

For Dinner 171

Chapter 171: Don 't Worry About These Details

This also made him think that only Cindy Clarke and Morgan Clarke lived together here.

A woman and a child, if a villain really came in, there would be no way to fight back.

He could imagine how nervous Cindy must have been just now.

"It's alright, next time I come over, I will let you know beforehand." Adrian Zhekova held Cindy, comforting in a soft voice, "I scared you tonight." He felt terrible when he sensed Cindy's trembling earlier.

Lowering his head, he secretly pressed his lips to the top of her hair.

Cindy didn't notice and shook her head: "It's just me making a fuss, I forgot you could come in."

After saying that, Cindy suddenly realized something was wrong.

When did she get hugged by Adrian Zhekova?

Cindy's head exploded, and she hurriedly pushed him away.

Seeing her reaction, Adrian Zhekova reluctantly let go.

Cindy quickly stepped back, feeling awkward and not daring to look at him: "Why...why are you here at this time?"

"I've been busy lately and haven't had time to come over and see you all." As Adrian Zhekova spoke, he skillfully opened the shoe cabinet, took out his slippers and put them on.

“Besides, I thought about it, you have a competition tomorrow. I’ll be arriving late, and by then, you’ll probably be on stage competing, so I’m here to see you tonight.”

Watching his familiar actions, Cindy felt as if they were already married, knowing each other more than anyone else.

Tsk!

Cindy quickly shook her head.

What marriage? What was she thinking about!

With a shake of her head, Cindy suddenly realized a problem: “Did you unlock the door with your fingerprint?”

She remembered that she only told Adrian Zhekova the password for the fingerprint lock at home but didn’t input his fingerprint.

Adrian Zhekova: .

“I find it troublesome to enter the password every time, so I input the fingerprint as well.” Since the password was there, he could operate it directly.

Cindy gasped in shock.

When on earth did this happen!

Adrian acted as if nothing had happened: “Don’t mind such details.”

Cindy: "..."

She felt that phrase was very familiar.

"Morgan Zhekova didn't wake up, did she?" Adrian asked again.

"Let's cheer." Cindy said.

He was here anyway.

Cindy came to Morgan's room, and Adrian asked: "Did you lock the door?"

"When I heard the noise earlier, I was afraid there might be danger." Cindy explained softly.

In Adrian's heart, it felt as if it had been blocked by a rock.

All these years that he didn't know about, Cindy had always been living like this.

Always protecting Morgan, shielding her from the front.

But who could protect her?

Tonight was just a false alarm.

But what if there was real danger?

But then again, Cindy wasn't in the wrong.

Still, Adrian felt distressed.

“Have you ever encountered danger before?” Adrian asked softly, “Have there been times when you protected Morgan, shielding her in the front lines?” Cindy hesitated, and Adrian’s gaze made her heart ache a little. “No.” Cindy smiled faintly, “I haven’t encountered such a dangerous situation.”

Cindy opened the door, but Adrian did not enter this time.

He just stood at the door, watching the little one sleeping soundly.

At this moment, he realized very clearly that the child’s sweet and worry-free life was all because of Cindy’s burden and persistence.

He closed the door and said to Cindy: “It’s been hard for you, from giving birth to Morgan until now, hasn’t it?”

Cindy didn’t know which aspect he was referring to.

Adrian scratched his nose and said: “I looked it up. Children with weak health are especially prone to illness. You’ve been taking care of her all by yourself. When she’s sick, you stay up all night with her, but there’s no one to share the burden with you. It’s all on you..”

Chapter 172: Staring Blankly at Adrian Zhekova

“There were many times like this, right?” Adrian Zhekova asked.

Cindy Clarke tilted her head and thought for a moment without denying it: “Hmm, especially when he was a baby and couldn’t talk. He would cry when he was hungry and cry when he was sick and uncomfortable. It was hard to tell if he was hungry or not feeling well somewhere.”

“At first, I had no experience and thought he was hungry. But he wouldn’t eat and just kept crying. It broke my heart, so I hurriedly took him to the hospital. That’s when I found out he had a fever. Because he couldn’t talk, he could only express himself by crying.”

