

Blind Date 881

[Chapter 881 Summer Fears Her](#)

She was rich since childhood and, thus, had a basic ability to appreciate its value.

She gave a sidelong glance. "It's not worth much. What's valuable is her identity."

Josie glanced at the notice board nearby. It clearly stated that after the exhibition, there would be a small auction. All proceeds from the auction would be donated entirely to impoverished mountainous regions.

"If you say it like that, won't she get angry?"

Laura propped her chin with one hand, glancing at Heather, who was being entertained by Mark. "She? She has no say in matters, not like Summer."

Her tone was dismissive, not showing the slightest bit of respect.

"What about you?" Josie suddenly asked.

Laura was taken aback. "What?"

"Do you have more say than Summer now?"

Josie's pupils were pitch black, and she looked at her very seriously.

"Me?" Laura let out a sheepish laugh. "I'm just an outsider, working for them and doing their bidding. I don't really count."

"I must say, you seem quite capable. You should give it a try."

Laura's smile turned somewhat awkward. She didn't ask what specifically was being tested.

After chatting with her for a while, Josie excused herself to the restroom. As she walked down the sun-drenched corridor, a sudden argument echoed from a corner.

"I disagree. We've reached this point. There's no turning back now."

It was unmistakably the voice of Arnold.

Josie stood still, spotting two familiar figures. She subtly positioned herself to stay out of their sight.

Summer's mental state was still not very good, her exhaustion visible to the naked eye. "Arnold, I can't wait any longer."

She lit a cigarette in frustration. "I've had enough of this life. Do you know how that b*tch looks at me? She's taken everything from me! That b*tch. I'm leaving. I'm leaving right now!"

"Summer!" Arnold grabbed her wrist as she was about to light the fire, his voice lowered. "Don't forget. None of this belongs to her, nor to you."

Summer fell silent. Her eyes widened, filled with boundless fear.

Arnold shook her off. "If you can tolerate it, then endure. If you can't, I'll find a way to make you disappear"

At the end of his words, there was an unmistakable threat. He was clearly not referring to a simple "disappearance"

Summer staggered back several steps, her hand on her forehead. She paced restlessly back and forth, finally gritting her teeth and saying, "Then you figure out a way to get Josie away from Morgan. I saw her again today! Arnold! Every time I see her, I can't control myself. I feel like I'm going crazy!"

The irritation in her words was not concealed in the slightest.

"Do you think I don't want to?" Arnold growled. "I want Morgan to disappear more than anyone else!"

"It's not Morgan, it's Josie." Summer clutched his arm, her tone almost pleading. "I want her gone. She's like an omnipresent devil!"

Josie stood not far away, her brows slightly furrowed and a chill running down her back. Summer definitely despises me. That much is certain. But now, it isn't just disdain she's feeling. It's fear. Why?

Josie wanted to keep watching, but unexpectedly, Arnold lost his patience. He glanced around, grabbed Summer's hand, and they left.

She stood in the sunlight, racking her brains.

"Ms. Warren." A voice suddenly came from behind.

Josie was on edge, and that sudden shock made her jump, draining the color from her face.

Larry was surprised. "What's wrong with you?"

She forced herself to stay calm. "I should be the one asking you that. What are you doing here?"

Larry squeezed out a smile. "Mr. Russell is asking for you."

Inside the lounge, the table was filled with documents, suggesting a recent flurry of activity.

Suddenly, the lights were switched off, plunging Josie into complete darkness. Immediately afterward, a pair of warm, large hands landed on her waist, pressing her against the door.

[Chapter 882 Birthday](#)

"Um-"

Josie barely had time to catch her breath before their lips passionately intertwined. His large hand gripped her slender waist, rendering her unable to move.

She struggled fiercely, but his strength was too much for her.

Exhausted from the struggle, she no longer had the energy to resist. She numbly allowed him to proceed with his actions.

"What will happen if others find out that the future son-in-law of the Olsen family is currently kissing his ex-wife?" Her tone was casual.

The man before her paused slightly and then he parted his lips, landing them on her cheeks, again and again. "Do you want others to know?"

Eyes damp, she glared at him. She was wearing a gown, which restricted her movements. Otherwise, she would have definitely kicked him.

"You look beautiful in the gown," Dexter suddenly said, cradling her face.

The two were entwined, two buttons of her gown undone, and his white shirt also wrinkled in the tussle..

