

Spoiled 621

Chapter 621: Never Giving Up

Charlotte Thompson gave her brother, Jordan Thompson, a stern look, which made him instantly sit up straight. He chuckled awkwardly and quickly explained, "Sis, I'm heading to the bar for something important. A friend who just returned from abroad wants to meet up there."

Upon hearing his words, even though Charlotte was half-skeptical, she didn't protest on the grounds that Jordan had been behaving well lately. She gave a slight nod, saying, "Don't stay out too late. If I don't see you by nine o'clock, don't blame me for driving over there and dragging you back."

Jordan instantly shivered at the thought.

He firmly believed that his sister was capable of doing something like that.

Back in Ashton, Henry Thompson and Charlotte each took turns dragging him back home every other day. Henry was quite intimidating; a single look could make him back down immediately.

But Charlotte was different. She could walk into a bar without uttering a word or glancing around. Upon spotting him, she would promptly grab his collar and drag him out.

Thinking about those dark days in Ashton brought tears to Jordan's eyes.

He nodded with a bitter expression on his face, suddenly finding his breakfast unappetizing.

After finishing his meal, Jordan hurried off to the bar. Charlotte, on the other hand, drove the children to the amusement park.

Little Miss Thompson, Grace, was thrilled to be in the amusement park. She bought a big bouquet of balloons right away, finding the colorful sight enchanting.

Hank Thompson, Chad Thompson, and Jack Thompson excitedly ran off to the bumper cars. Cyrus Thompson, being the more steady one, found such activities childish and grabbed a lawn chair to go read under the pavilion after telling Charlotte.

Watching Cyrus walk off to the pavilion holding Grace, Charlotte couldn't help but worry about her eldest son.

Could a childhood be complete without amusement park experiences?

Once they were tired from playing, Charlotte led the children into the nearest McDonald's. They chose a seat by the window, and Charlotte ordered a bunch of things.

Grace, who sat on her lap, waited expectantly for the food to arrive.

The weather was hot, so air conditioners and fans were running inside the restaurant. From a nearby speaker, popular songs were being played. Before long, Hank Thompson, came in from outside with cold drinks.

Grace was told not to drink any and could only watch enviously as Hank flaunted his drink in front of her.

About ten minutes later, Charlotte looked quizzically at the tray the waiter was carrying.

"Hey, I didn't order this."

The waiter gave her a knowing smile and pointed behind him, saying, "That gentleman ordered it for you."

Following the waiter's gaze, Charlotte saw a man walking toward her.

She was slightly taken aback, then frowned in confusion.

The man casually pulled up a chair and sat down, grinning, "Miss Thompson, what a coincidence, we meet again."

The man was Lincoln Smith, the film producer she had met just a few days ago.

Charlotte herself gave a small smile, responding, "I wouldn't have guessed Mr. Smith was a fan of fast food."

Internally, she had a premonition that Lincoln Smith's "coincidental" encounter was likely his continuous attempts to persuade her into joining his production crew.

Lincoln Smith chuckled in response, saying, "Of course. Isn't Miss Thompson also a fan?"

With all the food Charlotte had ordered now served, the children were happily eating. Charlotte hesitated a moment, let Grace down, her lips curled in a faint smile, and asked, "Mr. Smith, your visit is for..."

"I must confess,"

Chapter 622: Pleasant Cooperation

Lincoln Smith appeared slightly worried and said, "I have reserved a place for you when producing this show, so I want to give it my best shot no matter what."

He nodded slightly and listed again: "Miss Thompson, consider this: as long as you participate in this show, you can name your salary and set any terms. You are Joy. Your participation will certainly take the show to a higher level. It's a win-win opportunity, why not take it?"

Charlotte had long anticipated that he would say something like that. She pushed a plate of chicken legs in front of Lincoln, took a sip of fruit juice and said with a slight smile, "Mr. Smith, I will refuse regardless of the terms you offer. Let me treat you today."

Having said this, she put down her cup and began to eat with full concentration. The moment she took a bite, a flicker of enjoyment flashed in her eyes.

