penny raised her eyebrows because Orlando was allergic to dog hair.

"He is Orlando's brother. He was gentle. After he brought the puppy back, he loved it and played with it
daily. But they sent it away before he could name it."

Penny had not expected Orlando to have a brother. When she was about to ask about him, Zoey

added, "Please don't mention this to Orlando. Eric died young. He was about my age when he passed

away."

Chapter 115 Forced to Put on a Show

Chapter 115 Forced to Put on a Show

Her tone turned somewhat melancholy as Zoey spoke, and her gaze toward Niko became even more

affectionate.

"Niko looks like that little dog. So cute! Perry, where do you live? Can I come over to play with it?"

After saying this, Zoey glanced behind her. This road seemed to lead to a villa, one of the more

expensive villa areas in Chatville.

This place was more than the prime real estate. When it was initially launched, most of the best villas

had already been reserved. Perry's coming from here indicated that she likely came from a well-off

family.

Penny could sense what Zoey was thinking and hurriedly explained.

"I just happened to pass by this area. This road is great for walking dogs, and the scenery is nice. But

my home isn't here. I've recently finished renting, and I'm moving soon. I'll let you know once I've

settled."

Zoey didn't doubt her words and continued to caress Niko's head, playing with it.

Penny looked at the canvas behind Zoey and noticed that she had only completed half of her painting.

It seemed like she had arrived not long ago.

"Aren't you going to continue painting?"

Zoey reluctantly removed her hand from Niko's head and picked up her paintbrush with irritation.

"I didn't have time last night. I have to finish it now. Ugh, it's due tomorrow."

"I'll take Niko somewhere else for a walk. By the way, happy birthday. I'll give you your gift later."

Since she was attending a birthday banquet, a gift was necessary.

Penny had prepared sketch pieces she had practiced before, highlighting key points.

Zoey didn't lack anything, and giving her jewelry or the like would seem tacky.

"Okay, thank you. If you're still renting, don't choose anything too expensive. I don't lack anything."

"Don't worry; you'll like it."

The two chatted for a bit longer, and Penny didn't want to linger here any further, fearing she might run

into someone she knew.

She took Niko and headed back, but when they neared Hills Villa, she saw Orlando's car slowly

passing. He was heading to Hills Villa, too.

Penny's whole body stiffened and instinctively stopped, pulling Niko behind a large tree. She didn't

want Orlando to see her.

Orlando now knew her identity; was he coming to confront her?

Zane, who was driving, saw her but only glanced at her in the rearview mirror. He noticed Orlando was

still in the middle of a meeting and wasn't sure if he should say anything.

Orlando caught a glimpse of a shadow outside the window from the corner of his eye and thought he

might be mistaken.

He wanted to look, but the car had already driven some distance, and Penny's figure disappeared in

the rearview mirror.

"Orlando, it's Perry; it seems like she's walking a dog."

It seemed he hadn't been mistaken.

A trace of doubt flickered in Orlando's eyes, but he didn't dwell on it further.

When the car arrived at Hills Villa, he got out.

Anika, guarding the entrance, was startled to see him return.

"Mr. Fletcher."

Orlando rarely came back during the day. Why was he back so early today?

"Mm."

Orlando entered the living room and found the woman wasn't there. He frowned.

Why was she often not at home?

Rex hadn't mentioned having a fixed job; until now, she had only been doing part-time work.

After all, what the Fletcher family could provide her was enough to live comfortably.

"Where is she?"

Anika's tone was respectful, and she didn't dare say that Penny had gone out to walk a dog. If Mr.

Fletcher found out there was a dog in Hills Villa, he might become furious.

"Ms. Stuart has something to do and is still outside. She should be back soon."

"Okay."

Orlando's tone was cold. He sat down slowly, and it seemed like he would wait for Penny to return.

Rex had requested that he go with Penny tonight, so Penny had to ride in his car.

He was reluctant deep down, but out of consideration for Rex's health, he had to put on a show with

this woman.

