

Spoiled 391

Chapter 391: Rain Shower

Midnight.

The weather had suddenly begun to deteriorate, with invisible threads of rain pouring down from above.

Rainwater splattered on the ground, reflecting in the puddles a sharp, clear crimson.

A stretch version Maybach came to a stop in front of the villa; the driver got out from behind the wheel, expertly opened a black umbrella, and, after meticulously shutting the door, stepped back a few paces to open the rear door.

The clear sound of raindrops hitting the glass entered the ears, while the man in the back seat remained entirely still, his head slightly tilted back as he pretended to sleep.

The driver held the umbrella, a pair of sunglasses masking his expressionless face, as he respectfully nodded and softly said, "Mr. Battleson, we've arrived."

The tranquil atmosphere was shattered.

Justin Battleson suddenly opened his eyes, furrowing his brows deeply. Though his eyes were clear, there was an inexplicably suppressed anger rising to the surface.

The driver kept his head low, his demeanor reverent.

In the next moment, Justin waved his hand, showing signs of impatience.

"You may leave first, I will go out later."

With that said, the driver looked up at him surprisingly but didn't utter a word. Preparing to lower the umbrella, he handed it to Justin.

Deferring a little, Justin squinted and looked at the intensifying rain outside in the faint light of the car. "Take the umbrella with you," he said softly.

The driver froze, his actions interrupting.

As the rain splattered against his face, its icy touch felt strangely disquieting.

Instead of articulating his worries, he said, "Mr. Battleson, we don't know when the rain will stop. If I take away the umbrella, then you..."

Upon hearing this, impatience crossed Justin's face, "When I tell you to take it, just take it. Stop talking nonsense."

At his words, the driver touched his nose, seemingly unable to figure out what was going on, hesitating for a few seconds.

He closed the car door, reopened the umbrella, and skirted the puddles as he walked away.

After an unknown amount of time, Justin reopened his eyes.

He looked a bit bewildered at the open car window. From his angle, he could see the full moon hanging in the sky.

The heavy rain casting a thin veil over it, making it more mysterious and aloof.

Events from a few hours ago seemed to repeat slowly, playing out vividly in his mind.

The woman's tender lips and misty eyes.

It was strikingly similar to the night scenery.

He zoned out for a few seconds, then he opened the car door.

The rain splashed onto his pant legs as he stepped out emotionless into the rain, allowing it to drench him.

Aside from his slightly furrowed brows and soaking wet clothes, there didn't seem to be any other traces.

After entering the villa, Justin took a hasty shower and then went to the living room.

The living room was not lit, only a dim moonlight from the large floor-to-ceiling window scattered on the floor.

He leaned lazily against the window, pulled the pull ring onto his beer, raised his head and chugged.

Each motion was imbued with an almost trembling violence and a fury he couldn't suppress.

A few drops of beer slipped down his chin, flowing down to his neck, his Adam's apple bobbing with each swallow, adding an inexplicable sexiness.

Not long after, Justin casually tossed away the empty beer can. It landed with a dull thud in the trash bin.

The interior was filled with a sharp alcohol smell, but the man's deep eyes didn't show a hint of drunkenness.

Chapter 392: Fell into Her Hands

After finishing the final bottle of beer, Justin Battleson's consciousness began to blur.

He felt like he had lost his senses, leaving him in a strange realm.

In a daze, he saw Charlotte Thompson.

The woman was wearing a light-colored long-dress, white canvas shoes adorned her feet, and she carried a bag, her pinky finger slightly raised.

Her long hair flowed down her back, adorned with a light blue bow on her head.

She saw him and slightly furrowed her brows.

As their eyes met, Justin vaguely saw the woman lowering her head, rummaging through her bag for something.

After a few seconds, she lifted her head, the corner of her eyes raised with an air of undeniable authority.

She extended her hand toward Justin, a bank card sandwiched between her index and middle finger, her smile was sweet yet faintly cold, her voice soft.

"The money's all here, Mr. Battleson."