Josie remained unmoved. "What's the point, Dexter? After you marry Heather, will you still be entangled with me like this?"

Dexter slowly lifted his gaze, inexplicably feeling that she had truly grown on him. Every part of her had found a place in his heart, making everyone else seem interesting in comparison.

"I've said it before. Every time you show up with Morgan, I will take action."

He was simply crazy.

Josie took a deep breath, inhaling the sandalwood scent from him. It was a fragrance meant to soothe, yet at that moment, it left her mind in a haze.

Looking at the rosary beads on his wrist, she said, "When you get married, throw these rosary beads away. They're mine, and I won't give them to someone like you."

Dexter followed her gaze, not paying much attention. He bent his head and continued to kiss, the room filled with an ambiguous atmosphere."

Josie's vision blurred.

It seemed as if he asked something, but she didn't catch it. Suddenly, she felt a sharp pain in her neck. He had bitten her. Josie snapped back to reality, frowning. "What the f*ck!"

"I asking if you've slept with Morgan." He was gripping her neck, his eyes slightly narrowed. The desire to possess her filled his chest.

Josie suddenly understood. He probably noticed the lingering marks on Morgan's neck.

She suddenly smiled. "Dexter, if I destroy your most cherished possession one day, will you kill me?"

Dexter's face darkened a bit, and his tone intensified. "If you dare to sleep with him, I will kill you."

Josie hadn't answered him, yet that was actually also a kind of response. At that moment, he was mostly feeling disheartened.

"You better not have," he said in a deep voice.

The sound of knocking from behind the door was close. "Mr. Russell, Mr. Olsen is urging you."

Dexter remained silent, his expression unchanged as he locked eyes with Josie.

She glanced stubbornly to the side.

Since there was no response, the person outside the door knocked twice more. "Mr. Russell, are you there?"

Dexter withdrew his hand, freeing Josie, who took a deep breath of fresh air.

She watched his upright figure, stepped forward, and suddenly embraced him from behind, speaking in a soft voice.

"Dexter, today is Liana's birthday. It seems like you've never celebrated my birthday before."

Suddenly, she lowered her stance. The tone of her voice pierced Dexter's heart, causing him a pang of pain. He furrowed his brows. "There will be in the future."

"That won't be the same."

"I will eventually celebrate with you," he said, his tone casual. No one knew the determination behind his words.

The knocking on the door persisted. Josie turned around, unlocked the door, and said in a soft voice, "I don't want it anymore."

The worker outside the door was taken aback for a good while when he saw a woman coming out from inside.

Josie's expression was stern. "Do you have a death wish?"

The staff was stumped. "I..."

Josie strode away, fastening the buttons of her gown as she went. As she turned the corner, she ran into Heather. It seemed as if she had been waiting for a long time.

Dressed in outfits of the same color, it wasn't clear who had the upper hand.

[Chapter 883 Celebrating Her Birthday](#)

The emotions in Heather's eyes were incredibly complex. Her lips parted as though she wanted to say something. Yet, not a single word came out of her mouth.

As the early autumn wind blew in, both the women's hair fluttered. They stood facing each other like two parasol trees.

Josie only halted for a moment before moving past her. When she walked by, Heather caught the scent of sandalwood on her.

She had also once smelled the same scent on Dexter.

"Why are you spacing out here, Leanne? Where's Dex?" Claudia's voice came from behind her, breaking the silence.

Mark and Claudia stood hand in hand at the end of the corridor, looking at her with great tenderness. Heather snapped back to reality and walked forward. "He'll be here soon, I think."

Meanwhile, Josie continued forging ahead without looking back.

Ultimately, that gentle call of “Leanne” was never meant for her.

When she returned to the main hall, the guests had gradually gathered in groups of two and three. Nonetheless, they were still exchanging pleasantries.

Morgan extricated himself from his conversation and walked over to Josie. “Where were you?”

“The restroom.”

As she said that, she arranged her hair to cover the bite mark left by Dexter, all the while subtly scanning her surroundings. Arnold was still there, but Summer was gone.

A plan formed in her mind.

“Here it comes! It’s starting!” Suddenly, there was a commotion around them.

Josie and Morgan both turned their attention to the stage. Mark had his cane in hand and a benevolent smile on his face. He spoke into the microphone, saying, “Thank you all for coming to support Liana today. As you all know, she’s the apple of my eye. I thank everyone here for giving her this courtesy.”

