

Divorce 1411

Chapter 1411 Eerie Dreamscape

As I reached the doorway, someone opened the door for me, and I stepped inside.

The house was grand. It gleamed white like something out of a fairy tale palace. The landscaping in the courtyard was beautifully manicured, with a veranda at one end and a white swing gently swaying in the breeze.

I could almost see a girl in a red dress sitting on it, her laughter echoing in the courtyard, while a handsome boy pushed her higher on the swing. She soared like a bird, high into the air.

The boy was handsome, exuding an aura of elegance.

The girl excitedly shouted, "Higher. Can you make me go higher?"

As I turned around, I saw a gentle woman sitting on the veranda, watching us from afar.

I heard the girl's voice ring out, "Mommy, am I high enough?"

She just smiled, not saying a word.

The woman got up to leave, and I quickly looked away from the swing, hurrying to catch up. I felt a genuine fondness for her.

She was just ahead of me, heading toward the villa's greenhouse. It was a large glass structure bathed in sunlight, looking absolutely radiant inside.

It was filled with exotic flowers and plants, and I gazed around curiously.

Finally, I saw her by a large pond, quietly observing the lotus blooming there. They were pale yellow with golden stamens.

"Stella."

I thought I heard her call out, and I couldn't help but run over.

She asked me, "Do you like it?"

I nodded with a bright smile. "It's beautiful. Why do you like the lotus flower, Mommy?"

"Because they symbolize harmony, purity, and light. They are the embodiment of all things beautiful." She opened her hand, revealing a miniature yellow lotus.

"What's this?" I stared at the lotus in her hand.

It was made of inset rubies carved into the shape of petals that were intricately mounted on a base. The entire flower was exquisitely crafted and lifelike, sparkling in her palm, its priceless value evident.

"It's a brooch. Do you think it looks real?" She looked at me and asked gently.

The affection in her gaze made me feel particularly warm, and I wanted to move closer to her.

She pulled me over and pinned the lotus brooch to my dress. It shimmered brilliantly against the backdrop of my white dress.

Feeling exceptionally beautiful, I ran out of the garden while calling for my father.

I saw the gates open again, and a car drove in. Several people got out. Their faces were a bit blurry to me, but I still called out to them, "Do I look pretty?"

They all looked at me, smiling. The young man leaned against a couple, and I saw my father when he was young. He picked me up, spinning me around, and my laughter filled the air.

I ran back into the house, still shouting, "Atlas, come quickly."

The group walked into the hall, and I kept calling out to them, rushing inside.

In the side hall, there was a white piano that gleamed, like my mother said.

I called out to Atlas to play the piano with me. He smiled and sat down beside me, and the beautiful melody echoed through the spacious hall. Two couples stood by the piano, smiling happily and harmoniously, their eyes full of loving looks directed at us.

My hands danced across the keys, and I felt truly happy.

But suddenly, everyone disappeared, and I saw my mother crying.

The house suddenly felt cold, with no one around. I jumped off the stool in horror, wanting to run to her.

I saw her still holding the lotus, then wiped away her tears and took a box of chocolates.

She put the last piece of chocolate in my mouth. It was so sweet.

Then, she placed the brooch on a stack of beige cloth with words on it, wrapped it up, and put it in the box.

"Mommy, why are you putting it away? Aren't you going to wear it anymore?" I asked her.

She closed the lid, then took out a thick white candle and placed it over the fire. Soon, the wax melted, and my mother allowed it to drip over the box.

I looked at her actions in confusion, and asked anxiously, "Mommy, what are you doing? Why are you doing this?"

She didn't answer me.

Her tears streamed down her face, some dripping onto her hands. I could almost feel her pain, and I noticed that her hands were red from the hot

wax.

Chapter 1412 Clues in the Dream

I felt a dull ache in my head, causing me to toss and turn uncomfortably. It was as if I feared the wax might drip onto my hands.

In a haze, I murmured, "Mommy, does it hurt?"

She said something, and her voice echoed persistently in my ears.

A warm hand gently clasped mine, guiding me through winding paths, past a towering tree surrounded by vibrant flowers, until we reached a small tree.

"What kind of tree is this, Mommy?" I looked up at the short tree.