No wonder this McDonald's is crowded every day. The taste is undeniably good.

Meanwhile, after hearing Charlotte's clear and unambiguous rejection, Lincoln thought for a few seconds with his head down.

A few seconds later, his exploring gaze slowly fell on Charlotte and a sudden idea struck him.

He was somewhat excited but still carefully said after considering for a few seconds, "Miss Thompson, I am willing to make another offer. Would you like to hear it?"

Charlotte, engrossed in her meal, was not annoyed by the interruption. She wiped her hands and shot a teasing smile at Lincoln, saying, "Go on, let's hear it."

At her words, Lincoln's eyes lit up.

It seems there might be hope after all.

He organized his thoughts and said, "I used to be a chef for five years, and I've won many awards in various competitions, so my cooking skills are undeniably good..."

He looked at Charlotte and continued, "Miss Thompson, if you agree to join, I can deliver you a different meal every day at noon, all cooked by me."

As soon as he finished his words, Charlotte looked surprised. She hadn't expected it.

Lincoln would do that?

Charlotte had heard about Lincoln's past as a chef from Coco. The fact that he could think of this demonstrated that he put in considerable thought.

She looked at Lincoln with a complex gaze.

She had to admit that her inner foodie was somewhat swayed.

After hesitating for a few seconds, she again met Lincoln's sincere gaze, exhaled, then gave in and said, "Okay, I'll participate."

Upon hearing her words, Lincoln's eyes sparkled with unabashed joy. He quickly pulled a contract out of his pocket and quickly handed her a pen. He said, "Miss Thompson, the contract is here. We're offering you our most favourable terms, you don't have to worry at all... of course, you can take a look, and if there are no issues, just sign."

Charlotte raised her eyebrows, a little overwhelmed, but she trusted Lincoln so she wiped her hands and signed her name on the contract.

She handed over the contract and watched Lincoln clutch it to his chest as if it were a treasure. She grinned and said: "Mr. Smith, happy collaboration."

Still overwhelmed with joy, he muttered, "Fantastic, just fantastic. This show will definitely amaze the entire design and entertainment industry."

Coming back to reality, he said, "Miss Thompson, I'll immediately notify you when the show starts. I need to go back and start preparing now."

With that, he turned around hastily and rushed out of the restaurant.

The man in his fifties was running like a child.

With a smirk, Charlotte turned around and called the waiter.

"Hello, bill please."

The waiter looked at the bill, chuckled, and said, "Mr. Smith has already taken care of it."

With an inner smile of resignation, Charlotte stood up and left.

Chapter 623: Why Are You Only Coming Back Now?

Nightfall.

After deciding to participate in the show, Lincoln Smith's handling speed was swift. He immediately sent a document to Charlotte Thompson's mailbox.

Not only an email, but even another duplicate version of the contract was also sent over promptly.

Placing the milk on the table, Charlotte pulled a chair and sat down, wearing a soft, slick, white chiffon dress with ink-dripping hair draped over her shoulders.

She yawned and casually threw the paper contract onto the table. A computer was placed in front of her. She stretched out her hand to move the mouse and simultaneously clicked open the file sent by Lincoln Smith.

It was a more detailed program introduction than the one that Coco had given her, encompassing the process, rules, and the complete list of participants in the show.

In the column of judges, her name was first.

With a slight raise of her eyebrows, Charlotte read on seriously.

Just as Coco mentioned, the name of the show was "The Birth of Beautiful Clothes", themed around design. Apart from the judges, the participants were all current popular stars in the entertainment industry with some design background and goddess-level actresses.

After nearly half an hour to figure out the main direction of this program, Charlotte stretched her neck and leaned back, lightly sipping a mouthful of milk.

As if remembering something, Charlotte picked up her hand from the table, glanced at the lit screen, which clearly displayed a time.

Eight fifty-nine in the evening.

A dangerous light flashed in her eyes. Charlotte slowly took out the car key from the drawer, her index finger leisurely twirling the key ring, her gaze fixated on the time.

