

Reborn 441

Chapter 441 Love Is No One-sided Affair

Holding the divorce papers in her hand, Susan saw Manuel leave nonchalantly. She was a bit displeased that he just left without saying a word.

Had they become strangers since now?

Susan made her complaint go away and followed him out rapidly. As she had no difficulty in mobility, she was ahead of him soon and walked straight away. Manuel glanced up and saw a fuzzy figure of Susan. He hid all his feelings in silence.

Manuel went back to his car and drove away with his good foot.

Having been delayed for a while, he caught the rush hour and was stuck in stop-and-go traffic. He saw Susan in the distance, who was hailing taxis, but none of them stopped. Manuel hesitated for a while and drove towards her. He believed that his sentiment would dissipate in the end, and then he would be able to tranquilly treat the world, and the people in it.

He stopped beside Susan and asked, "You want a ride home?"

Looking at him, Susan stood still. She then thought of the man who had coldly left straight away earlier—she was not a woman who was liable to forgive.

Perceiving her rejection, Manuel had an impalpable smile on his face. He knew how much Susan hated him, and now she had managed to dump him. Why would she like to get close to him again? Manuel just wanted to pick her up since they were going the same way. But he wouldn't feel sorry about leaving her alone since she did not want his help.

With the window rolled up, Manuel stepped on the accelerator. When the car was about to leave, the door was abruptly pulled open, and Susan sat in. She just thought she could not punish herself for someone else's mistakes. It was impossible to call a taxi at this time. Why should she be so hard on herself for such an undeserved man? With these thoughts, she sat in the car with a swagger.

After being astonished for a second, Manuel started the car.

"Why didn't you drive your car?" Manuel asked as if it had come back to the days before they were married. He always treated Susan with such a lukewarm attitude. She would never perceive his affection for her if he had not courted her.

"I don't want to drive," Susan answered slowly, looking out the window, "The traffic accident scarred me."

Manuel nodded gently—just as he guessed.

"You go back home?" he asked.

"Yeah," she added, "I moved out and live on my own now."

Manuel's hands on the steering wheel clenched more tightly.

"I didn't want to live with dad, so I moved out." Susan said, "And, since we are divorced, I won't intervene in the relationship between your mother and my father." She meant that Manuel's mother and her father could be together freely.

Manuel said nothing. He had no idea whether his mother would choose to be with Susan's father now.

"Where do you live now?" Manuel asked.

"The Jadeite Apartments. On South Coast Road."

"Fine."

All at once, silence fell inside the car. They had nothing to say to each other.

Suddenly, Susan's phone ringing broke the silence. She checked the caller and answered at once,

“Henry,” She couldn’t help glancing at Manuel, who made no reaction.

“Finished?”

“Uh-huh, finished. I just left there.”

“I’m coming to get you,” Henry said at once.

“No, I’m fine. Thank you.”

“Sorry, I promised to drive you there, but I got some tricky things. Now I’ve finished, and I’m coming to take you home, and we can have a meal together.”

“No, Henry, I think I’m fine,” she smiled gently, “By the way, it’s rush hour, don’t forget to start for home earlier.”

“It’s harder to call a taxi at rush hour, yeah?”

“Well, I took Manuel’s car.”

Henry was stunned for seconds, then he smiled easily, “Then I’ll prepare the meal and wait for you.”

“Love you, Henry.” Susan nodded, “See you later.”

“See you.”

Susan hung up the phone. The silence went back into the car. Manuel still had no mood swings and just concentrated on driving.

“I got back together with Henry,” Susan said with a slight smirk.

“That’s good.” Manuel nodded. He had employed a course of persevering and despicable artifices, but thankfully, he didn’t destroy her happiness after all, which meant that he had not gone terribly wrong.

“How about you?” Susan asked abruptly, “Would you like to find a new girlfriend?”

Manuel didn’t answer.

“Had you not been so dull, many women might have loved you,” Susan said sincerely.

Manuel just listened without a word.

“Despite my hatred for Martina Sawyer, I can tell she likes you. Given her good exterior and superior background, I think you could consider her.”

“I will.”

“Manuel, there have been so many unhappy circumstances between us—the relationship between our parents, our marriage you contrived, and our unhappy divorce in the end. I hope it is all over today. I hope all the pains and sorrows that connected us have now come to an end. From now on, I will have my happiness, and you can find someone and get on with living with her. Do not be all alone, Manuel.”

Manuel glanced at her with his head turning to her and then continued to attend to driving. His voice was as grim as usual, “I know how to live my own life. I am fine on my own, and I don’t mind if a woman bursts into my life in the future. What I want to tell you is that I don’t want my being alone to be a burden on you. It is not for you, but I don’t want to grasp a woman just because of loneliness readily. If I meet someone one day, I will treat her seriously and be with her for a life-long time.”

Susan pursed her lips. That was indeed his way. He was a man who didn’t want to settle for anything except for the best. She had to admit that his self-discipline was terrific.

“This way?” Manuel drove across a street and asked Susan about the route. In this way, he changed the subject, as he didn’t want to talk much with Susan about his sentiments.

“Yeah. Turn left on the next crossroad.”

“OK.”

Then they talked about nothing but the route.

When the car arrived at the gate of the apartments, they found a man already waiting there. Susan opened the door, rushed out, and dropped into the arms of the man desperately, without saying

goodbye or thanks to Manuel. Looking at them holding each other tightly, he perceived what love looked like. Being with her was only his wishful thinking—a one-sided wish. However, love is no one-sided affair.

Chapter 442 A Celebration of Being Single

Manuel left in his car.

People were coming and going on the busy streets.

He had that frosty look in his eyes. The light of the setting sun shone on him but it seemed unable to warm him and remove the chill from him. Because his heart was cold. But he can still control himself. He had no mood swings, just like a fine statue.

Inside the car, the phone suddenly rang. He took a look and answered it.

His voice was as usual and no one could hear his sadness, he said, "Hello, Theodore."

"Hey, I heard your leg is almost healed," Theodore said.

"Yeah, the right leg is recovered but the left leg needs further rehabilitation."

"How long?"

"Maybe a month or two."

"So soon? I thought you were going to be crippled before." Theodore said jokingly.

Manuel was used to his directness.

"Where are you now?" Theodore asked.