"An almond eucalyptus tree. It's the tallest tree, do you remember?" Holding a package, she began to dig into the soil under the tree.

My head throbbed. I tossed and turned in bed.

"Chlo, wake up." A gentle voice called out to me.

I mumbled, trying to open my eyes, but I couldn't.

"Chlo... wake up."

The voice grew clearer.

Yet, my mother's voice continued to echo, "It's the tallest tree. Remember this, okay?"

"Chlo, wake up." I felt a large hand gently tapping my cheeks.

Startled, I abruptly opened my eyes.

My head was pounding. Instinctively, I pressed my temples, grunting.

"What's wrong? Had a nightmare?" Atlas's gentle voice sounded in my ear, gradually drowning out my mother's words.

I gazed blankly at his worried face. I leaned against him, letting out a relieved sigh, and softly groaned.

"My head hurts. I had a dream," I murmured, closing my eyes and clicking my tongue. "I'm so thirsty."

I suspected it was from eating too much spicy food earlier. Atlas handed me a glass of water, which he had prepared.

I gulped down the water, feeling its coolness flow down my throat. I instantly felt more energetic, and my headache seemed to ease.

"Thanks, honey. You're the best." I grinned.

As expected, he kissed me and smiled.

"You want more? There's freshly squeezed orange juice." He looked at me proudly.

I didn't really want more, but seeing his expectant gaze, I didn't dare to say otherwise.

"Yes." I sat up straight, leaving his embrace, and smiled at him. "My classmate said the juice on our plane is really good."

He handed me a glass of juice, smiling. "Your classmate is just flattering you. Do you believe that?"

"Indeed, it's delicious. Why wouldn't I believe them?" I took a sip.

"Then are you still going to reprimand them, my dear wife?" Atlas smirked.

"Are you here to tease me again?" I laughed, and he pinched my nose.

"What time do we arrive?" I asked him.

"At 9 p.m.," he said, then checked the time. "We still have a while. You want to rest a bit more?"

"No, I'm good. My head hurts too much from sleeping already."

"Then let's get up and move around," he suggested, and I grabbed his hand, getting out of bed.

He brought me a pair of soft slippers before leading me outside our room.

Through the porthole, I saw a sea of clouds outside, stretching as far as the eye could see. It occasionally revealed a ray of sunset, which looked magnificent.

I had never flown for so long before, so my feet were a bit weak.

I saw Dylan and Tristan looking at a laptop together, and they were very focused. Their fingers danced on top of the keyboard, and I wondered what they were typing.

When we arrived in Nocturnia, it was already night.

After we got into the car that came to pick us up directly from the airport, I asked Atlas softly, "Where are we going first?"

He whispered back, "Let's go back to

our place. It's too late, and you're

tired.

for the night and then we

will go see Grandpa tomorrow

gums

I smiled faintly. This arrangement suited me just fine.

Chapter 1413 The Forgetful Nanny

The car sped through the streets, and I had no idea where we were heading. But with Atlas by my side, I felt reassured. As long as he was with me, I wasn't afraid, even if we were at the ends of the earth.

After about 40 minutes, the car stopped in front of a house, and we all got out.

The warm air here was no different from Foswood, making me feel at ease. If it weren't for the different house and garden, I would have thought we were back at Pleca Park.

Atlas held my hand as we walked in.

An elderly woman came out to greet us, exclaiming, "Mr. Atlas, you're finally back!"

The woman welcomed him with open arms, and he strode over and embraced her while I stood by, feeling a bit awkward.

The old lady seemed ecstatic, patting his back and tearing up. "It's been so long since I've seen you."

Atlas didn't rush to pull away from her embrace, letting her pat his back. It was clear they shared a special bond, and the old lady had deep affection for Atlas.

Finally, Atlas stood up and said to the old lady, "Guess who I brought back with me."

The old lady was surprised to notice me standing beside them.

She looked at me with warm eyes, scrutinizing me from head to toe. Suddenly, a glimmer of recognition flashed in her eyes, and she blurted out, "Ms. Stella? I-Is she our Ms. Stella?"

Atlas proudly smiled like a child. "Your eyesight is as sharp as ever! You haven't aged a bit."

The old lady chuckled proudly. "Oh my. Who's getting old? How could I age when I still need to take care of you both?"