Justin's pupils suddenly dilated, his blood rushing to his head, he incredulously stepped back, a ringing in his ears accompanied by a sharp pain.

"Mr. Battleson, you're punctual today."

"The money's all here, Mr. Battleson, a thank you would be nice."

"Don't be so delicate."

"Mr. Battleson, let's get down to business."

...

Memories from five years ago flooded into his mind like mad, the woman remained in his memory holding the bank card between her fingers, smiling gently but firmly at him as always.

Now she was standing in front of him, her delicate face gradually overlapping with Sophie Allen from five years ago.

Justine's heart suddenly throbbed painfully.

She was Sophie Allen, but also Charlotte Thompson.

Justin's fingers trembled slightly. He looked up at the civil affairs office behind the woman, watching the figures moving in and out, some crying, some laughing. The rowdy scene was just a fleeting glimpse in his memory.

Or maybe, it was just a dream.

This scene was identical to their divorce.

He raised his hand, wanting to caress her blooming smile on her cheek.

However, so close yet so far, Justin suddenly had difficulty breathing. The next second, all scenes violently disappeared, leaving only a vast void.

As if everything in the world had gone far away from him, including her.

...

The next day.

The rising sun over the horizon spilled golden sunlight through the curtain, filling the entire room with a soft yet slightly cold light.

The living room was in a mess.

Justin leaned against the window, his bathrobe loosely draped around him, revealing large areas of wheat-colored skin. His collarbones were faintly visible under the bathrobe, his eyelashes fluttered slightly, and after a few seconds, he opened his eyes.

His head throbbed as if a great army was galloping in his mind. He stood up with the help of the chair, his steps a little unsteady. His heart ached with each throbbing in his head.

Last night's dream was as real as if it had happened again.

Sophie was still Sophie, wearing her light-colored dress, shyly smiling while caressing her bag.

But now it was different.

Sophie had become Charlotte, but she continued to disturb his mind as five years ago, throwing him utterly off balance.

In the end, he had fallen into her trap again.

His loose bathrobe opened as he moved, exposing his clear abs.

He circumvented the scattered cans on the floor and sat on the sofa, massaging his temples with his index finger. His eyes tightly closed, his body exuding an unspeakable low atmosphere.

His messy hair on his forehead, the red veins in his eyes clearly visible.

Justin Battleson closed his weary eyes and reached for his phone on the other end of the sofa.

Chapter 393: Very Much Like Adam Ross

On the other side, inside the hotel.

Dawn was just breaking when Charlotte returned to the hotel and immediately turned on the TV.

She planned to watch for about ten minutes before falling asleep, but unexpectedly dozed off while watching.

When she woke up again, it was already six in the morning.

The TV was still on, the volume turned down to the minimum. A family drama was playing on screen.

A pregnant supporting actress ran in front of the protagonist, crying pitifully.

Charlotte had just woken up, her mind still fuzzy. She watched the tear-streaked actress on TV with a bewildered look.

After a few minutes, she finally rebooted her brain. After a moment of realization, she hurriedly started checking her phone.

There were more than a dozen missed calls dating back to two o'clock in the morning.

They were all from Annie.

Charlotte slapped her forehead in annoyance.

She had been so irritated with Adam Ross yesterday that she had left the hotel in a rush, forgetting that Annie and the others were still in the booth. She had left without even saying goodbye.

She instinctively wanted to call back. Her finger hovered over Annie's number for a few seconds, hesitating as she glanced at the time.

It was now six o'clock sharp. Annie had gone back late last night; she might still be asleep now.

Should she call back later?

Having thought of that, she put down her phone, slipped into her slippers, and got up to turn off the TV.

Adam Ross' words from yesterday resurfaced in her mind.

A whirl of thoughts churned in Charlotte's heart, compelling her to get up once again. She pushed open the door to check on Jack and Chad.

She wasn't bothered by Adam Ross' opinion, but she felt the need to ask the children themselves about how they felt.

Jack and Chad were staying in one room. Soon, Charlotte had arrived at their door.

She'd forgotten to get the key card from the reception, so she gently rapped her knuckles on the door.