"On my way home."

"I heard you got divorced..." Theodore said.

And there were some small changes in Manuel's expression, which were so subtle that it was hard to catch. He asked in his usual voice. "Who told you that?"

Theodore did not answer.

Manuel guessed, "Hannah, right?"

"You can't blame her for having a big mouth." Theodore put in a kindly word for her, "She is worried about you and asked me to take care of you."

"I'm fine."

"Really? Don't be so stubborn!" Theodore doubted.

"Do I sound like someone who is a mess?"

"No. But you are always good at suppressing your feelings. Nobody knows what's going on in your heart. For a long time, Oscar and I didn't know that you liked Susan." Theodore said with some complaints.

Manuel did not know how to explain that.

"You know what? We'll have a drink tonight. Whether you're okay or not, I'm the only one who can help you celebrate being single since your cousin is not here." Theodore proposed.

Manuel looked at the busy street. In such a blooming city, he suddenly felt a little lonely. He had a feeling that the city did not belong to him. It was as if, a few years ago, he had left the country alone with his stuff on his back.

He said, "Okay, where?"

"I'll send you the location."

"Okay."

Manuel hung up the phone. He still seemed calm. No one could see how badly his heart hurt, how thoroughly it was broken.

The car arrived at the destination. When he walked in on a crutch, Theodore was waiting for him inside.

Stepping into the box, Manuel was shocked by the luxury of a private room for only two. There was a large table, which can hold at least 20 people, filled with dishes.

Manuel could not help asking, "Is there anyone else?"

"No, just the two of us."

"Can we finish all these?"

"That's not the point." Theodore said excitedly, "The point is that you finally get rid of Susan. Not to mention these, I am willing to treat you to the diner like this for a whole week."

Manuel was speechless.

"Help yourself. We should drink slowly." Theodore said.

Manuel nodded. They enjoyed the dishes while drinking and chatting.

"I don't know why you like Susan. I mean, I could only say she was not ugly. Sure, she was a trendy girl, and her temperament was good, but she could never be called a beauty. But you, look at yourself, you are talented, handsome, such a noble man. She has more money than taste but you are an elegant nobility. You two do not match." Theodore was speaking ill of Susan.

Manuel just sat there and listened, without saying a word.

"Yes, I admit that she has a good figure. I have seen her dancing with her friends several times at the club. But there are so many women in the world with nice butts..., and I don't think you are that shallow. I always thought you liked the pure type, sweet girls. Susan is a vamp vixen!"

"..."

In fact, Susan was quite conservative in the matter of sex. She went out for fun, but she was not promiscuous.

But for now, Manuel seemed to have no reason to speak nice words for her. Because they weren't a couple anymore.

"That's why I think getting divorced is the best thing you've ever done." Theodore said firmly, "For being single again, let's have another drink."

Manuel did not refuse. He was always drinking whenever Theodore said so. He couldn't hold his liquor very well, but he could use it to drown his sorrows now.

"But I was a little surprised that Oscar and Hannah got married. I know Oscar has liked her for a long time. You know, I've just discovered something." Theodore said excitedly.

Manuel looked at him.

He said bluntly, "Don't you find that you two are too dedicated to love? You guys can like one person for a long time with no regrets. Is that a tradition in your family? Or is it inherited?"

Manuel smiled. They just happened to meet someone they liked and didn't meet another one.

"Oh yes, I'll go on about them. I have always felt that Hannah is an eye candy and she loved Oscar for his appearance. After all, Oscar is a dreadfully charming handsome guy. It is quite common for women to throw themselves at him. But I did not expect them to be so deeply in love with each other. And they are in stark contrast to you two. I mean, Hannah and Susan are friends, right? Susan is a love rat. How did they become friends?"

"You're a love rat, too." Manuel suddenly said with a smile.

Theodore was stunned, then he retorted, "Only to women."

"She was only to men as well."

"You still speak well of her. You're not over her yet?"

"Yes, I am. Real letting go means treating someone with a normal heart without any private feelings. I was just being objective. I didn't mean anything else."

Theodore thought what he said was right, so he said, "Oscar and you have always been disliking my way of life, but what I want to tell you is that my happiness is something you can never experience."

Manuel chuckled.

But he was still uninterested.

Chapter 443 Martina's Approach

"How about joining me? To make your life complete." Theodore smirked.

"No, thank you, I'm afraid of getting sick."

"Come on! You haven't tried it yet. You can't get sick with good protection. And you can rest assured that the woman I found must be in good health. Do you think I can have sex with any woman?"

"Yes, you can."

Theodore took one look at his eyes and knew what he was thinking.

He rolled his eyes and said to Manuel, "You know nothing about having fun. Forget it. Just drink."

So they drank again.

The dinner was just the beginning. At about 7 PM, Theodore took him to the nightclub. That was where they drink even more.

At about 9 o'clock in the evening, Manuel felt that he could not get up. He said to Theodore, "I'm drunk."

"Is that all?" Theodore was not done with having fun.

"You know how much I can drink."

Theodore said with some helplessness, "I finally asked my dad for leave and he approved me to go out with you. If you leave now, I will be dragged back immediately. He is driving me crazy."

Manuel could imagine how difficult it must be for a runaway man like him to be kept in captivity.

But he can't drink any more tonight. He didn't want to get drunk like he did last time and do impulsive things, such as giving Susan a forced kiss. He didn't allow himself to cause too many problems he couldn't control.

"I have to go," Manuel said firmly.

Theodore would never force him to stay. He saw that Manuel was blushing and not feeling well.

So he said, "Okay, see you next time."

"I'm afraid you won't get out."

"Don't worry, as long as you guys ask me out. I know what my dad is thinking."

If Theodore could figure out what Laird was thinking, he would have been called a quite shrewd man.

But that was not the case.

Oscar and Manuel were afraid to mess with Laird Wold. He treated them with great respect, but if they strayed a little, they would suffer a lot under Laird's uncountable ways.

It was even scary just thinking about it.

"I'll see you out." Theodore was going to leave with him.

"No." Manuel refused, "You don't need to do that. You can hang around a little longer. It'll be a while before your dad knows I'm gone."

Theodore thought so. He had driven away his men around.

"I'll go, then."