“He had fevers repeatedly, and I would have to watch him constantly since there was no one available to help. At that time, I indeed felt very tired and exhausted. But as long as I saw him healthy and happy, I felt it was all worth it.” Cindy smiled.

“From his birth to the present, can you tell me more about these things?” Adrian Zhekova suggested.

“Now? It’s late.’

“Mmhm.” Adrian Zhekova seemed not to notice how late it was.

So, Cindy reluctantly followed him to the living room.

She made some tea and told him about some of her past experiences taking care of Morgan.

Actually, talking about those moments now, Cindy didn’t feel tired at all.

But during those times, there were several moments when she felt like she couldn’t hold on anymore.

“From now on, I’ll be there.” Adrian Zhekova’s voice was slightly hoarse, and his gaze unconsciously fell deeply on Cindy’s face, “I won’t let you struggle like this again.”

Cindy’s heart stirred slightly, and she also felt an unprecedented sense of stability.

If anything happened to Morgan, Adrian would not sit idly by.

Even more so, Adrian had been actively paying attention to them, and as long as he wasn’t busy, he would come and check on them.

She wouldn't have to carry the burden alone anymore.

Cindy had also considered the attitude of Morgan's biological father.

She had thought about what would happen if, by chance, they really met Morgan's biological father.

That person probably wouldn't want to have anything to do with Morgan. In such a high-pressure society, Morgan, to that person, might just be a burden.

Although Cindy didn't need the biological father to do anything for Morgan at all.

In her heart, it would be best if they were still strangers.

But she never expected Morgan's biological father to be Adrian Zhekova, a man with a sense of responsibility and commitment.

Not only did he not try to take Morgan away, but he also actively shared the responsibility with her, fulfilling his duties as a father.

Even more, he respected her decisions, including not telling Morgan the truth for the time being.

Cindy's throat seemed to be choked, and she couldn't speak for a moment. She just stared dumbfoundedly at Adrian.

She didn't know when, but Adrian's face had gotten closer and closer to her.

By the time Cindy came to her senses, Adrian's large face was already in front of her.

Not having time to think, Cindy instinctively held her breath.

Her trembling eyelashes closed, and her nervous gaze fell on his lips.

In the next second, they would touch.

Cindy's heart was pounding wildly, as if it would leap out of her chest.

"Cindy." A sweet, sleepy voice called out.

Suddenly, Cindy snapped out of the trance-like atmosphere.

She quickly pulled away from Adrian, distancing herself.

Just now... Did they almost kiss?

Cindy's face was burning hot, as if she was being scorched by fire.

At this moment, she couldn't say a word.

Instinctively, she raised her hand, her soft fingertips pressing against her lips..

Chapter 173: Human Shaped Walking Light Bulb

Adrian Zhekova narrowed his eyes, staring at her lips. His fixed gaze made Cindy's scalp tingle.

"Cindy!" Morgan was heard calling again just as he entered the living room.

Cindy quickly moved towards Morgan.

The living room was only so big after all, and she couldn't avoid Adrian no matter how she tried.

As she walked, she could still feel Adrian's intense gaze fixed on her face.

Cindy's scalp tingled to the point that she could barely walk properly.

She was on the verge of stumbling.

"What happened?" Cindy squatted down in front of Morgan and gathered him into her arms.

The little guy rubbed his eyes, still a bit drowsy: "I'm thirsty, I want water."

"I'll get you some." Cindy said, "Did you finish the water in your cup?"

Every night, Cindy would fill his water bottle for when he got thirsty during sleep.

"I finished it." Morgan replied.

Cindy chuckled, "Okay, I'll refill it for you, Just wait."

After saying this, Cindy went to the kitchen.

With Morgan around, Adrian's presence seemed a lot less prominent.

Adrian noticed that Cindy always seemed tense around him and was easily led by him.

However, as soon as Morgan appeared, Cindy would go back to normal, even forgetting his existence.

This wasn't good.

Adrian squinted at Morgan, who turned and immediately saw him.