The knock was soft, and just as Charlotte was about to knock again, thinking that the kids might not have heard her the first time, the door unexpectedly opened.

Chad was at the door, wearing a black and white striped T-shirt. Seeing Charlotte, he did not seem surprised.

He merely lifted his head slightly. The youthful naivety in his eyes, which were strikingly similar to Adam Ross', shone brightly.

His initially bewildered look was fading, but his eyes were still slightly red.

Charlotte pressed her lips together, a mix of emotions welling up within her, "Chad, did Mommy wake you?"

"No, Mommy," Chad replied. His voice was still childish, but with an added hint of seriousness. He stepped aside, leaving ample space for Charlotte to come in.

Charlotte stepped inside, where Jack, still half-asleep on the big bed, rubbed his eyes and sat up.

A surge of tender affection welled up within Charlotte. She pulled over a chair to sit down, reaching out to affectionately ruffle Jack's fluffy hair.

Surprised, Jack stopped and looked at her. Recognizing it was her, he held back a smile.

On the other side, Chad closed the door and came over. He sat on the edge of the bed, sensing Charlotte's intention with keen insight.

Before Charlotte could say a word, he asked quietly, "Mommy, did that man come to see you?"

At his words, Charlotte's gaze fell. She glanced at the expressions of the two children and felt a sudden wave of heartache.

They had always known they weren't her biological children and, as a result, they were even more reticent when it came to discussions about Cyrus and Hank.

Their personalities, even their features were strikingly similar to Adam Ross, bordering on moody and sickly sweet.

Although she never favored one child over another, she knew that in both children's hearts, there felt like a fishbone stuck in their throats that they couldn't swallow or spit out.

Chapter 394 Your Father is Called Adam Ross

Now that both children knew, there was no need for Charlotte to beat around the bush.

So she spoke directly: "Darlings, you both are big kids now."

She looked straight into Chad's eyes, effortlessly catching a fleeting glimpse of sadness in the boy's eyes.

Charlotte felt a twinge of pity, but she went on.

"I realize you may have some inkling of it. But since your father has already approached me, I think it's necessary to tell you some things."

She paused, took a deep breath, and said softly, "Your father is Adam Ross, the leader of Ross Group. I've checked out his side of the story - he didn't intentionally abandon you, he just didn't know you existed."

As her words fell, Jack, seated across from her, was caught off guard and his eyes reddened.

Chad simply turned his head slightly, his eyes betraying a tumult of emotion.

Charlotte bit her lip, feeling a pang of guilt.

When they were young, Chad and Jack were reserved and solitary at school, but they never shed a tear.

Jack's reaction to any mention of Adam Ross was something she anticipated.

After all, they were young children who had believed they were abandoned as infants.

Now that they were confronted with this matter again, it felt like someone had cruelly reopened their wounds, rubbed salt in, stitched them up, and torn them open again.

Charlotte knew that this revelation was cruel, but she had no choice but to speak.

This concerned the rest of the children's lives, their identities henceforth.

She opened her mouth and continued, "Adam Ross approached me this time to meet you and to acknowledge you."

Her eyes calm, she glanced at Chad.

The boy's messy fringe fell on his forehead, and there was a faint shadow under his eyes. Confronted by Charlotte's gaze, he simply bit his lip, and bowed his head in silence.

The air fell silent, no one willing to break the peace.

After a long while, Chad lifted his head, as if he had been fighting an internal battle.

He looked at Charlotte, his voice firm, "Mommy, I disagree."

Hearing Chad's words, Jack also unwrinkled his brow, echoing, "I disagree too."

Jack lowered his gaze and said, "Since we have memories, we've grown up by your side. We've never met Adam Ross, this so-called father. So, we only recognize you as our mommy."

Both children simultaneously rejected Adam Ross's request.

Strangely enough, Charlotte felt a touch of consolation.

She opened her mouth but was unable to make a sound. She saw the struggle hidden in the children's responses.

She wished more than anyone that her children could live happily.