Manuel picked up the crutch and went out. His head was still spinning. But he thought he could make it but he walked with some difficulty.

No sooner had he walked through the crazy hall than someone bumped into him. When he was about to

fall back, the person suddenly caught him.

He turned to say "thank you" but suddenly stopped. It was Martina.

Martina tightly held him and asked, "Are you OK?"

Manuel nodded. He didn't expect to meet her here.

It was her plan, of course.

Martina had asked people to follow Manuel and Susan for a long time. She was afraid they could not divorce smoothly.

She got a message that today Manuel and Theodore would have dinner together. Although she did not quite understand how they know each other, she just wanted to meet Manuel. She had waited most of the night, and finally, she had a chance to be near him.

"Thank you." Manuel moved. His move meant he wanted her to loosen her hands.

"I'll take you home."

"No, it is okay."

"You are drunk and you can hardly walk. I'll take you home." Martina said firmly.

She directly held him to go outside. Manuel pursed his lips but he said nothing. Sometimes, he felt he needed to give himself a chance to change. Even though he knew it wouldn't work, he wanted to give it a shot.

She helped him into the car and sat down next to him.

They kept quiet along the way.

For Martina, it was enough to sit with Manuel, even if they did not talk to each other.

The car arrived at its destination. Martina helped him to his home. Although Manuel's face was cold and blank, he did not refuse.

Martina wondered if this was her chance.

He used to be keeping a good distance from her.

Heart beating fast, she walked into his house and helped him to the sofa in the living room.

"Thank you," Manuel said.

That was obviously what people would say when they were seeing off a guest.

But Martina didn't want to leave. Now she wanted to get more since she noticed the subtle change in Manuel's attitude.

She could not control herself any longer.

"Manuel, I know you got divorced." She continued, "Now that you're done with her, can I be with you?"

Manuel said, "No, you can't."

"But I love you, so much."

"I don't love you."

"I don't need your love. Besides, you never gave me a chance, how do you know you can't fall in love with me? There are only unknown feelings between you and Susan because you used to live together.

You have never been with other women. If you give me the chance to live with you, we will fall in love, I am sure of that."

"No." His tone was not bad, but the words could break her heart.

Again and again, he gave a firm refusal.

"I won't give up. I will get you, I will!" Martina said with passion. As she spoke, her eyes turned red.

Manuel kept a blank expression on his face. But in fact, he was a little touched.

He was touched not because of his feelings for Martina, but to think of himself once so humble in front of Susan.

Martina was quite arrogant, but she was so weak and pitiful in front of him. She somehow reminded him of himself in the past.

He wouldn't give her a good answer, since he didn't want the same thing to happen to her.

Martina was heartbroken as she saw Manuel was so aloof.

She turned to leave but suddenly stopped.

She said, "I don't care what will you think of me. I can only use the simplest way to get your attention."

Then he saw her taking off her clothes.

Chapter 444 An Awkward Situation

Martina began to cry, but she was adamant.

Manuel unconsciously clenched his fist. He watched her clothes fall to the floor piece by piece.

She didn't wear much in the first place. After a while, she was down to her underwear.

His leg had not healed and it was very difficult for him to get up. But he still struggled to get up from the sofa and tried to stop her.

As soon as he walked to her, her bra fell off. Martina suddenly rushed into his arms.

Manuel was standing on the ground with only one foot and he was not steady, plus she pushed him with some strength, and as a result, they suddenly fell to the ground.

He lay down on the ground and she was on top of him. The next second, she kissed him on the face with some eagerness. Probably because she was afraid that he would say no. And Manuel surely refused. He pushed against her with his hand. No sooner had he caught her arm than the door was opened.

Susan saw such a hot scene.

If this was not his home, she could never believe that one of those two people on the ground was Manuel, who was grabbing the woman in front of him.

This was a bad time. And now Susan's presence was disturbing them.

Manuel saw her and so did Martina.

Susan realized the woman was Martina until Martina turned her head.

Since they got divorced, Susan was worried about him being lonely. Sure enough, she was worried for nothing.

Manuel never lacked wooers.

Martina was one of them and she was a little crazy.

Susan spoke, "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to disturb you. I just came back to pack up my things."

Now that they were divorced, it was time for her to clean her stuff out of this house. After having dinner with Henry, she decided to pick up her things. She always thought it was a little strange to leave them here. On second thought, she decided to take it tonight.

She should have called him before she came.

It was embarrassing.

"It doesn't seem like a good time." Susan added, "I'll come back tomorrow."

"No need to do that," Manuel said bluntly.

He picked up his stick, pushed Martina away, and got up.

Martina also stood up with her hands wrapping around her chest. Manuel picked up her coat to help her cover her body with some difficulty and then took her to the sofa. From beginning to end, he did not look at Susan. He just said, "You could pack first."

What did he mean?

Did he mean that when she finished, they could go on?

Susan gritted her teeth. It was none of her business whoever Manuel was with. She felt upset just because she found he had always been deceiving her. She used to think that their divorce would make him depressed for a long time. It seemed she was overthinking it.

Susan quickly packed up her things. She was eager to go and she didn't want to disturb anyone.

Soon, she brought her two suitcases out.

"I've finished," she said.

Manuel nodded.

"Sorry to bother you," Susan said politely.

Then she left with her stuff. She went resolutely, without any trace of nostalgia or emotion.

It was just awkward.

The door closed.

Martina looked at Manuel. He looked aloof as always.

He said, "You should go back as well."

"Manuel..."

"I also felt that after the divorce, I should try to start a new relationship, so I accepted your approach. But I've tried and I can't do that, at least now I can't."

"Do you still like her? Henry and Susan have been together and they have had sex. Why on earth do you still think about her?" Martina roared.

Did they ever have sex?

He didn't think so.

Because Henry owned 20 per cent of Phillips Bank's shares, and he promised not to sleep with her.

But it didn't matter to him at this time. He was just thinking about something.

He said, "You should leave."

"Manuel, I don't need you to like me and I don't need you to take responsibility."

"If you want to be with me, it doesn't have to be this way."

Martina looked at him.

"Don't be so cheap." Manuel said, "Be good to yourself."

He was also telling himself. When he finished, he walked into his room on the crutch, closed the door, and locked it.

