

Spoiled 1291

Chapter 1291: Getting Married Once Every Year

"The wedding dress is just too pricey, I really can't accept it."

"What's there to not accept, it's just a dress after all." Zara spoke with an air of nonchalance.

"No, I can't accept such an expensive gift," Charlotte firmly chose to reject.

However, after hearing Charlotte's words, Zara twirled her measuring tape on her finger and chuckled at Charlotte.

"Charlotte, don't forget, if it wasn't for you, my Melissa Tanner Studio would probably have disbanded by now. It's you who reignited the spark in my studio; you are my life-saving benefactor. Forget just one wedding dress, I'd be willing to design a set for you every year."

"A set each year? That would mean getting married every year." Charlotte murmured quietly.

"That's why,"

Zara stepped forward, grabbed Charlotte's wrist and pressed her into the chair, smiling: "If you don't want me to make you a wedding dress every year, then just accept this one obediently, got it?"

Pinned by Zara's hands on her shoulders, Charlotte sat immobilized on the stool, and with Zara's words, she found no reason to refuse anymore.

Through the mirror in front of her, she saw Zara standing behind her, showing a sincere smile.

"Zara, thank you."

"What's there to thank?" Zara shook her head at Charlotte.

Then she straightened Charlotte's shoulders and began taking her measurements in detail.

After taking detailed measurements for quite some time, Mr. Carter from XTZ replied to Charlotte personally, clearly very pleased with the several finished pieces, and arranged to meet with Charlotte shortly.

Such a meeting opportunity, of course, Charlotte would not miss.

Initially, Charlotte wanted to bring both Zara and Elijah Walker with her, but in the end, Zara declined citing design work, and Elijah chose to go home to rest. The recent days had been exhausting and taxing, which truly overloaded him.

As a result, Charlotte met with Mr. Carter by herself.

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Mr. Carter invited Charlotte to XTZ's branch in Druarus and personally welcomed her at the entrance.

"Mr. Carter."

Upon seeing Mr. Carter, before Charlotte could say a word, she received a very enthusiastic hug from him.

"Miss Charlotte, I'm so glad you've come."

With great warmth, Mr. Carter smiled at Charlotte: "The outfits you sent me are simply perfect. Choosing to partner with Riley Group this time is definitely the most correct decision I've made in my life."

"Mr. Carter, have you forgotten what I told you before? In this partnership for design, not only does Riley Group's design department participate, but Melissa Tanner Studio was also involved."

"Melissa Tanner Studio?" Hearing such an unfamiliar name, Mr. Carter's eyes showed a hint of confusion.

"That's right, in fact, when Riley Group was designing the collaboration collection for XTZ, we also partnered with Melissa Tanner Studio. The theme of 'Tradition Meets Modernity' has its 'tradition' represented by Melissa Tanner Studio's enduring heritage, which reflects the aesthetic style of Druarus for thousands of years. The embroidery on your favorite piece was personally stitched by Miss Zara, the owner of Melissa Tanner Studio."

Zara had given Charlotte a tremendous amount of help, and Charlotte would do her utmost to recommend Melissa Tanner Studio in front of a major company like XTZ.

Chapter 1292: Extremely Honored

"Not just me, even our Chief Designer Mr. Houston Johnson is extremely satisfied with this collaboration. The patterns on the clothes are actually something we have not come across before, and I think this is what Miss Joy was referring to as the Druarus culture."

Mr. Carter's face couldn't hide his joy as he quickly nodded after hearing Charlotte's words.

"I wonder if Miss Joy has the patience to explain these beautiful patterns to me. I believe such fashion culture will definitely set off a new trend in the fashion world."

"It would be my great honor." Charlotte nodded to Mr. Carter.

Seeing Mr. Carter's joy over the traditional patterns, a sense of pride and happiness that could no longer be concealed filled Charlotte's eyes.

What could be more prideful than letting the whole world see our national culture?

