

Seduced 231

Chapter 231

I strolled around for approximately an hour before returning to the apartment. I had nearly finished half of my cotton candy.

I was finally happy, but then someone abruptly grabbed my wrist. As I was caught off guard, I staggered and nearly fell. Terrified, I rapidly regained my composure.

It happened so suddenly that I instantly tried to break free. But my mind reacted faster than my body, and the unique scent made me immediately recognize who the other party was.

Terrified and enraged, I couldn't help but curse, "Why are you pulling me? If you're sick in the head, go to a doctor! Don't get up to your crazy antics here!"

Felix was carrying two guitars. He took a half-step back and stood still. His good-looking features were slightly stiff, and he wore a gloomy expression that showed his dissatisfaction.

Frowning, he said, "I didn't expect you to be such an irresponsible person."

I couldn't help but be angry.

He was the one who was irresponsible! Did he not know this? Was I irresponsible? How could he say that?

wanted to quarrel with him and discuss what had transpired over the years to determine who was the irresponsible one.

Despite my anger, I remained calm. After all, I was the one who decided to give up the performance. I wanted to reason with Felix, but it wasn't the right time.

I sneered as I resisted my shifting feelings. "Don't always blame me. Are you so confused that you don't know who's the innocent one here? I was blind back then, and it wasn't just me either. None of us realized what a big jerk you are!"

Felix froze. He then lowered his head, his wrath subsiding.

For a moment, I noticed redness in his eyes. After speaking, I also felt my words were too harsh and regretted it a little. 1

I was angry, but I had no intention of being aggressive or making verbal attacks. I was just a little upset, and my words came out a jumbled mess. My intention wasn't to hurt him but to find a way out for myself.

The strong air around Felix faded, and he showed a touch of sadness that I found hard to

grasp.

Even after five years, I hadn't learned to be reckless and give people hell just because of my

bad mood.

After saying those words, I felt a sense of regret and began to reflect on myself discreetly. Perhaps I made a mistake from the moment I agreed to perform with him.

The responsibility for this lay with me since I had thought things too simply.

Previously, I believed in having a selfless heart and an open mind. However, when I applied it to people and communication, I realized that a clear conscience was useless if someone wanted to think badly of me. Many people in this world would readily distort facts.

This proved that Felix and I should stay apart until we died. That was the only way we could both have peace..

“Sorry, I shouldn’t have said that,” I apologized.

Felix raised his head in astonishment. I noticed his reddish eyes, which made me even more guilty. 1

It seemed that I would have to be a good person throughout my life considering my temper and soft heart. I could only be bullied instead of bullying others.

He combed his fingers through his hair indifferently, tugging the hair on his forehead. He said mockingly, “What are you sorry for? You’re right. It’s not just you. I also sometimes feel like I’m blind. Otherwise, I wouldn’t..”

He then muttered something in a hushed tone. I wasn’t standing near him, so I couldn’t hear it.

“I retract what I said, but I won’t perform anymore. We were just practicing. I didn’t do anything else, but I was subjected to...”

“Okay, I won’t say anymore. You understand that I don’t wish to face such things. Perform by yourself. One of your talents is to play guitar and sing solo. You can perform well even without me.”

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“The Luna of my memory is not one to give up so easily. Why have you become so passive? It feels like I don’t even recognize you, anymore. Show the power you had when you competed with me for first place in high school! There’s nothing you can’t do.” Felix smiled.

He turned slightly and peered at a small patch of grass not far ahead as if he were gazing at something else through it.

I smiled helplessly. “I’ve thought about it seriously. You and Lilac are a couple. It’s normal for her to be possessive.

“If I were to think about it from a different perspective, I wouldn’t want my boyfriend to be too close to other women too. She’s defending her right.

“Her approach may be incorrect, but her reason isn’t wrong. I can understand it. So, we still need to maintain a certain distance. That’ll be beneficial for both of us.

“Felix, regardless of the reason, she’s the woman you chose to be with. You’ve been together for several years now. Everyone knows you two are a couple. You promised her that you’d be her knight for life.

“Since you promised her your life, you should treat her well. Even if you and I are innocent, that’s not a reason for us to keep in contact privately. You should make her feel secure. Our decision to perform together wasn’t properly thought out in the first place.

