

# The Second Act Revenge (Oneida and Jackson)

## The Second Act 181

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Christopher's face stiffened slightly.

His handsome facial features all tightened, and his thin lips were also compressed into a straight line.

Did Jackson claim that Oneida was his woman?

Christopher just squinted at them, unable to say a word.

He felt so sad inside.

"Let's go home," Jackson turned his head slightly and said to Oneida in a low voice.

Oneida was stunned for a moment and then nodded.

Jackson released his hand and let Oneida stand up straight again.

They turned around and left.

Christopher was left alone.

He clenched his fists and stared at their receding figures, looking extremely cold.

After a while, he finally turned around and got in the car.

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Oneida followed Jackson into Garrison Mansion.

On the way, neither of them spoke.

When they reached the hall, Oneida finally couldn't help but say, "Jackson, I..."

Unexpectedly, Jackson also said at this time, "You..."

They spoke at the same time.

Oneida smiled slightly and said in a low voice, "Jackson, please go ahead. I am all ears."

Jackson glanced at her.

Actually, he didn't have to do that.

He shouldn't even do that...

But when he saw Christopher and Oneida standing in front of Garrison Mansion, as they did last time, he could not stand it anymore.

This time, he couldn't stand by and do nothing.

Therefore, he chose to show up in person and warn Christopher.

Yet...

What he did just now seemed to frighten Oneida.

She looked embarrassed and uncomfortable.

Jackson's eyes darkened, and a trace of sadness flashed across his heart.

"Don't worry about what happened just now." Jackson's voice was cold and magnetic. "I saw that you didn't like being pestered by Christopher, so I took the liberty to do those moves. I just acted in front of Christopher. Don't take it to heart." In the end, Jackson's voice was even tender.

He was afraid that he would scare her and embarrass her, so he said this to make her feel better.

Hearing this, Oneida paused.

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It turned out that those ambiguous and intimate moves were all Jackson's acting.

He just acted in front of Christopher.

An inexplicable sense of loss surged into Oneida's heart.

She didn't say anything but replied in a flat voice, "Okay,"

Seeing her sudden lack of interest, Jackson frowned slightly.

He asked in a gentle tone, "By the way, what did you just want to say to me?"

Oneida paused for a moment.

Originally, she wanted to tell Jackson that she was actually very happy about what he had done just now.

Now, knowing that Jackson was just acting, she didn't need to say these words at all.

Oneida shook her head. "Nothing."

Seeing that she didn't want to talk about it, Jackson didn't force her. He immediately changed the subject. "By the way, change your clothes quickly. We are going to see Grandpa later." "Your grandpa?"

Oneida widened her eyes slightly and said in surprise.

Jackson nodded slightly.

"Why didn't you tell me earlier?" Oneida frowned, and her tone was filled with a bit of blame.

She and Jackson got the marriage certificate secretly.

After marrying him, she had never seen his family.

Now, she was finally going to see his family.

Oneida clenched her fingers with excitement.

"Why didn't I tell you earlier?" Jackson repeated Oneida's words with a faint smile. A hint of helplessness flashed across his handsome face, "You just came back from the training camp now. How can I tell you..." Hearing this, Oneida smiled awkwardly and said, "You're right."

She looked at Jackson with curiosity. "Why do you want to see your grandpa all of a sudden?"

Jackson said flatly, "It is Grandpa's birthday today."

Oneida was even more surprised.

She didn't expect that it would be such an important day today.

It was Lionel's birthday.

"Grandpa didn't want to make a big deal out of it, so he called us over for dinner," Jackson continued in his cold voice.

Oneida was a little uneasy.

Since she was going to the birthday party, she should prepare a gift for Lionel.

However, at that moment, Oneida didn't have any decent gifts.

Seeing her absent-mindedness, Jackson frowned and asked, "What's wrong?"

Oneida pursed her lips and said directly, "Jackson, I haven't prepared a gift for your grandpa..."

Hearing this, Jackson was still calm and said, "Don't worry. Just choose one from my collection."

In Jackson's eyes, gifts were insignificant.

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Lionel had seen countless valuable items.

Lionel didn't care about the gift. He just wanted to have a meal with his family.

However, Oneida shook her head.

She refused Jackson's offer.

"I'll think of a gift myself..." she said. It was the first time she met Lionel, so she couldn't give him a perfunctory gift.

Seeing her insistence, Jackson didn't say anything more.

They went back to their rooms respectively.

Jackson was pushed into the study by Victor.

"Mr. Bane, what you asked me to investigate has just been delivered to me," Victor said respectfully while pushing the wheelchair.

"Give it to me," Jackson narrowed his eyes and said briefly.

Victor didn't dare to delay. He pushed Jackson to the desk and handed him the materials he had investigated.

It was all about Oneida.

Victor was confused. When Oneida first married Jackson, Jackson seemed to be very reassured about her and didn't investigate her at all...

But now, Jackson was investigating her.

Jackson lowered his eyes slightly and slowly opened the file with his slender fingers.

After returning from Misty Forest, he ordered Victor to investigate Oneida's information.

It was got to be a thorough investigation.

He was not suspicious of Oneida, but more curious.

He just wanted to know if there were still some past stories hidden in this little girl.

His eyes fell on the file word by word, and he looked at it very carefully.

After reading it, he gently closed the file.

The handsome Jackson frowned slightly.

There was nothing strange about the information.

Oneida is just an ordinary girl, from the mountain village to Jeahron, from exile to return to the rich family.

Nothing special.

But Jackson had a strange feeling.

It seemed that something had been deliberately covered up.

Oneida must have some secrets.

Jackson didn't think Oneida would hurt him.

His judgment and intuition were accurate.

Oneida wouldn't hurt him.

## **The Second Act 182**

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What is Onrida's secret? Jackson wondered

Meanwhile...

Oneida was in her room, holding her phone and talking to Simon.

"Bring that thing here right now.

"By the way, is my brooch fixed? Bring it over when you're done?"

After saying all this, Oneida hung up the phone.

She paused for a while, then walked out of the bedroom, and went straight to the gate of Garrison Mansion

At a remote intersection, a black sports car was parked quietly,

Oneida opened the car door and got in the passenger seat.

"Boss." Simon, who was sitting in the driver's seat, couldn't help but call out when he saw her appear.

"Give me the thing"

Oneida didn't talk nonsense and cut to the chase.

Simon nodded and handed a wooden box to Oneida.

This box was neither big nor small.

It seemed to be made of very fine wood, with simple and exquisite patterns embedded on the surface.

The whole box was antique and noble.

Oneida took the wooden box.

Simon smiled and joked in a low voice, "Boss, why do you want this? You haven't touched the thing in this box for a long time..."

Oneida cast her eyes on the wooden box and replied lightly, "It's for Mr. Lionel Bane."

"Huh?" Hearing this, Simon was surprised. "Boss, why did you give such a precious thing to Mr. Lionel Bane?"

He looked at Oneida meaningfully from top to bottom. "Boss, do you really... fall in love?"

Oneida valued Lionel so much only because of Jackson.

Simon couldn't think of anything else.

Oneida glanced at him and snorted coldly, "Why do you ask so many questions?"

Then she quickly changed the subject and asked, "Where's my brooch?"

Hearing this, Simon immediately took out a delicate small box from the side and said, "Boss, in order to restore this brooch, I went to great lengths to find a world-renowned jeweler... Oneida took the box and opened it.

Simon continued, "Fortunately, the jeweler is skillful. He perfectly restored the brooch."