He looked at the mess in the room. Susan had cleaned up her stuff thoroughly.

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Susan carried two big suitcases downstairs.

Henry was waiting for her there.

She did not want Henry to go up with her for she was afraid it would bring him some mental burden.

She did think a lot for Henry, out of instinct, as if it was an instinctive desire to treat him better. But for

Manuel, she never had this idea. This, she thought, must be because she loved Henry but not Manuel.

Henry saw Susan. He came forward to take the suitcases over her and put them in the trunk. Then they got in the car and left together.

"What's wrong? You don't look well." Asked Henry.

"Nothing." Susan smiled lightly. She didn't even know she looked bad.

"I saw some embarrassing scenes."

"What?" Henry seemed interested.

"Just kidding." Susan laughed it off. She did not want to say too much to him about Manuel. And she changed the subject and talked about something else.

They arrived at Jadeite Apartments. Henry helped her bring the suitcases into the house.

"It's getting late now. You should take some good rest. I'll go home." Henry said.

Susan nodded and asked him, "Can't you stay?"

Henry had been with her almost every day since she moved out, but he returned to his house every night.

Wasn't it normal for modern young couples to live together before marriage?

"You just had a miscarriage. I don't want to do anything that might hurt you."

"We can live together and don't have sex."

"You give men too much credit. Men can't help themselves in bed." Henry chuckled, "Tomorrow is another day and we will have ample time."

Susan pursed her lips.

"I'll be with you every day. Don't be so depressed."

Susan nodded. She knew Henry did that for her good.

"Have a good rest and I will see you tomorrow."

"See you."

Susan watched him leave. She could not say how she felt now. She seemed not too sad, but not happy as well. Anyway, she was a lot calmer than she thought.

Chapter 445 To Experience and Feel

Susan lay in bed, tossing and turning, but could not fall asleep.

Her mind was full of the picture of Manuel and the half-naked Martina being together.

She can't get them out of her head. She thought it was difficult for Manuel to accept other women.

After all, he refused all of the wooers in high school. Even after so many years abroad, with a lot of blonde beauty after him, he had still been single, and she thought maybe he loved her.

Now it seemed that she was worrying too much. No one would love a person without regrets until death. And she did not want him to do so. No matter how determined she was about the divorce, she still felt a little guilty. When she thought about it, it was probably because she had failed to protect their child. This would probably be her biggest regret for the rest of her life. She wondered how long it will take her to let go.

Susan couldn't fall asleep. So she sat up, picked up the phone, and called Hannah. It seemed to be an instinct. No matter what she encountered, she would habitually go to Hannah.

Fortunately, even though it was late at night, Hannah still answered her call.

"Don't you sleep at this time?" Hannah got through the phone. Her words were with blame, but Susan could catch more care.

"I can't sleep."

"You can't sleep? That's new." Hannah sat up and tried to wake herself up.

Susan was not the kind of person who completely disregard the feelings of others. There had to be a reason for her to call her late at night. Hannah knew her well.

"I'm not heartless."

Hannah smiled and asked, "Tell me, what's keeping you up?"

"I don't know."

"Be honest." Hannah sounded serious.

Susan pursed her lips. She knew that nothing could be kept from Hannah.

She said bluntly, "I got divorced today."

“Do you regret it?”

“No,” Susan retorted, “I thought after that, I should take away the things I put in his house.”

“He did not let you take your stuff?”

“No.” Susan said angrily, “Just hear me out!”

“Okay, go ahead.”

“Then I asked Henry to accompany me to pack my stuff. He didn’t go upstairs. I was afraid of seeing that house will make him feel tense, so I went upstairs alone. I didn’t knock on the door or think about what it was like inside the room. I just pressed the code and went in. Do you know what I saw?”

“Didn’t you want me to let you finish?” Hannah asked.

Susan rolled her eyes.

“I saw Martina and him in the living room. She was half-naked and on top of him. And they seemed to...”

Susan continued.

“So you’re jealous?” Hannah raised her eyebrows.

“No, I am not. What are you talking about? I’m just sharing it with you because it was shocking, and I’m gossiping about it with you.” Susan said with excitement.

When she got excited, that meant she was caught short. Hannah knew it, but she did not say that. She didn’t want to irritate Susan.

Since Susan decided to divorce and Manuel also gave her what she wanted, there was no need to bring them together again.

Hannah said, “Susan, I’ve told you before, it’s easy to get bitterly disappointed when it comes to feelings. Once someone was hurt and decided to let go, they will become strangers. Manuel is that kind of person, after so many years, you should be clear about that. He doesn’t talk much and keeps everything to himself, but he knows what he wants and he doesn’t let his life get messy. He’s disciplined.”

Susan pursed her lips. She knew he was a restrained man.

“Once he thinks something through, once he chooses to let go, he would do that for real. To put it bluntly, by choosing to divorce you, he has chosen to end his affection for you. The fact that he is now willing to let other women approach him is enough to show that he has moved on from you and started to give himself a chance to start over,” Hannah said, “Susan, marriage and feelings are something one needs to experience and feel in person. No matter what I have said, in the end, it is you who experiences and feels. If you feel unhappy, you have to bear it yourself. Because Manuel has left your world.”

“I didn’t regret it.” Susan retorted stubbornly.

Probably, she didn’t allow herself to think about the things she might regret. She wouldn’t dwell on them. She still thought the man she loved was always Henry, not Manuel. Otherwise, why did she still fall in love with Henry without hesitation after she met Manuel first? She loved Henry more, Susan told herself.

This might be one’s vanity. It made her feel sick and irritable that Manuel had sex with Martina so soon.

“So just forget it. It’s late. Have some rest. I have to work tomorrow.” Hannah intended to finish the call.

“Same here, I gotta work tomorrow too,” Susan said.

“Did you get over it?”

“No, I don’t. It’s my dad. I don’t get a penny if I don’t work. I have no choice.” Susan got angry at the thought of her father.

“Your father is good to you, you will see.”

“I don’t want to.” Susan huffed.

In fact, she knew her father's love for her, but she couldn't let go of the past.

"Well, just try to get some sleep."

"Okay, bye." Susan nodded. She hung up the phone but was still awake.

Tucking herself, she forced herself to sleep.

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On the other side, Hannah couldn't sleep as well.