Just as Mr. Carter said, it's not just her; many overseas designers at the XTZ headquarters are also very interested in the styles and patterns of the clothes from this collaboration.

As a result, Charlotte stayed at the XTZ company, discussing and making final modifications to the designs with Mr. Carter.

"I didn't realize it was so late already; I must have held you up from many things."

By the time Mr. Carter had escorted Charlotte out of the company, the night stars were already hanging high.

"How could that be? I learned a lot during my time at your company."

Mr. Carter nodded: "Miss Joy, I sincerely hope that we will have more opportunities to collaborate in the future."

"Mr. Carter, that is my wish as well."

A smile spread across Charlotte's lips, and then she shook the hand extended by Mr. Carter.

Even on the car ride home, Charlotte still felt somewhat reluctant to leave.

"I really learned so much." Charlotte let out a long sigh and moved her neck and shoulders a bit while waiting at a red light.

It was at this moment that Charlotte remembered she had forgotten to inform the Thompson Family about working overtime tonight.

"Oh no."

Charlotte tapped her forehead, then pulled out her phone from her bag, and found several missed calls from Justin Battleson.

The calls had all come in about fifteen minutes ago. Charlotte also remembered that when she went to work at XTZ, she had specifically set her phone to silent mode to avoid being interrupted by any calls during work.

Charlotte had forgotten about this, and seeing the road signs indicating only two more intersections before home, she put down the phone she had picked up, with no intention of making a call. Better to speak in person.

However, as the traffic lights flickered and changed, Charlotte's phone on the passenger seat rang out again.

Charlotte was indeed startled, but under the circumstances, she couldn't just stop the car here to answer the phone.

So Charlotte chose to ignore the ringtone and drove on towards home.

Luckily the two intersections were clear, and Charlotte soon arrived.

Rushing back to the villa, several little ones were eagerly waiting at the door, looking delighted at the sight of Charlotte's car returning.

"Mommy! You're back!"

Grace sweetly smiled as she walked over to Charlotte, with one hand holding Olivia, who had just returned to the Thompson residence.

"Mommy, is work really hard now? Otherwise, why would you only come back now?" Chad asked softly.

Chapter 1293: Waiting for Her

"Mommy, did you not eat dinner yet? We've all been waiting for you to come home and start dinner! If Mommy is tired, Jack will give you a massage after dinner."

Jack Thompson held Charlotte Thompson's hand, while Chad Thompson took hold of Charlotte's other hand.

The two little ones walked one after the other, making their way into the villa.

"Wait a minute, it's already this late, haven't you all eaten dinner yet?" Charlotte immediately caught the key point in Jack's earlier remark.

"We wanted to have dinner with Mommy, so we were waiting for Mommy," Olivia Thompson said obediently, nodding.

"How can that be alright? Mommy has said before that sometimes work is busy, so you should eat when it's time, how can you delay mealtime just to wait for Mommy? This can affect your bedtime."

Charlotte Thompson said out loud.

When it's dinner time, you should eat. Justin Battleson didn't mention this, but aren't her other brothers also here?

"Did your Daddy Justin come home?"

Usually, Justin Battleson works overtime frequently.

And when Charlotte asked about this, the children's expressions all became hesitant.

"What's the matter? Did something happen?" Charlotte was somewhat perplexed.

But before the children could answer, Charlotte had already led them into the villa.

As soon as Charlotte walked through the door, she saw her brother, Jonathan Thompson, collapsed on the sofa like a salted fish, his eyes lighting up upon seeing her.

"Charlotte, you're finally back, I feel like I'm starving. Why didn't you answer your phone?"

"I was almost home so I didn't answer, but it's so late now, you really don't need to wait for me to eat. You're starving like this, let alone the children."

Charlotte looked at Jonathan Thompson with some displeasure, but upon hearing her words, an expression of sadness and grievance instantly appeared on his face.

"My dear little sister, it's a misunderstanding, it's not that I didn't want to eat. It's Mr. Thompson who wouldn't let us start, otherwise who would sneak near the kitchen to nibble on a meatball."