When eight fifty-nine turned into nine o'clock sharp, Charlotte put down the cup, clapped her hands and stood up, strode out of the living room. As she was reaching out to open the door, she slightly lifted her gaze.

She and the man outside, panting heavily, exchanged glances.

Embarrassment filled the air. Jordan Thompson looked helpless, he quickly took out his phone to check the time, and then showed the screen to Charlotte.

With a triumphant smile gracing the corners of his mouth, Jordan pointed at the screen and said, "Look, not a minute more, not a minute less, exactly nine o'clock."

Charlotte: "..."

She rubbed her brow wearily and stepped aside to make room for Jordan, saying, "Come in."

Seeing that she was not holding grudges, a touch of joy crossed Jordan's face. He quickly nodded, changed his shoes at the door, and briskly walked into the living room.

A faint smell of alcohol lingered on him.

He sat in front of the table. The computer was still on, with the show's overall direction displayed on the document page.

Just like a dragonfly skimming the water surface, Jordan's gaze swept across the screen. But when he inadvertently spotted Charlotte's name, he turned his gaze back, stared at it for a moment, and muttered aloud.

"The Birth of Beautiful Clothes... Sis, when did you start getting interested in variety shows?"

Charlotte, who followed right behind him and sat down on the sofa, replied after hearing his words, "I'm just acting as a judge."

On the far end of the sofa, the paper contract which was somehow taken away by the children, Cyrus Thompson looked at it, sipping his lips in surprise.

There was a soft sound outside the door, following which a tall and straight man figure appeared in Charlotte's vision.

Charlotte straightened up her body and casually asked, "Why are you only coming back now?"

Upon seeing the man, Jordan sneered lightly and immediately moved a few steps closer to him.

Chapter 624: A Day Apart Seems Like Three Autumns

Everyone huddled together with Cyrus Thompson, scrutinizing the contract in his hands without blinking.

At these words, Justin Battleson casually draped his jacket over the back of a chair and looked at her with a playful smile. "Working overtime today... oh, what, can't bear a day apart from me?"

There was a strange, pregnant silence in the living room immediately following these words.

Charlotte Thompson blushed slightly, then coughed lightly to cover her awkwardness. She rose and walked towards the room. As she passed Justin, she tugged at his sleeve and spoke in a voice that only the two of them could hear.

"Come with me, I have something to say."

After saying this, she paused briefly, then left and went towards the study.

Justin, curious, turned and followed her, an inquisitive gleam at the bottom of his eyes.

In the study, Charlotte sat down on the couch first. She glanced at Justin, who was about to close the door, her lips tightened, and a hint of indecision flickering in her eyes.

As the man sat down across from her, he gracefully folded his legs and looked at her worryingly, chuckling softly, "What's so important that you had to speak to me so seriously?"

His slightly teasing tone perfectly eased the tension.

After thinking for a few seconds, Charlotte spoke with a resigned look. "I'm going to participate in that reality show."

"A reality show?" Justin thought for a while, asking, "Is it the one Lincoln Smith mentioned the other day?"

Upon hearing this, Charlotte nodded and said, "I've been thinking about it for a few days. Fame is usually fleeting. Once the show has had its run and the hype has died down, it will be forgotten."

She paused slightly, smiling. "Producer Smith offered me a generous salary. I can make a lot of money, which is not bad at all."

Once she finished speaking, she looked up at Justin, observing his face.

Upon hearing this, a flash of displeasure crossed his eyes, "Being on a show is too high-profile. You are bound to become the subject of idle gossip. Don't you always say that you hate trouble?"

"I'm not afraid of being high-profile." Charlotte laughed and coaxed, "Besides, even if someone did target me, you'll be there, right?"

At her words, Justin's eyes flashed with admiration and surprise.

This seemed to be the first time since he had known Charlotte for so long that she spoke to him in such a tone.

For some reason, Justin, whose heart already stirred, put up a front and tried to tease Charlotte.