Then she looked at me, examining me carefully. "You've changed, but you're becoming more beautiful. You're different from when you were a child, but still so beautiful! Mr. Atlas, how did you find her?"

Feeling a bit embarrassed, I glanced at Atlas, feeling a bit at a loss. Atlas knew I would be uncomfortable, but he didn't tell me who she was.

The old lady walked slowly toward me and took my hand, giving it a squeeze. Then she opened her arms slowly, and I awkwardly let her pull me into a hug.

She patted my back like she did to Atlas too.

Her voice was filled with excitement, "It's really you. My Ms. Stella has returned."

"You've confirmed she's Stella yourself, right?" Atlas asked mysteriously.

The old lady finally let go of me, but her eyes still lingered on my face unwillingly. "We're indeed blessed by the heavens."

But she seemed to notice my unease and looked at Atlas in doubt.

"She lost her childhood memories, so she doesn't remember who you are." Atlas shrugged.

"Chlo, she's our nanny, Sandy." Atlas put his arm around me and introduced me, "We were both raised by her since we were little."

"Sandy?" I murmured, repeating the word, looking at the old lady in front of me. She was my nanny, the person second only to a mother.

"How could she lose her memory?"

The nanny, after hearing Atlas's words, seemed to lose control

"What did Ms. Stella go through? How could this happen to her?"

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"Chlo, the time we spent with the nanny in our childhood was longer than with our parents. When they were busy with work and traveling, it was the nanny who took care of us," Atlas explained.

I looked deeply at the nanny, who seemed completely unfamiliar to me but undeniably kind.

"When the incident happened back then, the nanny was also drugged and almost died at their hands. Later, it was Marco who saved her and sent her away.

"After I was safe, I bought this house and brought her back," Atlas continued, his emotions evident.

Then he looked at the nanny. "Every time I come back to Nocturnia, it feels like I'm coming home. Wherever the nanny is, that's our home."

Chapter 1414 The Familiar Taste

I knew Atlas seemed cold on the outside, but deep down, he was warm-hearted. He cherished family above all else.

Perhaps family love was something scarce in his life. In the Pierce family, it was practically non-existent, which explained his distant attitude toward his grandfather.

All they showed toward their kin was indifference and cruelty.

As I looked at the elderly woman before me, I softly called out, "Sandy."

She instantly broke down, embracing me once again. "Ms. Stella, you've grown up so much! I'm so happy that I get to see you again."

I felt choked up too, and I was deeply regretting not remembering anything. I hated not understanding her significance in my life.

Atlas quickly pulled me away, telling the nanny, "You say you're not old? You cry at the drop of a hat. That's a sign of ageing." Sandy chuckled at his words. "You just want me to get old, don't you?"

"You still have kids to take care of, so don't make her cry. She's pregnant now." Atlas sounded somewhat smug.

Her mouth was agape as she looked at me, then at my abdomen. "Y-You two are really together? And with a kid on the way?"

Atlas shrugged, spreading his hands. "I made sure to find my wife. You've always known that she would be my wife."

Perhaps it was this statement, or maybe the nanny saw our joyful expressions, or she learned about my pregnancy, but she suddenly burst into dance.

Her slightly plump body swayed, lifting our spirits. I couldn't help but smile broadly. She was a unique elderly woman.

All the anxiety I had felt along the way disappeared in that moment.

Atlas was also amused by Sandy's dance. He squinted his eyes and said, "Sandy, we're hungry."

Instantly, the nanny froze in her tracks, as if someone had pressed the pause button. In the next moment, she vanished into the wind.

Atlas laughed like a child, embracing me and kissing me. "Our home used to be so carefree and joyful."

I looked at him, trying hard to recall those scenes, but my mind was still blank.

"Really?" I concealed my disappointment and pretended to be happy.

Before long, Sandy came out again, informing us that dinner was ready. There wasn't much food on the table, but it was surprisingly delicious.

I didn't feel nauseous at all. Sandy stood beside me, urging me to eat quickly.

"You sit too, and let's eat together," I said to her.

"I'll watch you eat. Eat and see if it still tastes the same." She gestured, her tone sincere and eager.

Atlas looked at me warmly, saying, "Go ahead. See if you like the taste."