Jonathan Thompson complained, then raised his eyebrows towards Hank Thompson, "Isn't that right? Hank?"

"Yeah, Mommy, Uncle Seven is right, I only stole one meatball, and Uncle Seven he took two."

Hank Thompson tugged at Charlotte's sleeve with a wronged look, and after he finished speaking, he almost made Jonathan, who was drinking water on the sofa, choke to death.

"Hank Thompson! You really are my dear nephew."

Their noisy voices also attracted the rest of the people, and Mr. Thompson came downstairs at this time.

Seeing this, Charlotte Thompson hurried forward to help Mr. Thompson.

"Grandpa, how could you do this? It's already so late, why didn't you start dinner with the kids? How can your body take this, not to mention the children's?"

Charlotte Thompson looked up at Mr. Thompson, her eyebrows twisted in exasperation.

But Mr. Thompson simply patted Charlotte's arm in response.

"This young lady has the nerve to reproach others? You didn't answer your phone, nor did you send any messages, as if you vanished from the face of the earth, how could this whole family, young and old, not worry?"

Taken aback by Mr. Thompson's words, Charlotte, who still thought she was in the right, was suddenly at a loss for words.

"Grandpa..."

Feeling somewhat embarrassed, Charlotte Thompson reached up and silently touched her nose.

Chapter 1294: He's Being Strange

Then, Charlotte Thompson quickly helped Mr. Thompson to the main seat.

"I was busy with work this afternoon and had my phone on silent, I completely forgot about it."

Hearing what Mr. Thompson just said, Charlotte Thompson spoke out, "I'm sorry, did I make you all worried?"

"Knowing you're sorry, come and sit down to start the meal already—what are you still standing there for?" Mr. Thompson said.

Charlotte Thompson paused for a moment, and although she hadn't yet called the children to eat, the hungry kids were already seated around the dining table.

All of Charlotte Thompson's brothers except for Henry Thompson and Joshua Thompson, who were busy with company affairs, were also at the dining table.

"Where's Justin?"

Charlotte Thompson looked around but did not see Justin Battleson; just as she was about to go upstairs to look for him, Justin Battleson came down from the staircase.

"You're back?"

Upon seeing Charlotte Thompson, the frown between Justin Battleson's brows tightened, but the expression on his face revealed not only deep concern but also a hint of complexity in his eyes.

"Sorry for worrying you, the conversation with my business partner went a bit long, I lost track of time."

Justin Battleson gave Charlotte Thompson an apologetic smile then took her hand, leading her to the dining table as well.

Since Charlotte Thompson had already had dinner at XTZ with Mr. Carter and wasn't very hungry, she just nibbled a little and put down her utensils. She explained that she still had some work to do and then went upstairs to her room.

"You're busier than all of us every day," Jake Thompson said, resting his cheek on his hand.

"Justin Battleson, are you overworking my little sister?" Felix Thompson seemed to recall something and glanced over at Justin Battleson.

However, Justin Battleson's expression was rather indifferent; it was clear he was lost in thought and did not hear what Felix Thompson said.

"What's up with today? It's all so strange..."

Felix Thompson rolled his eyes in confusion, then turned to look at James Thompson beside him.

However, James Thompson did not respond to him.

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With the arrival of the rest of Charlotte Thompson's brothers in Druarus, they naturally stayed at the Thompson Family villa, so Justin Battleson and Charlotte Thompson returned to their own villa to stay the night.

On the way home, the two of them were silent, but for most of the time, Charlotte Thompson was busy organizing the remaining documents in her hands, unaware of Justin Battleson's reaction.

"Finally done."

After arriving at the villa, Charlotte Thompson stretched her somewhat stiff neck and shoulders, murmuring softly with a sense of relief.

Charlotte Thompson glanced at Justin Battleson walking beside her and her brows slowly furrowed.