"But what if something irreversible happens when I let my guard down a little?"

His tone was undeniably playful.

Charlotte wrinkled her nose, looked up at him, almost instantaneously, a dangerous glint flashed in her eyes as she looked mockingly at him.

"Hmm? What did you say?"

The sound of her voice was clearly different from the playful tone she had just a moment ago. It was a drastic difference.

Her face changed, it was like a split-personality.

Looking at her expression, Justin stopped his antics and smiled, flicking his lips, "Just joking...I promise to follow you throughout the process."

As his words fell, Charlotte relaxed, she leaned back on the couch and murmured cheerfully.

"That's more like it."

Across from her, a man softly traced his thin lips with his index finger, his gaze focused on Charlotte, his eyes filled with laughter.

Chapter 625 - Generating Power for Love, Jordan

On the other side, within the living room.

All around was silence, broken only intermittently by the audible sighs of Jordan Thompson and Hank Thompson. Grace Thompson tugged on Jordan's arm, the young girl strained her neck to see, but still she could not understand what was written.

Cyrus Thompson held a document in his hands, he flipped a page and upon seeing the conditions set forth by the production team, his eyebrows rose in surprise.

By his side, Hank sat a little closer. He looked on with confusion, then reached out with his chubby little hand to count the zeros on the paper.

After he finished counting, he became even more bewildered, a look of surprise spreading across his fair baby face.

He looked up at his beloved uncle and after a pause, asked, "Uncle, why can participation in a variety show earn so much money?"

At this, Jordan's face showed a blank expression.

Jordan, who had always spent money liberally, never knew how much money could be considered a lot. But now, looking at a long list of zeros printed on white paper, he was suddenly silent.

The Thompson family was always elitist, with Henry Thompson succeeding Mr. Thompson's business; running the Thompson enterprise as capably as his father did, even his sister had exhibited a genius-like talent in design. In Ashton, within the design circle, Jordan's sister was revered and seen as a myth.

A inexplicable sadness welled up within him.

Of course, Jordan was not just an average person either; he had loved rock music for over a decade, but to date had not made much noticeable impact.

He took the contract dejectedly from Cyrus, sighed, and when he glanced at the last signature, his gaze paused.

Lincoln Smith?

This name was not at all unfamiliar to him; he often hears it when he is at the bar with friends discussing the gossip in the entertainment industry.

Although most of the conversations were somewhat off-topic, he had heard Lincoln Smith's name many times.

Apparently, Lincoln was also a legend in the circle.

Jordan felt his fragile little heart take another hit, and he leaned back, his tone incredibly heavy: "Really jealous that my sister was personally invited by Lincoln, with such good terms."

He looked up at the ceiling in distress, his body sprawled on the soft sofa in a "lay-back" pose.

He lamented, "Really don't know when my rock music will have its moment in the limelight, ideally to the point of extreme popularity. At that time, Grandfather should stop criticizing me for not being productive with my days."

Admittedly, Jordan's rock music always appealed to a niche market and was virtually ignored by everyone else.

Despite sinking a lot of money into it with no significant achievements, fortunately, Mr. Thompson, despite his frustrations, had never taken any substantial steps to stop him.

The plus side was that he could afford it, otherwise he would only be left with unrequited love for the music.

After sighing several times, Jordan's face bore a look of mournful distress.

Hearing his self-pitying murmurs, Hank alongside him could no longer sit still. He leaned over in a mysterious manner and said, "Uncle, don't be discouraged. Who says rock music has no future?"

Hearing this, Jordan paused, turning his head to look at his nephew. After a second, a glimmer of excitement flashed in his eyes, as if he had found a kindred spirit and was about to speak.

Who would have thought that Hank with a sly gleam in his eyes, paused for a moment and teased, "But Uncle..."

"If you happen to do rock music..."

He dragged out the last syllable in a suggestive manner, deliberately keeping Jordan in suspense.

Upon hearing the word "but", Jordan had a slightly bad feeling.

