

## The Kiss 991

### Chapter 991

That time, on the way to the countryside.

Bawling her eyes out, Patricia reproached her mother, "Mom, look at the mess you've made! Now we're being shipped off to the boondocks!"

Xenia was already feeling low, and her daughter's reproach only made it worse.

"Patri, I can take it from others, but how could you say that to me? Who am I doing all this for, if not you?"

Patricia, at this point, had no patience to understand her mother and retorted, "I know you did it for me, but you didn't help at all. You just made things worse! Mom, we would've been better off admitting our mistakes in front of Grandpa and Grandma; maybe they would have given us another chance instead of sending us off to the countryside!"

Xenia felt a pang in her chest due to her daughter's words, "Now you're blaming me? Didn't you also fail to admit your mistake in time? And how could we have admitted it? Once admitted, it becomes something that can't be changed. You wouldn't have a chance to prove your innocence ever again!"

Patricia understood the logic, of course. She just felt that even the worst outcome would be better than being banished to the boonies! She **didn't** fancy the desolate countryside one bit!

Grandpa said they were to live in the countryside, but he didn't specify for how long. Would they ever be allowed back?

There were so many servants accompanying them on this trip, obviously assigned by Grandpa to keep an eye on them. Once they reached the countryside, they probably wouldn't even have the freedom to leave the mansion!

This was not the life she wanted!

The more she thought about it, the more unwilling Patricia felt, and the more she wanted to cry...

Seeing her daughter cry so bitterly, Xenia, despite her annoyance at Patricia's reproach and misunderstanding, still felt a twinge of pity for her. After all, she was relying on Patricia for her future!

So, Xenia patted her daughter's shoulder, trying to console Patricia, "All right, all right! No more crying! Patri now's not the time for us to be at each other's throats! If we let differences come between us, wouldn't that just make Ellinor happy, giving her a good laugh?"

Hearing her mother mention Ellinor would laugh at them, Patricia tried hard to stop crying. She wouldn't let that detestable Ellinor laugh at her...

She wiped her tears and looked up at her mother, "What can we do now? I've lost my brother's trust and affection, lost the love of my grandparents, the sympathy of my father, and even the opportunity to kidnap Theo. There's no way to turn things around!"

Xenia thought for a moment and checked what the servants around them were doing. Some were on their phones, and others were dozing off. Then, she whispered to her daughter, "I don't have an effective plan to change the situation right now. We need some time to think it over."

Patricia thought her mother had some new idea, but instead, she heard this useless sentence and frowned. Did her mother really need to whisper such a thing in her ear?

Then, Xenia continued, "The most important thing now is we absolutely can't be sent to the mansion in the countryside. Once we're there, we'll surely be watched by your grandfather's people!"

Patricia

was slightly taken aback. She agreed with her mother but muttered, "But we're already on the way!"

Xenia gestured subtly towards the nervous and timid child in the back row, "Baber is here too, isn't he? We can use him..."

## **Chapter 992**

After listening to her mother, Patricia looked back at Baber in the backseat and then exchanged a knowing look with Xenia.

Patricia then moved to sit next to Baber in the backseat.

Baber, who was initially quiet, instinctively moved away when he saw Patricia coming. Apart from fear and dread, he had no other expectations for this woman who played the role of his mother.

Patricia subtly reached out and pinched Baber's arm hard. When she heard Baber cry out in pain, she loudly asked, "Baber? What's wrong with you,

Baber?"

Then, feigning worry, she touched Baber's forehead and said, "Oh my, you're burning up!"

Xenia played along and asked, "What's going on? Is the kid running a fever?"

Patricia nodded and said, "Mom, Baber has a fever. What should we do?"

Xenia continued, "What else can we do? Go to the hospital! Quick, Baber has a fever. Turn the car around and take us to the hospital!"

The servants hesitated.

Xenia frowned and said sternly, "The child has a fever. What are you hesitating for? Even though he is adopted, Dean Howard and Alyssa recognize him as their own now. If anything happens to him, can you bear the responsibility?"

The servants looked at each other.