Once the pair returned to their room, Charlotte Thompson reached out and grabbed Justin Battleson's hand.

"Is something the matter? You seem a bit off today," she said.

Justin Battleson's reaction was indeed very different from usual, prompting Charlotte Thompson to grow suspicious.

Looking at Charlotte Thompson's hand gripping his wrist, Justin Battleson's fingertips twitched, breaking free to take hold of her hand instead.

Looking up at Charlotte Thompson, Justin Battleson gently rubbed her palm with his fingertips, then finally spoke slowly:

"Charlotte, don't you have something you want to tell me?"

"Huh?"

Caught off guard by Justin Battleson's sudden question, Charlotte Thompson felt puzzled for a moment and then nodded at Justin Battleson.

What Charlotte Thompson failed to notice, however, was a trace of complex emotions fleeting through Justin Battleson's eyes.

Chapter 1295: Charlotte, Why Did You Lie to Me?

"The collaboration draft with XTZ has been completed, and Mr. Carter is very satisfied over there. You have no idea how stunning the final result turned out."

Charlotte Thompson said with a smile as she explained the matter to Justin Battleson.

The event that made Charlotte remember and feel extremely happy was none other than this.

"Is that so."

Justin Battleson's reaction, however, was somewhat indifferent. He simply acknowledged her with a response, his tone a bit cold.

This kind of reaction from Justin Battleson was somewhat unexpected to Charlotte. The words she had been about to say got stuck in her throat.

Then, Charlotte blinked her eyes and took a step forward to approach Justin Battleson and touched his forehead with her hand.

"Justin, are you sick?" Charlotte asked with concern.

Otherwise, he wouldn't normally be like this.

However, Justin Battleson shook his head and took Charlotte's hand down. His eyes hesitated a moment, but in the end, he decided to slowly speak up and ask her:

"Charlotte, why did you go meet Leon Battleson by yourself?"

This sudden question from Justin Battleson left Charlotte completely stunned.

Why would he suddenly mention Leon Battleson?

However, Charlotte's bewildered reaction only deepened the sorrow in Justin's eyes. The hand that had been holding Charlotte's loosened slowly, letting her hand slip from his palm.

The abrupt loss of warmth from their fingertips finally snapped Charlotte out of her daze, and she instinctively furrowed her brows in confusion, shaking her head.

"I have never gone to meet Leon Battleson alone."

Charlotte carefully thought about it; aside from a coincidental encounter with Leon Battleson at the graveyard that day, she had not seen him again from the beginning to the end.

However, when Justin Battleson received such a reply from Charlotte, the frown on his forehead did not ease and the flame-like intensity in his gaze gradually settled, and even seemed to extinguish.

"Charlotte, why are you lying to me?"

It seemed like it took all of Justin Battleson's strength to say that.

Charlotte opened her mouth but didn't know how to start her explanation.

Because she was witnessing Justin Battleson pulling a creased photo out of his pocket.

The creases were new as if it had been forcefully twisted by external force; the main characters in the photo were none other than Leon Battleson...

And herself.

Her expression the moment she saw the photo was almost one of astonished disbelief.

"Why do you have this photo?" Out of instinct, Charlotte asked this question.

"Actually that day..."

Charlotte was about to explain, but Justin Battleson directly interrupted her.

"Then you claim you never met him."

Justin Battleson seemed to be struggling to maintain calm in his voice, but a slight tremble could still be heard from his trailing words.

"Who gave you this photo?" However, Charlotte asked the question she wanted to know.

"Does it matter anymore?"

Standing against the window with his back to it, Justin Battleson was enveloped in the pale moonlight, casting a shadow around him as deep as an abyss, as though it could swallow everything surrounding in the next second.

Such a response from Justin Battleson made Charlotte feel as though something was blocking her chest.

Facing Justin Battleson like this, Charlotte felt her thoughts become disordered...

Chapter 1296: Justin Battleson, Do You Believe Me?

She wanted to shift her gaze away from Justin Battleson.