The speech revealed his identity and signified his respect for everyone present, evidence of his deep affection for his daughter.

The guests below the stage burst into applause.

Josie clapped along feebly, her expression placid.

“Today is Leanne’s birthday. She’s turning twenty-four years old. Since she went missing, we hadn’t celebrated her birthday for many years. This year, we can finally fulfill our dream.” As Mark spoke, tears welled up in his eyes. “From now on, I will throw her a grand birthday celebration each year! There’ll be no more regrets!”

Below the stage, applause rang out once more.

Morgan snickered. “Well, how grand.”

Josie couldn’t describe her feelings then. There was only a sense of numbness within her. It was as though there was a hole in her heart in which the wind was relentlessly blowing.

Once Mark had finished speaking, Heather, who had been waiting quietly at the side, had already eked out a few tears. She ran up and threw herself into his arms. “Thank you, Dad.”

Mark gently patted her on the head. Then, a staff member timely turned off the lights in the hall. Amidst the darkness, someone wheeled a cake over, and a sweet rendition of “Happy Birthday” began playing.

Surprisingly, the person wheeling the cake over was Dexter.

He was still dressed in the same white shirt and black pants. His sleeves were rolled up to his elbows, revealing his solid muscles.

The seven or eight-tiered cake was lit with candles, creating a very warm and cozy atmosphere.

Everyone below the stage sang “Happy Birthday” in unison.

Josie didn’t bother opening her mouth. She clapped numbly in the darkness, a layer of frost blanketing her eyes.

Heather has a powerful and influential fiancé, a well-to-do family, kind and gentle parents, a group of guests below the stage willing to pander to her, and the identity of the daughter of an elite family. How enviable and fanciful. Her hardships of the past two decades can all be forgotten. Is she happy now?

Heather looked at the cake in delight, clearly beyond happy.

She clasped her hands together and closed her eyes before the candles. She made a wish for a good while before finally blowing out the candles.

Subsequently, the lights were turned back on.

“What are you thinking about?” Morgan asked, stretching out a hand to shield her from the light.

[Chapter 884 The Concept Of The Painting](#)

Josie gradually adapted to the light, squinting slightly. On the stage, the trio jointly held the handle of the knife and cut the cake together.

Dexter was calm and composed. His passion in the room earlier was all but gone, and he was restrained and aloof.

Heather was surrounded in the center, and it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say she was a princess. As Josie looked at Dexter, he returned her gaze. She wasn’t sure if she was seeing things, but she discerned a sense of warmth in his eyes.

She then glanced below the stage again. Claudia was also wearing a gown that day, and it was azure blue. The woman was looking at Heather with a smile on her face.

“Nothing much. I just feel that some things in this world are truly unfair.”

With a light scoff, Josie found a corner to sit down. Meanwhile, the atmosphere on the stage remained as lively as ever.

Morgan’s gaze fell on her reddened ankles. “Do your feet hurt?”

At his remark, Josie belatedly realized that her high heels were too small, leaving her fair ankles covered in red marks.

“Yeah.”

Morgan then crouched down and took her shoes off for her. As his large hands covered her ankles, a cooling sensation washed over them.”

Instinctively, Josie shrank back and looked around. “This isn’t quite proper.”

Morgan also darted his eyes around. “Who cares about you right now?”

That comment hit home, for everyone’s eyes were indeed on Heather.

Thus, Josie allowed him to do as he pleased.

Morgan placed her feet on his legs, intermittently kneading them. His movements were gentle, as though he was handling a precious treasure.

Still, Josie still felt a bit uncomfortable entrusting her feet to someone else and instinctively wanted to pull them back. "Okay, that's enough--"

Morgan pinned her feet down. "It's not like I haven't seen them before."

Words eluded Josie.

On the stage, things had progressed to the auction segment. The host introduced the few paintings that would be sold that day and quickly went into the bidding phase.

Heather sat below the stage, but Dexter was not by his side. He seemed uninterested in attending such an event.

The bidding below the stage was intense. It was all wealthy heirs, for they wouldn't dare disrespect the Olsen family and their daughter even if it were to win their support.

For that reason, this price shot exceptionally high.

Josie saw that even Arnold had bid twice.

But in the end, the winning bidder was a woman from the socialite circles. She seemed to have come prepared with ample funds.

"What about you? Do you not like paintings?" Josie asked casually, retracting her feet.