Sandy nodded eagerly. "Try it."

I picked up my spoon hesitantly, took a bite of the vegetables, and felt a different sensation on my tongue. The vegetables were tender, fresh, and perfectly seasoned with a hint of garlic.

"It's so delicious!" I couldn't help but exclaim.

Sandy laughed joyfully, "These were your favorite vegetables."

My favorite vegetables?

I looked at Atlas, seeking confirmation.

Atlas nodded. "You loved them when you were a child."

He then picked up a piece of toast and put it in front of me, indicating that I should try it.

I picked it up with my hand, took a small bite, and exclaimed, "Is this cinnamon toast?" Sandy nodded eagerly.

But suddenly, the food seemed tasteless to me. Atlas had mentioned that my mother had made my favorite cinnamon toast for us that day, and then she was gone forever.

Atlas immediately sensed my mood and patted my back. "Don't dwell on unpleasant memories. Look, we've moved on. With the nanny here, we're lucky to enjoy the delicious food from that time."

"It's so good to be back." I smiled, choking up.

"Yes, so we should look forward to the better things in life. Look, we came back, didn't we?" Atlas said it with deep emotion.

I grinned. "Let's eat."

That meal became my strongest memory, even though I couldn't remember anything else. Sandy told me so much about my food preferences back then.

We talked so much over the meal that it was already late at night by the time we stood up.

Chapter 1415 The Old Family Home

Atlas escorted me back to the master bedroom upstairs while softly saying, "Though it's not our original home, this is my own place. Welcome home, honey."

Honestly, I was deeply touched like never before at that moment.

I belonged here, yet I hadn't been around for so many years. Now, I had finally returned, and I was determined to reclaim what was rightfully mine.

For some reason, I was really looking forward to seeing Celine again tomorrow.

Atlas stayed with me as I finished washing up, and we fell asleep in each other's arms. I felt no sense of unfamiliarity here at all.

The next day, as I woke up, the sound of gentle rain greeted my ears.

I touched the space beside me, finding it empty and the bed already cold.

When did he leave? I had slept so deeply that I had no idea.

After getting up and freshening up, I changed into a comfortable long dress I had brought with me and walked out of the room quietly.

We had arrived too late last night to see the surroundings clearly, but even though it was raining now, the view outside was crystal clear.

The scenery outside was delightful. It seemed to be an estate with flowers blooming in the yard.

I descended the stairs to find that the hall was quiet. The size of this house was much smaller than Pleca Park.

When I reached the ground floor, Sandy was coming in from outside. She looked up and saw me, asking with joy, "Ms. Stella, did you sleep well last night?"

"Yeah," I replied softly, and asked, "Sandy, where's Atlas?"

After last night, we had become quite familiar with each other.

"He went out, but he'll be back soon. Are you hungry?" She asked briskly while heading toward the dining room.

I followed behind her into the kitchen, asking, "What time did he leave?"

"He left last night," she replied.

I suddenly understood why the spot next to me in bed was cold. He had to leave last night, but still, he went to bed first with me. He was probably afraid I couldn't sleep in an unfamiliar place.

"He went out to take care of something. Don't worry, he'll be back soon." Sandy seemed to know exactly where he had gone.

But I didn't press for more information. Atlas had said that between us, trust was the most important thing.

"Sandy, are you the only one here?" I asked.

We hadn't seen anyone else since we returned yesterday.

"No, there are a few more. They live in the cottage behind the yard and are responsible for everything outside. There's also a younger maid here, but she happened to take a couple of days off. She'll be back today." Sandy continued to work briskly while speaking to me.

"When Mr. Atlas isn't around, it's a waste of money to have so many people Iris once worked for the Pierce family. After the change of ownership at the Pierce family home, Iris left."

That was the nanny; once she started talking, she told me everything I wanted to know. Strangely, I didn't know how to ask her about the past, and she didn't need me to ask.

Memories would come flooding back to her as she spoke.

"She was ill for a long time after Mrs. Tammy passed away. After Mr. Atlas bought this house, she came back to work for him. They are loyal servants."

"Was this house built by Atlas?" I asked Sandy, looking at the scenery outside.