But in the end, Charlotte Thompson still found herself involuntarily staring into Justin Battleson's eyes.

To Charlotte, they should have contained a galaxy, but now it was shattered, and the once twinkling stars had gradually dimmed.

"Did you send someone to follow me?"

Charlotte felt she must be crazy, otherwise, she wouldn't have asked such a question.

Then she saw a smile tugging at the corners of Justin Battleson's lips, brimming with complex emotions.

It seemed tinged with sorrow and helplessness, but mostly, it looked like disappointment.

"Haven't you been investigating everything about the Battleson Family as well?"

Justin Battleson's voice came slowly, yet it struck like a heavy bell toll, resonating loudly in Charlotte's mind.

"Why?" Justin's thin lips muttered.

Three simple words, yet they seemed to carry the weight of a thousand pounds for Justin.

Charlotte didn't know how to respond.

She tried hard to find something else in the eyes of Justin looking back at her, but all Charlotte could see was a tiny, bewildered reflection of herself.

"Justin Battleson, do you believe me?"

Charlotte never imagined she would one day ask Justin Battleson this question.

The hand dangling at her side unknowingly clenched tighter and tighter, her pale palm throbbing with pain, yet Charlotte seemed not to feel it at all.

Charlotte looked at Justin Battleson, hoping to get the answer she desired.

But Justin Battleson disappointed her, or perhaps it was she who had also disappointed him now.

Justin Battleson said nothing.

The silence in the room was like an invisible hand, squeezing the hearts of the two, tightening its grip until it became hard to breathe.

Charlotte looked down, only to see the shadows of the two of them, mismatched due to the light.

"Justin, apart from the chance encounter at the cemetery, I haven't seen Leon Battleson again."

Charlotte sighed softly, taking her time to express these words.

However, what Charlotte didn't expect was that upon hearing her explanation, Justin Battleson let out a derisive laugh.

In an instant, Charlotte doubted if she had misunderstood something.

"Why? Why..."

Suddenly, Justin Battleson reached out and pressed down on Charlotte's shoulders, his expression and tone both agitated as though he was interrogating her.

"If you wanted to know something, you could have just asked me. I could tell you anything, but why did you still investigate on your own?"

It seemed that these words had been bottled up inside Justin Battleson for quite some time.

Charlotte looked into Justin Battleson's indescribable gaze.

She understood in her heart.

He had always known she was investigating the Battleson Family in secret.

"Justin Battleson."

Charlotte took a deep breath, placing her slightly cold fingertips on her own shoulders.

She frowned slightly, looking at the Justin Battleson in front of her.

"You're hurting me."

As if realizing something, Justin Battleson withdrew his hand, stepping back a couple of steps as well.

He let his own shoulders sag, the strands of hair falling across his forehead casting a fine shadow on his face from the window's light, completely concealing his expression.

"Justin Battleson, I think we both need to calm down."

Having said that, Charlotte turned around and left the room, but no matter how much she slowed her pace, she did not wait for Justin Battleson to call her back.

Until the sound of the room door closing burst in Charlotte's ears, she could no longer hold back the tears welling up in her eyes.

Justin Battleson doesn't believe her.

Chapter 1297: Are You Leaving Me Too?

Inside the room.

Justin Battleson listens to the fading footsteps of Charlotte Thompson outside, gradually becoming distant and then disappearing.

His legs feel as if they've been filled with lead, so heavy that he can't move them even half an inch off the ground.

The man who commands the entirety of Druarus' business world now stands in the cold, solitary room like a child who has lost his toy, helpless and pitiable.

He doesn't know how long it takes before he finally shifts his gaze woodenly to the desk beside him, where the books are in complete disarray.

If Charlotte Thompson had paid attention to this place from the beginning, she would have probably been very surprised.

Justin Battleson is not someone who carelessly scatters his belongings.

And so, Justin Battleson's gaze slowly settles on those disorderly books.

At the very bottom, a corner of something suppressed emerges.