She remembered that Morgan used to love collecting such items. If he found something he liked, he would go to great lengths to buy it, no matter the distance.

Morgan sat beside her. Looking at the painting on the screen, he scoffed, "I only collect paintings of value."

Josie almost burst into laughter.

Soon, it was the final painting. Instead of hurrying into the bidding phase, the host invited Heather on the stage.

"This final painting of 'The Moon, My Confidant' has just won the 11th Magnolia Awards in Wavery two days ago. Today, Ms. Olsen is willing to put this painting up for public auction, giving us an opportunity to hear about her design concept for this piece."

The guests below the stage broke out into applause once more.

Heather shyly stepped onto the stage, looking incredibly dazzling under the spotlight.

"Winning this award was really a stroke of luck. There's still a lot I need to learn." Heather turned sideways. "I drew this painting during my most difficult time. I'm not afraid to admit that I couldn't even afford a meal at that time. What kept me going was the person I love. Every night, I would gaze at the

moon, reminiscing our past, imagining what he might be doing, and if he were thinking of me. That was how I managed to pull through, bit by bit.”

Nearing the end of it, tears even welled up in her eyes.

It turned out to be a romantic and poignant love story.

In the lounge in the same building, a cup of coffee was placed before Dexter with steam wafting off it.

The woman on the stage seemed to be confessing her feelings to him, but all that was in his mind was Morgan holding Josie’s feet.

[Chapter 885 Accused Of Plagiarism](#)

Meanwhile, Josie was almost convinced by what she heard.

She gazed at the painting for a long time, admiring the deep blue tones, the smoke rising in the small town, and a crescent moon hanging overhead. From an artistic appreciation perspective, it indeed holds some value, but alas-

Someone in the audience teased, “So, did you two end up together?”

Heather’s face turned red. “Haven’t you all seen it?”

The clamor from the audience grew even more intense.

The bidding had begun.

In order to show their support, the audience bid back and forth for several rounds until the bid reached one million.

It was a high price, yet compared to her previous paintings, it seemed rather ordinary, for it was less than half of what she usually got.

Heather nestled in Claudia’s arms, not sensing anything amiss initially.

Josie saw someone raising a sign for one million and ten thousand.

The woman from the socialite section, however, did not try to outbid it. She was looking down at her phone, not making a move.

The situation was a bit awkward, but thankfully, the host was used to handling such grand events. Holding the microphone, he politely asked, “Is there anyone else who would like to raise the bid? All proceeds from today’s auction will be donated to impoverished mountainous regions.”

A soft murmur arose from below, but no one raised their bidding paddle again.

Going to such lengths to support someone was acceptable, but it was simply not worth it to spend a fortune on a painting that held no value for collection.

The unusual silence caught the attention of those in the lounge.

It was as if Josie could feel that particular burning gaze silently creep in.

I wonder what kind of expression Dexter is wearing while watching this scene.

She actually felt somewhat excited.

The lady from the socialite zone received a message. She glanced down at it, yet she still did not raise her bidding paddle.

The auctioneer on stage gripped the gavel, cold sweat trickling down his forehead. It seems that today, this painting will be sold at an extremely low price...

“One million and ten thousand going once!”

The phone in Josie’s pocket suddenly vibrated. She took it out and glanced at the screen. It was a message from Angel: I’ve arrived.

“One million and ten thousand going twice!”

She put it back, slipped the tip of her toe back into her shoe, and stood again in her high heels. From that angle, she could see Heather’s restless demeanor.

On one side, Mark’s solemn face seemed to have gained a touch of authority.

“One million and ten thousand...”

Just as the gavel was about to fall, a voice suddenly rang out from outside. “Apologies, this painting cannot be auctioned off!”

It was spoken resonantly in Uprian.

Everyone’s gaze landed on a foreign woman with blonde hair who appeared to be in her twenties or thirties. She briskly walked in, with a girl keeping pace behind her.

The foreign woman was scowling, her presence prompting some in the crowd to discreetly raise their phones. After all, she was a renowned landscape painter from abroad.

Someone gasped softly.

Josie stood in the corner, tilting her head slightly. She was relishing in Heather’s current state-the latter had turned pale and was trembling.

When the confused Claudia looked at Heather, the latter could only respond with a helpless shake of her head.

No one could stop the foreign woman. She had already stepped forward, projecting the materials she brought onto the big screen.