Oneida lowered her head and looked carefully at the swan brooch in front of her.

It was true.

The brooch was well restored.

There was no sign of deformation.

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At the sight of this, Oneida couldn't help smiling slightly.

After saying goodbye to Simon, Oneida hurried back to Garrison Mansion without stopping.

Time was running out, so she had to change her clothes immediately.

There was a cloakroom in her bedroom.

There were many different styles of clothes.

There were haute couture dresses, big-name fashions, and many expensive handmade clothes.

These were all prepared by Jackson.

Oneida didn't need them at ordinary times, but they finally came in handy today.

Because she was to attend the elder's birthday party, Oneida did not choose an exaggerated dress but a simple and clean white dress.

She didn't wear any make-up but simply combed her hair.

Then she took the wooden box and walked out of the room.

Jackson had been waiting for her in the hall.

Seeing Oneida walking downstairs, Jackson couldn't help but pause.

His eyes were filled with a flash of amazement.

Oneida was wearing a snow-white dress, and her cheeks were also fair. Her porcelain-like skin was glowing with light pink. She was like a fairy descending from the sky, gorgeous and unworldly. She was beautiful and clean.

"Jackson?" Seeing Jackson staring at her without saying anything, Oneida couldn't help but call out to him.

Jackson immediately came back to his senses, nodded at her, and said lightly, "Let's go."

So they got in the luxury car heading for the Bane manor.

The Bane manor was far away from Garrison Mansion.

It took Jackson and Oneida an hour to arrive at the Bane manor.

The Bane manor was surrounded by mountains and rivers.

Behind the building was a whole stretch of lush green mountains and dense forests.

And this mountain belonged to the Bane family.



In Jeahron, only the Bane family could own such a large mountain.

In the mountains, there were not only trees but also water.

The water was diverted into the manor and became a clear natural landscape.

The Bane manor was even more magnificent and imposing.

A piece of tile on the roof looked valuable.

Because Victor didn't follow them into the manor, Oneida pushed Jackson along the way.

They passed through the beautiful manor, led by a servant.

This was the first time that Oneida had ever set foot in the Bane manor.

Sure enough, it was extraordinary.

The heritage and tolerance of the top wealthy family were fully reflected through architecture and environment.

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"I was wondering who it was..." At that moment, a low sneer sounded, followed by a slightly oily male voice. "So it is Jackson. It's been a long time."

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Jackson, who was sitting in a wheelchair, paused when he heard the voice.

Oneida also stopped in her tracks.

She narrowed her eyes and looked in the direction of the voice.

The speaker was a young man.

He was tall, slightly chubby, and fairly handsome, but his eyes were cheesy.

Oneida took a look and quickly guessed the man's identity.

He was Claude Banc.

He was an illegitimate child and Jackson's elder brother!

All the children of the Bane family lived in this huge manor, except Jackson.

He didn't like to see others because of his disabled legs, so he moved out alone early and lived in seclusion in Garrison Mansion.

So, when Claude looked at Jackson, he was like the head of a family looking at an outsider.

With an arrogant smile on his face, Claude continued in a disdainful tone, "Jackson, your legs are so inconvenient. Why did you come all the way here? What's the point?" Hearing this, Oneida suddenly darkened her eyes.

She opened her mouth and was about to say something.

But Jackson got ahead of her. He said indifferently, "Of course, I'll come for Grandpa's birthday."

"You are quite filial..." Claude said with a half-smile.

He looked at Jackson with meaningful eyes.

Jackson looked the same as before.

He was aloof, fragile, and incapable.

In this way,

Claude was relieved.

Although Claude was the eldest son of the Bane family, he was an illegitimate child after all.

Among all the children in the Bane family, Jackson was the only one who had the most legitimate bloodlines. Therefore, Claude always regarded Jackson as his threat.

However, Jackson wasn't a threat anymore. He was more like a joke.

Jackson was crippled and incompetent. If he had been so useless all the time, Claude would be very happy.

After looking at Jackson, Claude withdrew his gaze and then fixed his eyes on Oneida behind Jackson.

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Claude narrowed his eyes and looked at Oneida carefully.

In fact, he had heard a lot about Jackson's marriage.

Because of a ridiculous engagement, Jackson was forced to marry the eldest daughter of the Chaser family who had been living outside for more than ten years. That lady was a famous country bumpkin.

Claude had been laughing for several days about it!

Jackson was a good-for-nothing. He married a country bumpkin. They were a perfect match!

In this way, Jackson was less threatening to him.

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Originally, Claude was worried that Jackson would marry a wife with a powerful background, which would undoubtedly make him more troubled.

Unexpectedly, Jackson was willing to marry a country bumpkin...

However...

Claude still fixed his eyes on Oneida's face.

This country bumpkin was pretty.

She was not what he thought.

Especially her beautiful and clear eyes, which were even a little cold.

Was she really the legendary uneducated country bumpkin?

"Claude." At this time, a gentle female voice sounded.

A girl in a yellow dress with long black hair suddenly came from the corner.

"Bella, why did you come out?" Hearing this, Claude immediately took his eyes away from Oneida's face and looked at the girl who called his name. His tone was suddenly gentle. Bella Foley smiled at Claude, but she quietly and uncontrollably cast a glance at Jackson.

Even in the wheelchair, that handsome and elegant man still had a noble temperament.

His facial features were as handsome as before.

"Bella..." Claude called out to her again.

Bella instantly came back to her senses and smiled guiltily, "They..."

"Jackson and his wife are here to attend Grandpa's birthday party. Claude stretched out his hand and put his arm around her shoulder, smilingly explained.

Bella nodded absent-mindedly, and her eyes fell on Oneida again.

Jackson's wife?

Her eyes darkened, and an inexplicable emotion flashed across her eyes.

"Why are you all standing at the door?" Suddenly, there was a low laughter, followed by extremely light footsteps. A woman in black leather clothes and long black boots came over. She had thick wave-shaped hair, delicate facial features, and fair skin. Her red lips made her look charming.

"\*Claude, Jackson, it's been ages!" Karen Bane waved her hand to them happily.

Hearing her address Jackson like this, Oneida immediately understood.

This woman was the third daughter of the Bane family and Jackson's elder sister.

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Like Claude, she was also an illegitimate child, but not the same mother.

Who would have thought that the three children of the Bane family present had three different mothers?

Jackson's father was indeed a playboy!

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Inadvertently, Karen suddenly walked to Oneida and looked at her with a pair of smiling eyes. "Are you Oneida from the Chaser family, right? You are really pretty, even prettier than stars in showbiz!" Karen was not only the daughter of the Bane family, she was also a superstar.

She won the title of Best Actress at a young age, and her acting skills were brilliant. And because she was beautiful, popular, and had an elegant temperament, she became a top star among female stars. Hearing this, Oneida smiled at her politely.

Karen's smile widened. "Oneida, you are so cute."

Then she looked down at Jackson and said lovingly, "Jackson, you look good today... I'm so happy for you."

"I don't have any requirements for you. I just want you to be healthy..."

"That's enough." Suddenly, Claude not far away made a sarcastic statement and interrupted Karen, "You are really disgusting."

Claude hated Jackson's guts, so when he heard Karen's words, he couldn't stand it anymore.

He was eager for Jackson to die!

Hearing this, Karen turned to look at Claude. The smile in her eyes dissipated, and she looked a little cold. "What's wrong? Can't I talk to Jackson?"

"You..." Claude stared at her and couldn't utter a word. He didn't expect that Karen would refute him so directly in front of so many people.