A few seconds later, she sighed softly and spoke, "Mommy knows what you're thinking. Even if you don't wish to acknowledge Adam Ross, deep down, you might still hope to meet him, right?"

At her words, both children fell silent.

Chad pressed his lips together, his eyes reflecting complex emotions.

Charlotte took a few steps forward, leaned over, and gently embraced them.

Smelling the familiar scent of her, both children's eyes moistened.

Charlotte's voice sounded over their heads.

"My darlings, you were raised by me. How could I not know what you're thinking?"

Charlotte paused, patted the children's shoulders, as if giving them strength in invisibility.

"In a bit of time, I'll arrange a meeting with Adam Ross. Then, you can have a heart-to-heart chat with him, okay?"

Chapter 395: Charlotte Thompson, I surrender.

As soon as the words left her mouth, Charlotte felt the child in her arms shudder violently.

She paused for a second, instinctively lowering her head to look at him.

Jack suddenly choked back a sob. His eyes were frighteningly red. The tears stubbornly refusing to fall.

Charlotte immediately became flustered. She tried to soften her voice as she gently asked: "Sweetheart, why are you crying? Did Mommy say something wrong?"

Upon hearing this, Jack shook his head. His low-hanging eyes full of sorrow.

A tinge of sadness in his voice.

"If mommy wants us to talk with that man, does it mean she wants to send us away?"

Charlotte's heart gave a painful lurch.

She quickly hugged Jack, denying it in a low voice: "Never. Both of you are mommy's treasures. Not only if you don't want to acknowledge Adam Ross, even if you do, mommy might not let you go away."

She gently stroked Jack's cheek, her tone indulgent: "This time, mommy is just letting you meet the man who brought you into this world. You still have to grow up with me. I will always be your mommy."

Hearing this, the sense of anxiety in the children's hearts finally lifted.

Jack nuzzled against Charlotte's chin, his voice still had a nasal ring: "Mommy, thank you."

Charlotte's heart melted. She kissed the children's cheeks before standing up.

"Chad, Jack, it's still early. I've said what I needed to, sleep a bit more and I'll call you in a little."

Seeing the children obediently lying in bed, she tucked them in before slipping out of the room quietly.

Back in her room, she yawned tiredly, picking up her phone to check the time. Only ten minutes had passed.

However, what caught her eye was the dozen or so unread messages on the locked screen.

Charlotte hesitated for a second before clicking open the messages.

All the messages were from a single sender, Justin Battleson.

Remembering what happened yesterday night, an unusual feeling slowly rose in Charlotte's heart.

She was suddenly afraid to see these messages.

But eventually, her curiosity won over. She opened the messages and began reading them one by one.

"It's now 5:40, I dreamt of you last night, Sophie Allen of five years ago."

"I know you want to deny it, but it's useless. You are Sophie Allen. The passage of five years changes nothing, and neither will ten or twenty in the future. Time cannot erase who you are."

"You aren't with Adam Ross, are you?"

"Charlotte, why do you always bare your claws at me when we are together, like a cat that had its fur ruffled? What should I do with you?"

"Charlotte, I think I'm beaten."

After reading the messages, Charlotte felt a throb in her heart, a tingling pain spreading from around her heart.

Justin Battleson, a man who used to be cold, aloof and distant, was now saying such words to her.

Is he really ready to compromise with her?

Charlotte pursed her lips and turned off her phone, albeit with some irritability, running her fingers through her hair.

She really needed a good sleep. All these things needed to stay away from her for some time.

With that thought, she put down her phone, turned towards the bathroom.

After hurriedly showering, she put on her pajamas, pulled the curtains, and lay down on the comfortable bed, closing her eyes in an effort to fall asleep.

But she tossed and turned, her mind filled with the contents of the messages.

Chapter 396: Turn Up the Volume

Charlotte lay on the bed for half an hour without the slightest hint of sleep. She kept her eyes open and stared blankly at the ceiling, her mind a tangled mess.

This was a fitting reflection of her life. A complete mess.

She rolled over and sat up, scratching her slightly damp hair.