"No, this is an old estate. Mr. Atlas bought it all and had the interior completely renovated. Even the garden outside was repaired after Mr. Atlas bought it.

"Mr. Atlas is very intelligent. These are actually two connected estates. Back then, this was originally the dowry of Mr. Atlas's grandma."

"Oh?" I asked curiously, which meant that this place used to be the property of the Cross family.

"Yeah. At that time, the Pierce family wasn't as influential as it is now. It was only because of Mr. Atlas's grandfather's charm that his grandmother chose to marry the old man."

I wasn't surprised to hear this. Obviously, she was also dissatisfied with Atlas's grandfather.

Chapter 1416 The Most Handsome Man in the World

"Mr. David sold this place after Mrs. Nancy passed away, but the buyer went bankrupt. These two courtyards were abandoned for many years, and rumors started spreading about ghosts haunting the place. But..." Sandy shrugged.

Then, she continued, "Mr. Atlas doesn't believe in that nonsense, so he bought them all back."

"Why would people say that?" I asked.

"Well, some malicious people wanted to stir up trouble, but it was all for the best. The properties eventually returned to Mr. Atlas's hands despite being abandoned for over a decade," Sandy looked proud.

"He's not afraid of anything supernatural. This was his grandmother's property, after all. What's there to be afraid of?" She laughed contentedly. "After Mr. Atlas took over, he renovated the place. These courtyards are quite spacious. When the weather clears up, I'll show you around. It's beautiful here.

"Mr. Atlas used to bring you here when you two were younger. Afterward, Mr. Atlas found me and asked me to look after this place since it was his home. Poor boy, those years were tough for him." She choked up again.

"He wasn't happy during those years. I didn't even know where he was. When I saw him come to get me...

"I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw him again. Mr. Atlas had grown so tall. He had become a man. But my heart ached for him because he wouldn't smile, and he always looked cold.

"He cried when I asked him about you. He cried like a child that day, and it broke my heart..." Sandy pounded her chest, taking deep breaths.

I was moved too, and felt a lump in my throat as I teared up.

"How could such despicable people exist? Why hasn't she died yet?" Sandy vented her resentment. "She's as venomous as a snake!

"Since then, he comes back every Christmas to tend to his parents' graves all alone. I accompany him every time.

"Everything's all better now that you're back. Look at him now, he's smiling. He's so handsome when he smiles, isn't he? I dare say he's the most handsome man in the world." Sandy exaggerated, raising her hands.

"I agree," I chimed in, and we both laughed.

"Time for breakfast, my little

set

She put my breakfast on a

tray and brought it out for me. Your children will be beautiful. We can't let them go hungry."

I sat down at the dining table and gestured for her to sit too.

"Are there any other older servants from back then working in the old family home now?" I asked Sandy as I ate breakfast.

She shook her head.

"Is the place still the same?" I inquired. "Is it far from here?"

"It's a little far, but they say it's the same as before. It's as luxurious as ever, but it looks cheap now

because of those two devils Sandy

cursed.

She suddenly asked, "You really can't remember anything?"

I shook my head. "No. I don't remember anything."

"My poor child."

Just then, Atlas walked in from outside, parts of him soaked by the rain.

I quickly stood up, wanting to wipe the rain off him. He smiled at me. "Hold on. I'll change and come down to have breakfast with you."

Sandy immediately got up and prepared breakfast for him.

He came downstairs, kissed my forehead, and sat beside me. "Did you sleep well?"

"Yeah, very well." I smiled contentedly. "It's so beautiful here, but it's a pity it's raining."

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"When the rain stops, I'll take you around

grand yard. That was

grandma's dowry. The Pierce family lived here for a while after my great-grandpa's wedding."

Chapter 1417 Journey to the Old Family Home

Although I had just heard Sandy's account of the mansion's history, I didn't stop him. I wanted to hear his perspective on the story.

"After my great-grandpa's business flourished, he built our family's home, and this place was abandoned. After grandma passed away, this place was transferred to someone else for a time due to financial reasons.

"Unfortunately, the buyers later fell on hard times and couldn't sell it. The mansion on the left side of this property also belonged to grandma. It was abandoned for over a decade. After stabilizing the situation, I bought it back. However, the exterior still remained in its original style."

I looked around, seeing a different scenery through the rain.