"Uncle, you're here too!" Morgan exclaimed dramatically, even stepping back in shock.

Adrian Zhekova:

If Morgan's reaction hadn't been so over the top, Adrian would have believed him.

This time Morgan's reaction was not as unexpected as the last morning when he first saw Adrian.

Adrian suspected that the kid must have heard him talking to Cindy earlier.

The moment he saw Adrian about to kiss Cindy, he rushed out.

Adrian gritted his teeth disdainfully at Morgan.

Why bother having a son?

He was plainly a walking third wheel!

At this moment, Cindy brought a glass of water for Morgan.

Morgan took it and in order to carry on the act, took a sip.

Actually, he wasn't thirsty at all.

“Uncle, what time is it now? Why are you still here?” Morgan looked at the time, full of suspicion.
“You’re not planning on staying over, are you?”

Adrian nodded, “It is quite late and it wouldn’t be appropriate for me to leave.

Since you’ve mentioned it, I might as well stay.”

“I didn’t, I didn’t say that!” Morgan quickly shook his head in denial.

But Adrian paid him no heed.

This wasn’t Adrian seizing an advantage. It was like forcing Morgan to play the role of a bridge.

Adrian then turned towards Cindy: “Can I stay here tonight?”

Adrian had stayed here before and Cindy couldn’t find any reason to say no.

Moreover, it was indeed very late now and by the time Adrian drove back, it would likely be past midnight.

Just as she was thinking this, Adrian explained: “You were scared tonight. If I am here, maybe it would be more comforting for you.”

Cindy hadn’t expected Adrian to think like this.

He continued, “Having a man in the house is always more reassuring.” “I am a man!” Morgan puffed out his chest and stood on his toes, trying to assert his presence.

But Adrian didn’t pay him any attention.

A man?

Huh!

“Besides, my luggage is still here. It could come in handy.” Adrian added.

Cindy: ‘

Chapter 174: Unexpectedly, Adrian Zhekova is also here

Adrian hadn’t brought up his luggage, she almost forgot that he said he was going to take it away, but he never did.

So his stuff was still here.

“My sleeping clothes are still here, right? Where did you put them?” Adrian asked, wondering if they had been put in her wardrobe.

“You’re welcome to stay here, but you’ll have to sleep on the couch again,” Cindy said awkwardly. “Your sleeping clothes are still here, I’ve already washed them for you. I’ll go get them.”

Adrian left his comfortable home and slept on her couch, how inappropriate it was.

Morgan was stunned.

Sleeping clothes? What sleeping clothes? When did Adrian leave his sleeping clothes behind?

“How about...

Before Adrian could finish, Morgan felt he might have ulterior motives and quickly answered: "Uncle, why don't you sleep in my room, and I'll sleep with

Cindy."

"Your bed is too small." He even despised Morgan's height.

"How about, I sleep with Morgan in his room, and you sleep in my room?" Cindy suggested.

After saying that, her face turned red.

She was inspired by Morgan and thought she could squeeze in with him.

After all, Morgan was small, and he wouldn't take up much space.

Plus, she could comfortably sleep on Morgan's bed.

Adrian would love to sleep in Cindy's ... room, but he couldn't let Cindy sleep with Morgan.

Morgan was already such a big kid.

Even if they were mother and son, it couldn't happen!

Adrian immediately refused: "He's a big kid now. It's not convenient for you two to sleep together."

Morgan blinked, "I'm only 4 years old."

Adrian sneered, "Didn't you just say you were a man too?"

Morgan: ‘

Cindy: “...”

“I’m fine sleeping on the sofa,” Adrian said.

After all, he wouldn’t have many more chances to sleep on the couch anyway. Sooner or later, he would be with Cindy and wouldn’t have to sleep on the couch anymore.

Alright, since he insisted, Cindy wouldn’t push it further.

Adrian took the opportunity to urge Morgan, “It’s late, you have to go to Nursery tomorrow. Go to bed, quick.”

Morgan looked at Adrian worriedly, and then at Cindy.

Leaving the two of them alone, he couldn’t help but feel worried.