“From now on, let us continue as before. We won’t contact each other privately, let alone meet in person. I’d like to spend my days at Jesselton College quietly for the next three years.

Felix stared at me. After a long time, he said hoarsely, “Okay, but I have a small request. Can you agree to it?”

“As long as it’s something that I’m capable of and doesn’t violate my principles, I’ll agree.”

“I know that I may never have the opportunity to start over with you again, and that’s a pity. So, I want to complete this performance with you. After that, we won’t run into each other again. I want this performance to be the final page of our story. Will you please agree?”

The matter came up again. Sure enough, it was exactly as I expected.

Felix remained determined to perform together. I hesitated.

If I agreed with him, the conversation with Lilac would’ve been meaningless. She’d

undoubtedly accuse me of going against my word and coveting her boyfriend.

Although I had a clear conscience and didn't care about her motives, that didn't mean I could accept her criticism without taking it to heart.

Felix noticed my uncertainty and said, "Regardless of the reason, you never give up halfway. You enjoy playing guitar, so why bother with irrelevant people's comments? Why take things so seriously and pass up such a great opportunity to perform?"

"I know how much effort you've put into the performance. You know it even better. Wouldn't it be a pity to give up now?"

"I know you don't like me, let alone Lilac. But you and she aren't the same. You shouldn't allow yourself to have regrets. Whether you hate or blame me, I'll take it all. After all, it was my fault in the beginning. Not being able to share a future with you is my retribution.

"But I hope you'll still be the woman you were at 18—the one who enjoys life and knows what you want. Lulu, please think about it carefully. Do you really want to pass up this opportunity? Will you regret giving up?"

I'd regret it. I knew myself well. Although I didn't want to admit it, Felix's remarks touched my heart.

I had the same thoughts. But I had to avoid suspicion due to the sensitive nature of our relationship.

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In my opinion, performing together was a bad idea that would bring about negative consequences. If we continued to let this mistake grow, it would just snowball into

something bigger.

However, after deciding to perform together, I really did put a lot of effort into it. I sincerely hoped the performance would be a success,

Should I give up or persevere and achieve the perfect result?

The two sides fought hard in my mind, and it was almost like there was a scale to help me weigh things out. But the weight on both sides was identical, and there was no winner.

Sometimes, I felt like an elderly woman with a backward ideology, I kept restraining and managing myself with moral values. In the eyes of others, my constraints were simply self-imposed.

In other words, I was the kind of person who sought out trouble when everything was fine and made things difficult for myself.

So, when I was shackled by my own morals, I needed an appropriate reason to help myself make a decision. In truth, I had already set expectations for the outcome.

When Felix noticed my silence, he lowered his eyes and smiled softly. "Lulu, it's one performance for a resolution. Isn't it worth it?"

It was worth it, of course. His reason was good, and I was convinced.

"Okay, Felix, I agree."

Just as I finished speaking, I noticed the rustling of a bush nearby. We were both shocked by

the noise.

Subconsciously, I assumed someone was lurking there. And that person was my nemesis,

Lilac.

Felix was tall, with lengthy legs. As he walked over, the air around him shifted

correspondingly..

He must have recognized the other person since he abruptly came to a halt and looked back at me thoughtfully.

When I rushed over, all I noticed was a bit of black trousers disappearing.

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Black trousers were overly common. Over half of the lecturers and students at the college wore black trousers. The spectrum of who owned those black trousers was too broad for me

to guess.

I stopped thinking about it because I couldn't make a guess. Anyway, Felix and I were just talking about the performance. There was no personal relationship involved. Anyone who wished to listen in could do so. I had a clear conscience.

Later, I realized I couldn't do anything with a clear conscience because many others would perceive my acts as purposeful.

A hundred people had a hundred different ways of understanding things. My true starting point wasn't important, and nobody was interested to know about it. They were only interested in the entertainment that something would bring.

Felix had managed to persuade me, so I took my guitar from him and hung it on my shoulder. I followed him to the classroom where we would be practicing.

I had been practicing for several days. It would be a pity to give up at the last moment. However, there was something I had to discuss with him beforehand.

“Felix, I saw this guitar in a high–end store. The average price is 18 grand. I’ll pay for my guitar myself. You must accept my payment if you want me to participate in the performance. Otherwise, I’ll go back now.”