Susan woke her up in the middle of the night and it was such torture. She looked at the time and hesitated to call Oscar, who answered the phone quickly.

No matter when she called him, he was always quick to pick up, always in less than three seconds. It was nothing like this once or twice. However, in the long run, it became a kind of happiness for her.

Chapter 446 We Will Never Break up

Hannah was moved at the moment.

Without comparison, she never knew how good a man could be and how bad a man could be.

Charles was indifferent and hypocritical to her, but Oscar was very doting and caring to her.

"It's late. Are you missing me?" He said, laughing.

Hannah managed to suppress her emotion and answered, "Yeah."

Oscar was surprised. She wouldn't express her feelings easily.

He chuckled, "Count the time. I'll be back in ten days."

"For what?"

"Ovulation."

"..." She was speechless.

He laughed again, "For our baby, I have to do my best."

"Oscar," Hannah called to him.

"Yes?"

"Manuel and Susan got divorced."

"Uh-huh," he said, without any emotion, "Sooner or later, it will happen."

"I just wonder if it will ever be the same between us."

"No," Oscar said firmly, even seriously.

Hannah pursed her lips. She had been affected a little by their divorce these days. She thought she could change something in Susan's life, yet, in the end, all she did was in vain. What had happened in her last life still happened today anyway.

So she always wondered, what could her rebirth change?

Was it that no matter what she did, the result would still be the same?

In the dead of night, she seemed to think a lot.

"I haven't thought about divorce for once since we got married," Oscar said very seriously.

Hannah suddenly realized that Oscar had lied to her when she proposed a fake marriage between them at the beginning, for he said "since we got married".

Damn.

"Oscar, when did you fall in love with me?" Hannah asked him very seriously.

"Take a guess."

"No." She got angry.

"I won't tell you unless you do."

"Oscar!"

“Honey, all you need to know is that I love you. Since when? It doesn’t matter.”

Hannah pouted and asked, “Then when I asked you to marry me, you pretend to be reluctant?”

Oscar acquiesced.

“At that time, what do you feel like?” Hannah asked again.

In the beginning, she was just trying to find a helper to humiliate Charles.

But what about him?

Was he on the verge of bursting with joy?

Hannah was somewhat sulky as she thought of his disdain and his passive attitude at that time. He was too good at disguising himself.

“What do I feel like?” Oscar paused to think and answered, “Finally it’s time to sleep with a girl.”

“...” Huh, men!

Oscar smiled again and changed the subject. “Don’t think about it. We are not the same. Only one of them was in love and hoping the other would like him but we are both in love. Marriage and relationship don’t last because of only one person. Don’t get your head around it. We’ll stay together for the rest of our lives.”

Hannah could not help smiling. She said solemnly, “If you do that, so do I.”

Then she hung up the phone. She rarely said such sweet talk.

She lay in bed, thinking of Oscar.

She wondered if she had found the right guy this time, however, she always felt he was somehow aloof.

...

The next day, Susan struggled to get up from bed. Her eyes were dull. She didn’t know how long it took her to fall asleep last night.

Finally, she got up, although she was dazed and dizzy. The morning routine after getting up was breaking her down. There were times when she wanted to give up and go back to her bed.

Then she managed to walk out the door.

Fortunately, her father was not too harsh on her and arranged a chauffeur for her. He was afraid that she couldn’t drive again or got into an accident again.

Susan knew it. But she simply didn’t want to make any change in her attitude to her father. It was difficult for her to get over things happening to her mother.

Sitting in the car, she answered her phone, “Good morning, Henry.”

“Are you up?”

“Yeah, I am on my way to work now.” Susan looked out the window, “I’m so sleepy.”

“It’s your first day. You will be fine when you get used to the routine.”

Henry asked, “By the way, did you have breakfast?”

“No, I don’t have time.”

“It is bad for your stomach. I bought some buns with beef stuffing, your favourite one. I’ll bring them to your office when you get here.”

“You’re so nice,” Susan said happily.

She got hungry at this moment since she loved beef buns. Henry’s words even made her raring to go to the office.

“See you later,” Henry said softly.

‘Okay, see you.’

Susan rushed to the Phillips Bank building and walked to her office. Henry was waiting for her at the door.

Everyone knew that he was a model employee in the company. He was always one of the first bunch of people who got to the company early in the morning and the last ones who left.

Susan thought they should be nicer to him. Otherwise, it was unfair to him since he had done so much to her family.

"Here," Henry gave Susan the buns and said, "it's still warm."

"Thanks." Susan took them over.

"And soy milk. Make sure you finish it."

"Yes, sir."

"Then I'll go to work." He said and petted her head dotingly.

They didn't shy away from each other in the company.

Susan didn't hold a high-level position in the company, and her office was just an independent office next to the big public one. Many people were coming to and fro. They all saw them there, but they ignored them because they were afraid of being hated.

But the other staff thought Susan was unfair to her husband. After all, they did not know about their divorce.

They felt sad for that unknown man.

Words said that her husband loved her very much.

Chapter 447 New to Phillips Bank

Susan had her breakfast with satisfaction. Then her secretary gave her a pile of financial data. Susan was a little breakdown when seeing so many files.

"What the hell is that?" she thought.

"Mr Chairman said that if you know little about finance, you should read more. And I'll be with you for consulting, Ms Phillips." The secretary said with respect. "I major in it."

Susan was speechless for the mess on her first day working. After all, her schedule was having some coffee and playing video games. So she answered, unwillingly. But she didn't refuse and grabbed a copy to read.

"Why are they all numbers? What the hell." she thought.

At about 10 am, Susan was requested to a high-level meeting. She was sick of meetings for they always ended inconclusively but dragged on interminably.

She went to the boardroom reluctantly and sat in a corner according to her position. The inner circle sat the important executives and shareholders of the company. And Edward sat right in the middle.

Edward said when everyone was there, "The emergency meeting today is not for something big."

'Then don't have one.' Susan thought.

"Mainly, it's the division of responsibilities and new appointments of a company's senior leadership. Phillips Bank had lacked an assistant general manager for a while. I am the chairman and general manager of the company, with a deputy general manager for help. But the deputy general manager can't arrange so many departments. So I appointed another assistant general manager to help."