Chapter 626: Male Singer

A few seconds later, Hank hesitated to say something but seemed to fear dampening Jordan's enthusiasm, and immediately said in a gentle tone, "Don't worry, Uncle Jordan, I believe in you, miracles can happen."

Not everything he said was a joke. When Jordan was punished by the old man in Ashton, he would often boast about his proud rock music to Hank.

After hearing it, Hank had nightmares for several days straight and almost ran away with Jordan's drum set in the middle of the night.

The kids all laughed at his teasing tone.

Hearing his words clearly, Jordan feigned anger, grabbed Hank's collar and said, "You insolent brat, disrespecting your elders, are you itching for a beating?"

Unafraid, Hank, the terrible child, was not one to be easily beaten. He even turned his head and pulled a face at Jordan during his free time.

Jordan: "..."

Jordan's face was as black as a pot, gritting his teeth in anger. Although deep down he felt a heavy blow, he still held back from giving Hank a beating.

He quietly consoled himself.

It's my nephew, I can't resort to violence, I absolutely can't resort to violence.

After doing some psychological construction, Jordan released Hank's collar and snorted coldly, "I don't need to deal with a little brat."

With that said, he lowered his head and focused on the contract, ignoring everything else.

The contract had the program rules, and when he reached the end, Jordan's eyes lit up.

Reading out a clause as if to confirm he had understood correctly, he read it aloud, "The show will also invite a male singer to critique from a unique male perspective..."

A male singer!?

A man!?

Jordan's eyes shone brighter than the light, emitting a dazzling brilliance that could almost blind.

Just then, the study door opened and Charlotte, laughing, came out of the study. Before she could reach the couch, the children surrounded her, excitedly asking about the show.

After Charlotte patiently answered all their questions, she told them to wash up and go to sleep.

She yawned and finally felt sleepy as she sat down on the sofa. She reached for the laptop on the table, preparing to head to her bedroom.

Just as she stood up, Jordan, who was sitting on the sofa reading the contract, suddenly called out to her.

Charlotte turned around to see Jordan stand up abruptly, excitement clearly written all over his face.

"Sis, I've read your contract, this show is absolutely brilliant!"

Hearing this, Charlotte's eyes flashed with confusion, she nodded and asked, "So?"

"So..." Jordan stammered and scratched his head, continuing, "How about you take me along? Let me make an appearance."

As the words fell, Charlotte looked even more confused and asked, "The participants of the show are all females, why would a grown man like you want to join in?"

Jordan raised his eyebrows a little, "Sis, don't tell me you didn't read it properly."

He handed over the contract in his hand, then pointed at a few lines of text, saying, "They can accept a male singer."

Hearing this, Charlotte glanced at it and then looked away.

She now understood - Jordan wanted to participate in the show as a male singer.

However, it was clear that the people of Druarus were not very interested in rock music. She knew Jordan's love for amusement shouldn't mess with the show, so she decisively refused him.

After fruitless persuasion, Jordan had no choice but to sit back down on the sofa, disheartened.

Chapter 627: Worries

There was still more than a month to go before the television program started, yet, the producer Lincoln Smith was cheerfully making preparations along with the crew. He somehow even managed to get Charlotte's WeChat and messaged her every day.

Charlotte set a glass of water on the table, found a spot on the sofa in her slippers, and checked a message from Lincoln. She gave a nonchalant reply, then browsed his photos on his social media platform.

Lincoln's account was totally open; she could even look back at pictures from years ago when he was a chef participating in competitions and images from his daily life.

Exiting the page, she saw no new responses. Charlotte put down her phone, and glanced at her carefree brother, Jordan, sitting next to her.

Jordan turned to look at her too. When their gazes met, he scratched his head and gave an awkward laugh. "Big sister, is there no way to ease the situation a bit?" he asked.

Contemplating his question, she raised an eyebrow, thought for a moment, then replied, "Not at the moment. Let's talk about it once you've matured a bit."

Rejected again, Jordan's head sagged. He murmured disappointingly before reaching for the remote to channel surf.