“This painting is the most meaningful of all my works, never before exhibited publicly. Today, I am shocked to learn that someone has plagiarized my artwork for profit. I am deeply angered, and I will ensure that the plagiarist pays an appropriate price!”

She was fierce and uncompromising. She didn’t hold back and had no intention of showing a shred of mercy.

Heather could barely stand, almost needing someone to prop her up.

The people gathered that day were all prominent figures of Wavery. Their witnessing the drama was as good as it becoming common knowledge within their social circle.

Liana... accused of plagiarism... at her own birthday party...

[Chapter 886 Ruining Her Life](#)

“No... I didn’t...” As weakness gripped her body, Heather attempted to meekly herself to Claudia and Mark.

Both of them looked upset, as the situation was getting out of control.

There were countless photos being played on the screen.

Suddenly, Heather realized something. Her gaze swept around until it finally settled on a figure to her rear left. A white silhouette stood there with her chest puffed. The figure flashed a faint smile, eyes glistening in schadenfreude.

Josie simply looked at Heather and smiled, then she mouthed the words across the distance. “Happy Birthday.”

Heather’s vision went dark. She could no longer hold herself up as she completely passed out.

Another wave of chaos ensued.

Josie closed her eyes and said to herself, “Happy birthday, Liana. I’m sorry. I just found out today is your birthday.”

When she opened her eyes again, what she saw were a pair of eyes, cold yet filled with rage, staring at her from a distance.

Two hours later, the venue was emptied. All the artworks were organized and stored away. The painting suspected of plagiarism was also taken down and handed over to the lawyers to deal with.

Heather was taken to the hospital, with Claudia and Laura accompanying her. Mark, however, returned to the Olsen Residence alone.

With the place emptied out, there was a desolate air, to it.

Josie remained standing in place, with Morgan by her side. After an unknown amount of time, she finally moved. “Let’s go.”

“This drama has really worn me out,” he said, expressionless, as he placed his hand on her shoulder and gently patted it to comfort her.

Upon reaching the entrance, Morgan went to fetch the car, while Josie stood by the roadside. However, she was stopped by someone. All the bodyguards from the establishment sprang into action, solely preventing her from leaving.

“I’m sorry, Ms. Warren. You cannot leave today.”

Josie's hand trembled slightly as she said in a deep voice, "Tell Dexter not to don't go too far!"

The bodyguard was in a bind. Glancing in the direction where Morgan was driving from, he quickly said, "Ms. Warren, please don't put us in a difficult position. We're just trying to do our duty."

It was still the same room, with the lights turned off and the curtains tightly drawn. Barely a sliver of light could be seen.

Josie sat on the couch, her back still perfectly straight. If one looked closely, one could see a trail of blood at the corner of her mouth. Because it had coagulated, it was startlingly noticeable.

A slender figure stood in front of her, blocking her way. The deep voice was filled with unconcealable anger.

"How long have you been planning this?"

"Less than two weeks," she said, feeling a sting in her mouth while speaking.

Who would have thought that just a few hours ago, she was kissed by him right here, and now, the scene. was so different it felt ironic.

Dexter let out a snigger. "You're quite capable, aren't you?"

She didn't reply.

"How did you know she plagiarized?"

"I deliberately left an art book for her, guessing that she would copy the paintings in it. All I needed to know was which one she chose, and I had someone locate the original."

It was a meticulously crafted plan, or to be more precise, a trap to draw Heather in.

"After that, you arranged for Morgan to bribe my people not to bid, right?" He hit the nail on the head, for it wasn't difficult to guess.

Dexter crouched down, gently caressing the red mark on her face. He sounded as if he was sighing.

"Why did you do this?"

"Actually, she had every chance to avoid this outcome, if only she hadn't plagiarized." Josie wanted to laugh, but the corner of her mouth hurt when she tried to smile. "But she did plagiarize, and this is what she deserves!"

The moment the words were spoken, Dexter's caressing touch turned into a grip. He tightened it as his rage reached its peak. "What does this have anything to do with you, Josie? Do you know that you've ruined her life?"

[Chapter 887 They Are Not The Same](#)

On Heather's twenty-fourth birthday, amidst the dream celebration everyone had crafted for her, Josie ruthlessly ruined it by humiliating her and making her the subject of gossip for a lifetime.

News of the event could no longer be contained, and it was bound to spread throughout the city soon.

Presumably, Heather would never want to celebrate her birthday again in her lifetime.

“You’re more ruthless than I am.”