Justin Battleson strides over, pinches that corner, and pulls out a photograph from underneath the pile of books.

"You clearly said that aside from that, you never saw him again..."

Looking at the two people in the photo, Justin Battleson's murmuring voice grows increasingly somber.

"But who is that dining with him in the picture?"

In the photo, Leon Battleson and Charlotte Thompson sit opposite each other, seemingly engaged in conversation, with calm smiles on their faces.

"All that I had was taken from me at that time, and now... are you going to leave me as well?"

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Charlotte Thompson wanders aimlessly on the street.

The night wind is truly cold, cutting through the thin layer of clothes, burrowing desperately into the bones, soaking into the marrow, making the blood flowing through gradually turn icy.

In the brightly lit street, amidst the hustle and bustle of traffic, Charlotte Thompson alone moves against the tide of people hurrying to enjoy the nightlife.

Ever since she became Charlotte Thompson, she has never walked down the street as dispirited as she is now.

Charlotte stands at the street corner, looking up to find that brightest North Star in the night sky.

But tonight is overcast, the moon not revealing even a sliver of itself.

At this moment, her stomach embarrassingly growls, despite having had dinner already.

Charlotte Thompson pats her pocket, finding nothing but a phone with only two percent battery left.

Biting her lip, Charlotte Thompson dials Annie Anne's number.

The call is quickly answered.

"What's up, Charlotte, calling me so late?"

Annie Anne's voice is hoarse, perhaps due to being woken from sleep by the ringing phone.

"Could I..."

Charlotte Thompson begins to ask if she can go over to Annie Anne's place.

But then she thinks that Oliver Hudson is probably with Annie, so she swallows the words before they make it out.

Although Charlotte Thompson doesn't finish her sentence, Annie Anne seems to guess what she wants to do and slowly says:

"Come over, Oliver Hudson isn't home today."

"Thank..."

Upon hearing Annie Anne's words, Charlotte Thompson's eyes, misty with tears, become even drier, but before she can finish speaking, the phone automatically turns off due to low battery.

Charlotte Thompson goes straight to Annie Anne's place.

Because Charlotte Thompson had given her a heads-up, Annie Anne waits for her arrival after their phone call ends.

But when Annie Anne sees the somewhat dejected and disheveled Charlotte Thompson, her expression is somewhat astonished.

Chapter 1298: Bloody Scars

Annie Anne reached out to grab Charlotte Thompson, intending to take her into the room, but found that Charlotte's hands were even colder than her own.

"Charlotte, what happened?"

Annie Anne had never seen Charlotte show such an expression before, her tone full of concern, she immediately poured a cup of hot water for Charlotte to warm her hands.

After receiving the hot water, Charlotte kept staring at the wisps of steam rising from the cup, but she didn't speak right away.

Annie Anne sat down beside Charlotte, thought for a moment, and then tentatively asked.

"Did you have an argument with Justin Battleson?"

This was the most unimaginable question in Annie Anne's mind.

After all, in her eyes, Justin Battleson was extremely affectionate toward Charlotte, and Annie Anne couldn't think of anything that would cause the two to argue.

What Annie Anne hadn't expected at all was that Charlotte actually nodded.

"Why would you two possibly have an argument?"

All Annie Anne felt now was confusion and utter astonishment.

"Charlotte, what exactly is going on..."

Annie Anne started to speak, wanting to immediately ask for the full story, but seeing Charlotte's current expression, Annie swallowed the words that were on her lips.

She decided to wait until Charlotte's emotions were a bit more stable before discussing it.

Glancing at the clock on the wall, Annie Anne got up and walked towards the kitchen.

"Do you want me to make you some late-night snacks?"

It was then that Charlotte finally reacted, she clenched her now-warmed palms, then stood up to follow Annie's pace.

"I'll join you."

Annie Anne didn't oppose Charlotte's suggestion, and the two of them went to the kitchen together.

After hesitating for a while, Charlotte finally decided to make herself a bowl of clear soup noodles.