Everyone in the room listened carefully with no objection. It was true that the company lacked an assistant general manager because the right one never showed up. So it was delayed and did hinder the operation of the company. And the responsibility would be clearer with an assistant general manager.

Everyone knew that Henry would be the assistant general manager. His behaviour won everyone's admiration. And Edward expected a lot from him, especially when he broke up with Susan. Edward treated him better out of guilty. So Henry would win the game by all means.

Henry felt the same way and he had waited for a long time. Edward had told him several times that he would get a promotion someday not only because he did a great job but also because it was compensation for him.

Henry could not help sitting up and waiting to be appointed on the spot. He didn't show the ecstasy inside because he had learned to be calm on any occasion for years.

Edward said, "And I've chosen the assistant general manager. He will be..." Though everybody knew it was Henry, they were a little excited before the name was revealed.

"Manuel!" The name shocked everyone.

Henry was so astonished that he thought he misheard and maybe Edward just said the wrong name. It was reasonable for him to make a mistake because Edward and Manuel spent a lot of time together.

But just when Henry's mind was blank, the door of the boardroom was opened and a man in a suit walked in.

He was on a crutch, and the sound of which hitting the floor was crisp. Although he was limping, his aura was powerful, completely free of the timidity of a newcomer to the workplace, but instead full of confidence.

The court was in an uproar.

Who was Manuel?

How could he just get parachuted into such a high position?

Those who know a little bit about Edward's family knew that Manuel was both his adopted son and his son-in-law. And that gave him a reason for the position. However, it was too sudden to be accepted, especially for Henry, who worked hard for the company and finally got the chance to be promoted. But suddenly, he was replaced.

At that moment, everyone in the room looked at Henry with somehow empathy.

Beaten by his adoptive parents and bullied in an orphanage, Henry couldn't stand people looking at him with pity. He pursed his lips without saying anything.

And Manuel walked up to Edward. Edward stood up, pat Manuel's shoulder, obviously appreciating him, "Manuel, say something."

Manuel nodded and looked at the people in front of him. The glance of him shocked Susan, who had no interest in meetings. But seeing Manuel here, she thought her father had lost his mind.

Damn it.

Manuel said calmly, "Hello, everyone. I'm Manuel. I'm 23 years old. Since I am a newcomer here, I have so many things to learn, and any advice will be appreciated. Also, I'd like to know the business ASAP to make some fruits for the company. Thank you." He finished with a bow.

The brief speech expressed his attitude and confidence. Although everyone was in shock, some of them started to applaud with courtesy. Gradually all of them joined in, except for Henry and Susan.

Henry didn't want to applaud and Susan didn't know what to do. She was confused by Manuel.

It was a short meeting and ended after the appointment. Manuel left with Edward first without saying a word to Susan. She thought that he did not even glance at her.

Susan stayed when everyone left. So did Henry. He restrained the upset inside and walked up to Susan, "Susan, let's go." Hearing that, Susan came back to her sense, "What's wrong with Manuel? Why he is here?"

"Maybe you should ask your father!" Henry said with a smile. He would not let anyone spy on his disappointment.

"Damn it," Susan said and rushed out of the meeting room. She was going to ask what the hell was her father doing. After she divorced, he hired Manuel in the company. What was that for, disturbing her?

Chapter 448 The Wealth of Your Family Will Do, If I Fail to Get You

Susan went straight to her father's office and rushed into it without a knock. Manuel happened to be there. He turned his head to see angry Susan.

"Why did you let him in?" Susan was in a rage with the first syllable. Manuel turned around and never watched her again.

Edward frowned, "I am the chairman of the company. And I am in charge of everything, so it's none of your business."

"Do you know how embarrassed I am? How embarrassed Henry is? I've heard that Henry was supposed to be the assistant general manager and he just came here and took it away from Henry. How could he do that!" Susan spoke in a loud voice without any concern for anyone. Even Edward felt a little awkward. Susan was too candid in front of Manuel.

Edward said seriously, "Don't meddle in the company's affairs. I'll talk with you later about Manuel. Now go back to work."

"It's not a secret!" Susan shouted at Edward, "It's all for Justine! Right? Since Manuel and I got divorced, you and Justine can be together again. And what you did is all for her! You think I don't know that?!"

"That's it!" Edward was a little angry. He had run out of patience with her but she never showed any respect. "I said that I am the boss here and your words don't count!"

"After all, the only one you care about is Justine!" Susan said in rage. She also knew that she could not change anything.

She was so clear that so deep Edward loved Justine that he would rather give her the whole company if she would come back to him.

Susan walked away and slammed the door of the office. Looking at his daughter, Edward said worriedly, "I don't know what I should do. When can she act like an adult and stop being impulsive?"

"Take it easy." Manuel said, "She will change."

"Well." Manuel smiled, "I should go."

"Ask me if you got any problem."

"Sure." Manuel nodded, politely. He bowed and left.

Once he entered his office and sat down, someone knocked.

"Come in," Manuel said.

Susan came in. Manuel guessed it was her because no one except for her would come here on his first day.

"Manuel, what do you want?" Susan barked questions at him. Manuel didn't say anything but picked up the phone and said to his secretary, "Black coffee, please."

"Yes, Mr Johnson."

Hanging up the phone, Manuel began to work.

"Manuel, answer me. What do you want?" Susan was so angry for Manuel ignored her. And even not just at that moment, he didn't glance at her since she went to Edward's office.

"You want the business of my family, right?" Susan said her suspicion.

It seemed like Manuel smiled lightly. Susan could not tell the meaning of it. Sarcastically, or sadly?

Manuel thought that maybe he was always the evil one in her opinion.

Someone knocked and the secretary sent coffee in. Seeing Susan here, she hurriedly said, "Ms Phillips."

Though Susan's position was not very high, she could do anything because no one wanted to annoy the chairman's daughter.

"Get out!" Susan looked angry. She was in a rage so she was mean to the secretary. The secretary was awkward and left the room after dropping the coffee.

The door was closed and Manuel finally looked at her and said word by word, "You are right." Susan was speechlessly shocked. She stared at him.

How could he admit that?

How shameless he was!

"I'm here for the Phillips Bank." Manuel said, "Are you satisfied?"

She even wanted to strangle him.

"Could you be more shameless?"