Chapter 116 I'll Take You to the Hospital

Chapter 116 I'll Take You to the Hospital

Seeing that Orlando intended to wait for Penny there, Anika began to feel anxious. She hoped that Ms.

Stuart would return quickly.

Although Ms. Stuart mentioned that she had no emotional connection with Mr. Fletcher, Anika didn't want their relationship to deteriorate.

Mr. Fletcher's time was precious, and it was evident that he didn't like Ms. Stuart. Now, he was willing to wait here. If Ms. Stuart took too long, Mrs. Moran might give her a hard time again.

Anika quickly found a secluded corner and called Penny.

"Ms. Stuart, Mr. Fletcher is waiting here for you. Should we tie Niko outside for now?"

If Penny returned now and Niko barked, Orlando would notice since she had to pass by that way.

Penny knew Orlando had come to confront her, and the worst-case scenario was that they would terminate their cooperation.

Even worse, Orlando might publicly announce that he would never collaborate with the studio where she worked.

Penny's brow furrowed, and she held the dog leash, thinking about how to explain herself.

Initially, she thought they would divorce soon and didn't feel the need to explain.

But no one could have predicted that things would escalate to this point. Considering Orlando's cold

attitude towards her, she felt it didn't matter anymore. A sincere apology would suffice.

But she couldn't tell him that Niko lived at Hills Villa. So she returned to find Zoey, hoping that Zoey

could watch Niko for a while. Once she had dealt with Orlando, she would return to pick up Niko to

avoid making Orlando even more annoyed due to his allergies to dog hair.

Zoey readily agreed, and they quickly made the arrangements.

This delay took about twenty minutes in total. Penny began to run back to Hills Villa, worried that

Orlando might become impatient.

But just as she reached a spot less than a hundred meters from Hills Villa, she saw Orlando's car

driving out of the villa.

His face was somewhat darkened, and twenty minutes had already tested his patience. Even for

essential business partners, he wouldn't tolerate more than a five-minute delay, let alone Penny, who

had stood him up twice.

His brow furrowed as he saw Penny through the car window.

Penny, surprised by the sight of Orlando's car and in a rush, stumbled and fell as she twisted her foot.

The pain was excruciating, and a cold sweat broke out on her forehead.

The car slowed beside her, and the window rolled down, revealing Orlando's stern face.

He was dressed impeccably in a sharp black suit, his hands resting on a stack of documents on his lap,

looking somewhat unapproachable.

Penny struggled to stand, but due to her twisted foot, the pain had turned her lips pale, and her eyes

welled up with involuntary tears due to the sudden pain.

"Mr. Fletcher."

She called out and was about to explain herself, perhaps apologizing for not revealing her identity

earlier.

However, she heard Orlando's cold inquiry, "Do you live around here?"

Penny was surprised, failing to respond immediately. Orlando followed with a second question.

"Is your foot okay?"

It was a coincidence that they ran into each other and were no strangers to each other. Orlando didn't

think he could leave her alone here just like that.

Besides, it seemed like a painful fall.

There was a hole in Penny's pants, her knee was bleeding, and her ankle was twisted. Standing was

now a struggle for her.

She was about to answer but winced as she moved her leg, involuntarily letting out a moan.

She glanced down at her knee and noticed a small, sharp stone embedded inside. That explained the

intense pain.

Orlando opened the car door, his tone devoid of emotion.

"Get in. I'll take you to the hospital."

There was a hospital not far from here, about a ten-minute driving distance, and he was going in the

same direction.

Penny's mind briefly raced, concluding that Orlando didn't know her identity.

A polite smile appeared on her face, and she felt less anxious.

With Orlando's complete lack of interest in her, he might not even know her identity after the contract

ended.

That might be for the best.

She wanted to decline his offer, but considering her current condition, could she still return and pick up

Niko?

"Okay, thank you, Mr. Fletcher."

Chapter 117 Bound to Bear His Wrath

Chapter 117 Bound to Bear His Wrath

She held onto the car door and slowly got inside.

