

## Chapter 5

She ended the call, her frustration almost shattering the screen.

Sherry seethed with anger. This was her beloved cousin, whom she and her uncles had supported on a tight budget! She was nothing more than a cunning wolf in sheep's clothing!

"Ms. Wilson, Ms. Wilson?" the nurse on the other end of the line asked, "Are you going to proceed with the surgery or not?"

A beep, a beep, a beep...

A text message arrived.

"Have you made up your mind? - sniper"

Sherry placed her hand against the side of her bag, which held a small card about the size of her palm.

Without hesitation, she took it out and offered it to the nurse, saying, "Yes, I'll do it. Where do I make the payment?"

The nurse accompanied her to complete the necessary procedures and payment. The doors of the operating room closed once again, with the bright red words "In Surgery" standing out.

She withdrew three hundred thousand dollars from the sniper's card.

Sherry forced a bitter smile. She had finally agreed to sell herself for a fee.

"I will keep my promise."

As these three words were sent out, she felt a sense of loss.

She soon received a response.

"All right, tonight, 9 p.m., Hilton Hotel, Room 2307, see you there."

Sherry put her phone away, refusing to look at the message.

She remained by the door for the duration of the procedure, not daring to leave for even a second.

At nine o'clock, Malcolm called, saying, "I'm already at the Civil Affairs Bureau; why haven't you come?"

"I'm not going to make it," she sneered.

"Are you trying to back out?"

"No, there hasn't been a single moment when I've wanted to divorce you."

"Then hurry up and come! I only have a limited amount of time and don't want to waste it with you!"

Sherry stated coldly, "I feel the same way. I don't want to waste another minute on you either. My uncle is in surgery, and I can't leave. I'll contact you once his condition stabilizes."

"Sherry, what are you up to? Do you want money?"

"There's no need; just take your dirty money and support your heartless mistress!"

She abruptly hung up.

The entire world fell silent.

Her uncle's surgery lasted until seven o'clock in the evening.

She observed the doctor's relieved smile as the doors of the operating room opened: "The surgery was successful; the patient just needs to pay attention to postoperative care."

Her body sagged, and she sat down on a nearby metal chair.

"Thank you, doctor, thank you..."

Her uncle was returned to the general ward, still connected to numerous medical devices and unable to be separated for even a second.

His phone, an ancient Nokia model with peeling paint and worn-out numerals on the keyboard, was placed beside him since her uncle couldn't bear to throw it away.

Buying a new phone would be expensive, and he would rather save the money to give to Sophia.

Fortunately, the night passed peacefully.

Her uncle opened his eyes the next morning and saw her face. Immediately, tears streamed down his cheeks, and he apologized, "Sherry, I'm sorry to your mother!"

"Uncle..."

"Tell me honestly, did Sophia mistake you for someone else? It wasn't you who went to a hotel with a man, right?"

She couldn't lie under her uncle's sincere gaze.

But Noah's heart turned to ashes as a result of his realization.

"Sherry, how did you become like this? Malcolm is a good boy; how could you do something that hurts him?"

"Uncle, things are not what you think... Please don't get agitated, please."

With his weathered palm, Noah wiped away his tears. "Does Malcolm know anything about this?"

She was completely clueless.

Sophia probably wasn't going to tell Malcolm because she had set her up and pretended to be gentle and considerate in front of him.

"He probably doesn't know yet."

"You hear me? Don't do anything foolish again, you hear me? You and Malcolm are doing well together, and after I'm gone, I have to explain to your mother..."

The entrance to the ward was forced open as he was speaking.

The nurse brought Malcolm into the room, saying, "Mr. Ford, this is Mr. Noah's ward."

Sherry looked up and met Malcolm's gaze.

He was still cold and distant. His eyes swept across her face and landed on Noah. "I heard you're not feeling well, so I came to see you."

"Malcolm is here! Please sit, please sit. Sherry is just being foolish. Malcolm is always busy with work; why did you come? I'm fine, really!" Noah exclaimed.

"She didn't invite me; it was Sophia who invited me," Malcolm said succinctly.

But Sherry understood what he meant.

He came to see Noah because he was Sophia's father, not because he was Sherry's uncle.

Noah, too, noticed something unusual in Malcolm's words. His smile stiffened slightly. "What... is going on?"

Sophia couldn't hide her joy on her face. "Dad, let me tell you something today: Malcolm is no longer my brother-in-law, but my cousin."

"He's her boss!" Sherry interrupted Sophia, not wanting Noah to be upset any further after his surgery.

"Uncle, Sophia now works in Malcolm's company and does an excellent job," she stood up and commented.

"Malcolm frequently compliments her."

"Is that so? Oh, our Sophia has made a name for herself! The money she spent on her international education was not wasted!" Noah became content.

"Let's sit and talk," Sherry suggested, pulling two chairs over from the side.

"We're not going to sit. Malcolm suggested that as juniors, we pay visits to our elders. We'll be leaving soon because there's still work to be done at the company."

We.

Sherry felt a pang in her heart: Malcolm and Sophia had become "we" now.

"What do you think?" she asked, looking at Malcolm.

"There is indeed a lot of work at the company," Malcolm responded promptly. "Mr. Noah, both Sophia and I have confidence in your abilities. We'll leave now."

Noah could barely hide his sadness and forced a smile when he heard that Sophia wanted to leave after such a short time. "The company's matters are crucial. You should leave. I'm fine."

"Then we'll leave now," Malcolm said, nodding. "Please let Sophia know if you need anything. You're her father, and I'll take care of you."

Noah had always admired Malcolm as his nephew-in-law, and observed his courteous behavior today, despite his busy schedule, only deepened his appreciation for him. "You're such a well-mannered young man. However, Sophia may present some challenges for you. Ever since she was a child, her sister and I have spoiled her. I'm concerned that she might cause you some trouble."

"No, she's doing well, and I'm satisfied with that."

Noah grinned happily, but his face also revealed a hint of worry. "There's one more thing. Both you and Sherry are not getting any younger, and you should consider starting a family."

Sherry's heart skipped a beat.

Her lifelong longing was to have a child.

"Dad, you still don't know, do you?" Sherry doesn't object to having a child, however..."