“It’s only 18 grand. Why should we draw the line between us so definitively? We grew up together. Is our 20–year friendship worth less than a guitar? It’s a gift from me to you.”

We were two people of the opposite sex, and once money was involved, no one would trust us if we claimed to be innocent. They wouldn’t believe we had nothing to do with each other. At least I didn’t believe it.

That was 18 grand. An average family’s monthly salary wasn’t even close to this amount. But he gave me a guitar that cost that much to me for no reason. His excuse was the 20–year friendship between neighbors, but that seemed far–fetched.

Chapter 234

I believed he genuinely wanted to give me the guitar and didn’t care about the money. I appreciated his kindness, but I couldn’t accept it without reason.

This was my bottom line, and I had to insist on it.

“I must give you the money. If you won’t take it, I...”

If he wouldn’t take it, I wouldn’t accept the guitar and wouldn’t attend tomorrow’s performance. But I couldn’t finish telling him the last part.

It wasn't that I lacked a conscience or was ungrateful. It was not that I wanted Felix's gift to become a tool—I could use to threaten him either, especially since he gave the guitar to me with good intentions.

He understood my stubbornness and pinched his forehead. Raising his eyebrows helplessly, he sighed. "You're always so stubborn. Do you have to be like this?"

"Yes." I gazed at him, insisting on my opinion.

He looked at me deeply. The hushed argument lasted two minutes before he backed down and agreed to let me pay for the guitar myself.

"Give me your bank account number. I'll transfer it to you right now."

"Why are you in such a rush? It's not as if I don't have any money on me now."

"It's nothing. It's just that my memory isn't good. I'm worried that if I forget it later, you might suffer huge financial losses."

I took out my phone and stared intently into Felix's eyes. I acted like I would refuse to cooperate with him if he didn't accept the money.

Felix compromisingly took out his phone and showed me his bank account number. He was still trying to explain that we didn't need to draw the line between us so definitively. In fact, he didn't have much thought about it and just wanted to give me the guitar as a gift.

I believed what he said.

I wasn't sure if he gave me the guitar because I loved it or because he wanted to make amends for what he had done and said. But I believed he never once considered asking for money when he gave me the guitar.

I had to transfer the money for the guitar to him. Drawing the line between us was just

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another choice I made.

I had more than one million in savings. Felix had been exceptionally talented since childhood. He was naturally making good money at Jesselton College in recent years as well, given his genuine abilities.

This was only 18 grand, which was nothing to us.

But even siblings had to settle debts openly. Furthermore, our relationship had been in a delicate state for several years. Of course, it was important that I paid him back the money.

Anyway, the guitar was to my liking. I still felt grateful to him.

It wasn't until Felix confirmed the payment that I felt relieved and followed him to the rehearsal classroom for the final day of practice.

The practice ended early so that we could rest up for tomorrow's performance.

What was unusual was Hannah no longer pestered Felix to go out to supper together. She even left one step ahead of us. She said that she needed to reconfirm the connection in

various locations. The rehearsal for tomorrow morning also required further arrangement and organization.

After she left, only eight people remained in the classroom, including Felix and me.

When the juniors said their goodbyes and left, Felix and I were the only two people on the quiet road.

“It’s very late. I’ll walk you back.”

He stretched out casually to pick up my guitar, but I avoided him.

“No, we’re on the college campus. It’s extremely safe here. I can go back by myself, thank you. See you tomorrow.

I turned to leave, but Felix grabbed my arm and said with a rare hint of fury, “Even if you want to draw such a clear line with me, there’s no need to jeopardize your safety. I’ll send you back. You’re not allowed to refuse.”

Chapter 235

Felix was rarely strict: He wouldn’t let me refuse.

I knew he meant well, but I just couldn’t accept it.

I had been having so much contact with him lately that we frequently appeared together in front of everyone.

Two people in my apartment had already asked if I had a boyfriend. It showed that Felix and I had captured the attention of others.

If someone were to slander me one day, I was scared my name would be on the love confession wall for all the college’s professors and students to see.

I had a pure conscience and wasn’t afraid of what others said. But since it was unnecessary, I should nip the matter in the bud.

Besides, I had just finished talking to Lilac during the day and went out with Felix again at night. Although there was a reason for everything, I didn’t believe I could properly justify it. In that case, what would others think?

I looked at Felix. His expression was frigid, concealing a trace of gloom.

