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Frowning, Theodore looked around. Seeing that there was indeed no one in the kitchen, he turned off the stove and called Ariana. However, there was no reply.

It was dark outside and the rain was still falling heavily.

Theodore looked for Ariana everywhere on the first floor but did not see her. His face darkened and he had such a complicated expression that it was hard to tell whether he was nervous or angry. His first guess was that she had run away.

He came out of the side hallway and pulled out his cell phone expressionlessly. He intended to send someone to catch Ariana as soon as possible. Just as he was about to make the call, he heard a heavy fall coming from the greenhouse.

He rushed there and to his surprise, he saw the familiar figure cleaning up some flowerpot pieces on the ground.

Theodore's uneasiness immediately subsided. The moment the woman turned around, a gentle smile appeared on his gloomy face.

"Why did you come here? Did you get hurt?" Theodore asked anxiously. He quickly took her hand and checked it carefully. His eyes were full of tenderness and affection.

Ariana had been scared several times during the night, and right now, there was already sweat on her back. She didn't want him to see her nervousness, so she acted like nothing had happened. "I was hungry and wanted to get something to eat. | heard a noise coming from the greenhouse and when | came, | found a black cat sneaking around. | accidentally knocked over the flowerpot when trying to catch the cat."

Theodore listened to her carefully and didn't interrupt her at all. He held her hand as she spoke and gently rubbed it.

Although Ariana did her best to look calm, she was obviously very nervous when she was speaking. However, when she saw that Theodore acted like he didn't care about it, she was relieved.

At that moment, the cry of a cat was heard. The black cat quickly fled through the window. "That is the cat | was telling you about," Ariana said quickly, pointing at the black cat. The black cat had shown up in time, as if to confirm what she had said.

Theodore finally let go of Ariana's hand and looked at her with a smile. "You don't have to pick up the pieces of the flowerpot. The servant will clean it tomorrow."

After saying that, he took her out of the greenhouse.

As they left, Ariana took a glance back. When she saw the door of the greenhouse closed, she felt relieved.

Originally, she came downstairs to eat something because she was hungry.

However, the cat's interruption and what she saw in the greenhouse caused her to lose her appetite. She ate only two bites of the food she had heated and returned to the bedroom.

As for Theodore, he had received an impromptu phone call and had to retreat to his study. Ariana was thus alone in the huge bedroom.

She tossed and turned in the bed. Every time she closed her eyes, she thought of the golden shackle. This made her so nervous that she trembled with fear and was unable to fall asleep.

Ariana sat up and looked around the room.

Unlike Theodore's room in the Anderson family residence, this room in the manor was so desolate. The walls were clean, but there were no decorations, not even tables, chairs, or sofas. The only thing she could sit on was the bed.

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She walked to the walk-in closet next to the bed. The walk-in closet was the complete opposite of the bedroom and it looked lively. There were several clothes, and an unfinished glass of wine sat on the wooden table. Ariana leaned over and smelled the wine. The smell of wine was sweet, as if it was just opened today.

Ariana was stunned by the number of expensive paint boxes in the walk-in closet. Even more strange was the fact that there were more paint boxes than clothes in the closet.

She saw a frame covered in white fabric in front of the window. She walked over and removed the fabric from above the frame. It was a painting. The landscape in the painting was very familiar to Ariana. It looked like the greenhouse, and there was a vague silhouette in it.

As Ariana was busy thinking about the painting, her attention was suddenly drawn to the scenery outside the window. From where she stood, she could see the flower field as well as the greenhouse.

Then suddenly the sound of the wheelchair came from outside. Ariana quickly went back to bed and pretended to be asleep.

After a while, Theodore climbed into bed. Ariana could feel his warm, familiar breath. His hand slowly wrapped around her waist from behind, causing Ariana to tremble all over.

"What's wrong?" Theodore asked when he noticed that Ariana was trembling.

Theodore's hot chest that was pressed against Ariana's back was driving her crazy, and she didn't understand why she was trembling all over.

Ariana had to tap into what little sanity she had left to come up with a convincing answer to Theodore's question. "Your hands are so cold."

"Oh... sorry!" Theodore slowly kissed her earlobe and then withdrew his hands. He waited for the warmth of the bed to warm his hands before hugging her again. This time he tured Ariana over and kissed her.