"Why not? Since I failed to get you, your family's wealth will do."

"Manuel!" Susan was too angry to speak.

"Now, if you have nothing to say, just go, Ms Phillips. Because I got a lot to learn and I hope you can give me some time on my first day working."

Susan looked at him stonily. It seemed like he had changed into another person. So unreasonable. So cold-blooded.

Her eyes became bloodshot and she almost lost her mind.

"Let me tell you, Manuel. You can never get my family's business. And you can never get me. Neither the business!" Susan left and slammed the door.

Watching her leave, Manuel looked down to do his work. Susan was right. She would never like him and he could not have the business of the Phillips family.

The phone rang. Manuel took a deep breath for a little relaxation and picked it up, "Hi, Hannah."

"Are you in the Phillips Bank?"

"Yes, it's today."

"The assistant general manager?"

"Especially the business of groups."

"Nice one." Hannah nodded. She had known Manuel would work for the Phillips Bank and they would work together for a long time later.

She was candid, "The Sawyer Group pays a lot of attention to their international e-commerce and they may spend a lot on it."

"You mean they want to get loans from Phillips Bank?"

"Yes, Phillips Bank and the Sawyer Group have a close cooperation relationship. Most loans of Sawyer are provided by Phillips Bank. Please check it for me. How many loans do they have in Phillips Bank now? I want to check its assets and see if I can kill it this time!"

"Okay." Manuel said and asked, "When do you need that?"

"In three days"

"No problem."

"Thank you."

"It's okay." Manuel said, "I will help you unconditionally. Not saying, my cousin."

Chapter 449 The Game (1)

Hannah chuckled. Somehow, she felt warm inside when speaking of Oscar. The feelings of strong affection never showed when she was with Charles. Their relationship followed the prescribed order

and was just a marriage. She was a traditional wife who thought that the marriage would be lifelong and she should pay all attention to him. She never thought twice. But at that moment, she felt that she was too stupid in her last life.

"Hannah," Manuel called her name twice but she didn't hear it.

"What are you thinking about?" Manuel teased.

"Nothing." Hannah denied, "Just want to ask Susan's reaction on your arriving."

"You know." Manuel said slowly, "She hates me."

"But when she knows the truth..."

"She will never know." Manuel interrupted.

"You know, sometimes you are so thoughtful that I think Susan doesn't worth it."

"That's not true. She has no responsibility because she doesn't like me. She never forces me to do anything and I'd like to do her a favour." Manuel said calmly.

"Just a favour?" Hannah frowned a little.

Since when Manuel started to brag? Or Oscar, Manuel, and Theodore were all genius who had unimaginable superpowers?

She always felt that the three of them were beyond imagination even with those mediocre appearances.

Anyway, she didn't dare to imagine what they could do.

"It's not as difficult as you think." Manuel avoided further explanation, "That's it. I'd like to do my work. I'll call you when I get Sawyer's loan record."

"Okay. Then I won't bother you."

"Bye-bye."

Hannah hung up the phone and became a little depressed.

How could the Sawyer Group get involved in so many businesses? Its previous investments were reasonable because they were affordable. But projects of the South Bay New Town and the international e-commerce exceeded their capacity. Whether they were too ambitious to take any risk or someone was helping them?

The door was opened when she was concentrating on thinking.

Rose said, "Ms Hannah, the man you want to meet has arrived and he is waiting in the meeting room."

"Okay." Hannah nodded, "Tell Tan to be there."

"Yes."

Hannah stood up and walked to the meeting room with Tan following hurriedly.

A mid-aged man was in the meeting room. He had a small e-commerce platform. He didn't invest a lot in it and it didn't extend the market to the whole country but only offered some door-to-door services in the local area. Hannah decided to take over it.

The man was a little nervous to meet Hannah. It was reasonable to be nervous for a boss worth millions to meet a leader from a company worth billions.

"Mr Dixon, right?" Hannah spoke first.

"Yes, Mrs Wells. How are you?" Jensen stood up to shake hands in a hurry.

"Sit, please." Then they sat down. Hannah said bluntly, "The reason I invite you today is that I'd like to have a conversation with you about taking over the Bead Chain e-commerce platform.

"It's a small company and the net profits are less than a million, I don't know why you want it?" Jensen was a little confused. The money was quiet enough for him and his family but meant nothing for the Cooper Group.

"Surely, e-commerce will have its day, and companies like yours will be replaced by a bigger one, such as

the one the Sawyer Group is constructing, which will replace small ones like yours soon.” Hannah cut to the chase, “But it will be different if it is arranged by the Cooper Group. Also, you may wonder why I don’t run a company by myself. I’ve thought about that but there are too many troubles and procedures and we don’t have time to waste. So we prefer taking over yours and doing some changes.”

Jensen listened and believed what she said. Since they are far richer than him, he didn’t think that the Cooper Group would take advantage of him.

“How much will you pay for it?” he said.

Hannah had done a lot of investigations and she knew that Jensen didn’t pay much attention to his business. Given enough money, he would sell it immediately.

Hannah handed a file to him, which had made everything clear. Jensen took it hurriedly and was shocked.

Five million. She would like to give five dollars for it, which was worth two million at most.

“What do you think of the price?” Hannah asked.

“Absolutely.” Jensen said in hurry and asked, “Can such a stroke of luck happen to me?”

“Miracles happen every day.” Hannah was joking.

Jensen thought for a while, “Well if you won’t defraud me and give me the money you promised, I can sell the Bead Chain e-commerce platform.”

“You can check the contract and we’ll give you the money the next day you sign.”

Jensen picked it up and read it again, “I trust you.”

“Sign here. You bring the official seal?”

“Yes,” Jensen answered hurriedly.

“Then stamp.” Jensen did what she said.

They shook the deal.

After some talks with courtesy, Hannah sent him away and went back to the office with Tan. Hannah said, “Do you think it is worth five million to buy a company less than two million?”

“Surely it does.” Tan was candid, “Five million can boost the Bead Chain’s market value and makes it more competitive. A lower price means that the e-commerce platform is worth less and it won’t win their trust. However, five million is still far cheaper than two billion of the Sawyer Group.”