“Thank you, but I can go back by myself.”

“Luna...”

His expression grew colder, and his tone became rougher and more aggressive.

“Why are you here, Felix? You didn’t even answer my calls. It was difficult for me to find

you.

“I

Before he could continue speaking, he noticed someone running toward him. She had short hair and was wearing a dress.

I recognized Lilac just by looking at her silhouette.

My scalp felt numb. What I was frightened about was actually happening.

In any case, seeing it for herself was preferable to hearing about it from others. I could state everything plainly in front of Lilac to avoid any misunderstandings.

Felix was shocked as he glanced at her. Then, he returned his focus to me. I noticed a trace of panic in his expression.

1/2

He asked Lilac, "Why are you here?"

"Felix, I haven't seen you in a few days. I miss you so much. By the way, I booked a room at the hotel we usually visit. I came to pick you up. Hello, Lulu. It's so late. Why are you two together?"

She stared at me with clear eyes and spoke to Felix with faint distrust in her voice. When she looked at him, she suddenly transformed into a coquettish woman.

It was astonishing how rapidly her expressions could change.

Felix looked at Lilac indifferently before returning his gaze to me. This time, his gaze was more inquisitive than panicked. His expression confused me.

What was he observing?

"The orientation party will be held tomorrow night. Today is the final practice session, and it just ended. I won't keep delaying you two any longer. Goodbye." I needed to make things clear.

When I turned around, Felix was going to say something, but Lilac grabbed his raised arm and dragged him along another path.

At 8:00 pm, there were few pedestrians in the college. The street lights were like devoted guards, leading me safely back to my apartment.

When I entered my room, I was merely met with silence.

It was the third night in a row that Helen hadn't returned.

Based on recent Instagram stories, she should be with Matthew.

The Loxleys appeared to be up to something vital. Helen, Brenda's choice for Matthew's future wife, was following Brenda at all times except during lectures.

It should be a vital test for Helen to see if she could become the Loxley family's future madam.

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Several photos seemed to have been taken sneakily as the shooting conditions looked

immature. However, due to Helen's beauty and Matthew's gentlemanly behavior, the photos turned out pretty good.

There seemed to be a subtle understanding between the two. Their smiles were in sync when they naturally turned to glance at each other.

Half an hour ago, Helen posted a photo to social media. It showed Matthew in a suit and leather shoes. He had his left hand around Helen's shoulder and held a glass of wine in the other. He was looking back at Helen with a calm and soft gaze, making one feel happy for them.

Such a gentle exchange of looks made me believe they would have a wonderful future together.

The most heart-fluttering part was the accompanying words, "Time stops whenever I'm with you."

Through the years, Matthew and Helen had grown from being complete strangers to being dependent on each other.

Matthew must have been moved by Helen's wholehearted devotion.

Indeed, being loved single-mindedly by such a beautiful young woman for so many years would soften even a heart made of stone.

This reminded me of Colin.

He had always been a calm person. I'd never seen him post anything on social media. I had once asked him why.

He said if he were to encounter a really hard problem, the likelihood of finding a solution online was extremely low. If it was just to express his feelings, it was akin to unnecessary complaining. Speaking out directly would be more helpful in solving problems.

He said he wasn't young anymore, so there was no need to waste time.

I had always thought that him claiming he wasn't young anymore when he was still under 30 was just an excuse. In reality, he just hadn't encountered something or someone worth posting about.

His close friends around him always said he was the calmest man in the world. He was so

dull and boring that he might end up not getting married. Colin would just laugh it off each time. He would say fate was predestined, and God would not let such a devout believer remain alone forever.

During the years with Colin at Lincoln University, I tried many times to get him on social media. I even prepared posts for him, but he always refused. He said if he found the woman of his life one day, he would make his social media debut with her.

I couldn't remember what I felt when I heard this back then.

But this boring and calm man surprisingly posted something tonight. He wrote, "I like waiting for you the most." The attached photo showed two hands holding each other against a background of two blooming roses that were radiant from the sunlight.

The larger hand was slightly tanned and had strong knuckles, while the smaller one had long, slender fingers with fair and delicate skin. The two hands holding each other showed power and beauty coexisting. They complemented each other, creating a highly aesthetic visual.

The appearance of the roses stirred something in me. It reminded me of the long rose corridor at Lincoln University.