One of them said, "Madam, there's a local hospital not far ahead. Should we take Baber there first?"

Xenia exclaimed, "What? A local hospital? Are you suggesting we take Baber to an unprofessional clinic? What if they misdiagnose and delay Baber's treatment? Can you take responsibility?"

The servants, after some consideration, had no choice but to turn around and take them to the city hospital.

Half an hour later, they arrived at the city hospital. After registering for emergency care, Patricia and Xenia took Baber into the emergency room.

The servant who followed them was waiting outside the consulting room, but after a long wait, he didn't see them come out.

Therefore, he went into the emergency room to check, only to find the doctor was attending to another patient, and Patricia and Xenia were nowhere to be seen.

The doctor, irritated by the intrusion, gruffly said, "Who let you in? Line up if you want to see a doctor. One at a time!"

The servant asked the doctor, "Where are the people who came in with a child?"

The doctor frowned and said, "You mean those two women? They asked me to give their child an injection to reduce his fever. I told them to wait in the injection area behind the curtain. When I prepared the medication and lifted the curtain, they were gone."

The servant glanced behind the curtain and saw a window that was left open. The emergency room was on the ground floor, and one could easily exit the hospital through the window.

The servant immediately sensed that something was off and quickly called home to report the situation.

Patricia and Xenia, carrying Baber, hastily left the hospital and hailed a taxi.

Once they were in the cab, Patricia finally breathed a sigh of relief, "Mom, where are we going next?"

Xenia replied, "I have a vacant apartment *on* the Third Ring Road. The Howard family doesn't know about it. We can stay there for now and plan our next

move:

Patricia nodded, feeling exhausted. It was good to have a place to go.

## **Chapter 993**

Initially, she was worried about what to do if they couldn't get to the hotel, as staying at a hotel would leave a record, and they would undoubtedly be traced and sent back to the countryside.

At this moment, Baber was quietly crying in her arms. He had no understanding of what was happening, but the unsettling feeling filled him with extreme fear. He was now afraid to cry out loud, only managing to suppress his voice.

But how could Patricia, holding him, not hear his crying?

Ever since she found out that this child had no utility for her, Patricia had begun to see him as a burden with no patience or affection. “Why are you crying? So annoying!”

Baber didn’t know what he did wrong, looking at her with unease and a desire to please, “Mom, Mom...”

Patricia said with disgust, “Don’t call me mom. I’m definitely not your mom! Let me tell you, I haven’t abandoned you, and I’m already taking care of your food and drink every day. You better not cause trouble for me. Otherwise, I’ll kick you out of the car right now!”

After saying this, she no longer held him and irritably placed him aside to sit on his own.

Baber felt wronged, but he didn’t dare to **cry** anymore, forcing back his tears...

They arrived at the apartment on the Third Ring Road that Xenia had purchased under someone else’s name.

Patricia took a bath to relax and calm down before discussing their plans with her mother.

Coming out of the bathroom, she saw her phone vibrating. Patricia looked, and her eyes revealed a hint of annoyance. It was her foolish friend Haillie Knotts calling.

Haillie had previously promised to help her deal with Ellinor Mendoza, but so much time had passed, and there had been no movement at all. She was such an unreliable person!

Patricia blow-dried her hair without answering the call.

After blow-drying her hair, she saw her phone still vibrating, and it was Haillie calling again.

Patricia finally answered the call with impatience, “Hello?”

Haillie’s tone was extremely anxious, “Patricia, why did

Patricia answered, “Haillie, I was in the

*you only* answer the call now?”

*r just now*

*Only?*

and didn’t hear it. What’s

*you* can help me p

wrong? Do you need something?”

Haillie’s voice was trembling, “Patricia, can you help m

Patricia furrowed her brows irritably. She herself was struggling, so where would she find the time to help someone else?

“What’s going on?” Patricia asked.

Haillie sighed sadly, "Didn't I say I would help you deal with Ellinor? I've spent money hiring someone to watch Ellinor. I had him find a chance to run over Ellinor with a car. If he ended up in prison because of this, I was going to compensate his family with a sum of money. He agreed after taking the money. Then, yesterday, that person finally found an opportunity and drove a van toward Ellinor... Who would have thought that Theo would find that driver today and the driver was beaten by people sent by Theo? He ended up revealing me!"