Tears welled up in Josie’s eyes, falling like heavy raindrops onto the back of her hand due to the pain. Yet she remained defiant. “It’s you who taught me to hit someone where it hurts.”

In pitch darkness, Dexter stared at her, wishing he could kill her, yet his heart ached just as intensely.

“Why has it come to this?” He pushed her away. “Are you happy ruining her life? The Josie I know wouldn’t stoop to this level.”

These words struck Josie to her core. She parted her lips and tilted her head back. “Are you surprised? You must be heartbroken now. I’ve ruined your princess. Her life is over. But what about me? What about my life?”

Dexter’s side profile was rigid, the veins on the back of his hand slowly subsiding. “You are not the same.”

“What’s different?”

Josie added quickly, “Just because she’s Liana and I’m Josie, you can always accommodate whatever she does, while I’m always to be blamed, right? Yes, she’s the daughter of the family. Of course it’s different. And me? I’m worth nothing to you. If my life is ruined, so be it, right?”

As she spoke, she moved closer to him. Tears streaming down her pale face, she compelled him to remember that very moment.

How could you treat someone you love like this?

“For you, Liana is the only thing that matters.”

In the dim light, she looked so fragile that she might shatter with the slightest touch.

He breathed slowly in the darkness. As he reached out to touch her face, his hand felt dampness. “Does it hurt?”

Josie didn’t say a word.

“Does it hurt?”

She remained silent, her breathing somewhat heavy.

He spoke in a muted voice. “She has been lost for many years, hardly experiencing any happiness. I owe her. My past with her is different and incomparable to ours, so don’t compare them.”

“It sounds like I deserved that slap.”

Dexter said, “You shouldn’t be playing these mind games.”

Hmm, she’s being crafty.

“I ruin your partnership, didn’t I?” she asked, looking up.

Dexter gently wiped away the tears from her face, his Catholic rosaries occasionally brushing against her skin, giving her a cold sensation.

Josie thought to herself, D*mn it, even at this point, I still have a soft spot for him.

“Dexter, I’ve always been curious. What kind of person am I in your eyes?”

What kind of person?

Dexter was reminded again of the first time he saw Josie. She was sitting by the roadside, having just finished a phone call and crying so hard that she could barely catch her breath. Her face was flushed red. When she finished crying, she wiped away her tears with the back of her hand and opened her laptop to continue working.

Just like that, her resilience allowed her to grow on him. Over the next two years, they went through a lot together, yet nothing could truly knock her down. She remained strong and beautiful no matter what.

Sometimes, she would act a bit naughty. In his presence, she would occasionally be like a young girl, and at other times, she would exude the demeanor of a mature woman.

Dexter closed his eyes, and all that came to mind now were her virtues.

“When you are ungrateful and treacherous, it makes me want to kill you,” he whispered in the darkness.

After hearing that, Josie fell silent. “I’m not always ungrateful. You know, when we divorced, it was for your own good.”

After a long while, Dexter finally responded with a hum.

It was as if the two of them were embarked on paths so divergent that there was no turning back.

[Chapter 888 The Birthday Gift Is A Forgery](#)

Dexter wouldn’t let her leave.

When Morgan bombarded her with messages, she wasn’t sure how she should deal with him.

Josie, staying in the room arranged by Dexter, replied word by word: I’m fine. I’ll survive.

Morgan called directly, but she didn’t pick up. Instead, she asked, “How is Heather?”

A voice message came through in reply. On it, Morgan scoffed, “Lying in the hospital and getting an IV drip. Claudia is by her side.”

Heather had lost consciousness for a full three hours. When she woke up, she just stared blankly at the ceiling, unwilling to speak.

When Claudia arrived in the ward, the attendant was just bringing in the day’s gift list for her to review. She glanced at it and said, “Take it away.”

“Right Away.”

An epiphany suddenly crossed Claudia's mind. She furrowed her brows and raised her hand. "Let me see it again."

The attendant handed it over again.

She scanned through the list until she saw Josie's name. The gift the latter sent was an antique porcelain bowl.

Claudia glanced at the girl in the ward, let out a soft sigh, and ultimately didn't go in. "Take me to see it," she said.

The attendant led the way, taking her to the storeroom.

The gift from Josie sat quietly under the light, amidst a cloud of dust.

Claudia took out the piece of porcelain and carefully examined it in her hand. Her eyebrows furrowed. "A counterfeit..."