There were many happy memories of Colin and me in that beautiful corridor.

However, I couldn't understand what Colin meant by the post.

Back then, I was especially naive. I completely missed Colin's intentions and eagerly wanted to meet my future sister-in-law. I looked forward to the day he would post on social media. Now that he had finally made a post, it was a photo of him holding someone else's hand.

And my feelings were not as joyous as I had anticipated. Rather, there was a bitter sadness. Something seemed to block my chest, and I was unable to do anything about it. It was just obstructing there.

Looking at the photo, I immediately thought Colin deliberately made this post and it was targeted at me.

I thought I had reason to suspect that he was using this method to tell me he had found the

woman of his dreams.

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"I like waiting for you the most."

In other words, it was not that Colin—who never had a romantic partner even when he was approaching 30—hadn't found someone he fancied. Rather, he had been waiting for some

reason.

The sour feeling in my heart grew stronger by the moment.

In that case, what about me?

If he already had someone he loved, why did he confess to me and ask me to accept him? Why did he speak so passionately, saying that he had always liked me!

He was declaring his love for another person in such a possessive way without any explanation after confessing to me. I had even promised him to consider it seriously.

What was I to him?

Was I just someone he was using to pass the time while waiting for someone else?

Felix was already a jerk, but if my guess was right, Colin was even worse.

Was I doomed to be hung up on the two wrong choices I made, both from the Whites, for the rest of my life?

I felt a little sad and angry,

I maneuvered to his WhatsApp chat box and pressed the voice message button. I wanted to ask him what he was doing and why he was treating me this way.

Five seconds into the voice message, my mind went blank. I couldn't remember what I wanted to say and was unclear about the stance I should take to question him.

I finally gave up in defeat after 11 seconds passed without uttering a word.

I stared at the phone foolishly for a while before retracting the voice message. Then, I absent -mindedly took a shower and lay in bed.

I didn't know how to describe my feelings right now. There was sourness, sadness, disappointment, and a bit of indescribable jealousy.

I resisted the urge to call Colin several times. My mind was in a mess as countless memories flashed through my mind, making me distressed.

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I didn't know when I fell asleep, but when I woke up in the middle of the night, the room's lights were still on. The little rabbit pillow that Colin gave me years ago was wet.

I thought I had cried and reached out to dab at the corner of my eye. There were no tears, just a little dampness. There was a tingling pain when I touched the skin with my finger.

I found my phone on the bed and took a look, hoping for a missed call or a text message. But there was nothing.

It was as if Colin had disappeared from my world.

Looking at Facebook again, the professor who had posted the last time had shared a new photo that was captured perfectly.

The white light shone on the two people sitting in the center of the booth, making for an exceptionally clear photo. Colin's deep gaze was on the woman in a long dress beside him. She was shyly twirling her hair that fell over her shoulders. Her lips were curved into a shy and sweet smile.

I could even feel the love coming from the beautiful couple, especially against the dark and mysterious background.

I once thought that Colin's protection and indulgence should only belong to me and me alone. At least, they had always belonged to me before this.

Even when I hoped to have a sister-in-law, I never thought Colin would leave me behind. I always believed I would be his number one forever, or at the very least, I would enjoy the same priority as my sister-in-law.

Today, I realized that when a man had a lover, other women—even a sister he grew up with -would be kept out of their world.

I had never thought that there would be a day when Colin would show his tender and affectionate side to another woman and then neglect me without even calling me for days.

Perhaps this was what it would be like between us in the future.

Was I not sad? To be honest, I was a little sad.

Chapter 238

Did I feel lost? How could I possibly not feel lost when the person who had been taking care of me all this while was suddenly distancing himself?

But what right did I have to complain about it?

I threw the phone aside and repeatedly told myself that Colin had found the love of his life. Wasn't this what I had always hoped for in the past? I should be happy for him.

But for some reason, I just couldn't feel happy.

I hadn't realized why I was so sad and upset. I was just deluding myself, telling myself that all this was normal and that it was bound to happen someday. It just came a little too sudden, so I wasn't mentally prepared yet.

I kept comforting myself, telling myself to start getting used to this version of Colin and this version of me.

However, even with all the excuses I could think of, I couldn't accept or forgive him for declaring his affection for another woman. Not before I had even given him an answer.