The boiling water bubbled in the pot, and Charlotte watched the bubbles constantly breaking in the boiling water, saying softly:

"I lied to Justin Battleson."

Seeing Charlotte speak up, Annie Anne directed her gaze her way.

"What reason would you have to lie to Justin Battleson?"

Annie Anne knew very well what kind of person Charlotte was, she looked at Charlotte with a puzzled expression as if hesitating for a moment before continuing to speak,

"Plus, didn't you always tell me that the most important thing between lovers is trust?"

"I deceived him, so he doesn't trust me, when you think about it carefully, isn't that somewhat to be expected?"

Charlotte stirred the noodles in the pot with chopsticks, and a dry smile cracked at the corner of her mouth.

Annie Anne pondered for a moment, then ventured a guess.

"Is it because of the Battleson Family's issues?"

In fact, Annie Anne had heard a bit about some matters concerning the Battleson Family from Oliver Hudson, and since Charlotte had also mentioned to her the matter of her meeting Justin's father before, Annie Anne naturally connected the dots to the Battleson Family.

As expected, Charlotte nodded.

"But the mistake was mine, hiding from him the investigation into the Battleson Family's affairs. I knew all along it was a thorn buried deep in his heart, a memory he never wished to revisit, yet now I chose to secretly investigate while keeping it from him."

As she spoke, Charlotte couldn't help but remember the words Justin Battleson had pressed out when he had held down her shoulders earlier.

She chose to keep it a secret and investigate on her own because she didn't want to touch or reveal that bloody wound of Justin's.

Now, reflecting on her current actions, wasn't Charlotte causing Justin even greater pain?

Justin must be feeling extremely disappointed with her in his heart.

Chapter 1299: Met Leon Battleson Alone

Her wrist slightly drooped and Charlotte Thompson pursed her lips.

"Is it just because of this?" Annie Anne tentatively asked.

Just as Annie Anne expected, Charlotte shook her head and continued, "Previously, I went to the cemetery to see Aunt Watson, but ended up encountering Leon Battleson there."

Charlotte briefly explained the encounter with Leon Battleson to Annie Anne, allowing her to understand the circumstances.

"It can't be such a coincidence that he suddenly appeared in the cemetery where Aunt Watson was?" Annie Anne furrowed her brows tightly.

"I don't know what's going on, but today, when I returned, Justin Battleson asked me if I had been looking for Leon. I remembered the encounter that day in the cemetery, and since I was already investigating the Battleson Family, I chose to hide this from Justin."

Charlotte took a deep breath and then said, "What I didn't expect was that Justin Battleson actually had photos of me and Leon meeting at the cemetery."

Hearing this, Annie Anne felt something was off and massaged her temples.

"How did Justin come to have photos of you two? Did he see you?"

"I don't know."

Charlotte looked at the noodles in her bowl, the previous hunger she felt had completely disappeared during the conversation.

"But I told Justin that besides being at the cemetery, I hadn't met Leon alone, but he didn't believe me at all."

There was a trace of perplexity in Charlotte's voice; she didn't understand why Justin reacted that way when she spoke those words.

"So, did you have any actual interaction with Leon at the cemetery?"

Her question made Charlotte uncomfortably furrow her brow.

She then pressed her fingertips against her neck, pondering for a while before looking up at Annie Anne.

"Or did Justin see Leon choking me?"

"What?"

Seeing Charlotte cover her neck, Annie Anne was thinking about whether she and Leon had done something improper, but she had never expected the situation to unfold like this.

Remembering that chilling sensation, Charlotte couldn't help but shiver.

"That day, he suddenly reached out from behind."

As she spoke, Charlotte moved behind Annie Anne, mimicking Leon's actions in the cemetery on Annie.

"Just like this."

Charlotte spoke as she prepared to let go, but the peripheral vision caught a faint red mark visible at the collar of Annie Anne's clothing, leading to suggestive thoughts.