Charlotte sighed reluctantly and got up, about to leave. Suddenly, she seemed to remember something, turned to the man across her, and said, "By the way, I have something to do tomorrow morning. Could you please cover for me for a couple of days?"

As her words faded, Justin's long legs bent slightly under the table. He casually picked up the glass of water she had just set down, lightly sipped it and smiled, "Understood."

His lips had just touched the faint lipstick mark on the cup. Seeing his Adam's apple moving, Charlotte's pupils dilated slightly as if her heart had been set aflame. Subconsciously turning her head away, she coughed lightly and said, "Well, I'm going to go wash up and get ready for bed."

With that, she turned, elevated her foot to take a step, a thin blush appearing on her cheeks. Yet, unbeknownst to her, a smile emerged on her face.

It was late, and all the children who had been bustling around on the sofa had obediently gone to bed. Charlotte came out of the bathroom, covered her yawning mouth with her hand, and then opened Grace's room door.

She wasn't really worried about the four other children, but she just couldn't help fretting over this young girl.

When Grace slept with Olivia, Annie was meticulous and would subconsciously pull the blanket over Grace if she woke up in the middle of the night.

Stepping lightly into the room, Charlotte noticed a small protrusion on the pink, vast bed. Drawing closer, she found Grace sleeping on her back with a colorful storybook lying across her face.

Charlotte let out a soft chuckle, gently picking up the book. Grace was sound asleep, drooling slightly.

She used a tissue to wipe off Grace's drool and then properly adjusted her blanket.

Grace's chubby, soft feet were poking out, her nails faintly pink. As Charlotte's warm hand touched them, Grace's furrowed eyebrows relaxed and she smacked her lips contentedly.

Chuckling softly, Charlotte's eyes softened with a touch of nostalgia.

Having brought up these six kids from such a young age, Cyrus and Hank didn't cause her much trouble; Olivia, even though she wasn't her child, was so understanding. When Annie entrusted her to Charlotte, Olivia didn't cry or fuss, she just silently looked at Charlotte with wide-open eyes.

However, Grace, Chad, and Jack were the ones who had given her a lot of worries.

Chapter 628: Enough to Explain Everything

Grace Thompson had a weak constitution since childhood due to her congenital condition.

Chad and Jack Thompson, on the other hand, were surrogate babies, making them a bit weaker compared to other children.

In a life-or-death situation, Charlotte Thompson never gave up. No one knows what power drove her to make it so far with her children.

The greater the hardship, the more unforgettable it becomes.

Maybe that's just how it is.

After sitting in Grace's room for a few minutes, Charlotte quietly retreated back to her own room.

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The next day.

Justin Battleson went to the office early in the morning, while Charlotte, who had already taken a leave of absence, leisurely entered the kitchen to make breakfast.

At breakfast, as if he remembered something, Jordan Thompson worked hard to swallow his food and asked, "Sis, what are you planning to do with your day off today?"

Upon hearing this, Charlotte's expression didn't change at all, as if something had occurred to her. After a moment, she said, "Well, I guess I should at least tell Henry about going on the show."

The unexpected mention of Henry Hudson brought a look of disappointment across Jordan Thompson's face.

He stirred the white porridge in his bowl occasionally, with an unusually serious tone.

After a brief pause, he continued, "Sis, I always feel that Henry still hasn't gotten over you. Last time when we went to his house, the way he looked at you, that was telling enough."

Henry Hudson had always been calm and composed. He could hide all his thoughts deep within himself. But when it comes to Charlotte, he hides nothing.

Tenderness and softness are written all over his face.

The room suddenly fell silent. Charlotte lowered her eyes, a hint of an unclear emotion flashing across them. After a while, she gently shook her head and said, "It's hard to explain."

It's hard to explain.

But time wears down everything, and eventually, there will be a satisfying answer.

Henry Hudson is still her best friend.

After breakfast, Charlotte changed into her clothes, grabbed the car keys, and asked, "I can drop the children off at the nursery on my way..... would you like to come?"