We had a promise, but he had broken it. It was clearly his fault.

Thinking about this, I couldn't help feeling a sense of betrayal. I could feel the wet patch on my pillow spread.

I wanted so badly to call Colin and ask what he meant by his actions. I wanted to ask if he no longer needed my answer.

But I just couldn't bring myself to press the call button even after searching for his name.

It was because I was afraid.

I was afraid that if the answer wasn't what I wanted, I would be at a loss.

This wasn't the first time I was abandoned. Once, I was harshly criticized and humiliated when I sought the truth. If today was a repetition of the past, I wouldn't want to ask again. I didn't want to be humiliated once more.

I had my pride too.

Suddenly, I remembered what my mother had said. She wished that I would no longer have any involvement with the Whites.

There were so many people in this world. The daughter of the Lawsons didn't have to rely on the sons of the Whites.

I had always thought that Colin and Felix were different. Colin had promised he wouldn't lose me.

Alas...

I hadn't done anything, but I had already lost miserably.

For the first time in my life, I tasted disappointment.

When dawn broke, I wanted to get up but found my head spinning when I tried to. My eyes were dry and gritty.

Picking up my phone to look at myself, I was startled. My eyes were bloodshot, my cheeks were swollen, and my skin was as white as paper. I resembled a vampire that had been buried underground for a thousand years. I looked terrifyingly haggard.

This was also the first time I was in such a miserable state because of a man.

Mom was right. I really shouldn't set my heart on the sons of the Whites.

Because it hurt.

The Whites always hurt me and made me sad. Why should I still long for their warmth and care?

Forget it, Luna.

I was telling myself to forget about them. Everything would come to a pass. I shouldn't be sad anymore. If love could only bring pain, then perhaps life would be better without it.

As I staggered to wash up, I looked at the pitiful reflection in the bathroom mirror. I made up my mind. From now on, I would learn to live by myself. I would never rely on anyone and never ever harbor expectations of anyone easily.

The orientation party would start at eight in the evening.

I started to prepare for the evening's performance at four in the afternoon.

After crying all night, my face was slightly swollen. It was all the more reason to go for heavier makeup.

I put on a snow-white casual long dress with silver sequins embroidered on the hem and

combed my clean hair to naturally drape on my

back,

I wore the white strappy sandals with pearls I had recently bought while shopping with Colin, carried my beloved guitar, and stepped out of the apartment.

Chapter 239

My face looked a little distorted from the swelling after a night of crying. I put on heavier makeup to hide it. I put on a snow-white casual long dress with silver sequins embroidered on the hem and combed my clean hair to naturally drape on my back.

I wore the white strappy sandals with pearls I had recently bought while shopping with Colin, carried my beloved guitar, and stepped out of the apartment.

I didn't expect Felix to be waiting for me in front of the apartment building.

When he saw me, a hint of surprise and delight flashed through his bright eyes.

He was in an all-black attire. Looking at him like this gave me a headache again.

With the way we were dressed and how we were about to perform in front of thousands of people, it would be a shame if we didn't generate some gossip-worthy news.

If I had known earlier, I would have worn something colorful. It would have been better than me in all white and him in all black. We looked like angels descending to Earth.

At 8:00 pm, the performance officially began.

The outdoor plaza, capable of accommodating thousands, was packed with people as laser lights sliced through the night sky like arrows.

Every face was brimming with joy.

The student council chose a male and female host. The male host was dressed in a silver-

gray tailcoat. He had broad eyebrows and a tall, handsome stature. Meanwhile, the female host was in a bright red knee-length dress. She had delicate features and a radiant smile:

After a brief and lively opening speech, a group of young students appeared on stage from various entry points amidst thunderous applause. They danced with passionate exuberance. In the deafening music, greatly igniting the atmosphere of the performance.

I was sitting in the waiting area on the side of the stage, waving the glow stick in my hand. It excitedly screamed with the others, but I was unable to express the joy I felt.

After the dance, a senior came on stage with a bass guitar and sang a very old but explosive. song, "You Are Not Alone".

The entire audience joined in the chorus. Most of the teachers and students swayed their bodies to the music, with moonwalks sweeping across the venue.

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I stood up excitedly too and sang loudly with the rhythm, nearly throwing my glow stick.

Somehow, the scene of watching a performance with Colin during our New Year's shopping spree suddenly overlapped with the current moment.