Reaching out to grab the phone on the bedside table, she turned it on, and went through the contacts, her movements slow and deliberate.

Her fingers rested on Henry Thompson's number for a moment, then swiftly swiped away, going directly to Annie Anne's number.

She clicked on it and dialed.

In the receiver, there was the sound of dialing, and about a few dozen seconds later, Annie Anne finally picked up the call.

Inside the other villa.

Annie Anne groped around under the pillow for a while before finding the constantly vibrating phone. Her sleepy eyes weren't completely opened, yet she answered the call.

King Samuel rolled over and held her, inhaling the scent of her hair and whispered, "Who's that?"

Only then did Annie Anne open her eyes to look, shaking her phone and nuzzling into the man's embrace, whispering, "It's Charlotte."

After responding, she lifted her voice slightly towards the receiver and said, "Hello, Charlotte."

More than ten seconds after the call was connected, Charlotte finally heard Annie Anne talking to her.

But she heard all of the conversation between Annie Anne and King Samuel clearly.

If Justin Battleson's message was a bomb to her, then her call to Annie Anne was akin to a massively destructive atomic bomb.

Beyond just flaunting their relationship, why the heck was the man on the other end King Samuel??

Charlotte's face instantly darkened. She clenched her phone, her tone cracking slightly, "Is King Samuel there with you?"

Annie Anne hummed, her voice stuffy from a blocked nose and asked confusedly, "What's wrong?"

Charlotte almost choked on an expletive she couldn't get out. Grinding her teeth, she spat out, "Annie Anne, put me on speaker."

Hearing this, Annie Anne was surprised, unsure what Charlotte was aiming at.

Feeling quite awkward, she glanced at the man beside her who seemed to be falling asleep again and whispered hesitantly.

"Charlotte, King Samuel is sleeping. This isn't right."

"Sleeping?" Charlotte scoffed, her voice chilling, "After all the awful things he's done, he can still sleep? Annie, put me on speaker. I'm not going to hurt him. I'll just help him sleep better."

By her estimation, King Samuel's "bunch of friends" must have kept him partying in the hotel all night long, and he had probably been lying down for less than an hour.

And that was exactly the effect she was after!

Hearing this, Annie Anne prepared to activate the speaker, but not without a reminder, "Okay, Charlotte. But keep it down. Don't disturb his slumber."

Charlotte's face darkened yet another degree.

Annie Anne was such an innocent girl to the extreme, and if it wasn't for the fact that Annie had forgotten what King Samuel had done to her, Charlotte would have erupted in rage!

And King Samuel.

She had been far too easy on him when she encountered him yesterday. The thought was enough to make her blood boil.

A scumbag who didn't even recognize his own mother now brazenly flaunted his relationship with Annie, the one person who knew the truth--all while she suffered from memory loss. And he was sure to put on a show of deep affection.

Charlotte was practically seeing stars, but she had to keep her cool because of Annie Anne's presence. She couldn't outright confront King Samuel and expose him.

Anyway, there was plenty of time, and she would personally recover the debt of grief Annie Anne had suffered and the broken family of Olivia Thompson.

Chapter 397: Can't Bear to Be Hurt

Charlotte Thompson swiftly got out of bed and quickly dug out a small speaker from her suitcase.

It was a gift from her elder brother when she was pregnant in Ashton, specifically meant for playing prenatal music.

Unexpectedly, it had found its use now.

Charlotte connected the speaker to the hotel's Wi-Fi, and quickly downloaded two songs from a music library.

After confirming that they could be played, she spoke to Annie Anne on the phone: "Annie, please hold on, I'm almost done."

Annie didn't know what she was up to and waited patiently.

Charlotte took out her laptop and entered a series of codes, which led her into the control panel of Annie's phone. Having learnt hacking for a while, locking a phone was a cinch for her.

Having locked Annie's screen, Charlotte nodded in satisfaction, picked up the phone again, and a mischievous smile appeared on her face.

"Annie, promise me, no matter what happens next, you won't blame me, okay?"

"Now, move your phone away from you... Oh yeah, you're not sleepy now, right?"