Knowing what Charlotte was asking, he paused for a moment and then shook his head and said, "No."

Seeing the look in Henry Hudson's eyes, he inexplicably felt guilty for his sister.

It seems he should involve himself less in these matters.

After seeing his reply, Charlotte nodded unsurprisingly. She took Grace's hand and said, "Let's go."

After dropping the children off at the nursery, she drove straight to Henry Hudson's apartment. As she parked in front of the apartment and unbuckled her seatbelt, she unexpectedly saw a familiar car in the rearview mirror.

As she saw the car park in front of her and stopped, Charlotte got out of her car, and saw a familiar figure who also got out of his car.

Their movements were remarkably similar.

After closing the car door with one hand, she stood on the spot, pressing her lips lightly and smiling.

Locking eyes with a somewhat bewildered man not far away, she suddenly felt a sense of empathy, as if they were united by mutual understanding.

There were two small gardens on either side of the apartment building. The flowers in the garden were in full bloom, decorated with morning dew adorning the colorful petals, making them look beautiful and vibrant.

The man opposite was dressed in a perfectly tailored black suit, his eyes were gentle and welcoming.

Still the same man in her memories.

The first ray of morning sunshine shone down, and he saw a lady who was wearing a light blue long dress looking at him with a smiling, tilted head.

"Aren't you going to invite me in?"

Chapter 629: Reminiscing the Past

Entering the living room of the apartment, Charlotte Thompson naturally made herself comfortable on the sofa, while Henry Hudson, trailing behind, handed her a glass of water.

Accepting the glass, the welcoming warmth flowed continuously into her palm. Leaning back, Charlotte watched as Henry took a seat across from her.

His lips curling up slightly, he asked, "What brought you here today?"

At his words, Charlotte pressed her lips together and gave a somewhat embarrassed smile. "I've been meaning to visit for a while, but just haven't found the time."

With the constantly delayed progress at the company, it wasn't until recently that she managed to catch up and find the time to reconnect with Henry.

And with the sudden opportunity presented by a variety TV show, she simply thought she should let him know.

Hearing her response, a subtle, pleasant surprise flickered in Henry's eyes.

Clearing her throat, Charlotte gripped her cup, took a few seconds to collect her thoughts, and then began to speak slowly.

"I plan to participate in a variety show," she paused, then added, "what do you think?"

"A variety show?"

A hint of surprise crossed Henry's eyes, followed by a questioning tone.

From what he knew, Charlotte was not really interested in this sort of thing.

After thinking for a bit, he replied lightly, "How come you decided to join in?"

Hearing his question, of course, Charlotte was too embarrassed to admit that she was moved by the lunch Lincoln Smith had sent her. She pondered for a few seconds and said, "The offer was too generous to refuse, and their attitude was really sincere."

As she finished speaking, a hint of amusement passed through Henry's eyes.

He knew Charlotte too well, and could discern the veracity of her words in an instant.

No doubt the offer was indeed generous, and their approach was sincere, but those weren't the main reasons.

If she wouldn't say it, then he wouldn't ask either.

After sharing her news, Charlotte seemed to run out of things to talk about, while Henry remained silent.

A somewhat odd, awkward ambiance permeated the air. The two sat across from each other, Henry bearing an unbelievably calm expression.

The chirping of birds seeping in from the window, crisp and clear, seemingly heralding the arrival of a new season.

Slightly pressing her lips together, as if suddenly remembering something, she raised her eyes to Henry and asked, "When I got here, you had just returned from outside...."

The rest of her sentence was left unsaid, curiosity apparent in her eyes.

In response, Henry chuckled lightly. Flicking some nonexistent dust off his sleeve cuff, he softly said, "There was a lot to do at the hospital; I ended up working all night by accident."

Upon hearing this, Charlotte finally noticed the signs of deep fatigue beneath his eyes and the beginning traces of stubble on his chin.

A strange sensation filled her heart, and with a small frown, she asked, "Haven't you eaten yet?"