“So, we’re going to hype it up.” Hannah said, “Local e-commerce platforms like the Bead Chain focus on two things. First, we follow the original operation mode of the Bead Chain and focus on the local market. Our advantage is the speed. It cost one day to deliver things within a city. Second, international e-commerce, import and export trade.”

“So Ms Hannah, you mean that we are not as complicated as that of Sawyer? We find our position and do professional projects only and attract international e-commerce platforms to cooperate?”

“And the only advantage that we don’t have is...” Hannah restrained.

“The clout.” Tan felt the same way.

Chapter 450 The Game (2)

“Yes. The only thing we don’t have is clout. It’s about leading a pack, except the local mass base.”

Hannah asked Tan, “You must have done a lot of work in inbound marketing overseas, do you have any good ideas?”

“Leading a pack is easy. As long as you’re willing to employ the resources, that is, invest your money, it won’t be difficult.”

“I’m all ears.”

“First, a nice celebrity spokesperson can attract a big following composed of his fans. Secondly, the event of special offers can help to attract a large number of clients in a short time. Thirdly, propaganda. Advertising boards everywhere also can be eye-catching for people and make them interested in our products. Fourth, word of mouth. People to people is the fastest way of finishing a trade. As long as I’m down to the ground and do my best on the service and quality of products, it won’t be tough to become the top of the e-commerce sector, considering that the industry in Northfield hasn’t developed very well.”

Hannah was listening and agreed with his advice. Because she knew that e-commerce would become a thriving industry after a decade.

She had long planned to build an e-commerce platform. However, it won’t be easy to transform a company, so she had to do it step by step. And she thought that she could grab this chance and take a gamble.

She said, “OK, you can do the arrangements as you said, I leave this work to you. And my point is to persuade the board of directors to allocate funds for it.”

“How much are you going to put in?” Tan asked.

“I need you to help me make a budget sheet.” Hannah said, “ According to your budget sheet, I can calculate how much money is suitable.”

“Right. I’ll try to finish it today.”

“It’s almost noon now. Are you sure you can finish it today?” Hannah also didn’t want to push him too hard.

“I have been used to fast-paced tasks since I went abroad.”

“It seems like I need to give you a pay increase.”

“I’ll appreciate it.” Tan didn’t refuse her.

“But you have to do some great things. As long as you do it, I promise you your salary will hike.”

“I’ll do my best for my salary.” Tan kidded.

Hannah also smiled, “I won’t waste your time. You go and make the budget sheet.”

“OK.”

Tan left, and Hannah watched his back. Although she had only known him for half a month, she was satisfied with his capacities.

But she didn’t remember him in her last life so she didn’t know him at all. However, she didn’t doubt him. Because Tan didn’t seem to have anything to do with the Sawyer Group. And she also wanted to test this idea so she specially asked him to participate in this project.

She didn’t want to be betrayed later.

...

In the office, Henry was almost trembling with anger.

His sure thing was messed up, messed up!

‘That guy, Manuel Johnson, what the hell is he up to?’ Henry thought to himself.

Manuel was worthless and knew nothing, but now he became his immediate boss and was in charge of supervising the group.

He was sent to keep an eye on him, wasn’t he?

Henry couldn’t understand why he couldn’t stop Manuel’s momentum and realized that guy was not simple at all.

He gritted his teeth to try to calm himself down, then he picked up the phone and dialed a number, “Mr Sawyer.”

“What’s wrong?” Charles answered with a bad tone.

“Manuel is in the Phillips Bank.”

“Manuel?” Charles frowned. It seemed that he needed a second to recall and then remembered who Manuel was. He wouldn’t have taken Manuel seriously if his sister hadn’t liked him.

“Yes. Now he’s the assistant of the general manager. I became a sacrificial lamb.”

“Isn’t Manuel divorced from Susan? How can he work at Phillips Bank?”

“I guess his mother, Justine Knight, could be the reason. Edward likes Justine for a long time, so he may want to please her and fit Manuel in the bank.”

“What do you think of his ability?” Charles asked bluntly.

“Today is his first day, so I can’t tell.”

“So, today you phoned me because you want me to help you get him out of Phillips. So he won’t get in your way.”

“That’s what I meant. I’ve worked hard to get where I am and ingratiate myself with many executives.” Because of Manuel, all his efforts were almost in vain.

“I don’t think he is capable of anything, so you don’t have to worry. Edward isn’t an easy game in business. He can’t keep a person who doesn’t show any good prospects. Even if he wants to keep Manuel, he won’t put him in an important position. As soon as Manuel can’t handle his job, Edward will ban him.”

“The point is that now I don’t feel good.”

Henry thought Edward was so cold-blooded and ruthless.

“I’ve worked for him for many years, but I still can’t beat Manuel.”

“Stop your whines. It’s a tall order for someone of your lowly origin to have anything with the Phillip Family,” said Charles, disdainfully.

His words made Henry recall Martina’s mocking toward him. Henry tightly clung to his phone and tried to control his rage. He had the fact that the Sawyer Family despised him in their bones and that impressed upon his mind. One day, when he was strong enough, he would make the two siblings wish they had respected him.

“But I thought of a way to make you feel better.”

“What?” Henry asked.

“You can go public with the fact that they’ve divorced. Once they got divorced, Manuel is not qualified for such an important position. So it’ll be easy for the top executives to thwart him. Of course, Edward has a decisive right as the president. But even if it doesn’t change anything, you can also disgust Manuel. Besides, considering that he likes Susan so much, how will he feel after you announce that they are divorced and that you’re dating her?” Charles said carelessly because he didn’t take Manuel seriously at all.

After hearing Charles’ words, Henry also felt kind of relaxed. He had to say that he didn’t know how despicable Charles could be until he got in touch with him. The tricks he used to hurt people were better than his abilities.

“By the way, there is something I need to let you know.”

“What?”

“Sawyer planned to run international e-commerce, but now it’s confronted with money problems. I need you to get me a loan of 1 billion.”

“It seems that you’re behind on your old loan. You can’t loan again by formalities.”

“That’s why I told you now. You can prepare it ahead of time.”

“1 billion is beyond my authority.” Henry still showed a kind of resistance.

“Henry, don’t you understand? I said you can prepare it ahead of time because I want you to figure the way out so that I can get my loan properly and legally!”

Henry frowned.

Was he pushing him on the fence to the crime?