Annie hummed in reply; she didn't usually sleep much anyway.

After hearing Charlotte's words, she obediently moved her phone away.

For some reason, she suddenly had a bad feeling about this.

Charlotte's smile got bigger. She placed the mouthpiece of her mobile phone near the speaker and turned the speaker volume to its maximum.

Confirm, play.

The next second, the deafening sound of music echoed throughout the room. The room was soundproofed, so she had no worries about disturbing the children.

On the other hand, it was Oliver Hudson who had to bear with it.

"Good luck comes, I wish you good luck, good luck brings joy..."

The moment Annie moved the phone away, the amplified sound of music from the speaker increased a few times almost simultaneously.

The haunting song "Good Luck Comes" echoed deafeningly in the room.

Annie was startled and jumped, her reflex was to hang up the phone.

However, it was at this exact moment, she found out to her dismay that her phone screen...

She couldn't tap it at all!

The festive accompaniment of "Good Luck Comes" played over and over again, waking up Oliver Hudson.

Looking at the phone playing the music, his face showed an indescribable expression.

Annie, pointing at the call screen, was almost in tears.

On the other side, Charlotte, trying to keep herself from bursting into laughter while listening to "Good Luck Comes" play over and over, felt like she was going to die from internal injuries.

She could just envision the completely exhausted Oliver Hudson, who was just entering sleep, being jolted awake by the beautiful sound of "Good Luck Comes" over and over again.

Then his face turning livid, looking as if he had eaten shit but could neither spit it out nor swallow it.

She leisurely scrolled the speaker screen and selected the song "Can't Bear to Be Hurt".

It was another tormenting cycle of play.

On the other hand, Annie, holding the phone, couldn't control her smirking which turned into full-blown laughter.

Oliver Hudson, staring at the screen displaying "Charlotte", instantly understood everything.

Even though Charlotte Thompson had never met him, she'd been mocking him ever since she saw him last night.

His intuition told him that Charlotte must know something about the past.

The music played over and over again.

The bags under Oliver Hudson's eyes deepened...

After an unknown duration, Charlotte finally turned off the music. She picked up the phone leisurely and said, "Oliver Hudson, I didn't have a gift for you when we met yesterday, but these two songs are my present to you and Annie for being together. Do you like them?"

Chapter 398: Not Necessarily True

She didn't wait for Oliver Hudson to speak, she lowers her voice and says, "Oliver Hudson, treat Annie well, I should have known that doing the same thing to the same person twice would bring disaster."

After speaking, she hangs up the phone in a flamboyant manner and lays comfortably in bed.

On the other hand, upon hearing Charlotte's words, Annie was a bit dazed.

"Oliver Hudson, did you know each other before?"

Oliver Hudson seems a bit uncomfortable as he shakes his head, with a deep look in his eyes.

...

In Chad and Jack's room, the children sit neatly on the bed, while Hank sneakily peeks outside. He turns his head and says to the other children, "Mommy has gone back to bed. Now we can have a meeting."

Cyrus glanced at him speechlessly and didn't speak.

Hank approached stealthily, excitedly.

"Jack, Chad, hurry up and tell me, what did mommy just say?"

Chad sighed, "The matter about that man."

Grace, on the other hand, pouts a little, not understanding.

Although she didn't understand what they were talking about, she sat obediently and listened.

"I guessed right, didn't I? I knew he would come." Hank hummed.

"Big brother, I have a favor to ask." Chad paused before adding, "Help me find more detailed information about Adam Ross."

Upon hearing this, Cyrus naturally nods his head.

He picked up his laptop and skillfully typed Adam Ross's name into the search bar on a dark screen.

The search engine Cyrus had paid a high price for from a top hacker in Ashton. The information it retrieved was practically as detailed as an entire hacker group's intelligence network.

Detailed, accurate.

These are the two main qualities of this website.

After clicking 'search,' text begins to pop up only seconds later. Cyrus scans it quickly before opening the personal details and placing the screen where everyone could see it.