“Yes, you should go to sleep,” Cindy agreed.

Morgan sighed helplessly.

Cindy couldn’t see any of his concerns!

How could she be so oblivious! What to do!

Reluctantly, Morgan went back to sleep with a backward glance every three steps.

The pillows and quilts were stored in her bedroom wardrobe.

As Cindy went to get them, she didn't notice Adrian following her into the bedroom.

When Cindy opened the wardrobe and stood on the stool to fetch the quilt and pillow from the top shelf, Adrian saw the recipe book on her desk.

When he suddenly opened the door earlier, Cindy thought a thief had entered and hurriedly left without closing her recipe book.

At the moment, the recipe book was wide open.

Adrian picked it up and saw not only the cooking methods and seasonings but also Cindy's notes.

Why cook it like this, why season it like that.

Some parts were marked with a question mark, and in brackets, there were other methods and seasonings.

"Is what's written in the brackets an alternative method?" Adrian asked when he saw it.

Cindy didn't expect Adrian to be in the room.

His sudden remark startled her.

Cindy turned her head in shock, only to find Adrian leaning against her desk, his long legs stretched out as if he had no room to place them..

Chapter 175: Morgan Zhekova Followed You Too

This was his first time stepping foot in her room!

Cindy Clarke felt like her last bit of territory had just been infiltrated by him.

Adrian Zhekova's presence was overpowering; her room seemed to have been completely invaded by his scent.

The familiar smell that used to belong to her was long gone.

Cindy Clarke, startled by Adrian Zhekova, was nearly tripped off balance.

The weight of the pillows and blankets made her feel dizzy and light-headed.

She lost balance and toppled over.

Adrian Zhekova dropped the cookbook, dashed over in two strides and still managed to catch Cindy Clarke in time.

But in doing so, Cindy Clarke practically fell into Adrian Zhekova's arms and was embraced by him.

Adrian Zhekova lowered his head to see Cindy Clarke's flushed face.

He couldn't help but chuckle.

This deep, magnetic laughter embarrassed Cindy Clarke beyond words, and she quickly pulled herself out of his arms as if she had been burnt.

Adrian Zhekova felt regretful. He hadn't even had a good hug yet.

Cindy Clarke shoved the pillows and blankets into Adrian Zhekova's arms without looking up.

She murmured without raising her head, "Please go to sleep now, good night."

Unexpectedly, Adrian Zhekova calmly placed the pillow and blankets on Cindy Clarke's bed first.

Cindy Clarke looked at him with a puzzled face.

Could Adrian Zhekova possibly be planning to sleep here directly?

"Are you sleepy now?" Adrian Zhekova asked again.

Cindy Clarke was caught off guard.

She wasn't sleepy, but it wasn't exactly appropriate to continue chatting with him at this late hour.

It would be better to claim she was sleepy and let him go to bed soon.

Just as she was about to reply, Adrian Zhekova pointed at her desk and said, "If you're not tired, could you clear my doubts? I'm a bit obsessive-compulsive. If I have questions, I won't be able to get a good sleep tonight."

"Your curiosity must be where Morgan gets his from," Cindy Clarke blurted out absentmindedly.

Morgan was the same; he had to get to the bottom of anything he set his eyes

on.

If he couldn't satisfy his curiosity, he would feel extremely uncomfortable, always be bothered by it and wouldn't be able to forget about it.

Adrian Zhekova paused for a moment, then chuckled lightly.

The bedroom door was open, but Cindy Clarke still felt as if she was trapped in this confined and cramped space with him.

His chuckling lingered above her head. It tickled her scalp and made her ears turn red.

Then, her recipe appeared before her eyes.

It was handed over by Adrian Zhekova, "What does this in the brackets mean?"

"When I am experimenting with different cuisines, I tend to try a variety of methods. Like here," Cindy Clarke pointed to a part in the cookbook with her slender white finger, "Here I tried to pan-fry then marinate, or marinate then pan-fry."

"Here, although it is seasoned in this way, I was wondering if I could switch it to what's in these brackets? The question mark means I haven't tried it yet, but I'm curious about it and made a note to try it later."