Karen glared at him and turned to talk with Jackson.

Jackson looked at her calmly and nodded from time to time.

Claude looked gloomy. He did not say anything more but hugged Bella and walked directly into the hall.

After greeting Jackson, Karen unexpectedly reached out and touched Oneida's hair.

Oneida was caught off guard and couldn't help being stunned.

She didn't expect that someone would touch her head like this.

"Oneida, Jackson is in a special situation. You have to take care of him. I'm afraid you will be very tired. Thank you so much..." Karen looked at her kindly. Karen was only a few years older than Oneida, but she looked like a mother to Oneida.

Oneida smiled and shook her head, explaining, "I'm not tired..."

She was telling the truth.

She was really not tired at all.

Jackson lived in seclusion every day. Although they lived together, they rarely saw each other every day.

Jackson didn't need her to take care of him at all.

So, how could she be so hard?

Karen thought Oneida was modest, and she smiled lightly again, "What a good girl."

With that, she said goodbye to them and was about to go back to her room.

Oneida looked at Karen's receding figure thoughtfully.

With so many people and complicated relationships, the Bane family was as she imagined.

It was indeed complicated.

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Was this so-called top wealthy family really as gorgeous as it seemed?

Perhaps there was a lot of hidden dirt, right?

Oneida was about to push Jackson into the hall when Yvonne came over.

"Jackson, Ida, you're here!"

A surprised smile appeared on Yvonne's face. Her facial features had almost no trace of age. She looked extraordinarily gentle and beautiful

"Why didn't you tell me in advance?" She looked at Jackson with some resentment.

Jackson just replied indifferently, "We came here in a hurry."

Yvonne looked at her son carefully with tenderness in her eyes.

She hadn't been to Garrison Mansion for a long time, nor had she seen her son.

She missed Jackson a lot.

After looking at Jackson for a while, Yvonne came back to her senses. She looked at Oneida and smiled, "Ida, how are you doing with Jackson?"

"I've told you that you could build a bond gradually. You seem to be close with each other, Yvonne continued. "So, when are you going to let me have a grandson?" Oneida almost choked.

She didn't know how Yvonne could tell that they were closed...

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## **The Second Act 184**

### Chapter 184

Oneida wasn't distant from Jackson, yet they were not so close, either. They definitely weren't close enough to having kids. Hearing Yvonne's words, Jackson was stunned a little, too,

He replied faintly, "Mom, Ida is still young and hasn't finished her studies. It's too early to have kids.

It was the first time Jackson had ever called Oneida "Ida".

The word sounded especially pleasing.

Hearing this, Oneida just kept her head down silently.

Yvonne felt that Jackson's words did make sense.

Oneida was only nineteen, after all. There really was no rush.

Yvonne realized she had been too eager.

They didn't continue the conversation but walked into the hall together.

The upscale wooden round table there was almost fully arranged.

Soon, everyone would be sitting there, having dinner together.

Claude and Bella were sitting on the couch, having no intention of greeting Yvonne as she approached.

After all, Claude had the final say in the Bane family. He feared no one else but Lionel.

Other than Lionel, Claude cared little for anyone else, including Yvonne, even though she was the wife of his father.

Just then, a tall man dressed in a black suit elegantly walked into the hall.

He was strikingly handsome and gentle with thin red lips, fair skin, and light pupils, exuding a subtly noble but aloof temperament.

Oneida noticed him immediately.

Unexpectedly, as soon as the man walked in, his gaze was fixed on Oneida from the get-go.

The two of them locked eyes across the room, an unsaid conversation hanging in the air.

The man's eyes were narrow, deep, and cold.

His gaze seemed casual yet unfathomable, emitting a mysterious chill. Being stared at with such eyes was really chilling. He was like a viper. Exactly, a viper! Looking at this man, Oneida thought it quite fitting to compare him to that creature.

He was definitely not a man to be trifled with.

"Jonas, you're finally here." Claude's voice suddenly rang in Oneida's ears.

In a trice, Claude had approached that man, showing a genuinely warm smile. "You're the last one to show up. You must drink more later."



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That man just smiled, noncommittally.

Oneida's eyes twinkled slightly.

She thought, 'So, he is Jonas!'

Claude and Jonas were truly blood brothers.

It was said that their mother was a commoner, also the first love of Jackson's father.

Due to Lionel's disapproval of their marriage, she never received her rightful status.

Despite this, she gave birth to two boys in secret.

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The elder one was Claude and the younger one was Jonas.

Though they were illegitimate children, Lionel couldn't bear to see the family bloodline cast aside, so the boys were brought into the Bane family. Unexpectedly, Jackson's father was a true playboy. Apart from his offspring with his first love, he had another child with another woman. This child was Karen.

Karen came to the Bane family alone after she listened to her mother's last words.

Subsequently, she became the third child of the Bane family..

The fact that the first three children of the esteemed Bane family were illegitimately born by two women shocked the entire Jeahron when the news broke out. Later on, Jackson's father finally heeded his parents' wishes and turned over a new leaf in preparation for marriage.

His bride was none other than Yvonne, the daughter of the Lowell family.

Shortly after their marriage, Yvonne gave birth to a son.

He was Jackson.

Jackson was the youngest, the fourth child of the Bane family, and the one with the most legitimate lineage.

As the only legitimate child, he was

the most noble son of the Bane family.

Ironically, he was disabled in both legs, detached from worldly affairs. Besides, Karen devoted herself to showbiz, paying no regard to the affairs of the Bane family. Therefore, the major control of the Bane family resided with Claude and Jonas.

The two could be said to rule the roost within the Bane family.

Oneida fixed her eyes on the two brothers.

They didn't look alike.

Claude appeared somewhat greasy,

while Jonas was refreshingly handsome.

However, Jonas gave her no good impression.

Claude was a visibly base person with his feelings completely undisguised, while Jonas was unfathomable.

Such an individual was even harder to deal with.

As Oneida pondered, Jonas walked unhurriedly from Claude's side towards Oneida and the others.

He first courteously greeted Yvonne. "Aunt Yvonne."

Hearing this, Yvonne couldn't help but smile at him.

Compared to Claude, Yvonne liked Jonas.

Unlike Claude, who was always looking down on her, Jonas had always been polite to her since young and had often helped her out and treated Jackson quite well too.

After greeting Yvonne, Jonas turned to look at Jackson who was sitting in a wheelchair. Jonas smiled faintly, "Jackson, how's it going?"

Jackson just nodded slightly and responded indifferently, "Not bad."

"Good. If you need any help, just tell me," Jonas said with narrowed eyes and in a deep voice.

After that, his gaze shifted to Oneida, his eyes flashing a glint of sharpness.

Despite its fleeting, Oneida caught it.

She slightly tightened her fingers, her expression cold as she met his gaze.

Jonas smiled gently, looking every bit a gentleman.

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However, Onrida knew he was not

"So, you're Oneida Jonas' voice was light. "Nice to meet grow?"

Oneida gave a forced smile. "Me th

Just then, a servant enddenly ran into the hall.

"Mr. Roderick Bane i buk

At this news, everyone changed their faces.

Many were visibly surprised.

The so-called "Mr. Roderick Bane mentioned by the servant was Jackson's father.

The reason everyone was so surprised was that Roderick hadn't been home for a week.

He was just a nominal chairman of the Rane Group. In fact, Claude and Jonas had taken over the family business a long time ago. All Roderick needed to do was party his life away.

It was pretty common for him not to come home for a month.