Based on her understanding of Josie, she would never be negligent in this regard, nor would she present a counterfeit.

Nevertheless, Claudia was certain that the piece of porcelain was indeed a fake.

Claudia couldn't figure out the reason. After a long time, she realized that she seemed to understand Josie more than she understood Liana.

That day was a good example. She never imagined that Liana would plagiarize, doing something that completely disgraced the Olsen family.

She let out a soft sigh, left the storeroom, and took a detour to the study.

Inside, the light was dim. Mark sat in front of a massive bookshelf, smoking one cigarette after another.

Claudia stepped forward softly, gently removing the cigarette from his mouth. "It's not good for your health."

Mark's eyes were dry and looked extremely tired. He leaned on her, letting out a heavy sigh. "Cloud, is this child our punishment?"

After a moment of silence, Claudia gently stroked his hunched back. "It's our fault. We didn't raise her well. We are responsible."

Adjusting his glasses, Mark said, "Even the capricious Sum would never do such a thing..."

This humiliating situation has utterly disgraced the Olsen family!

"She's our child. We should give her our utmost care, don't you think?" She comforted him softly, "Let's take it slow. For the time being, I won't go to the monastery and stay at home instead."

Thanks to Dexter, Josie came to realize that behind the art gallery was a vast manor. Upon opening the room door, she could see streets crisscrossing in all directions.

She had heard that it used to be an ancient village, which was later abandoned and transformed into an art gallery. Due to its sprawling area, there was a massive space left unused at the back, which was later turned into a holiday manor by investors.

The autumn rain drizzled down. Accompanied by gusts of cold wind, it created an atmosphere of desolation.

When Josie saw Dexter again, it was already two days later, and the swelling on her face had subsided somewhat.

Two of them were sitting on a raft. The boatman simply assumed they were tourists on vacation, enthusiastically introducing the scenery. Dexter stared at the lake's surface, not knowing how much he was actually taking in.

Instead, Josie seemed quite intrigued. "Really? Is it really that special? Can that tree actually grant wishes?"

In the center of the lake, there stood a century-old tree, adorned with red ribbons. These were hung by visitors who came to make their wishes.

"Of course. Otherwise, there wouldn't be so many people coming year after year," said the boatman.

[Chapter 889 Compensation](#)

"People often think that more people means it's better, but that's not always the case," Josie said, propping up her face and speaking earnestly.

The boatman chuckled at her innocence. "Everyone has their own desires in life. If you have any, you can give it a try."

Josie didn't respond but turned her head to look at the tall man on the deck. He was seated, but there was nowhere to put his legs. "Mr. Russell, 'do you have any?'"

Dexter glanced at her, clearly unwilling to answer that question.

She continued on her own, "Well, with your wealth, you can have whatever you want. Let me guess, do you wish for Heather's well-being?"

According to Laura, the rumor mill was buzzing about this matter in their circle. Heather hadn't been seen outside for several days, and Summer had taken delight in her misery.

The man frowned. "Josie."

He wasn't angry, but he was getting impatient. Yet, he didn't explode in anger and remained indifferent, leaving her in a state of uncertainty.

Josie was getting a bit impatient. He could afford to waste time, but she couldn't.

She couldn't wait to leave.

Unfortunately, the boat was moving at a leisurely pace, and time was passing slowly.

Dexter didn't know if he was taking advantage of the remote location, forcibly keeping her here. Whenever he had spare time, he would go to the art gallery to look at paintings. When he was busy, he would lock her in the room, accompanying him to work.

When the boat reached the shore, he suddenly became interested again and took her to explore the streets. and alleys, searching for the unique local snacks of Wavery.

At this time of the year, there were indeed few tourists. Most shops were closed, with the shopkeepers taking naps in their rooms. They finally found a shop that was open. It was clean, and the menu was posted on the wall with clear prices.

Dexter was still glancing at the menu when Josie took the initiative to sit down as she was tired. She immediately made her order, "Peanut noodles. strawberry crepe, and honey roast duck."

The lady boss quickly wrote it down and praised, in the local dialect, "The young lady is very good at ordering."

Josie replied with a smile in the same dialect, "I'm a local."

The lady boss looked at the distinguished man and asked, "What would you like, sir?"

Despite his obviously young appearance, she couldn't help but address him with "sir."

Dexter frowned slightly and looked at the woman who was already seated. "Same as her."