Chad's gaze fell on the screen. Once he had read the content, he paused, his pupils dilating slightly in disbelief.

It was impossible to find Adam Ross's information on an ordinary website. Even here, there were only a few lines.

One line caught his eye.

"It is said that a few years ago he chopped off a person's finger. He is violent and brutal, and almost no one dares to provoke him..."

Hank read this information out clearly, word by word.

The room suddenly fell quiet. Hank's voice grew weaker until he finally stopped speaking entirely.

Chad and Jack maintained neutral expressions, but one could tell from the disappointment flickering in their eyes.

This ruthless and brutal man turned out to be their father.

Even Cyrus was unusually silent.

Hank pressed his lips together, feeling the depressive atmosphere that filled the room.

He coughed softly, trying to lighten the mood, "Why so serious, not everything on the internet is true. It said 'rumoured,' which means there's a 50% chance it's fake."

At this, Olivia also spoke up softly, "I agree with what Hank said, Chad, Jack, this might not be true."

Cyrus dipped his head, looking at the website he paid such a high price for, silently closing it.

Looking up, he spoke with a blank expression, "It might not be true, look on the bright side."

"Yeah, plus didn't mom say she was going to introduce you guys to that man? You'll know what kind of person he is then." Hank racked his brains for comforting words.

Chad softly sighed, nodding his head.

Chapter 399: Reporting Design Progress

After sleeping comfortably for another two hours, Charlotte Thompson woke up on-time and sat up.

She rubbed her eyes with her hands, looked refreshed from head to toe.

Within a few minutes, she got out of bed, walked to the window, and drew the curtains.

The blazing sun streamed into the room without restraint. She stretched lazily and cast a glance out of the window.

Despite the nice weather outside, clusters of dark clouds that had formed at some point were looming in the sky, ready to unleash upon the lonely, brilliant sun.

The small balcony outside the window was clearly visible, with the light blue lace curtain on the right stuck halfway in the middle.

A pot of sunflowers was placed perfectly upright right below, in full bloom.

The bud of the sunflower had started showing specks of yellow, nestled within the green leaves, it appeared delicate and beautiful.

This pot of sunflower hadn't been there before. It must have been brought by those youngsters.

Always full of tricks.

Charlotte smiled slightly, and then went to freshen up.

After a while, she took out a black professional women's suit from the closet, paired with a white, ruffle-collared blouse, and a skirt that hugged her curves and stopped at her knees.

The ruffled collar of the white blouse served as the crowning touch to the whole outfit.

Charlotte got dressed, applied light makeup casually, took her bag, and left.

Upon reaching the office, it was precisely nine o'clock. She walked into her office, turned on her computer, and opened her design drafts from the documents.

Before she could decide where to start, she closed her eyes slightly out of a small headache and picked up a file and the draft samples from the side of the desk.

The design was still at a standstill, but the deadline was fast approaching.

After a while, she heard a soft knock at the door.

Charlotte was feeling frustrated, she pointed at the door without lifting her head, raising her voice slightly: "Come in."

The door was pushed open gently, and a young lady who seemed to be around twenty appeared at the door.

She smiled, looking somewhat embarrassed, but her gentle eyes were comforting to look at.

Charlotte placed the file down, returned her smile, and asked: "What's up?"

"Well, Miss Thompson," The young lady's face turned slightly red and continued, "The Queen's design is very important, so this time Mr. Battleson plans to participate personally and hopes that you can report the progress of the design in Mr. Battleson's office."

The progress of the design?

Charlotte frowned; Justin Battleson had always expressed great trust in her and had never brought this up before.

Why was he now requiring her to report on the progress of the design?

Oh well, since she had done her part sincerely, giving a progress report wouldn't harm.

With these thoughts, she nodded, stood up, picked up the files, looked at the young lady in front of her, and said: "Alright then, let's go."

Mr. Battleson's office was on the top floor. The two directly entered the elevator and headed to the top floor.

The young lady left to attend her own tasks after the elevator ride, Charlotte, clutching her files, stood at the door to Mr. Battleson's office, feeling somewhat uneasy.