Her knee and ankle were unbearable, but she tried to endure them. When facing Orlando, she remained polite but distant.

"Thank you, Mr. Fletcher."

The faint scent of blood lingered in the air.

She was worried that she might be disturbing his work. She fell silent and sat quietly in the corner, not saying another word.

Since Penny got into the car, Orlando's gaze had been fixed on her knee.

Her knee was still bleeding, with a long gash, and her ankle was red and swollen.

If it were any other woman, she'd probably be in too much pain to hide her expressions.

However, Penny couldn't help but gasp softly, then she remained quiet, looking straight ahead.

The car quickly passed by the place where Zoey and Niko were. Niko was quite eye-catching, and

Orlando immediately spotted Zoey playing with him.

He couldn't help but ask, "Where were you rushing to just now?"

The last time he saw her, she seemed nervous about that dog. How come she suddenly handed the

dog to Zoey and ran in that direction?

Moreover, Penny still hadn't answered his question. Did she live in that area?

But her apartment was far from here.

Knowing that Orlando was unaware of her true identity, Penny remained calm and stuck to her initial excuse.

"The scenery here is beautiful and suitable for dog-walking. I don't live here; the villas in that area are

said to be quite expensive. The apartment I rented is nearby, but I'm moving to a new place soon."

Orlando squinted his eyes. Renting?

Penny had earned a design fee of over a million dollars for a single project, and even though Chatville's

housing was expensive, it didn't make sense that she still needed to rent after working for several

years.

Especially when she and her husband should have been able to gather enough for a down payment.

"I just saw your car and didn't expect to see you in this area."

Penny cleverly changed the subject, turning the conversation back to Orlando.

"Yeah."

Orlando didn't say much. He didn't want to discuss that woman from Hills Villa any further.

They had arrived at the hospital. Penny opened the car door and, limping, tried to get out, but the pain

in her foot was severe. She struggled several times but couldn't manage to stand up.

Rarely in such an awkward situation, she took a deep breath, ignored the pain in her knee, and finally

got out of the car.

The intense pain washed over her, and her face contorted, but she stood outside the window and

smiled at Orlando.

"Thanks, Mr. Fletcher."

Orlando pinched the documents. After Penny finished speaking, she limped his way to the hospital

entrance.

This woman was as stubborn as a mule, never willing to ask for help.

Orlando rubbed his forehead with his hand, finding it amusing. There was no need to rush to offer

assistance; his time was valuable, and he had never been this eager to help anyone.

"Zane, drive."

Zane was seated in the front and thought Orlando would assist her. But hearing him say this, he stepped on the gas pedal.

Penny went into the hospital alone, got her injuries treated, and came out with a crutch provided by the hospital, looking somewhat distressed.

She had to attend the banquet in the evening, but with her current condition, how could she manage?

Rex wanted to introduce her to other people in the industry tonight, and with her current appearance, she would probably only embarrass Rex.

Penny regretted that she had rushed back to see Orlando earlier.

She called Anika and asked her to send someone to pick up Niko. Then, she wondered if she could

quickly reduce the swelling in her ankle.

There were no bone injuries, so she could endure wearing high heels.

She quickly took a taxi back to Hills Villa.

Anika was shocked to see her in this state.

Niko had already been put in another room, and Anika was anxious.

"Ms. Stuart, aren't you supposed to go to the Fletcher's mansion tonight?"

"Anika, please get me some ice to apply. I'll start doing my makeup in a couple of hours."

Anika had no choice but to hurry and fetch some ice.

"Mr. Fletcher left very angry. Ms. Stuart, if you two are going to live under the same roof, you might

have to stop fighting like this."

Penny didn't need to guess; she knew Orlando must be furious. After all, she had stood him up twice in a row.

She sighed, looking at her still-swollen ankle.

She could evade consequences temporarily, but not forever.

Tonight at the banquet, she couldn't continue to pretend.

She knew she would have to bear his wrath eventually.