"All these notes on the side are my annotations. The original idea, the purpose, and the thought process at that time for every chosen method is all written here."

"I record all of these things. When I'm free, I will flip through these notes.

Sometimes I forget the reason for doing things a certain way after a long time. But after reading the notes, I feel like I'm seeing someone else's diary. It brings a fresh perspective and could give me some inspiration," Cindy Clarke explained.

Adrian Zhekova flipped through casually. Even with just a casual glance, he could see the dedication Cindy Clarke had put into it..

Chapter 176: As if Afraid of Losing Her

“This one is...” Adrian Zhekova picked up another one.

This one was different from the one Cindy Clarke had written herself; this one was obviously a photocopy.

Cindy explained, “This is the family recipe I mentioned before. It’s not the original, though. The original is too old and the paper would have been damaged by now. So this is a photocopy. However, in our family, it’s all that’s left.”

Suddenly, Adrian’s face turned serious. “Your mother and sister sold you for just this?”

He refused to acknowledge them as Cindy’s mother and sister, referring to them only as “those two women.”

Although it was their greed that, through chance and misfortune, led to his meeting with Cindy and adopting Morgan Zhekova.

But that was their good luck.

What if there hadn’t been a mistake?

Thinking of Mr. Lopez’s disgusting appearance and how he almost ruined someone as good as Cindy, Adrian’s heart tightened.

His gaze fixed on Cindy, as if he was afraid of losing her.

Cindy's face flushed under Adrian's gaze, her emotions rising and falling. Yet under his gaze, she felt a bit of sorrow.

Adrian's eyes seemed to be filled with worry and heartache.

She didn't know if she was reading him wrong, but under such a gaze, she couldn't help but feel a little sad, even weak.

She took a deep breath, hiding her feelings at the moment, and forced a smile. "Actually, it's their fault. They were the ones with evil hearts; it has nothing to do with the recipe itself."

Adrian smiled slightly and nodded. "You're right."

"This recipe is still quite useful. Some methods handed down from our ancestors might not be as good as modern ones, but we've updated so many cooking methods, ingredients, and seasonings over time. Many of them never existed before," said Cindy.

Royal dishes from ancient times may sound exquisite.

But due to limitations, many modern ingredients were not available in ancient times.

Noodles, for example, were invented during the Song Dynasty.

Chili peppers are native to South America and were introduced to China in the early 17th century. Tomatoes weren't introduced until the 18th Century.

In ancient times, cattle played a crucial role in agriculture so eating beef wasn't easy. Some dynasties only allowed for slaughtering when the cattle were old or seriously ill.

Therefore, while ancestral recipes may sound impressive, they were limited by their time and place, and may not be as delicious as modern cuisine.

“However, the wisdom of our ancestors is still extraordinary. From these recipes, we can find a lot of inspiration. When I have the chance, I’d like to try recreating some of these dishes using modern methods,” said Cindy.

Adrian flipped through the recipe and found that Cindy had made many annotations.

He couldn’t help but laugh; she really loved to make annotations.

“There’s a competition, right?” Cindy said shyly. “I thought I might go through everything I’ve organized and maybe find something useful.” Adrian put down the recipe and stared at her intently.

Feeling his stare, Cindy averted her gaze, unable to meet his eyes.

“Are you nervous about the elimination round tomorrow?” Adrian leaned casually on the table with both hands.

“Of course, I am,” Cindy said. “That’s why I’m looking at the recipes. I just hope

I can do well tomorrow..”

Chapter 177: They Followed Again!

Adrian Zhekova smiled and suddenly raised his hand, letting his palm gently rest on top of Cindy Clarke’s head.

Cindy was startled for a moment, feeling the tender force on her hair. "Good luck tomorrow," Adrian said softly, gently massaging her head for a moment or two.

Cindy's heartbeat suddenly quickened and she responded in a low voice, "Okay." "Then get some rest early; I'm going to bed," Adrian said softly. "Don't stay up too late, either. You need to be well-rested for the competition tomorrow." "Yeah, I'm going to bed now," Cindy obediently replied.