The only silver lining was that Roderick hadn't fathered any more illegitimate children. Otherwise, he might have pissed Lionel off

When she heard Roderick come back, Yvonne couldn't help but frown. She muttered, "Well, does he know he has a home? He still has his conscience, huh? I thought he

wouldn't even show up for his father's birthday." Just then, a tall man staggered into the hall.

He was in a dark jacket, looking handsome.

Roderick was naturally handsome. If not, how could his children all be good-looking?

However, at this moment, Roderick seemed to be drunk.

His checks were flushed, his gaze was bleary, and he was barely able to stand.

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## **The Second Act 185**

### Chapter 185

When everyone saw Roderick in this state, their expressions varied.

Claude and Jonas both had a been-there-done-that look. After all, they were used to their father's style of conduct.

Jackson sat indifferently in his wheelchair.

He didn't even spare a glance for Roderick.

Jackson slightly squinted, showing no emotion.

Oneida, however, tilted her head thoughtfully as she sized Roderick up.

Yvonne, standing by, quietly clenched her fists when she looked at the drunken man with a complexion of agitation.

Roderick squinted, his gaze blurry as he looked towards Jackson's direction.

"Huh..." Roderick scoffed, his gaze cooling slightly. "You still know to come back?"

Of course, that comment was directed at Jackson.

Jackson ignored Roderick completely.

His expression was unchanging, not a flicker of emotion visible.

It was like punching a pillow for all the impact Roderick made.

Gritting his teeth, he felt a surge of anger fueled by the alcohol.

Roderick marched towards Jackson with a flushed face. Sensing something was off, Yvonne quickly reached out and grabbed Roderick's arm, her expression dark as she snapped. "What do you want to do? Don't bully my son!" It was well known in the Bane family that Roderick didn't like Jackson.

Claude and Jonas, the illegitimate children, could hold sway in the house not only due to Jackson's disability but also because of the favoritism and tacit approval of Roderick.

Roderick preferred the illegitimate children of his first love to Jackson.

Even before Jackson was wheelchair-bound, Roderick disliked him.

Now that Jackson had become disabled, Roderick's dislike of him only grew.

Though they were father and son, they were no less estranged than strangers.

Yvonne firmly grasped the arm of Roderick to prevent him from approaching Jackson. She warned, "Stay away from my son!"

She fiercely glared at Roderick, as if he was not her husband, but her foe! Roderick scoffed coldly, suddenly shaking off Yvonne's hand with strength. Caught off guard, Yvonne stumbled backward a few steps, nearly falling over. At that moment, a flicker of emotion finally crossed Jackson's deep eyes.

He slightly turned his head, casting a sideways glance at Roderick.

Jackson's eyes were filled with a bone-chilling coldness.

The onlookers watched the scene unfold without uttering a word.

Yvonne barely maintained her stance. Her face turned pale as she clenched her teeth. "Are you going crazy

As she spoke, her eyes reddened slightly.

However, Roderick didn't look at her but fixed his gaze on Jackson who was seated in his wheelchair.

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"Disgusting!" Roderick sneered coldly, his eyes filled with disgust.

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## Chapter 185

"What, cat got your tongue? Don't you speak a single word when you see me?" When he saw Jackson being indifferent, Roderick's voice was charged with anger. "My very sight of you infuriates me!" Roderick's face seemed rather fierce, and his eyes were filled with hostility.

Who would have thought that the chairman of the prestigious Bane Group would be such a crude and temperamental person?

As he spoke, Roderick suddenly stretched out his hand, aiming to grab Jackson's shoulder.

In the blink of an eye, Oneida, who had been silent, intercepted Roderick's arm with a quick raise of her hand.

Roderick was taken aback.

The next second, Oneida's hand moved up swiftly, aiming for his cheek.

A crisp slap landed heavily on Roderick's face.

The air turned deadly silent immediately.

Everyone was stunned, hardly believing what they had seen, except for Oneida herself and the ever-expressionless Jackson.

The two were the calmest on the spot.

No one had imagined that Oneida would suddenly give Roderick a fierce slap.

People wondered, 'How dare she?!'

Someone seemed to have taken a deep breath.

Roderick was dazed for quite a while before he gradually came back to his senses.

He, wondered, 'I was hit... by a random young girl?'

On realizing this, Roderick widened his eyes and glared at Oneida fiercely.

A clear and swollen handprint was still visible on one side of his face, utterly ridiculous.

"Who the hell are you?" Roderick was so enraged that his face turned crimson and his eyes widened as if he wanted to tear Oneida into pieces. "How come I've never seen you before? How dare you hit me?" Oneida wasn't the least bit intimidated by Roderick's fearsome demeanor.

She revealed a carefree and sly smile. "Sorry about that. My hand slipped a bit. Hope it didn't hurt too much."

Everyone wondered, 'Her hand slipped?'

The crowd watched this with great interest.

They thought Oneida was really something.

Hearing her words, Roderick felt utterly humiliated.

He thought, 'What the hell? She clearly doesn't see me as anything important!'

He immediately reached out to Oneida, intending to teach her a lesson.

At this moment, Roderick felt a sharp pain in his wrist.

Out of the blue, Jackson managed to seize his wrist and shoved him harshly backward.

Though the push seemed nonchalant, it was incredibly forceful.

Roderick couldn't help but stagger back several steps.

He smashed into a table behind him.

He frowned tightly, nearly crying out in pain.

His face hurt, and so did his back.

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Chapter 185

Inside, Roderick was boiling with rage. "You...."

He shakily extended a finger, pointing at Jackson's face.

Jackson looked at him with an icy gaze and slightly said in a cold tone, "She's my wife. You have no right to lay a finger on bert

His words were truly dominating.

After speaking, Jackson reached out and firmly held Oneida's wrist.

"Let's go back to our room."

Jackson said so to her.

Hearing this, Oneida nodded with a smile.

Jackson then turned to Yvonne and said in a gentle tone, "Mom, let's go

"Okay," Yvonne said, visibly shaken as she walked over.

She didn't want to stay in the hall anyway, so she decided to follow Jackson and Oneida back.

Yvonne thought, 'Out of sight, out of mind!'

As the three of them turned to leave, Roderick trembled in anger. "You... you should..."

He thought, "They really look down on me!"

With a contorted face in fury, Roderick followed them, but unexpectedly he lost balance and plummeted to the ground

"Ouch..." Already tipsy, he was made dizzier by this fall.

Jonas immediately stepped forward and helped Roderick up. "Dad, watch out."

Behind them, Claude couldn't help shaking his head and sighing, a look of unbearable viewing on his face.

As a matter of fact, Claude himself didn't have much respect for Roderick.

Claude thought, 'You're hardly the bearing of a noble family but a prodigal squandering your days in debauchery?'

Nevertheless, Claude didn't dare to say these words in front of Roderick.

Meanwhile, Bella beside him was somewhat preoccupied.



Her mind was constantly filled with the scene where Jackson stood up for Oneida.

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COMMENT

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## The Second Act 186

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Bella thought, Jackson is cold and detached. He should stand up for a girl and even confront his own father for her! Has he truly fallen in love with her?'

Thinking this, Bella couldn't help but clench her fingers, her face also suddenly darker.

At this moment, Yvonne was sitting on the edge of the bed in her bedroom with red eyes, tears continually streaming down.

She started crying the moment she entered the bedroom.

Oneida and Jackson could only watch by the side.

After Yvonne had almost cried herself out, Jackson reached out and handed her a clean, neat handkerchief.

Yvonne took it and frantically wiped her face.