Since they had confessed their mutual feelings for each other, Theodore seemed to be unable to have enough of her. He was like an addict who was lucky enough to have his drug beside him.

After a deep, languorous kiss, Theodore held Ariana in his arms and kissed her again from time to time.

The hot kiss made Ariana's mind go blank, and she could no longer overthink.

"Horace told me that you called me a few days ago but my phone was powered off.

What happened?" Theodore asked gently, looking affectionately at the woman in his arms.

When Theodore mentioned this, Ariana became excited. She told Theodore the whole story of how her movie project was rejected by Norton and how she planned to raise funds by attending the film festival.

Hearing that, Theodore was silent for a moment and it seemed like he was lost in thought. Then suddenly, he got up and asked Ariana to get out of bed and help him get his laptop from the study.

The downside of pretending to be disabled was that he constantly needed someone else to help him with everything © He definitely had to find a way to get rid of the wheelchair as soon as possible and finally stand up.

When Ariana brought the laptop, Theodore immediately logged into the Anderson Group database but couldn't find the said movie project.

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He noticed the puzzled look on Ariana's face and moved his laptop to face her. Then he explained, "I can see the submitted records of project plans and everything concerning investments by the Anderson Group. But | just checked, and there is no trace of the project you submitted."

It was clear that Norton had kept her project plan.

Ariana flew into a rage when she heard what Theodore said and she retorted angrily, "It seems that Norton didn't submit my project at all. He told me that it was rejected by the company. What a bastard! Besides, he seemed to have some connection with Jasper. | remember when | went to see him, he asked me to pass the script to Jasper, but | wouldn't let him. As a result, he scolded me."

Ariana felt a little aggrieved when she mentioned this matter. Then she remembered how helpless she was when she called Theodore but couldn't get to him.

Theodore felt sorry for her and held her in his arms.

"sj Entertainment is just one of the subsidiaries of the Anderson Group. The staff lacks team spirit and under such conditions, abuse of power for personal gain is inevitable. Norton took advantage of his position as the head of the investment department to reject your project. | will handle it. Don't worry." After comforting her for a while, Theodore added, "You can give a copy of your project plan to Horace. I'll keep an eye on it this time, and | don't think anyone will dare to reject your project without a solid reason."

"But we've already shot a short film to attend the film festival..." Ariana looked at him with hesitation in her big eyes and suggested in a low voice, "How about we submit the short film to the film festival as planned? | want to see if | can turn the tables by myself."

Theodore chuckled and didn't say anything. He really liked the fact that she wanted to handle things her way.

If she was really determined to solve the problem by herself, he would give her his full support and he would handle the consequences.

"It's getting late. Let's go to bed," Theodore suddenly said. He put away his computer and turned off the light. Then, he lay down again and held Ariana in his arms.

It was a cold night. Ariana instinctively leaned against Theodore's warm chest. His steady heartbeat echoed clearly in her ears, keeping her wide awake.

At that moment, she couldn't help but remember what he had said in the greenhouse during the day, wondering if it was true or not. ©

If the misunderstanding this time wasn't cleared up, or if it tumed out that it wasn't a misunderstanding, was he really going to pull out that golden shackle and put it on her ankle?

Three days later, it was the opening ceremony of the film festival.

It was only fitting that Jayson had to go to this film festival to present their short film. Jayson still invited Ariana to go with him so if they won, they would celebrate together.

Jayson exuded such confidence that Ariana was very confident about the outcome of the festival.

By a stroke of luck, Ariana hadn't been busy recently, and Theodore was even busier after returning from the manor. Theodore and Ariana sometimes called each other at night, and they barely met.

Ariana decided to take the opportunity, and she agreed to go with Jayson.

As was tradition for the film festival, there was a red carpet walking stage. Since Jayson and Ariana weren't famous, they didn't need to go through this step.

It had been a long time since Jayson had been to such an event. As soon as he got out of the car and saw a group of journalists surrounding the venue, he felt a little uncomfortable all of a sudden.

Although the film festival was a big event, Jayson didn't particularly dress up for the occasion. His messy hair slacked over his shoulders, and he was dressed in a sweater and sneakers.

Ariana was even more casual, wearing a woolen skirt and flats. She didn't put on any makeup except lip gloss to enhance her complexion.