"What should I do? I'll definitely be held accountable by Theo! Patricia, can you help me convince Theo? Only you can help me now..."

Hearing Haillie's words, Patricia was somewhat surprised and puzzled, "Did that person run into Ellinor yesterday? Then why does she look perfectly fine today, hopping around as if nothing happened?"

Haillie replied, "That person actually didn't hit Ellinor because Balfour was right beside her at the time. He rushed to protect her immediately, so that person actually hit Balfour. Balfour got injured, but Ellinor is completely unscathed."

## **Chapter 994**

Patricia's eyes widened in disbelief. Was he risking his life for Ellinor? No way, something was fishy!

Seeing Patricia lost in her thoughts, Haillie nudged, "Patricia, why are you silent? You gotta help me out! If Theo really gets on our case, the Knotts family is done for!"

Snapping back, Patricia replied, "Haillie, it's not that I don't want to help, but I can't! Ugh!"

Haillie was puzzled. "Patricia, how can you not help? You're Theo's lifesaver, and he always listens to you!"

Patricia sighed heavily, a hint of sadness in her voice. "Haillie, you don't know what's been happening. Theo no longer sees me as his lifesaver; he won't listen to me anymore..."

Haillie was taken aback. "What? How's that possible? Everyone knows you risked your life to save Theo, even got left with infertility because of it. Does Theo deny all that? He's not like that!"

Patricia shed a tear. "It's Ellinor... She claimed in front of Theo that she was his real lifesaver, not me. Theo believed her and didn't regard me anymore. And today, my mom and I were kicked out of the Howard family by my grandpa and sent to live in the countryside. All thanks to Ellinor! Because of her, I've lost everything! Haillie, I really want to help, but I can't. I'm sorry..."

As she spoke, she started crying again...

Haillie was both shocked and furious. "What? Ellinor managed to convince Theo she was his lifesaver. And how did she manage to get you, who's always been the apple of your family's eye, kicked out to the countryside? How the hell did she get that much power?"

Patricia's tone was tinged with irony. "If Ellinor can make my brother risk his life for her, what can't she do?"

Knowing Haillie's protective feelings for her brother, Patricia intentionally riled her up.

Haillie complained loudly on the other end of the phone. "Ellinor is a real piece of work!"

Patricia rolled her eyes before adding, "Haillie, I'm in no position to help you now. Unless Ellinor leaves Theo, things won't look up for us..."

Haillie frowned in worry and said, "But how can we get Ellinor to leave Theo?"

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Patricia insinuated, "Haillie, since that driver's been found by Theo and confessed about you, it's only a matter of time before Theo comes to settle the score with you and the Knotts family.

But, if Ellinor were out of the picture, Theo's heart might return to me. Then maybe I can persuade him for you..."

Haillie paused

for a moment, understanding Patricia's implication. She then seemed resolved and said, "Patricia, I know what to do! Just wait for my good news!"

With that, she hung up.

Patricia smirked, hoping Haillie would handle this more cleanly to avoid future trouble.

Xenia walked into her daughter's room, noticing her deep in thought by the window. She approached and asked, "Patri, what's on your mind? I've got some food sent up. Come have a bite!"

Patricia snapped out of her thoughts

and turned to her mother. "Mom," she said meaningfully, "did you know my brother had a car accident yesterday?"

## Chapter 995

Xenia was taken aback, and she started to question, "Balfour had a car accident? What's the deal? He didn't seem to come home last night. Was it because of the accident?"

Patricia squinted her eyes, showing a crafty smirk, "Maybe! He probably didn't want to cause concern for Grandpa and Grandma, so he didn't come home."

Xenia didn't have any affection for her stepson Balfour, and he didn't respect her much either. If he bit the dust because of the accident, she wouldn't bat an eyelid, and she might even be glad.