At this very moment, she was no longer a graceful, dignified lady but a woman who was heartbroken and wanted to cry.

"He might as well not come back!" Yvonne sobbed as she spoke, looking at Jackson with eyes full of pity. "You finally came home. How could he treat you like this? Jackson, don't take it to heart."

As she talked, tears again surged from her eyes, her voice laden with a deep cry. "Why does he treat you in this way? You're his son, a legitimate one! Why does he detest you so much? He doesn't like you, but even resents you..." Jackson's expression remained unchanging.

Seeing Yvonne so upset, he couldn't help but whisper comforting words. "Mom, it's okay."

He was already used to it and had seen through it all.

He had never known what fatherly love was since he was born.

That was because he never had it.

He always watched Claude and Jonas receive expensive toys from Roderick and laughed with him.

None of that belonged to Jackson.

When he was young, he had yearned for just one look from Roderick.

It turned out that it was just a pipe dream of Jackson.

Thus, later on, he stopped dreaming of paternal love.

He decided to become powerful.

Now, he was powerful enough.

He would make all of them pay for him at the right time.

Oneida who was standing by fixed her gaze on Jackson's face.

Before coming to the Bane manor, she had guessed that Jackson didn't have a good status in the Bane family.

Unexpectedly, the reality turned out to be even more brutal than she had imagined.

Jackson was so disregarded in the Bane family!

Little wonder he moved out of the Bane manor and lived alone in Garrison Mansion.

If he had stayed in the Bane manor, he might have ended up with a mental disorder because of his family.

Oneida stared blankly at Jackson.

At that moment, she made up her mind.

She would protect him.

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From now on, she would protect Jackson no matter what would happen, just like how she had fiercely slapped Roderick in the hall.

She didn't care if Roderick was Jackson's father. As long as he hurt Jackson, she would retaliate!

Jackson was still cold, appearing very strong.

However, Oneida thought, 'His childhood must have been very bleak.

'But that's okay, I'll be with him. Everything is going to be different.

'I'll make him happy

Meanwhile, Yvonne kept crying.

She went on and on, complaining completely about Roderick.

When she was about done, Oneida suddenly asked, "Why don't you just divorce him?"

Yvonne seemed to really despise Roderick or to say she hated him.

Why did she still insist on staying in the Bane family instead of opting for divorce?

Yvonne's gaze faltered for a moment.

A trace of sorrow crossed her eyes. "I do want to! I've definitely considered divorce."

Yvonne had of course thought about divorce.

However, for Jackson's sake, she hadn't gone through with it.

Once divorced, she wouldn't be able to stay in the Bane manor. Then, she wouldn't be able to protect or look after Jackson.

The Bane family would never let her take Jackson away!

Yvonne once brought it up, wanting to take Jackson with her if she divorced, but Lionel dismissed the idea.

The Bane family, as a traditionally noble one, would never let their grandsons end up out in the cold.

Once caught in the web of a powerful family, Yvonne had no way to leave with Jackson.

Therefore, for Jackson's sake, she could only endure and stay in the Bane family.

Jackson was her life's only concern.

Yvonne felt it was a thorough mistake for her to marry Roderick.

She had met Roderick when she was still young.

It was at an upper-class gathering.

Back then, Roderick was a charming young man, handsome and dashing, with a look that could bewitch anyone.

It was his charming look that captivated Yvonne.

She fell for Roderick at first sight and daydreamed about him relentlessly.

Later when she found out he had a beloved first love, she even cried a river.

Just when she thought about giving up, Roderick actually planned on abandoning his first love to marry a girl of equal social status! Yvonne knew her chance had come.

Even though Roderick already had two illegitimate children with his first love, and despite his scandalous repur him.

she was determined to marry

She wasn't affected by the persuasion and objection and focused solely on marrying Roderick.

Eventually, her parents gave in.

She got her wish and became part of the Bane family.

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At that time, with his rumors everywhere, Roderick was infamous throughout Jeahron. Despite that he was from the affluent Bane family, no rich lady wanted to marry him.

After all, no one would like to marry a playboy with illegitimate children!

Only Yvonne, like a fool, married him head-on like a moth to a flame.

She had thought she could touch his heart and make him turn over a new leaf.

In fact, right after they married, Roderick did have a brief change.

They enjoyed a rather sweet honeymoon period, during which she even got pregnant with Jackson.

Nevertheless, happiness came fast and left just as quickly.

While she was struggling through her pregnancy, Roderick was cheating on her.

Not only was he still hung up on his first love, keeping in touch with her behind the scenes, but he was also close with quite a few other women.

Even Karen, an illegitimate daughter, came at that time.

Yvonne was so upset that she almost had a miscarriage.

Fortunately, Jackson was a lucky child and was finally born.

However, due to being premature, he had been rather frail as a child.

Because of this, Yvonne always felt a deep sense of guilt towards him.

Now, Yvonne and Roderick had effectively separated, sharing a house but otherwise like strangers.

The two of them pretty much stayed out of each other's hair.

His indulgence in dissipation was none of her concern.

In her heart and eyes, there was only Jackson.

She knew she deserved this, no one else to blame.

She was the only one who should be blamed. She was naive and fool. Had she listened to her parents, she wouldn't have become like this.

Thus, all of this was the punishment she deserved.

But as long as Jackson was safe and happy, her pain didn't matter.

With that thought, Yvonne slowly stopped crying. She bit her lip and murmured, "Forget it. No more on it."

Suddenly, there was a knock at the bedroom door.

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## **The Second Act 187**

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"Mrs. Bane, it's me."

The delicate voice of a maid came from outside the door.

Yvonne paused upon hearing the voice.

The maid continued, "Dinner is ready. Mr. Lionel Bane asked me to call you all to eat. Yvonne wondered, 'Lionel has arrived?'

Yvonne wiped her tears with a handkerchief, replying hastily, "I see. We'll be right there.

After speaking, she looked toward Jackson, managing a forced, faint smile. "Jackson, it's your grandfather's birthday today. Don't dwell on what just happened. You know exactly what kind of man Roderick is. Just ignore him. It's enough once we two live well!" As she said, Yvonne couldn't help but grin her teeth in frustration.

Seeing her like this, Jackson couldn't help but shake his head. "You're the one who needs to chill out."

He had long since stopped caring about Roderick.

However, Yvonne still couldn't let Roderick go. She had a mixture of love and hatred for him.

"I..." Yvonne stiffened up, quickly denying it. "Not I..."

"Alright. Let's go."

Jackson subtly changed the subject, not wanting Yvonne to dwell on this issue.

Hearing this, Yvonne quickly nodded. "Right. Let's hurry to the hall. We can't keep Mr. Lionel Bane waiting too long."

Jackson turned to look at Oneida, who was daydreaming nearby.

Standing there with a vacant gaze, she looked unexpectedly cute.

Jackson couldn't help but speak, his cool voice tinged with slight pleasure. "Let's go."

At his words, Oneida immediately looked up at him.

"Okay." She nodded, then stretched out her hand to push Jackson's wheelchair.

"What were you thinking?" Jackson suddenly asked in an indifferent tone.

Oneida pursed her lips.

Just now, she was thinking about Lionel.

She was going to meet this legendary figure soon.

Lionel not only inherited the Bane family's glory but also led the family to even greater heights.

Oneida heard he was cold, decisive, and clear about love and hate.

However, she wondered why such a person could let the Bane family end up like this, glossy on the surface but chaotic inside, with the rise of the illegitimate children, the ridiculousness of Roderick, and the miserable life of Jackson since childhood. Oneida was just pondering this.