To say that seeing him didn't cause any awkwardness, didn't stir anything within her, would be a lie.

She hesitated for a moment, braced herself, and was just about to knock on the door when she heard the man's low voice from inside the room.

"Since you're here, why aren't you coming in?"

Charlotte lowered her eyes, her heartbeat suddenly accelerating uncontrollably.

She pushed the door open, pretending nothing had happened, and placed the files on Justin's desk.

Then she began casually: "Mr. Battleson, the design progress you wanted is all here. I don't have much of the sample drafts, so please review them quickly so I can take them back and continue with the modifications."

Chapter 400: Answering the wrong question is already an answer.

The moment the words fell, the surroundings became so quiet you could hear a pin drop.

Justin Battleson didn't make a move, after a moment, he slightly raised his eyes and glanced at the neatly stacked files on his desk, where a trace of sadness that even he did not recognise flashed in his eyes.

His throat was a bit hoarse.

"Charlotte, you know very well, I didn't ask you here to discuss progress."

Hearing this, Charlotte was slightly taken aback, although it was not easily noticeable.

After a few seconds, she nonchalantly shrugged her shoulders and said, "Isn't that so?"

Her dismissive tone was like repeated stabs to the man's heart.

Justin Battleson slowly got up, his head slightly lowered, his gaze fixed on her, his eyes filled with bloodshot veins staring straight at Charlotte.

The latter didn't back down, locking eyes with him bravely.

It seemed like the stage was set for a huge battle to break out.

Justin Battleson's eyes suddenly turned a frightening red, clearing his throat, he finally managed to ask with immense difficulty, "Are you and Adam Ross... together now?"

Hearing this, Charlotte was smiling on the surface, but her eyes held complex emotions that were about to overflow.

She slightly raised her head, smiled like a blooming flower, "Mr. Battleson, this is my personal business, and as this is working hours, I refuse to answer."

Her words were clear, ringing with resounding resolve in the office.

Justin Battleson's hand resting on the office table was trembling slightly, and his eyes turned even more red.

His voice also had an imperceptible tremble.

He stared hard into Charlotte's cold eyes, hoping to find some falseness there.

But he found none.

Justin Battleson's eyes darkened, he dropped his gaze, and mockingly laughed, "Charlotte oh Charlotte, is refusing my question that hard for you?"

Charlotte's heart skipped a beat, and an indescribable bitterness spread from her heart.

She clenched her fists then slowly released them.

Meeting the man's gaze, she continued to smile softly.

But this time it was different, there was absolute restraint and resolve in her eyes.

Towards Justin Battleson, she would not allow herself to evoke even a hint of love or fondness, to her, feelings were like stumbling blocks, lethal ones.

She cleared her throat, smiled and said, "Mr. Battleson, you should review the documents. I need to keep up with my schedule."

Justin Battleson gave a bitter smile, "You still won't answer me."

Charlotte was in no hurry, her expression bland, she asked, "Mr. Battleson, have you ever heard this saying?"

"An answer that avoids the question is in itself the answer."

Justin Battleson's body stiffened, he incredulously lifted his head.

Almost doubting his own ears, an indescribable sadness filled his eyes.

"What did you say?"

Charlotte smiled and said nothing, her heart inexplicably aching.

The immense disappointment in Justin Battleson's eyes, she saw it all too clearly.

After a few seconds, the man dropped his head, his expression hidden, and when he lifted his head again, his face was completely void of emotion.

He reached out a hand to pass her the files, gently saying, "You may leave."

Charlotte took the files, nodded and in a light and breezy tone, said, "Goodbye Mr. Battleson."

The man watched her leave, only slumping in his chair when her figure completely disappeared from his sight, pulling out a cigarette from his pocket.

He got up and walked to the window.

The smoke created a hazy silhouette of the man's profile and jawline, giving off a vague sense of solitude and sadness.

On the other side, Charlotte stepped out of the office, abruptly halted in the corridor and hesitated as she turned to look back at the office door.

Just a few seconds later, she moved and walked away.