The same lively scene, the same frenzied audience, the same excited me, and the same sea of waving glow sticks.

That year, to give me a clearer view, Colin pulled me through the crowded sea of people. I could still remember the complaints of people nearby. Everything was vivid in my mind.

The difference now was that Colin was no longer by my side.

My high spirits suddenly dipped at this realization. Even the glow stick in my hand felt like it shouldn't be waved anymore.

Fortunately, the song I was about to sing contained a gentle sadness. Given my current mood, it would inadvertently help me deliver an even better performance.

My act was scheduled toward the end.

Standing on the stage under the watchful eyes of thousands, the spotlight quietly shone on my head and cast a pattern of light in front of me. I strummed the guitar strings as the accompanying music flowed.

“I’ve walked through the breeze you’ve passed, does this count as an embrace?”

“I’ve walked the paths you’ve taken, does this count as a meeting?”

“I still like you so much, wishing to be with you until we’re old.

“I still favor you the same, only for your gentleness...”

The sound system was excellent. The song, lasting just over four minutes, quickly came to

an end.

I didn’t know if it was because Felix and I sang too well or because the audience, accustomed to the passionate performances before us, found our subdued presentation uniquely appealing. But there was a full 30 seconds of silence before a thunderous applause erupted.

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After bowing several times, the applause gradually subsided.

As we left the stage, Felix took my hand.

The moment our fingers touched, I instinctively pulled back. It seemed Felix had anticipated my reaction as he immediately tightened his grip, solidifying this act of holding hands.

Since knowing Felix for 22 years, this was the first time we genuinely held hands. And this happened under the watchful eyes of thousands, in a manner where I was reluctant but he was forceful.

The Luna Lawson from before she turned 18 might have eagerly anticipated such an act of holding hands with the dream of her youth. But the Luna Lawson of today only felt resistant.

Yet, faced with so many onlookers, I couldn't just pull my hand away. Doing so would not only damage Felix's dignity but also lead to all sorts of speculation from those countless

eyes.

I simply accepted the situation after finding no way to withdraw my hand.

It was just a collaborative performance. It was pure, open, and honest. There was nothing shameful about it, so why avoid him and let people speculate?

Once we were backstage and the curtain had shielded us from the audience's view, I quickly withdrew my hand. I shook it uncomfortably.

Felix, who had been smiling just moments ago, immediately turned frosty. He seemed to be gritting his teeth when he said, "It's just holding hands. Do you need to make such a big deal

out of it?"

He'd always been presumptuous, thinking that everything he did was without fault. He never considered if his actions would put others in difficult positions or lead to

consequences.

He was like this five years ago and remained unchanged today.

Indeed, a leopard couldn't change its spots. He was probably born with this personality and wouldn't change no matter who the other party was.

I lost any desire to stay any longer after this hand-holding incident.

As I was leaving, I ran into Hannah.

Felix was following not too far behind me.

But she was blocking me, saying that everyone had agreed to celebrate after the successful performance. They wanted to have a big party as a reward for the many days of rehearsal.

My involvement in the performance was merely due to Hannah's persistent coaxing, while Felix being my co-performer was just an accident.

Every time I thought about interacting with him, the scene from our senior year Thanksgiving would automatically come to mind.

I had always been resistant to be with him. I couldn't understand why I felt this way, but I just didn't want to face him.

This collaboration forcibly tied us together, and I had been feeling uncomfortable every day. More importantly, I was bothered by the high probability that Lilac would cause trouble for me. I've had enough of her antics over the years.

Now that the performance was over, our collaboration had ended. Naturally, there was no need for further interaction.

As for the celebration, I had no intention of joining.

I had made it a point to avoid being where Felix was in recent years. It wasn't that I was afraid or worried about anything, and neither did I have any ulterior motives. I just simply didn't want to have any contact with him. And I especially didn't want to cause a fuss with Lilac over him as it would affect my mood.

After declining Hannah's invitation, I returned to my apartment alone with my guitar. I'd rest tonight so that everything would return to normal tomorrow. I was me, he was him. We shouldn't have anything to do with each other.

As I left the performance venue behind, I left the commotion as well.

I adjusted the guitar on my shoulder as I looked back at the lively orientation party. Even though it was right in front of me, it felt like a different world.

I was better suited to silence.