Of course, she couldn't discuss it with Jackson.

Her

eyes twitched slightly, and she responded softly, "I was just thinking..."

She paused for a moment before she continued. "I will take good care of you."

Her words were sincere indeed.

Hearing this, Jackson was stunned.

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After a brief dence, he replied meaningfully. I'm not as fragile as you think?

Then he continued, "I should protect you'

"Well, are you showing off your affection in front of me? Yvonne, who couldn't stand their conversation any longer, finally spoke up with a fringed disgust, yet a hint of a smile hid in her eyes. Oneida's cars promptly turned a dight red as she heard that.

She felt a bit shy

Jackson, however, remained composed and very calm.

The three of them walked out of the bedroom at a leisurely pace. As they entered the living room, everyone was already seated.

Claude and Jonas were sitting together, with Bella beside them.

Roderick seemed to have sobered up from his drunkenness. He had changed his clothes, and the red flush on his face faded slightly, but his eyes were still a bit distant.

Karen also changed into a new outfit, from a black jacket to a demure dress.

Lionel sat in the center,

He looked quite young, not at all aged,

His handsome face was seemingly too young for his age.

His eyes were sharp, his gaze cold and deep.

He was filled with a commanding aura and a noble demeanor,

At just one glance, Oneida felt that Lionel and Jackson had extremely similar eyes.

Among all the descendants present, Jackson resembled Lionel the most.

As Jackson, Yvonne, and Oneida entered, everyone couldn't help but glance their way.

Suddenly a hint of a smile flashed across Lionel's face.

"Jack" Lionel looked at Jackson and called out with a smile brimming with joy.

Jackson nodded towards him, "Grandpa."

"Good boy" Lionel immediately responded, staring straight at Jackson, his eyes filled with a mix of happiness and complexity.



"You look good!" said Lionel with a laugh, then gestured to Jackson. "Jack, come over here."

The moment Jackson showed up, Lionel's gaze nearly glued itself to him, and now Lionel wanted him right by his side.

The atmosphere around the dinner table was subtle.

Claude was gritting his teeth, Jonas had a calm face with unreadable emotions, and Roderick was unexpectedly silent. Oneida pushed Jackson towards Lionel.

"You must be Oneida, right?" Lionel looked up at Oneida.

He smiled as he watched her, sizing her up surreptitiously.

Oneida certainly noticed Lionel's quiet scrutiny.

With a slight tilt of her lips and a relaxed expression, Oneida smiled lightly, "Yes, Grandpa."

She called him "Grandpa" in a sweet tone.

Jackson's grandfather was naturally hers too.

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Perhaps pleased by the term "Grandpa", Lionel burst into laughter, his eyes crinkling even more with his wide smile.

"Good girl," Lionel commented before turning to Carlos. "Bring over the welcome gift I prepared.

"Yes," Carlos responded and quickly fetched an envelope.

The envelope was handed to Lionel.

"Oneida, it's our first meeting. Due to Jack's special circumstances, you got married into our family somewhat abruptly... I know you must feel unfair. This is my welcome gift for you. You must accept it." Saying so, Lionel handed the envelope to Oneida.

Oneida hesitated for a moment but ultimately took it.

"Can I open it now?" she asked, glancing at Lionel almost reflexively.

Lionel laughed again, "Of course."

Though it was their first meeting, Lionel really took a liking to Oneida.

Her gaze was pure and unpretentious.

Lionel wondered, 'No wonder Jack has never brought up divorce.

In fact, Lionel wasn't so adamant about the marriage alliance with the Chaser family.

If Jackson objected to the marriage with the Chaser family, Lionel wouldn't force him.

Later, Jackson suddenly married a girl from the Chaser family.

At that time, Lionel told Jackson that if he really didn't like that girl, he would help Jackson divorce her.

Unexpectedly, Jackson never mentioned it after getting married.

It seemed that the young couple was doing pretty well.

In this case, Lionel felt relieved.

Right now, Oneida was busy opening the envelope.

In the end, she pulled out a black card from inside.

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## **The Second Act 188**

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Oneida took a closer look, and it was a global-limited edition black card.

The amount of money in it was beyond measure.

"Grandpa?" Oneida's eyes widened, and she looked over at Lionel with a complex expression. How could Lionel give Oneida so much money on a first meeting? Wasn't that inappropriate?

"What, not happy about it?" Lionel asked with a smile.

"No," Oneida replied and shook her head.

"Then accept it gladly. This is a gift from me," Lionel said kindly.

Oneida didn't say anything more and put the black card into her pocket.

This black card also surprised everyone else present.

Especially Claude, whose eyes widened slightly, his gaze fixed on the black card.

His eyes even reddened a bit.

"Grandpa, why give her such a lavish gift on the first meeting? Bella didn't have such a gift!" Claude frowned, looking a little upset.

When Lionel met Bella for the first time, he wasn't so generous.

This made Claude feel dissatisfied.

Usually, Claude was quite afraid of Lionel, but now he didn't care about it.

Claude just wanted to stand up for Bella.

After Claude said those words, the atmosphere suddenly became tenser.

Unable to help herself, Bella tugged at Claude's sleeve and shook her head with a frown, saying, "Why did you say such things now?"

Hearing Claude's words, Lionel turned to look at Claude and Bella.

Lionel's eyes suddenly turned cold, and his tone was quite chilly, "Bella hasn't married into the family yet. Once she does, I'll give her a better welcome gift." Claude and Bella both pulled a long face upon hearing this.

They pursed their lips, suddenly at a loss for words.

Lionel was right.

Bella was just Claude's girlfriend, and they hadn't been married yet.

It was not that Claude didn't want to marry Bella. He'd love to tie the knot sooner rather than later.

The problem was with Bella.

She had never agreed to marry Claude.

Latterly, at Claude's insistent request, Bella moved into the Bane manor for a trial marriage.

Then so-called trial marriage was actually just living together before getting married.

The couple lived together to get to know each other more and see if they could get along.

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So even though Bella was living in the Bane manor, she was not yet considered the wife of Claude.

silent.

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"Alright, everyone, please sit down before the food gets cold," urged a cheerful voice suddenly-it was coming from Ka, who had remained

"Yeah, Karen is right," Lionel said, the indifference in his eyes slowly melting into a smile.

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Lionel hurriedly invited Oneida and Yvonne to take their seats.

Jackson sat next to Lionel

And Oneida took her place beside Jackson.

The birthday party finally kicked off officially.

Before dinner, everyone began to unveil their carefully selected gift.

The gifts were all specially prepared. Someone gave Lionel antiques, health care products, and his favorite books.

Jackson also prepared a special gift for Lionel

It was an exquisitely crafted calligraphy brush.

Lionel loved calligraphy, which was a fact well-known throughout the family.

So, Jackson giving Lionel a calligraphy brush was really hitting the mark.

"I really love this brush," Lionel said, beaming with joy as soon as he saw the gift from Jackson.

Ever since he was a child, Jackson had always known exactly what was in Lionel's heart.

However...

Thinking this, Lionel felt sad. His eyes momentarily dimmed.

However, the sad feeling was fleeting. Lionel still smiled warmly, looking at Jackson with even more affection.

"Grandpa, as long as you like it."

Jackson looked at Lionel calmly, his demeanor unusually serene.

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Watching Jackson, Lionel felt as if his heart was broken.

Jackson.

Lionel felt sorry for Jackson.