Chapter 118 You're Not Mad at Me

Chapter 118 You're Not Mad at Me

Anika brought her the ice, but after an hour of applying it, the swollen area still throbbed painfully,

especially when she put on her high heels. It felt like needles were poking at her skin.

Beads of sweat formed on her forehead as she pushed through the discomfort to continue with her

makeup.

Anika couldn't help but feel sorry for her.

"Ms. Stuart, how about I call Rex, and you can go another day?"

"No."

The primary purpose of this banquet was to cheer up Rex. He had been so kind to her, and she had

already missed picking him up earlier. She couldn't afford to disappoint him on such a momentous

occasion.

Penny completed her makeup, wearing the bracelet Rex had given her. Apart from that, she had no

other accessories.

With her naturally fair skin and calm demeanor, paired with a dress accentuating her waist, she looked

exquisite, like a winter plum blossom.

The emerald bracelet on her wrist made her appear even more nobly attractive.

After finishing her preparations, Penny wasted no more time and got into the car.

However, not long after the car departed, she received a call from Cason, asking her to make a detour

to Stuart's mansion and bring Lana along.

Penny furrowed her brows. "Dad, why does Lana need to go? Isn't she feeling unwell?"

"She is, but she heard about this event and wanted to join the fun. Rex likes you, and he won't mind if

you bring one more person. Penny, she's your sister, and she's been in the hospital for years without

the chance to attend any big gatherings. I'm busy, so take her with you."

Penny didn't particularly like or dislike Lana, and she agreed.

The car then headed to Stuart's mansion, where Lana was already waiting in her evening gown.

Due to her illness, she appeared delicate.

Helen didn't argue with Penny tonight; perhaps she realized that for Lana to attend an event like this,

they needed Penny's help.

Helen wanted to go but couldn't ask Penny for this favor. But she was okay with Lana attending in her

place.

Maybe someone would have their eye on Lana, and there was a possibility of her finding a wealthy

suitor.

Everyone knew that the Stuart family was barely holding up, and if Lana could get a rich husband, it

would be better than struggling with Penny at Stuart's mansion.

"Penny, I'm sorry. I was too stubborn."

Lana cautiously held onto Penny's hand. "You're not mad at me, are you?"

Penny's face remained expressionless as she softly replied, "Get in the car first, or we'll be late."

Lana nodded and carefully took her seat, holding up her gown.

It was the first time Penny had sat in this car, which Rex had left at Hills Villa. It was a limited-edition Bentley. They couldn't arrive at the Fletcher's mansion in her car.

The banquet was scheduled to begin promptly at 7:30, and the car glided slowly down the road.

Penny and Lana didn't exchange any more words. Penny had to look out the window to keep herself

occupied, but something caught her eye and made her furrow her brows.

A young man dressed in tattered jeans captured her attention. He was standing by the roadside,

devouring a bun.

He looked as if he hadn't eaten for a long time.

Penny had keen eyes and recognized him instantly. It was her cousin Noah, who had run away from

home several years ago.

He had left his parents and wife behind in their hometown, disregarding any responsibilities, and even

accumulated a mountain of debt. In recent years, he hadn't made a single phone call.

Whenever Philip and Haley mentioned their son, their eyes would tear up. Penny never expected to

see Noah in Chatville.

"Stop the car."

Penny called out, her gaze fixed on Noah, afraid he might disappear.

The driver promptly pulled over, and Penny, without any concern for the pain in her ankle, opened the

car door and stepped out.

"Wait for me."

She said before heading towards Noah.

Chapter 119 Getting Injured for Her

Chapter 119 Getting Injured for Her

But suddenly, a few rough-looking guys appeared beside Noah and gave him a shove.

Then, they led Noah into an alley nearby.

Penny took a few steps and had to lean against a tree by the side of the road, gasping in pain.

Worried that Noah might get into a confrontation with those thugs, she gritted her teeth and followed.

In the dark alley, she could hear the sounds of punches, kicks, and curses.

"When are you going to pay up? If you don't, I'll beat you to death today!"