"After we eat, we'll go to the family home. It's the rainy season in Nocturnia at this time of year. You used to hate this weather when you were young." I still disliked rainy days.

"Is the family home far from here?" I asked Atlas.

"Not really. It's on the other side of the hill," Atlas replied.

After finishing our meal, I went upstairs to change into the outfit I had prepared for this occasion.

It was still raining heavily outside, and it was a little gloomy and chilly. Atlas held an umbrella over us and embraced me as we walked out. Sandy watched us get into the car and waved goodbye.

Although I maintained a calm demeanor, I was actually quite nervous.

I was feeling some complex emotions.

Atlas sensed my feelings and gently held my hand, offering me an invisible source of strength.

"I'm here, don't worry," Atlas reassured me softly.

"Okay," I replied.

After about 40 minutes of driving, we arrived at a mansion halfway up the hill. It was quite high up and offered a view of a part of the city below. The air up here was fresh too.

Atlas held an umbrella above me as I got out of the car. He led me to the tightly closed gate and pressed the doorbell.

As we waited for the door to open, Atlas lowered his gaze to look at me standing beside him, giving me a warm smile filled with contentment.

I understood what he was feeling.

He didn't feel lonely now that I was

ove

by his side. I imagined that he must have felt lonely every time he

entered here.

The gate opened, and an elderly man came out, respectfully greeting him. "Hello, Mr. Atlas."

Atlas just snorted and held my hand as we strode in.

I couldn't help but steal a glance at the old man.

He must be grandpa's personal servant. Atlas didn't introduce me to him, so it was clear that he held no regard for this man.

As we walked into the courtyard, I

was slightly surprised. The mansion was built in the Etrian-style, which was a stark contrast to other buildings in this country.

It looked a little old, but it exuded a grand and mysterious atmosphere.

The old man who had greeted us hurriedly caught up and walked ahead of us, maintaining a respectful demeanor.

After passing through several doors and crossing some courtyards and gardens, we arrived at a small building. At the door, the man bowed slightly and said softly, "Please wait here, Mr. Atlas."

Then he hurried inside.

A few seconds later, he came out again and said, "Please come in, Mr. Atlas."

Atlas led me in, walking briskly toward the interior of the house.

At this moment, all the anxiety I had felt along the way suddenly disappeared, and my heart became exceptionally calm. I didn't know why either.

I just had to think of him as an elderly person.

Atlas led me inside with ease and familiarity.

Inside the room, I saw a skinny old man sitting upright on a redwood armchair.

Chapter 1418 Real or Feigned Illness

This must be David's bedroom. A wooden board divided the interior.

In front of the board, there was a set of redwood tables and chairs, with three seats on each side.

David, who was wearing a white suit, was sitting on the main redwood armchair.

As we approached him, I could see that although he was thin, he didn't seem frail, which contradicted the news we had heard on the phone, that he had been gravely ill.

Atlas's expression was cold, indicating that he had anticipated this.

However, I felt unsettled. They had claimed he was critically ill, but everything seemed fine. What was the point of that deception? Why was Celine so eager for us to return? What was her motive?

Thankfully, Atlas remained composed, indicating he had anticipated this.

But that woman had said things weren't looking good when he called her. I had clearly heard her, and I knew she wasn't our nanny.

David was the first to speak, setting down his teacup and looking at us as we approached.

"If it weren't for the 'critical illness' ruse, I wouldn't have had the chance to see you." His tone was calm, but it sounded like he was reproaching us. His words confirmed that he wasn't really ill.

And it was clear that Celine knew about this, and had participated in this deception.

It seemed that even now, David could still be influenced by Celine. This made me lose any trace of respect I had for him as an elder of the Pierce family.

I wondered if it was him or Celine who wanted to see us.

"There's no need to say that, Grandpa. You know very well that you probably wouldn't have told me if you were really critically ill." Atlas's tone was

severe.

David didn't get angry at Atlas's words and remained calm. "Don't forget, you're my only grandson."

This time, Atlas didn't say anything.

David's gaze shifted from Atlas to me, and there was a dim and unclear light in his eyes as he stared for a few seconds before softly saying, "Please, take a seat."

Atlas gestured to me, and we sat together on the chairs beside him.