He fought back the pain in his heart and continued unwrapping his gifts.

Eventually, only Bella and Oneida hadn't given their gifts yet.

Bella glanced at Oneida instinctively, noticing she was about to present her gift.

So, Bella quickly stood up, handed over the well-prepared gift to Lionel, and said with a beaming smile, "Grandpa, this is my gift to you. I wish you good health and all the best." Bella purposely hurried to give her gift to him more quickly than Oneida.

Bella had put a lot of effort into this gift.

It would surely impress Lionel.

With her gift presented first, whatever Oneida gave would seem less amazing in comparison.

Bella intended to steal the show and leave Oneida helpless.

She did this for a reason.

Bella really couldn't stand Oneida, even to the point of hostility.

Why should Oneida get to marry Jackson? Why should Bella enjoy his protection?

Indeed, it was jealousy.

Seeing Oneida by Jackson's side drove Bella almost to insanity with envy.

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Though Bella hid it well, her heart was brimming with jealousy.

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Chapter 188

Bella despised Oneida.

The disdain came swiftly and strongly

Although today was the first time Bella met Oneida, her animosity towards Oneida was already uncontrollable.

"Grandpa, hurry and open in Bella's face was decorated with a gentle smile as she looked at Lionel, appearing incredibly sweet

Lionel smiled back at Bella and took the gift from her, saying "Alright, I'll open it right now?"

With that, he started unwrapping Bella's gift.

After the wrapping was removed, everyone saw the gift inside.

It turned out to be a painting.

"This..." Lionel was momentarily stunned upon seeing the painting, his eyes flickering with surprise, joy, and amazement.

"Grandpa, do you like it?" Bella asked Lionel, smiling while secretly feeling complacent.

Her gaze secretly swept over Oneida's face, curious to see her expression.

However, Oneida looked very composed, and her expression was unusually calm.

Bella pinched her fingers instinctively.

Had Oneida not realized the severity of the situation?

After Bella presented such a stunning gift, wasn't Oneida afraid that if her gift couldn't match up to Bella's, she would definitely be outshone?

The thought alone made Bella feel embarrassed for Oneida.

At that moment, everyone's attention was focused on the painting Bella had presented

"Where did you get this painting? Lionel looked up at Bella with a gentle expression and asked her.

This was the first time Lionel had looked at Bella so tenderly.

Bella smiled sweetly and responded, "Grandpa, I painted it myself."

"What? Did you paint it yourself?" Lionel was surprised, and even his usually impassive face showed a hint of astonishment.

one."

"Yes, I know you like Spencer Dawson, so I specifically learned his painting style to paint this for you," Bella said softly. "Although my painting skills are not bad, capturing the essence of Spencer's style was quite challenging. It took many drafts before I finally got this Listening to Bella's words, Lionel was very touched.

He bowed his head to look at the painting with great emotion.

Spencer Dawson was a late foreign painter.

He was exceptionally talented with superb painting skills, developed his own style, and was very famous.

Lionel admired Spencer's style and loved his paintings.

This time, Bella specifically painted one in Spencer's style for Lionel, and the painting was exceptionally vivid and skilled.

SEND GIFT

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## The Second Act 189

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Lionel examined the painting several times, and the joy and admiration in his eyes were quite evident.

"Bella, you good girl. After looking at the painting, Lionel couldn't help but look up at Bella again, his face brimming with a benevolent smile. "You really put your heart into this? "Grandpa, Bella has always been a great painter. You just don't know her well enough," Claude said, unable to conceal the pride swelling in his heart as he grinned.

Lionel, upon hearing this, laughed heartily. "It seems I haven't paid Bella enough attention"

Bella pursed her lips, smiling gently.

Her gaze drifted towards Jackson.

She wanted to see his reaction.

Would her painting astonish Jackson?

However, Bella was disappointed.

Because she saw that Jackson was looking at Oneida.

Jackson utterly didn't care about the gift Bella presented to Lionel.

Nor did he care about how good her painting really was.

Jackson was looking at his wife.

At that moment, Bella's heart sank as if it had been dropped into an ice cave.

It was freezing cold.

Bella quietly withdrew her gaze, her fingers tightening in secretly.



Jackson indeed was looking at Oneida. He turned to her and whispered softly, "Did you bring a gift?"

Caught off guard, Oneida lowered her voice slightly, a trace of discontent in her response, "Didn't I tell you I would handle the gift myself?"

Did Jackson not trust her?

Seeing her reaction, Jackson couldn't help but smile slightly, his handsome face softening. "I'm just worried you might be a bit forgetful. If you forgot it, I brought an extra one just for you, so you could give it to Grandpa." Hearing this, Oneida looked straight into Jackson's eyes.

At that moment, he seemed so calm and unbelievably gentle.

Her heart inexplicably felt a touch of sweetness.

Jackson actually brought an extra gift, just for her!

Oneida smiled, whispering, "Thanks, but I really did prepare a gift.

Just then, Bella was about to humiliate Oneida.

Bella said in a gentle voice, "Oneida, what gift have you prepared for Grandpa?"

At these words, all eyes turned to Oneida.

Now Oneida was the only one who hadn't yet presented her birthday gift to Lionel.

"Didn't you prepare anything?" Claude squinted his eyes, his gaze showing clear disapproval as he stared at Oneida.

Upon hearing this, the onlookers' gazes toward Oneida were infused with a subtle sense of curiosity.

"Ida definitely brought something. Don't just start rumors." Immediately, Karen defended Oneida.

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Chapter 189

Claude scoffed, disdainfully saying, "If she did bring something, she'd better show it quick. Why is she delaying? What kind of treasure could it be? Perhaps seeing Bella's excellent gift made you feel inferior. So do you think you can't match up?" Upon hearing this, a dark glint flashed across Oneida's eyes, and for a moment, she said nothing.

But Bella immediately spoke up, pretending to be displeased, "Don't say that..."

Although Bella voiced her discontent, inwardly she felt that Claude's words were exactly what she intended.

He said exactly what she had wanted to say.

Bella instinctively glanced at Oneida, eager to see her reaction.

Unexpectedly, Oneida just smiled.

She looked up, her deep, icy gaze piercing through Bella and Claude. Then she glanced at the painting. "This painting is indeed quite remarkable."

That was what Oneida said.

Hearing this, Claude sneered, "Anyone with eyes can see that. You don't really need to point it out."

"Claude." Lionel, seeing Claude picking on Oneida, furrowed his brows in displeasure and warned him.

Claude pursed his lips with a displeased expression.

"But there are some things you guys just can't see," Oneida continued, her smile slowly fading, replaced by a hint of coldness in her eyes.

"Stop acting! Just speak plainly!" Claude frowned and said bluntly to Oneida.

"Be more polite to her."

Suddenly, the usually silent Jackson spoke up indifferently. He looked straight at Claude, his gaze deep and piercing.

Feeling Jackson's stare, Claude inexplicably shuddered.

This guy, despite being confined to a wheelchair, was actually so commanding and domineering just now.

Claude frowned, feeling nervous.

Meanwhile, Bella looked at Oneida, with a smirk that wasn't quite a smile, "Really? Then do tell us, what did you see in this painting that others didn't see?"

Bella seemed to be smiling, but her heart was filled with disdain.

Could Oneida even paint?

An outsider who knew nothing about painting dared to arrogantly critique Bella's painting!

However, Oneida didn't look at Bella again. Her gaze shifted to Lionel as she said, "Grandpa, this painting indeed imitates the style of Spencer, but it wasn't drawn by Bella herself."