"You bastard made it so hard for us to find you. How dare you run away!"

Penny had just reached the alley entrance when she heard these voices.

She quickly dialed the emergency number and shouted, "Stop!"

The thugs paused, turned their heads, and saw her in a formal dress. One of them whistled and then

slowly approached.

"Hey, beauty! Noah, when did you start hanging out with a beauty like this?"

Noah curled up his body, trying to protect his head as best as possible. He looked up at Penny with

anxiety in his eyes.

"Penny?"

Noah's voice was trembling from the pain. He was trying to stand up, but those kicks had broken

several of his ribs, making it impossible for him to exert strength.

Penny was both angry and frustrated with Noah. He was in his late twenties and still had no decent job.

She couldn't believe he had ended up as a beggar in Chatville!

She was angry and thought about how Philip and Haley would feel if they knew.

But when she saw the thugs approaching, she slowly backed away.

Her leg was still hurting, and she was wearing high heels. As she backed away, her heel caught on a

raised part of the sidewalk, causing her to fall backward.

This wasn't good.

She was probably unable to walk now.

However, the expected pain didn't come. Instead, someone grabbed her waist, and she could feel a

man's calm, distant presence.

Penny slightly raised her head and saw the man's jawline.

She recognized the familiar scent and froze for a moment. After standing up, she quickly distanced

herself.

"Mr. Fletcher."

She exclaimed in surprise and looked up to see Orlando's car parked not far away.

She was wearing this dress, which made her stand out too much. It was hard not to attract attention.

Penny suddenly realized she had walked quite far from her car. She couldn't see her car anymore.

Orlando furrowed his brow upon seeing her in a formal dress walking on the road, trailing behind

several thugs. What was she trying to do?

His expression remained cold, his sharp features showing no signs of a smile. He appeared distant and

unapproachable.

After Penny steadied herself and distanced herself from Orlando, his brow furrowed slightly.

He hadn't initially intended to interfere, but seeing her following those thugs while dressed so alluringly,

he had to wonder what she was up to.

His gaze fell on her attire. She had applied light makeup today, making her eyes appear even brighter.

Her dress accentuated her slender waist, revealing her fair skin that seemed almost dazzling.

Orlando's gaze briefly flickered, and he looked away.

"Why did you come here dressed like this?"

Penny was about to explain when the thugs approached.

"Hey, pretty lady, this isn't right. Why did you bring your man along to see us?"

The thugs' eyes shamelessly roamed over Penny's body. As they came closer, they realized how

stunningly beautiful she was. They had never seen such a beautiful woman in their entire lives.

Penny's face darkened as she glanced at Noah, who was still flinching nearby. She was furious.

Without wasting time, the thugs reached out to touch her, but Orlando intercepted their hands.

Orlando's intervention was swift and precise. He twisted the thug's wrist and kicked him away.

"Mr. Fletcher, watch out."

There were five thugs in total, and Orlando was alone. All Penny could do was protect herself.

However, just seconds after she spoke, she watched in astonishment as all the thugs fell to the ground,

writhing in pain.

Orlando hadn't even broken a sweat, and his appearance indicated that handling them had been

effortless.

Penny was left stunned but didn't have time to say anything as she rushed over to Noah.

"Are you alright?"

As she spoke, she saw a look of terror in Noah's eyes. Then, there was the sound of a knife piercing

flesh.

Penny turned and saw that the dagger had been plunged into Orlando's palm. His hand was shielding

her back, clearly intended to protect her.

The dagger tip had pierced through his palm, and blood was oozing out, making it a gruesome sight.

Chapter 120 He Got Hurt While Protecting Me

Chapter 120 He Got Hurt While Protecting Me

Penny was startled; she saw Orlando's fierce expression as he kicked the thug away.

The thugs, realizing they had kicked a hornet's nest tonight, didn't dare to linger. They clumsily helped

each other up from the ground and hastily retreated.

"Mr. Fletcher! I'll take you to the hospital."

Penny gripped Orlando's hand tightly, her fingertips trembling.