Seeing her act so obediently made Adrian struggle to hold himself back.

He almost didn't want to leave; he just wanted to pull her into his arms and crush her into his bones.

But in the end, he left, taking his pillow and blanket with him.

With Adrian around, Cindy couldn't easily bring herself to leave the bedroom.

Fortunately, she'd already washed up before Adrian came.

Otherwise, she'd be afraid of having another awkward moment like last time.

Though Adrian had already left and she was the only one in the bedroom, it seemed as if the room was still filled with his presence; the air was filled with the scent of mint from his body.

Cindy closed the door, her fingers touching the corner of her eye.

Just moments ago, when she'd fallen from the chair and Adrian caught her.

He'd leaned down, and his lips had seemed to brush the corner of her eye.

Cindy felt that the corner of her eye was hot; she couldn't help but let out an irritated hum, then collapsed into bed.

While she was in the midst of her frustration, suddenly there was a knock at the door.

Cindy, still irritable, could tell it was Adrian just by the force of the knock; Morgan Zhekova wouldn't have the strength to knock like that.

She annoyedly got up from bed and went to the door.

Upon opening the door, as expected, she saw Adrian standing there.

Looking at Cindy's embarrassed and annoyed expression, Adrian couldn't help but chuckle and say, "You haven't given me my pajamas yet."

Cindy was already extremely flustered. If Adrian continued to tease her, she might just become furious!

"Wait a minute!" Cindy said, not daring to look at him.

Cindy quickly pulled open the drawer where the pajamas were kept; this was actually where she kept her own pajamas.

However, there was still room to spare, just enough to fit Adrian's set.

"Did you put my pajamas together with yours?" Adrian's voice suddenly sounded behind her again.

Even though she'd already experienced this kind of surprise once, Cindy still couldn't help but be unprepared for it.

Who knew this man would actually follow her in again!

Startled, Cindy quickly turned around, but she didn't expect Adrian to be so close this time.

As she turned, her shoulder brushed against his chest.

By the time she had turned completely, she found herself trapped by Adrian in front of the wardrobe.

Flustered, the redness spread from Cindy's scalp down to her neck, and she angrily said, "Why didn't you say anything before coming in again? Don't you know it's rude to enter a girl's room like this without permission?"

"Sorry," Adrian apologized sincerely, lowering his head. "I just wanted to see where you put my pajamas."

"Would I just throw them somewhere?" Cindy didn't mean to deliberately block his words, but she was just too embarrassed; she hadn't thought before speaking.

Actually, she didn't even know what she was saying.

"No, it's just curiosity; it's my fault," Adrian chuckled lightly and didn't get angry because of what Cindy said.

He wasn't that petty.

Adrian's light laughter, accompanied by his breath, gently brushed against Cindy's forehead..

Chapter 178: The Daily Life of a Married Couple with a Child

Cindy's ears twitched, blushing red at the roots.

Adrian Zhekova tilted his head slightly and saw Cindy's pajamas in the drawer behind her.

Placed next to his, they looked really nice together.

Cindy hastily took out his pajamas and stuffed them into his arms: "Here, you... go to sleep now."

Adrian Zhekova could only accept them and, looking at the annoyed expression on Cindy's face, he didn't dare push any further. He was afraid of truly angering her, to the point that she might kick him out of the room.

So he obediently took his pajamas and went back to the living room.

The next day, Cindy got up early.

Not only to send Morgan off, but also to prepare breakfast for Adrian Zhekova. Adrian Zhekova went to the company earlier, so Cindy had to get up earlier than usual.

While Adrian Zhekova was waiting in the restaurant, it didn't take long for Morgan to come out, all ready.

Adrian Zhekova felt that now it really seemed like he and Cindy were married.

A married life for the three of them.

The feeling was really nice.

Adrian Zhekova and Cindy sent Morgan together to the school bus.

This time, Teacher Linda was not as surprised as before.

Adrian Zhekova and Cindy were definitely together.

Otherwise, there was no way Adrian Zhekova would repeatedly accompany Cindy to send Morgan off early in the morning on several occasions.