Only if Balfour kicked the bucket could Byran take the reins of the Howard Group. Once Byran became the heir, she wouldn't need to kiss anyone's ass in the Howard family anymore.

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Patricia in reality, didn't care much about Balfour's fate either. She knew since she was a kid that Balfour's attraction to her was only because she reminded him of Pearl Howard, something she had to scheme hard to achieve.

She was pondering something else, or rather, a possibility...

"Mom, do you know how my bro got into this accident?"

Xenia replied nonchalantly, I couldn't care less how he got into the accident! He doesn't treat *you* well anymore anyway, Patri. Why are you still worrying about him? Just forget him."

Patricia shook her head, "No, I'm not worrying about him. I'm suspecting something."

Xenia was taken aback, "What's that?"

Patricia explained, "Yesterday, a car almost hit Ellinor, and my bro got injured trying to protect her."

Xenia found it unbelievable, "Balfour risked his life for Ellinor?"

Patricia's eyes darkened, "Right? Mom, you find it weird too, right? How can my cold-hearted bro risk his life for a woman?"

Xenia didn't understand Patricia's real concern and just said disdainfully, "Isn't it because Ellinor knows how to lead men by the nose? Even your bro couldn't escape her charm!"

Patricia furrowed her brows, "No! My brother's feelings for Ellinor definitely aren't romantic!"

Xenia asked in confusion, "If it's **not** romantic, then what is it? Isn't that all there is between a man and a woman?"

Patricia looked at her mother seriously and speculated cautiously, "If my brother had romantic feelings for Ellinor, then he should be disgusted by Ellinor being with Theo, right? But he didn't show any signs of jealousy. Instead, he was very concerned about Ellinor and was even nicer to Theo... Mom, don't you think it's weird? It totally defies logic!"

Xenia found her daughter's speculation reasonable and nodded, "Hmm, now that you mention it, it does make sense! Patri, what kind of feelings do you suspect your bro has for Ellinor now?"

Patricia was silent for a few seconds, and then she voiced the possibility she least wanted to face, "Mom, do you think Ellinor could be the long-lost Pearl? In this world, isn't Pearl the only one who could make my bro take risks?"

At the mention of the name Pearl, Xenia's face turned serious immediately. What she had been most worried about these years was that the missing Marlinie would come back with her daughter, Pearl.

"Is that possible?\*

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Patricia stated firmly, "This is the only logical explanation I can think of. Otherwise, I can't understand why my brother is so into Ellinor! And my dad, don't you think the way he looks at Ellinor and talks to her is kind of weird?"

Just thinking about McNeil's reaction to seeing Ellinor made Xenia terrified, "If it's really as you fear, we must get Ellinor out of here!"

A flicker of determination appeared in Patricia's eyes, "Ellinor certainly can't stay, but we better not get our hands dirty ourselves."

"If we don't do it ourselves, who's gonna help us out?"

"Mom, I've already arranged for someone to handle the Ellinor. We don't need to rush. Just wait for the result."

Xenia looked at her daughter in confusion and asked, "Who?"

Patricia replied, "If she succeeds, you'll know."

Xenia trusted her daughter wouldn't randomly pick someone unreliable for this risky task, so she didn't ask further, "Okay, Patricia, go grab a bite! And get your adopted child to eat something as well. He's been ignoring me, won't eat when I ask him to, and won't even eat when I feed him; he's such a pain!" A hint of annoyance appeared in Patricia's eyes, "If he doesn't eat, just leave him be. If he starves to death, it's one less burden for me!"

The Howard family's mansion.

Ellinor explained to the two elderly members of the Howard family that the reason she skipped school during high school was because she had already learned all there was to learn, and due to financial difficulties, she saved class time to work and earn some living expenses.

She wasn't lying about working.

At that time, she had just started Crescent Society, and her company was just getting off the ground, so she was busy every day.

Her job was at her own company, so she wasn't lying.

The main thing was she didn't want too many people to know her identity.

Also, she didn't take the entrance exam and was already accepted by many renowned schools, so she didn't really need to take the entrance exam, but she still went that day.

The university she applied to wasn't Creston University.