With a nonchalant nod, he replied, "It doesn't really matter if I don't, I'm used to it."

Upon hearing this, Charlotte scowled deeply. Standing up as she spoke, she declared, "How can you not eat? Wait here, I'll cook for you."

Henry was about to object when he noticed Charlotte heading towards the kitchen and closed his mouth, the corner of his lips slightly lifting instead.

Meanwhile, in the kitchen...

Charlotte opened the refrigerator to whip up a couple of dishes, only to find it almost empty – only a few eggs and some ginger and garlic were lying deserted.

Upon seeing this, the hand she was about to reach into the fridge froze in place.

Right, Henry didn't cook much at home.

Chapter 630: An Empty Space

With a flicker in her eyes, she found an unopened pack of noodles on the cabinet nearby.

Well, she'd just make do with noodles.

Not too long after, a delicious aroma wafted from the kitchen. Carefully arranging the two eggs on top of the noodles with chopsticks, Charlotte Thompson carried the bowl out, satisfied with her work.

Lifting her gaze, she started to speak: "You're out of vegetables. I made you some noodle soup, you..."

Her words stopped abruptly, a flicker of surprise flashed in her eyes as she instinctively stepped lighter.

The man on the chair was leaning slightly back. His warm, tranquil eyes even more relaxed, his breathing regular, an air of leisure added to his profile.

His eyelashes trembled slightly, casting a beautiful shadow across his eyes. The light seeping in from the window landed on his picturesque brow and eyes.

Charlotte sighed gently and placed the bowl of noodles on the table before settling herself on the sofa.

The steam was still coming off the soup. Once it cooled down a bit, she woke Henry Hudson up.

He opened his eyes, a glint of disorientation in them. When he came to his senses, he sat up, gave Charlotte Thompson an apologetic smile and said, "How long was I asleep?"

At that, Charlotte shook her head and pushed the bowl toward him. "Just fifteen minutes or so. Eat while it's hot, or it'll get cold."

Having said that, she stood up from the sofa and pondered for a few seconds before deciding to speak.

"Henry, I've got something else to take care of. I'll get going then."

Henry Hudson paused for a second, subtly managing a soft laugh, then said, "I won't keep you then. Be safe out there."

Nodding, Charlotte Thompson turned around to leave. As a soft clicking sound of the closing door echoed in the living room, Henry uncontrollably glanced out the window.

Only when he saw Charlotte's car slowly disappearing outside the apartment did he retract his gaze, his eyes lowered in thought, feeling a void unexpectedly growing in his heart.

...

On the other side, Charlotte Thompson drove straight to the hospital.

Annie Anne's health was gradually improving. Aside from occasional bouts of emotional instability and excessive sleep, nothing else seemed out of the ordinary.

Walking into the ward, she saw Oliver Hudson gently wiping Annie's face, the latter staring blankly at nothing.

The room was unusually silent, nobody was speaking.

Charlotte Thompson stood in the doorway, unwilling to break the quietness.

Visibly, Oliver Hudson was no longer the man he used to be. His guilt and love for Annie were plainly visible after months of constant care removed his usual sharp demeanor, leaving only endless patience and tenderness.

Of course, this was only for Annie Anne.

Charlotte hadn't forgotten the kind of man Oliver Hudson was: a smart businessman who excelled in strategies and calculations, always pursuing maximum gain and minimal loss.

For Annie Anne, he had finally stepped away from this persona.

Now, he seemed just like an everyday husband and father.

That was all he was.

A flood of sentiment surged inside Charlotte Thompson, causing her to space out.

Not far away, Oliver Hudson placed the warm towel in the basin and started to carry the basin out. He looked up, catching sight of Charlotte Thompson.

A flicker of surprise crossed his eyes, he nodded slightly with an acknowledging smile and then left the room.

Annie Anne also saw Charlotte, her face revealing evident joy. She quickly made space beside her and gestured Charlotte to join her, her voice filled with excitement, "Charlotte, come sit here."