She paused slightly, forgetting her next move.

"Charlotte?"

Feeling Charlotte's pause, Annie Anne thought something had happened and turned her head, but then saw Charlotte's gaze fixed on her neck.

She chuckled softly, bringing Charlotte back to her senses.

"You..."

Charlotte looked up at Annie Anne in front of her, no wonder her voice sounded somewhat hoarse over the phone.

Then, Charlotte shifted her gaze: "This was my only contact with Leon, but Justin's reaction made me feel like he didn't believe what I said, as if I met Leon alone somewhere else."

"Perhaps it's really because you were secretly investigating the Battleson Family, and that hurt Justin."

Annie Anne thought briefly, then pulled Charlotte to sit down on the chair.

Chapter 1300: Cold War

Charlotte Thompson fell silent.

Actually, after much thought, this was the only explanation that made sense.

"So, you ran out here after your cold war with Justin Battleson?" Annie Anne asked.

Charlotte nodded.

"I thought it'd be better to speak out directly since there seems to be some misunderstanding. It wouldn't be good if anything unexpected happened, especially since Justin loves you so much, he definitely wouldn't bear to hurt you."

Annie Anne reached out to pat Charlotte's shoulder, consoling her in a soft and gentle voice, then handed her the chopsticks that were on the table.

"If you don't eat now, the noodles will go all clumpy."

Charlotte paused for a moment as she took the chopsticks, and turned to look at Annie sitting next to her.

"Are you... hungry?"

Annie's expression suddenly gained a hint of subtlety: "Don't tell me you cooked too much."

"Just... suddenly not feeling all that hungry," Charlotte confessed, feeling a bit guilty as she touched her nose.

"You're like the nemesis on my road to dieting."

Annie glared at Charlotte before getting up to get another set of bowls and chopsticks from the kitchen.

"You're still dieting?" Charlotte's pitch rose involuntarily at the mention of dieting.

"I remember you were just on a diet not long ago."

"No way around it, that's the character I'm playing in my new movie. You know, the kind that's described as having a figure 'slender as a willow'..."

Annie nibbled on her chopsticks, muttering softly, "And I thought I'd finally get to wear those floaty, ethereal costumes in a fantasy drama."

"Your new script is set in the... Republican era, isn't it?"

Charlotte pondered the previous conversations she had with Annie.

Then, she snapped her fingers, a look of surprise spreading across her face.

"Is the fantasy drama set in the Republican era that you're in called... Indul..."

"Indulgence."

Annie slowly exhaled the name of the drama, looking at Charlotte somewhat puzzled,

"I don't recall telling you the name of the drama I'm in."

"You didn't tell me, but my company did. Recently our design team took on the contract for the lead actress's wardrobe in a drama, seems to be for yours."

Charlotte recalled carefully, realizing that it was indeed the case.

"Really? What a coincidence?"

Annie blinked in disbelief, then touched her chin and pondered for a while before saying, "Indeed, our drama crew is quite affluent, so it makes sense to have your company design the lead actress's clothes."

"No wonder they want you to diet."

Charlotte eyed the Annie in front of her and then pressed her hand onto her soft belly, teasingly saying, "Can't have a tummy bulge in a cheongsam, right?"

"I've been consistently working out to maintain my figure, there's no way I'll have a belly." Annie batted Charlotte's hand away, tapping the bowl of noodles with her chopsticks.

"This is your late-night snack, you better eat it."

"We agreed to share it, I can't be the only one getting fat."

...

In the presidential suite of a certain club.

Adam Ross and Harper Gibson sat side by side on the sofa, both of their gazes fixed on Justin Battleson, who was sitting opposite them.

In front of the three of them on the table was an assortment of fine liquors.

Justin didn't say much, his long fingers clasping a glass of wine, the amber liquid inside casting fragmented light through the uneven lines of the glass as the clear ice cubes tinkled against its sides.

His gaze was slightly restrained, yet his expression revealed none of his inner thoughts.