Later, it was the president of Creston University who found her and persuaded her to come to Creston University after much persuasion.

She clarified all this to the two elderly members of the Howard family just to prevent Xenia and Patricia from misleading them again.



At the same time, she also told the two elderly members of the Howard family how Xenia and Patricia had sent people to the countryside to investigate her and how they had been spreading rumors about her on the internet.

After listening to Ellinor's detailed explanations, Dean and Alyssa felt both heartbroken and guilty for Ellinor.

They were heartbroken that she had to work from such a young age to make ends meet and couldn't concentrate on studying.

They felt guilty about how Xenia and Patricia had treated Ellinor...

Alyssa held Ellinor's hand and said, "Ellinor, we believe everything you've told us! Don't worry; we'll give you a fair deal. Xenia and our foolish granddaughter will get their just desserts; your Grandpa Dean has already sent them to the countryside for reflection."

Dean nodded, "Ellinor, I'm sorry for the trouble you've gone through! We won't let them off easily just because they're our family!"

## Chapter 997

Ellinor glanced at the old couple from the Howard family, feeling their affection, then remembered the dissatisfaction she had heard about her mom when she first arrived at, her heart filled with sarcasm and indifference.

If they knew she was the kid of Marlinie, whom they disliked, their attitudes would change, right?

Ellinor coolly withdrew her hand, and while smiling, she said, "Well, thanks for believing in me."

Their so-called "punishment" for Xenia and Patricia was just sending them to a country house.

Was that punishment?

To her, it was more like a vacation!

The house had everything they needed; they could enjoy delicious food and fine wine, only the long-term stay might be a bit lonely.

Compared to the way the Howard family punished her mom, this light punishment was nothing, right?

Ellinor's lips held a polite smile, but her eyes were cold, "By the way, I want to discuss something with you."

Alyssa spoke gently, "Just tell us what it is. If Grandpa Dean and I can do it, we'll definitely satisfy you!"

Dean echoed, "Yes, Ellinor, just name it!"

Ellinor kept smiling, "I didn't come to you because Mrs. Howard and Ms. Howard slandered me, and I just want to discuss something with you." Dean and Alyssa exchanged looks, not knowing what Ellinor wanted to discuss. They could only sense that despite her politeness, she seemed distant.

Alyssa said, "Okay, Ellinor, what is it that you want to discuss with us?"

Ellinor spoke indifferently, "Ms. Howard had previously claimed to be the lifesaver of Mr. Blanchet and falsely claimed that she became infertile because of saving Mr. Blanchet, making him feel guilty."

Although Dean wasn't there at the time, he also heard about it and felt ashamed of his granddaughter's behavior.

"Uh, we know about that. Ellinor, do you want Patri to apologize or compensate you in some way?"

Ellinor shook her head, "No, we don't need her apology or compensation. But previously, Ms. Howard used the excuse of her infertility and her love for children to persuade Mr. Blanchet to adopt a child from abroad with her, and they named him Baber.

Later, everyone found out that Ms. Howard was not infertile, and she could still have her own children.

As far as I know, the child wasn't well taken care of by Ms. Howard, often getting injured and sick. I also heard that Ms. Howard became very indifferent to him once she realized the child was no longer useful to her.

So, I was thinking, if Ms. Howard doesn't like the child and doesn't want to take responsibility for him, can we let Mr. Blanchet take the child? After all, Mr. Blanchet is also one of the child's legal guardians."

She had promised Baber that she would help him, and she intended to keep her word.

Baber reminded her of her helpless self when she was a child...

However, when Ellinor stated what she wanted to discuss, Dean, Alyssa, and McNeil all looked at her with surprise and disbelief.

## Chapter 998

McNeil asked with a bit of surprise, "You don't mind Theo Blanchet taking the kid he adopted with Patri to live with him?"

Ellinor glanced at McNeil, Whether I mind or not doesn't matter. The kid is back in the picture, and someone has to raise him. Anyway, it's not the kid's fault."

McNeil looked at her with a hint of admiration.

Where could you find a girl who is this open-hearted, willing to accept a child her husband adopted with another woman?