Although Teacher Linda was no longer surprised, she still decided to go back and report the situation to the headmaster.

They must pay more attention to Morgan.

Cindy prepared a bit at home because the competition officially started at 2 pm.

After having a quick lunch, Cindy arrived at the competition venue to familiarize herself with the environment ahead of time.

Contestants usually came half an hour to an hour in advance.

When Cindy arrived, most of the contestants were already there.

Cindy wore a mask and did not show her face.

First, she received her apron and name tag.

Just as she had put them on, she heard someone calling her: "Cain Velman." Looking over, Cindy saw Iris Doone and Blake Walker approaching.

The two probably felt more familiar with her after a group competition than with other people.

However, during the auditions' group matches, they hadn't confronted her like other contestants did.

At that time, the duo chose to remain silent, watching from the sidelines.

Therefore, Cindy knew their intentions.

She didn't plan to interact too closely with them.

Both of them had already put on their aprons and pinned their name tags on them.

Seeing Cindy's outfit, Iris asked, "Are you going to wear the mask for today's competition too?"

"Yeah, I've already applied to the competition organizers and got permission," Cindy replied indifferently.

Because she was wearing a mask, they couldn't see her expression.

"Today's event is being streamed live, and you still don't want to show your face?" Blake exclaimed, "Why?"

"How did the organizers agree to let you keep your face hidden?" Iris asked curiously. "The Pingla Competition has always been very strict with the rules every year, regardless of the contestants' backgrounds. They must follow the organizers' requirements. This is the first time they're making an exception."

"I have some personal reasons, and the organizers were understanding after discussing it with them," Cindy said lightly.

Blake didn't think too much of it and just laughed, "I can actually understand. Aside from the under Pingla Academy, Cain Velman is the top among our group. Our level has always been poles apart from the Academy. Cain Velman is almost at the first place. With her excellent results, it's understandable for the organizers to make some exceptions.."

Chapter 179: How Does Cindy Clarke Scold People!?

But evidently, Iris Doone didn't feel the same way.

She tentatively asked Cindy Clarke, "Your friend came with you during our group competition that day, right?"

Iris Doone's eyes shifted, "One of them was a man, and everyone was saying he looked like Adrian Zhekova, the CEO of Pingla Group."

Blake Walker also remembered that and nodded in agreement.

Cindy Clarke raised her eyebrow, saying, "Then they must have been mistaken. If I really knew such an important person, would I still need to participate in this competition?"

With an ironic look in her unmasked eyes, Cindy Clarke looked at Iris Doone, "You're not suspecting that I got this 11th place by using backdoor connections, are you?"

Iris Doone felt thwarted, as that was precisely what she was thinking.

But she couldn't admit it.

After all, it was one thing to be suspicious, but to voice such an accusation would be too serious.

She never expected Cindy Clarke to bring it up so bluntly.

"Of course not, don't get me wrong," Iris Doone quickly said with an increasingly unnatural smile.

“Yeah, definitely not possible,” Blake Walker chimed in seemingly carefree, “If you really used backdoor connections, you would have been directly placed first, not 11th.”

“Even if you’re the First Person under Pingla Corp., it’s just a fancy title, still not truly the first. There’s still someone from the actual Pingla Corp. above, and being the First Person under Pingla Corp. means you’ll never be as good as the real Pingla Corp. people. It’s not worth it,” Blake Walker said with a smile.

His words seemed to be defending Cindy Clarke.

But in fact, it was a subtle mix of praise and insult, making anyone listening feel uncomfortable.

Iris Doone originally thought Blake Walker was being sincere.

Thinking back to the group competition, his feigned humility didn’t seem like it came from a genuine person.

But there it was, waiting to reveal itself.

Iris Doone laughed quietly in her mind as she saw Cindy Clarke’s eyes curving into a smile, “You make a good point. If I really had those connections, I would have arranged myself to be first.”

“No, if I had that kind of network, why would I even participate in this competition, or be a food blogger? Why not just open a high -end restaurant and become the boss? Are there any reasons I’d need to stand next to certain tasteless people? What do you think?” Cindy Clarke asked with a smile.