I carefully examined David as I sat down. Despite his age and frail appearance, I could still see traces of his former elegance.

He must have been remarkable

when he was younger. All the men of

the Pierce family were handsome,

and even this old man, who was

nearly 90 years old, exuded a sense of dignity and mystery.

His eyes were sharp, showing vitality and spirit, indicating that he was in excellent health.

However, his gaze on me was very indifferent, and tinged with a hint of disdain.

I reined in the awe I had been feeling.

"Are you married?" David asked.

"Yes," Atlas answered firmly.

"Do you really not think of me as your grandpa?" David looked at Atlas.

"And do you really think of me as your grandson?" Atlas met David's gaze squarely, asking the question without any deference. David just stared at Atlas for a moment.

"Atlas," David snorted. "You haven't set foot in this place for years, have you?"

"You're in good health, and you seem to be enjoying your life, so I didn't want to disturb you." Atlas's reply was straightforward.

It was widely known that David never left his mansion, even when his grandson was in danger. He lived a secluded life without interference from the outside world. I really didn't know why he was trying to blame someone else for this.

There was a moment of silence in the room, but the atmosphere was far from harmonious.

The old man who had welcomed us quickly entered and softly said, "Mr. David, Ms. Celine is here."

"Tell her to wait in the side hall," David said calmly.

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After the old man left, David stared at me for a few seconds before saying to Atlas, "Ask her to leave." have something to discuss with you."

My heart tightened, and I wondered what the old man was up to.

Atlas hesitated for a moment, then turned his head and gently said, "Wait outside."

"Okay," I responded as I stood up. I left without saying anything to David.

I walked out of the room and couldn't help but let out a sigh of relief.

But as I stepped out, I saw the person I least wanted to see at the door.

Chapter 1419 The Confrontation

Celine was there before me. She was dressed meticulously, and although she was middle-aged, she still took great care of herself. We were standing very close to each other, so I could see the expensive foundation on her face that was failing to conceal her wrinkles. Not far behind Celine stood her 'shadow,' the sinister Kenzie.

Celine didn't seem surprised to see me emerge from the room. However, Kenzie's eyes widened, and she looked at me in disdain.

I glanced at her and cursed silently. 'Damn.'

Celine faintly said, "So, you've finally become part of the Pierce family?"

I smiled calmly and replied, "I have, Celine. Didn't you say grandpa was critically ill? As his granddaughter-in-law, I had to come see him, of course."

She probably hadn't expected me to be so bold.

Her eyes darkened slightly, and her complexion turned pale.

"Granddaughter-in-law?" She repeated skeptically. "You seem quite eager to claim that title."

I glanced at her and calmly walked out of the room.

I moved to the tea table on the side veranda, ignoring her words, and elegantly sat down beside it.

Celine was a little angry when she saw my arrogance. She turned to the servant and coldly asked, "How much longer is it going to take, Abbas?"

"Mr. David is talking to Mr. Atlas. Please sit down and wait," Abbas replied gently, gesturing to the tea table.

Celine didn't say anything. I could feel her gaze locked on me as I reached for the teapot.

I poured myself a glass of tea, took a sip, and noticed Celine walking toward me.

The sound of her high heels clicked on the ground as she approached, and she sat down opposite me, saying, "Ms. Chloe."

I looked at her and said, "Please call me Stella or Mrs. Chloe, Celine."

She laughed disdainfully when she heard my words.

"Sorry, that was a habit." She regained her composure. "I heard your father has returned. Is he okay?"

As I looked at her again, I thought that she seemed thinner than the first time I saw her, and her complexion wasn't great.

"You know about that too? You're

quite well-informed. Thanks for your concern, My father is fine except for his crippled leg. His memory, especially, is quite good," I said with a smile.

I was hinting that my father remembered everything with that remark.

"How fortunate." Her insincere words sounded casual.

I admired her composure. Didn't she feel guilty? I wondered if she had a conscience, or if doing so many bad deeds had made her immune to feeling guilt.

"People always say that surviving a great disaster brings great fortune in the future." I took another sip of water, then casually looked at Celine.

"I can't believe he's still alive after twenty years." Her words were harsh.