At this point, the butler for the Howard family rushed over and whispered something in Dean's ear, and his face instantly darkened, "What? Send more people to search immediately!"

The butler nodded and took the order, then turned to leave.

Dean looked at Ellinor with a complex expression, "Ellinor, why don't you go home and rest for today? As for the kid, we'll think about whether to let you and the Blanchet family take him."

Ellinor nodded and said, "All right, I'll wait for your message then. I'll take my leave now."

She then stood up, bid everyone politely, and prepared to leave.

McNeil also stood up, "Let me walk you out."

Ellinor was pretty cold towards this irresponsible father. There was a hint of rejection in her eyes, "Please stay. I know my way out; no need for you to accompany me."

McNeil stopped in his tracks rather helplessly, "All right then, take care on your way."

"Mm," Ellinor responded briefly, then turned to leave.

Once she left the Howard family's gate, she got into a black car that was waiting for her.

In the car, Theo was sprawled out in the back seat, his long fingers tapping away at a laptop. Hearing Ellinor get in the car, he glanced at her, "Did you clear things up with the Howard family?"

Ellinor nodded and retorted, "All explained."

Theo tapped a few more keys, then closed the laptop, gently caressing her cheek, "It was their people who framed you. Now that it's all clear, you didn't really need to explain anything to them anymore."

Ellinor said, "I've explained everything to the elders of the Howard family to prevent Patricia and her mother from finding more opportunities to prove their innocence and continue causing trouble. Their actions didn't affect me much, but the losses to the Blanchet Corporation are irreversible. Although the Blanchet Corporation's stocks are recovering, we still need to be especially careful and not give them more opportunities to stir things up."

Theo looked at her deeply, smiling slightly, "Not bad; are you thinking about me?"

Ellinor ignored his joke, "By the way, I asked the Howard family for the custody of Baber. They said they would consider it and let us know."

Theo was slightly taken aback, "Why?"

Ellinor glared at him, "You're Baber's adoptive father. You can't just shirk your responsibilities. Besides, don't you think Baber is rather miserable at the Howard family? He's been deeply hurt by Patricia.

Patricia doesn't really love Baber. Initially, she was only using him to control you. Now that she can't use him to control you anymore, Baber has no value to her, and she wouldn't treat him well.

You're also one of Baber's legal guardians. If you bring him to your side, he at least wouldn't get hurt anymore."

Theo looked at her deeply, "If I bring Baber over, you wouldn't mind?"

Ellinor shrugged, "To say I wouldn't mind at all would be a lie! But Baber is adorable. If you bring him over, I can start learning how to take care of a child." Theo stared at her for a while, then held her, "I'm sorry I didn't discuss with you about adopting Baber."

Ellinor rested quietly against his chest, her eyes downcast, "There are many things we can't help. You were morally blackmailed by Patricia back then. I understand how you felt

Upon hearing Ellinor's words, Theo's eyes trembled slightly.

## Chapter 999

"Ellinor."

"Ah?"

The man gently lifted her chin and then kissed her passionately.

Ellinor's eyes widened slightly, feeling a bit awkward about the sudden action from the man. She pushed his chest with both hands but couldn't push him away, so she gave up resisting.

After a while, the man finally released her with satisfaction, allowing her to breathe freely.

Then, he took a deep breath, exhaling slightly, and said to her, "Darling, I might be very busy in the coming period, shuttling between domestic and international matters. I won't be able to come home every day."

The flush on Ellinor's face faded, and she raised an eyebrow slightly. "Are you dealing with foreign business?"

The man nodded and said, "Yes, you can say that. But whenever I have time, I'll try to come home and be with you."

Ellinor thought for a moment. "Which countries are you going to? Maybe I can go with you?"

Theo's eyes brightened, a hint of a smile in his eyes as he asked, "You want to come with me?"

Ellinor frowned and glared at him with a touch of petulance. "I don't have much to do lately. If I go with you, it can be considered a trip!"

Theo just chuckled softly, his large hand gently patting her head. "You stay home and rest well. I'll come back to be with you whenever I have time."