These dishes were all sweet, and Dexter had never liked sweet things. After tasting a few bites, he didn't touch them anymore. However, Josie was enjoying them, especially the honey roast duck, which she had several helpings of.

Dexter mocked, "Have you always had such a varied taste?"

Josie raised her eyes. "I didn't realize you were talking about food at first. Sorry."

His expression darkened a few shades.

She continued to eat. "I love sweets. I,always feel there's something to look forward to when I eat something sweet. When I was in school, Pop used to buy them for me. If I did well in my homework, I'd get ice cream, and if I got top marks in my exams, I'd get honey roast duck. But Justin never had this. treatment because he was bad at studying." She bit her fork and laughed, reminiscing about the past.

She wasn't sure how much Dexter had taken it. He casually got up and said, "I'm going to the restroom."

The streets were winding and not easy to navigate. The lady boss led him into her own home, afraid he might find it simple. When Dexter came out of the restroom, he didn't rush to leave. Instead, he took a detour and entered the kitchen.

The lady boss was busy cooking, and the exhaust fan was humming. Suddenly seeing Dexter, she was startled. "Young man, can't you find your way out?"

Dexter furrowed his brows tightly. He took out his phone and scanned a QR code before saying, "Ma'am, can you make another serving of honey roast duck?"

[Chapter 890 Learning To Cook For Her](#)

The lady boss was surprised but then cheerfully said, "Sure, wait outside. I'll be right there."

However, Dexter didn't budge, and his brows furrowed even more. "No, Ma'am. Can I watch you cook?"

The lady boss was surprised, and she forgot to stir the dish.

"Why would you want to learn? You don't look like someone who would enter the kitchen."

Indeed, for over twenty years, Dexter had hardly set foot in the kitchen. The few times he did was because of Josie.

He rubbed his nose. "Well, you see, my girlfriend loves this dish, and it's very important to her. I want to try and learn to make it for her." Saying this was a bit difficult for him.

If Josie heard him call her his girlfriend, she would surely get angry again.

She loved-getting angry, but he simply couldn't bear to see her upset.

The lady boss suddenly realized and agreed. She said, "Young man, you're really thoughtful."

Even though it was early autumn, the kitchen was still hot with various aromas mixed together. Ten minutes later, Dexter could barely endure standing there anymore.

Sweat started to bead on his forehead, but he gritted his teeth and endured it.

The lady boss taught him step by step, all while observing him. "I saw the two of you sitting together earlier, not saying much. Did you have a fight?"

Dexter recalled what happened that day and felt annoyed. He grunted in response.

He had a good memory. He remembered how the lady boss did everything, how to add seasoning and how much to use, just by looking once.

The lady boss sighed. "Couples always argue. You're so considerate and good to her, so she'll understand."

Understand? Dexter pursed his lips. She never understood me. Still, he asked, "Really?"

"Of course. But it also depends on why you're arguing. Did you do something wrong? Or did you say something wrong?"

This question was tricky because it was neither. Dexter rarely spoke so quietly, and he had lost his air of authority. "Does hitting someone count?"

This statement startled the lady boss, and she looked him up and down, utterly bewildered.

"You young man, you look so well-behaved, how can you resort to violence? Girls are delicate, and their parents would be heartbroken if they knew."

Her words made Dexter's expression even darker. Josie didn't have a mother, and her father was missing.

Thinking about it, he began to regret his actions that day, and the pain he felt for her gradually surfaced
“It wasn’t intentional. I was too angry and couldn’t control myself.”

“You can’t do that in the future. If the girl is willing to be with you, she definitely loves you. You have to treat her well, understand? If you no longer like her, then tell her clearly and let her go. You can’t hit people.”

Dexter stared at the food absentmindedly. He had never thought that one day he would be here, listening to a stranger’s lecture. He felt embarrassed to explain that it wasn’t that Josie was willing to stay with him; it was that he had forcibly kept her here.

Didn’t he like her anymore? He had never felt this way before, and he had never thought about letting her

When Dexter came out, Josie had finished eating. She was holding her phone to pay and couldn’t help but taunt him, “Dexter, has a woman ever treated you to a meal in your life?”

He stood on the steps and followed her lead. “Not really.”

“Then I’m the first one.”

“Yes, the first of many things.”

Josie smiled, but her smile faded after a while. At this point, she no longer cared about these trivial details about Dexter.

He could give her something but could also give the same thing to others.