However, her high heels made it difficult for her to move, and her leg was in considerable pain.

Orlando frowned; the injury was on his right hand, which would be inconvenient.

He watched Penny kick off her high heels, standing barefoot on the ground. This unexpected move

made his face show a rare trace of concern.

If Keely found out that Orlando got hurt because of her, she might unleash her fury.

Plus, Penny owed him a favor tonight.

Penny got into Orlando's car, simultaneously grabbing Noah, who had been planning to escape.

"You're coming with me too!"

Noah looked miserable and somewhat afraid of Penny. He hesitated and, seeing the luxurious car, he

dared not get in.

Penny didn't waste time talking to him; she pushed him into the passenger seat.

Zane, the driver, saw Orlando's injury and immediately stepped on the gas pedal.

The car quickly headed towards the nearest hospital.

A few minutes earlier, the car Penny had exited had caused a traffic jam due to her abrupt departure.

She had been in a hurry to catch Noah and hadn't noticed that it was not a suitable spot for parking.

She hadn't realized she was in a no-parking zone because she had been hurrying to apprehend Noah.

As the honking and angry shouts from the blocked traffic grew louder, Lana noticed the commotion and

informed the driver.

"Let's move ahead. I'll call Penny and let her know. Maybe she'll catch a ride with someone else to the

Fletcher's mansion."

The driver had no choice; the party was about to start, and it was inappropriate to be late.

So, the car proceeded towards the Fletcher's mansion.

As Lana watched the mansion draw nearer, anticipation and excitement rose.

This would be her first public and significant encounter with Orlando.

Before, she had only observed him from afar, and he probably saw her as just another passerby.

There had been a flicker of something complex in his eyes during their last meeting, even a hint of

annoyance.

That was fine; as long as she continued to work hard, she believed that one day, when she stood by his

side, he would like and treasure her.

Her cheeks flushed with excitement, and her palms grew sweaty.

She took a deep breath, trying to maintain a poised demeanor.

As for Penny, the fact that she wasn't coming tonight was even better.

Lana didn't want her to steal her thunder.

Penny had arrived at the hospital, sweating profusely from anxiety.

Seeing her in her elegant gala attire, the doctor was somewhat surprised but couldn't deny her beauty.

"Doctor, please check his hand; it needs stitches."

Orlando hadn't been in the best mood to begin with. This was the first time he had been injured

protecting someone else, especially someone he had only known briefly.

He hadn't intended to block that knife; he acted instinctively, thinking that a scar on her fair back would

be unsightly.

So, his body acted faster than his brain, blocking the sharp blade.

Seeing Penny so concerned, her complexion changing with worry, he found it intriguing.

It was as if he was witnessing a different side of her for the first time since he met her.

Even that first night they woke up together, she had been so composed; he had thought she'd never

display any other emotions.

This thought brought him a subtle and barely noticeable sense of pleasure.

Penny's phone rang at that moment, and it was Rex calling.

Seeing the doctor was getting Orlando stitched, she quickly gave the doctor a brief explanation and

headed to the corridor to answer the call.

"Rex, I'm sorry, Orlando got hurt protecting me. He's at the hospital getting stitches, so I don't think we

can make it tonight."

Hearing that Orlando was even willing to get injured for Penny, Rex had no intention of blaming her.

"Penny, are you okay?"

As for Orlando, he was a man, and a few injuries were no big deal.

"I'm fine, but he's seriously injured. It's all my fault."

"You silly child, he's your husband, and protecting you is his duty. Orlando did well this time. You stay

there and take care of him. There will be other opportunities to introduce you to others. There's no

rush, and don't blame yourself."

Penny was touched. She had always known that Rex was kind to her, so her guilt for secretly signing

an agreement with Orlando weighed heavily on her.

In the ward, the doctor had already stitched up the wound on Orlando's hand. He heard his phone ring,

and when he saw it was Rex, he felt slightly annoyed.

If he didn't attend the party, Rex might think he was coming up with excuses to avoid that woman

again!