Ellinor stayed silent for a moment and then nodded.

"All right."

Twenty minutes later, the car stopped at the entrance of the Blanchet family's estate.

Theo patted Ellinor's head again and instructed, "You go back home first. Remember to eat well. I need to go to the company for a while and will be back to be with you in the evening."

The stock market of the Blanchet family hadn't fully recovered yet, and he probably had a lot of things to handle right now. Ellinor understood that, so she obediently got out of the car, lazily waved to him, and then turned to walk toward the grand entrance of the Blanchet family.

The man inside the car watched her walk to the entrance, then raised his chin slightly, gesturing for the driver to start.

Ellinor was about to enter the password for the Blanchet family's entrance when her phone suddenly rang.

She took out her phone and saw an unfamiliar incoming call. She answered, and the person on the other end immediately called out her name, sounding quite unpleasant, "Ellinor!"

"Who is this?" Ellinor asked.

The person on the other end said, "Step back three paces, and you'll see me."

Ellinor turned to look behind her; there was no one there. She looked left and right as well, but she couldn't see anyone's figure.

'I'm sorry, I don't have time to play this boring game with you.'

After speaking, she was about to hang up the phone. The person on the other end seemed to sense that she was about to hang up and hurriedly said, "Wait! Don't hang up!"

## Chapter 1000

Just as Ellinor was about to hang up the phone, she halted, "Spill it. Who are you, and what's up?"

The other party answered, "I'm near you! Look to your left, and you'll see who I am!"

Ellinor's gaze quickly shifted to the left, where she saw a silhouette waving at her from an alleyway..

It was Haillie, a face she hadn't seen in a while.

She had used a voice changer during the call, so Ellinor hadn't recognized her voice.

If Haillie had nothing to hide, she wouldn't use a voice changer, so Ellinor guessed something was up.

Ellinor watched cautiously and chuckled into the phone, "Haillie, is that you? If you need me, just say so. No need for these cloak and dagger games. You think it's fun or something?"

Haillie stood at the intersection, "I do need you. Come here; we need to talk."

Ellinor wasn't fooled. She politely laughed, "I'll pass. I'm almost at the Blanchet's. You can come in with me, and we can talk there."

After a failed car accident yesterday, Haillie was now being hunted citywide by Theo's people. She didn't dare to go home, stay in a hotel, or even step foot into the Blanchet's house!

"I can't go to the Blanchet's. I heard Putnam and Marissa Blanchet are back. It'd be awkward to talk with them around. Come here, let's find a place without people."

Haillie was Patricia's good friend and was often used by her. Now that she was looking for Ellinor, it must be about Patricia again.

Ellinor wasn't playing ball, and she calmly said, "Then, I'm sorry. I'm dog tired today. If you're not up for coming to the Blanchet's with me, we'll have to pick this up some other day."

With that, Ellinor hung up and prepared to go in.

Listening to the busy signal, Haillie gritted her teeth.

Ellinor was still as difficult as ever!

Thinking of the task she had to complete today, Haillie quickly caught up with her before she could go in, "Hold up!"

Ellinor was about to enter, but hearing Haillie's voice, she turned around and, while smiling, she questioned Haillie, "Changed your mind, Haillie? Ready to come in?"

Haillie frowned, "Do I have a choice? You won't come out and talk with me!"

If she hadn't just seen Theo drive away without getting out of the car, she wouldn't dare to go into the Blanchet's place.

While Theo wasn't home, she could seize this opportunity to sort out some stuff...

Ellinor smiled and said, "Well, come on in then!"

And with that, she led Haillie into the Blanchet's.

In the Blanchet's living room, Putnam, Marissa, and Veronica Blanchet were having lunch.

Hearing the entrance, Marissa looked up and saw Ellinor, immediately smiling, "Ellinor's back! Perfect timing, wash your hands, and join us for lunch!"

After changing into slippers, Ellinor entered the room, greeted her grandparents, and then said, "Grandma, I've got a friend over. We've got some stuff to talk about. Can we have lunch sent up to my room so we can chat while we eat?"