Though Cindy Clarke was wearing a mask, Iris Doone and Blake Walker could still see the mockery in her eyes.

How vicious Cindy Clarke could be when insulting someone!

But they couldn’t fight back.

If they did, wouldn't they be admitting they were tasteless people?

And they certainly weren't!

Blake Walker frowned, looking like an honest man who didn't agree, and suddenly said loudly, "Cain Velman, how could you say something like that? Are you insulting the other contestants? They haven't provoked you, how could you look down on them?"

Iris Doone praised Blake Walker in her heart.

With one move, he had created animosity towards Cindy Clarke.

Letting everyone else hear this would sound like Cindy Clarke was looking down on all the contestants, not just them.

As expected, due to Blake Walker's words, all the onlookers turned their attention to the commotion.

Hearing the name Cain Velman, none of them were unfamiliar.

Everyone's brows furrowed.

Cain Velman was too arrogant!

Being called the First Person under Pingla Corp. was simply a matter of politeness and promotion.

But she took it seriously.

She really thought she was a big deal!

Seeing that he had roused everyone's discontent, Blake Walker was secretly pleased..

Chapter 180: Cindy Clarke Actually Breaks the Rules

Surprisingly, Cindy Clarke didn't panic but showed an expression saying "You guys are really good at making a fuss over nothing."

She smiled and said, "I didn't swear at the other contestants."

Iris Doone frowned and said, "Cain Velman, either control your mouth and stop talking nonsense, or admit what you said. If you say something and then don't admit it, what does that make you?"

"Some tasteless people, yes, I'm talking about you two. Didn't you hear that?" Cindy widened her eyes, looking at them with surprise.

"How crude can you be, not understanding plain words and trying to shift the blame to others?" Cindy now didn't bother to hide her tone.

"You!" Blake Walker was angered and ashamed.

Iris's face turned red and green, and she said angrily, "Cain Velman, we came to talk with you with the intention of making friends since we are from the same group. How could you swear at us!"

However, at least Cindy's words made the other contestants who were originally indignant relax their expressions.

At least it wasn't directed at them.

Therefore, their hostility towards Cindy reduced.

But they couldn't help but join the commotion.

Someone whispered, "Has Cain Velman become arrogant? Just because she got good results in auditions, she starts looking down on people?"

"Yeah, even if it's not aimed at us, we're still from the same group. Isn't it inappropriate to be so arrogant on the first day?"

"Arrogance needs to be backed by enough strength," someone said coldly, "She became arrogant too soon."

Iris saw that her words changed other people's attitudes towards Cindy and she felt smug.

However, before she could savor her triumph, she heard Cindy say with a smile, "You two, one of you suspects my ranking was achieved through connections. The other belittles me for being 11th Place, not 1st Place."

"I am 11th Place, and I never felt proud of it like I was 1st Place. Do you need to belittle me?" Cindy said very bluntly.

She spoke out loud, "During the group competition, other team members looked down on me just because I'm a food blogger. You two didn't join them in attacking me, but watched the drama from the sidelines. Did you think you could come and talk to me sarcastically as if nothing happened just because you didn't join them?"

"You two have no taste. Did I say anything wrong?" Cindy said coldly.

If it were not for their bad intentions, she would not have been so direct.

But who could blame her when they were not well-intentioned?

So she didn't bother to pretend with them anymore.

Iris never thought that Cindy would scold them to their faces!

Who could have expected it?

Usually, when people are angry, they talk behind people's backs, not scold them to their faces like her.

This caught Iris and Blake off guard.

Originally, Iris and Blake came to fish for Cindy's words.

Even if they were sarcastic, they didn't openly confront her.

Under normal circumstances, even if the other party was angry, they couldn't find a reason to scold back.

After all, they didn't explicitly say it.

Who knew Cindy wouldn't play by the rules! Now, the other contestants suddenly realized.

"No wonder she scolded them."

"Yeah, if someone questioned my ranking and ability, I would scold them too." "Whoever starts the provocation is the despicable one. That's what it means.."