

His kiss 1151

Chapter 1151

Jealousy burned through her. Why did Gabriela always have someone in her corner, no matter where she went?

But Wesley wasn't mine to lose. Why would I be upset about this? If anything, I'm glad Gabriela's working so hard to save up for her own wedding fund.

Gabriela shot him a helpless look.

Clearly, he was determined to make her admit, out loud, that every dollar of it was destined for marrying him.

"Fine," she said, a playful smile tugging at her lips. "I'm saving for a wedding fund. But I'll earn the rest myself. That way it'll actually mean something."

Even though his proposal hadn't technically landed, Gabriela had effectively confirmed, in front of everyone present, that they were back together.

Satisfied with that outcome, Wesley nodded. "All right. I'll wait until you've saved enough, and then you'll marry me."

His expression stayed composed, but there was no mistaking the warmth threading through his voice — enough to leave everyone wondering if the famously stoic Wesley had somehow been swapped out for someone else. The sheer sweetness of it was almost cringe-inducing.

In that moment, it became unmistakably clear just how deeply he cared for Gabriela.

The looks now aimed at Rebecca grew steadily more awkward. It seemed the sudden collapse of her engagement had come down, quite simply, to the fact that Wesley had never had any real feelings for her at all.

Humiliated, Rebecca's face burned red.

Overwhelmed by jealousy and fury, she jabbed a finger at Wesley. "You're blind! Treating someone as vile as Gabriela like she's precious. One day you'll regret this!"

With that, she covered her face and stormed out of the room.

Wesley paid her no further attention, turning back to Gabriela instead. "So, what's the plan now?"

She glanced at her friends.

They'd only come to collect their winnings — they hadn't eaten or gone shopping yet.

“Let’s get some food first,” she said.

Wesley nodded. “Perfect timing. Dr. Su and I haven’t eaten either. Mind if we join?”

After checking with Alissa and Aubrey, Gabriela agreed.

What had started as an outing for three girls had, before long, turned into a group of six.

Billy secured a table at a nearby revolving restaurant.

The food was excellent, the view even better, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

After dinner, Alissa suggested karaoke, and Gabriela agreed without hesitation.

It had been far too long since she’d had a real chance to unwind.

Seeing her enthusiasm, Wesley — never much for this kind of outing — went along with it too, if a bit reluctantly.

They ended up at a club in Lan Kwai Fong, a lively nightlife district.

In the private room, Aubrey seemed a little reserved at first. But after a couple of drinks and a song or two, she loosened up completely.

Still riding high on her winnings from earlier, she threw herself into the fun, eventually challenging Billy to a dice game.

She kept losing at first, downing drink after drink, until Billy started deliberately letting her win, worried she might overdo it.

Chapter 1152

But even when he threw the game on purpose, Aubrey insisted on drinking anyway.

“Dr. Su, you’re a doctor. You shouldn’t be drinking this much. I’ll drink for you — that’s only fair.”

Gossipy as she could be, Aubrey had her own code, and she refused to owe anyone anything, no matter the circumstances.

Noticing the slight unfocused glaze creeping into her eyes, Billy decided to call it quits and handed her off to Gabriela.

“Miss Haynes, your friend’s not looking too steady. Keep an eye on her.”

Sure enough, Gabriela spotted Aubrey, clearly tipsy, still reaching for another glass. She pulled her close at once, wrapping an arm around her shoulders.

“Aubrey, no more drinking. Let’s sing instead.”

Ever obedient where Gabriela was concerned, Aubrey nodded and leaned into her.

“Okay, let’s sing.” She picked out a Cantonese song and began humming along softly, her voice carrying a faint slur.

“The streets suddenly fell silent, the cypress trees suddenly ceased to sway, and in this moment, all I need is a warm cup of tea...”

Her voice came out quiet, tinged with something wistful.

Head resting on Gabriela’s shoulder, microphone loose in her hand, she hummed on softly.

There was a loneliness in it — in her voice, and in the way she held herself.

Aubrey had always been the cheerful, upbeat type — how could a tune this sorrowful come from her?

Gabriela reached over and patted her head gently before handing the microphone off to Alissa.

“Alissa, do you know this song?”