Wasn't the painting drawn by Bella herself?

At this, most of the people present were astounded.

"What are you babbling about? If Bella didn't paint this, then who did?" Claude was the first to blow his top, glaring at Oneida with a hostile tone, "I watched Bella stay in the studio for a long time, just to create this perfect piece of art. Aren't you just slandering her because you're jealous of her?"

Oneida didn't take Claude's words seriously.

She couldn't care less about his words.

Lionel was also slightly stunned.

"Isn't this painting drawn by Bella?" asked Lionel.

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He squinted his eyes, his gaze deep as he looked at Oneida and asked, "Why did you say that?"

However, Bella stood there still

Her fingers clenched even tighter.

Her knuckles turned pale.

Bella still kept composed on the surface, but her palms were already full of cold sweat.

"Actually, this painting was done by another foreign artist, Oneida spoke in a cold tone, her voice sounding in everyone's ears, "Perhaps Grandpa has heard of Leonardo Palmer?"

Lionel perked up, his eyes lighting up slightly. "I know him. Leonardo and Spencer's works share the same style, a style that I admire."

Oneida smiled and nodded, saying, "Exactly. Leonardo became famous because he imitated Spencer's style. He's the artist whose work closest resembles Spencer's in the world. "Who would've thought, Bella actually outright used Leonardo's work and presented it as her own? What a shock!" Oneida turned to look at Bella, her eyes filled with disdain.

## **The Second Act 190**

Chapter 190

Originally, Oneida didn't want to expose Bella's stupid lie.

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After all, with so many people around and since Lionel seemed to really like the painting, Oneida didn't want to put a damper on everyone's spirits.

Yet, Bella was overtly and covertly humiliating Oneida.

Bella pretended to be innocent, but she harbored ill intentions towards Oneida.

Others might not see through Bella's mind, but Oneida saw everything clearly.

Since Bella wanted to provoke Oneida, how could Oneida stand with it?

She would naturally bite back in kind!

After hearing Oneida's words, everyone present couldn't help but turn their gazes to Bella.

Their eyes filled with suspicion and contempt.

After all, Oneida's arguments were reasonable and well-founded.

So, everyone was suspicious of Bella.

"You did that on purpose, didn't you?" Claude couldn't sit still any longer. He looked at Oneida with anger and shouted, "How can you be so sure that this painting was done by that Leonardo you mentioned? You were slandering Bella recklessly. How could you be so shameless?"

Bella then pursed her lips, her gaze steadfast as she turned to Lionel. "Grandpa, I don't know why Oneida would say those words, but I really did paint this work.

"If you don't believe me, I can show you all my previous drafts."

Hearing this, Lionel glanced between Bella and Oneida.

For a moment, he didn't know whose words to believe.

"Oneida, tell me, how can you prove this is Leonardo's painting and not Bella's?" asked Lionel.

Lionel stared at Oneida with a frown.

Actually, Lionel was familiar with Leonardo.

After all, he had a passion for the art of painting.

He admired both Spencer and Leonardo.

But in Lionel's recollection, Leonardo had never painted the piece he was currently holding.

Noticing Lionel's thoughts, Oneida replied calmly, "Bella was clever not to steal one of Leonardo's more famous works, else it would have been instantly recognizable. She used one of Leonardo's lesser-known paintings. Grandpa, you might not have seen it, but one thing remains unaltered.

"That is, Leonardo's signature is always hidden in his paintings!"

Oneida's words made Lionel's eyes light up.

"Indeed, this is true." Lionel seemed to recall something and said, "I've heard that Leonardo always conceals his signature in his paintings."

Then, Lionel lowered his gaze to the painting in his hands.

It was a painting of sunflowers.

In the center of the sunflower, he could faintly make out the letters "Leo".

That was Leonardo's name.

Without a doubt, this was Leonardo's work, not Bella's.

So, Lionel put the painting down and immediately looked up at Bella.

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## Chapter 190

The previously gentle expression had vanished, replaced by a stern and serious face.

"Bella, do you have anything to explain?" asked Lionel.

Lionel's voice was calm, but it sounded imposing and serious.

Bella's complexion turned slightly pale.

She struggled to control her trembling fingers.

She had thought about everything, but she had never anticipated that Leonardo's paintings would hold such a secret.

It was also Bella's fault for not researching Leonardo's painting habits beforehand. Had she done so, she might not have been exposed.

Of course, the most despicable person was Oneida.

If it weren't for Oneida, things wouldn't have gotten so messed up.

Initially, no one noticed it until Oneida suddenly exposed Bella and messed up Bella's perfect plan.

"Bella." Claude also looked at Bella with a tight frown. He urged, "Say what you want to say, and don't be afraid. If you really did the painting yourself, no one could wrong you!"

Bella bit her lip, her face turning even paler.

She couldn't say a word.

Seeing Bella's reaction, everyone understood the situation.

Bella had admitted it through her silence.

"Bella, why would you?" Lionel frowned deeply; his eyes looked serious. "If you had painted a painting yourself, even if it wasn't good, I wouldn't mind. Why would you use someone else's painting?"

Bella bit her lip hard with a frustrated expression.

"Grandpa. At last, Bella spoke in a low voice, with a faint cry in her tone, "I did want to create a painting in the style of Spencer for you, but I just couldn't get it right, and I

couldn't capture the essence. I drew many drafts, but none of them worked. "Later, I heard about Leonardo, who specializes in mimicking Spencer. By a twist of fate, I got my hands on this obscure sunflower painting by Leonardo that hardly anyone has seen. So, I just..."

In the end, Bella almost broke down in tears, her eyes rimmed red.

But among those present, aside from Claude, no one felt sorry for her.

Lionel's expression transformed into a frigid mask, his eyes betraying a glint of icy disdain. Deceit had always been abhorrent to him, and the realization that Bella had feigned a birthday gift stoked a seething anger within him.

"Take this painting back to Leonardo! Stop embarrassing yourself." Lionel placed the painting in front of Bella and then withdrew his gaze, not looking at her again.

Bella continued to bite her lip, feeling utterly humiliated and disgraceful.

Claude watched from the side, unsure how to offer comfort.

In Claude's heart, even if Bella had stolen someone else's painting, it wasn't a grave mistake.

After all, her intentions were good from the start.

At that moment, Bella put away the sunflower painting and sat in her seat, not uttering a word.

Claude glanced at her, then turned his head to look at Oneida.

"You've said so much. How about you show your gift now?" said Claude.

His eyes were cold as he glared at Oneida fiercely. "Were you in such a hurry to embarrass Bella because your own gift is even less presentable?" Suddenly, everyone's attention was drawn back to Oneida.

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Quids showed a faint smile, confidently laughed, and said, "Of course, I will present my gift?"

After speaking, she took a wooden box from beside her and handed it to Lionel

Grandpa, this is just a small gift for you. I hope you like it. Happy Birthday, wishing you good health and everything going smoothly

Onida said all this in one breath, her voice sweet, which made Lionel break into a big smile.

"Kid, you really have a way with words"

Lionel beamed with praise,

Beside him, Jackson slightly turned his head to look at Oneida, his eyes suddenly radiating joy

"What's this, just a shabby wood box? Seeing Oneida bring out a simple wooden box, Claude immediately showed scor

"Ashabby wood box? This box is made of fine wood! Just this box alone is quite valuable!" Lionel, who knew wood well, recognized the preciousness of this wooden box at first glance, Everyone was surprised when Lionel said those words.

The box was actually made of expensive fine wood!