"Yes. My father has always wished

to come back alive, uncover the

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truth of the past, and find out who killed my mother and my

grandparents. He won't rest until the

real culprit is brought to justic

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wish has kept him going over the years."

Celine's expression remained calm, but I could tell that she had tightened her grip on the cup.

I smiled lightly. "I actually planned to visit you another day."

Celine's gaze turned cold as she mocked, "I'm glad you thought about me."

I smiled wickedly. "I wanted to see if my former home was still the same."

Her expression visibly turned dark.

I got up and glanced around the courtyard, which exuded an ancient and elegant atmosphere.

"Did you live here when you were young?" I asked as I turned back to Celine.

"I've never lived here. This is the Pierce family's old family home, and I don't like old things."

"Oh..." I sighed. "This place seems refined, but I don't see that quality in you, Celine."

Chapter 1420 The Family's History

I intentionally made that remark.

Suddenly, I noticed the old man glancing at me.

I had heard about the Pierce family's history from Grandma Rose.

When the Pierce family first arrived in Nocturnia, things weren't easy for them. Their fortunes had completely turned around only after David had married the eldest daughter of the Cross family.

I figured this mansion must have been built during that time. Everything about it, from its location and architectural style to the overall maintenance of the courtyard, exuded an ancient style.

However, Celine's mother was just a mistress who favored luxury and fashion, so she wouldn't have liked it here. Even if she had, she wouldn't have been entitled to live here, as it belonged to the eldest daughter of the Cross family.

So it was only natural that Celine had never lived here.

The drizzle continued, and I couldn't be bothered to contend with Celine. Instead, I strolled leisurely in the courtyard, admiring the view of the garden. I didn't venture into other parts of the yard without permission.

I felt Celine and Kenzie's venomous gazes following me the whole time.

I hadn't expected Atlas to spend over two hours with his grandpa in the room, which left Celine, who had been waiting outside, feeling restless.

There was no way she was in the mood to deal with me now. I was sure she was feeling guilty.

As Atlas emerged from the room, Celine stood up. "Atlas, you're back. Why didn't you tell me?"

"I wanted to see grandpa." Atlas's tone was firm.

"I need to talk to you about something. Wait here. I'll go and say hello to dad first." Celine's tone carried a hint of command.

"I have something to attend to. Another day, perhaps. I'll take Chlo back with me now," Atlas said as he held my hand. He opened the umbrella without waiting for Celine to speak again, and we walked out.

I glanced back at Celine and saw her frowning as she watched us leave. I flashed her a smile before getting into the car with Atlas. "What did grandpa say to you?" I asked Atlas, watching him closely.

"Nothing much. We just talked about some things from the past." Atlas sounded indifferent, and he was clearly not telling me the whole truth.

I didn't believe that he had spent over two hours just talking about the past with Grandpa, but I didn't press further.

I just stayed silent.

Atlas didn't say another word on the way back, though he held my hand tightly. He appeared to be lost in thought.

He only seemed to snap out of it

when the car returned to the estate. Holding my hand, he said, "The weather's not great today. Let's stay at home. When the weather clears up, take you around to see the places where we grew up together."

"Okay." I nodded.

Sandy hurried out from inside the house. I supposed she was trying to figure out what had happened from our expressions.

Atlas cheerfully asked, "What's for lunch, Sandy?"

She immediately brightened up. "Al

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the things you both loved to eat when you were little. Now that we're back here, of course we'll eat the food from home." Content belongs

She chattered on and loudly called out, "Iris, come out and see. Mr. Atlas and Ms. Stella are back. It's been a long time since you saw them."

As she said that, a middle-aged woman emerged from inside. She appeared to be in her forties.

She stood at the dining room door and fixed her eyes on me for a long time before muttering, "You've changed a lot, but you're still our Ms. Stella."

I just smiled, not knowing what to say.

Atlas greeted her. "Hey, Iris."

"It's a good thing you've brought her back. Thank the heavens."

"Let's prepare the food and have lunch." Sandy briskly disappeared into the kitchen.

Iris glanced at me again, wiping her eyes, then quickly ran inside as she announced, "Lunch will be ready soon!"

Just then, Dylan walked in from

outside and looked at Atlas. He

didn't say anything, but there wa

something in his gaze, as Atlas nodded in understanding.