It wouldn’t feel quite so heartbreaking if someone else joined in.

Alissa shook her head. “I don’t speak Cantonese — that’s a southern Chinese dialect.”

Gabriela didn’t either, but she picked up the mic anyway and hummed softly along.

Feeling Gabriela’s quiet care, Aubrey’s eyes welled with tears she hadn’t meant to shed. Thankfully, the dim lighting in the room gave her cover as she quickly wiped them away.

After all the singing and laughing, the night had stretched on quite late.

Gabriela insisted on taking Aubrey home. As drunk as she was, there was no way Gabriela could let her leave alone.

But Aubrey, grinning through it all, waved her off. “Don’t worry about me, Gabby. My boyfriend’s coming to get me.”

She dialed a number, her voice tinged with mild irritation. “Kevin. I’m drunk. Come get me right now.”

Before long, a figure appeared, hurrying toward them.

It was the third time Gabriela had seen Kevin.

The last time, he’d been working in Western Town, only coming back to Okburg — the busy city they lived in — during holidays to see Aubrey. He’d since transferred to Okburg for work, though Gabriela hadn’t crossed paths with him again until now.

Kevin stood tall, probably around 175 centimeters, his features sharp and striking.

Thick, bold brows, and lips with a certain understated sensuality.

He recognized only Gabriela, offering her a polite greeting before gathering the thoroughly drunk Aubrey into his arms. When Gabriela offered to drive them home, he declined, opting to hail a cab instead.

It was Alissa's first time meeting Aubrey's boyfriend, and she offered a fairly balanced assessment. "He's good-looking, but he seems like he might have a temper."

Gabriela laughed. "Aubrey adores him, though. They've been together for years."

Aubrey and Kevin had started dating during her third year of college. From long-distance to sharing a city, the relationship had held steady all this time. They'd had their share of fights, sure, but never a real breakup.

The only thing missing was a wedding.

It had been nearly nine years.

Alissa's eyebrows shot up. "That's some serious commitment."

It was rare, seeing a couple stay together that long without ever tying the knot.

Curious as to why, Alissa glanced over at Billy, standing calm and silent nearby, and thought better of asking further. He didn't seem the type to appreciate gossip, so she let the question drop.

Wesley and Gabriela shared a car home, and before leaving, Wesley told Billy, “Take Dr. Su and Alissa home. Thanks for your help tonight.”

Well accustomed to such tasks, Billy assured him it was no trouble and got to work.

He dropped Dr. Su off at his residential complex first, then took Alissa on to her hotel.

Yes — Alissa was currently living at a hotel.

With Wesley having practically settled into Gabriela’s villa full-time, Alissa found herself equal parts intimidated and awkward whenever their paths crossed there. In the end, she’d chosen to move out.

She hadn’t wanted to go back to the Hopkins family estate either, so a hotel had seemed the easiest fix.

If the wealthiest man in Holtsley wanted to play the long game, fine — she’d play along. She was still young enough to afford waiting him out a few more years.

Billy watched Alissa walk into the hotel lobby, waited long enough to be sure she’d made it up to her room safely, then drove off.

Everyone else got home without any trouble.

Aubrey's night, though, didn't go quite as smoothly. Thoroughly drunk, she'd gotten out of the cab and dropped into a squat by the roadside, burying her head into her arms like an ostrich, refusing to budge no matter what Kevin said.

He coaxed her, low-voiced, for a long while before she suddenly grabbed onto his leg and burst into tears.

"Kevin. When are you finally going to marry me? I'm so tired..."

Aubrey was nearly thirty now, just months away from that particular milestone, the kind that came loaded with social pressure to settle down. Every year, her family pushed harder — pressuring her toward marriage, shoving her toward blind dates she didn't want.

But she had no interest in marrying anyone else. She only wanted Kevin.

His brows knit tight at her words.

His face already carried a sharp, moody edge, the corners of his mouth naturally turned down, giving him a permanent look of quiet exhaustion with the world.

When he frowned, that look only sharpened further.

“Aubrey, I want to marry you too. But your mom’s demands are just too much.”

Aubrey’s family situation was anything but simple.

Chapter 1154

She was the eldest daughter, the only one in her family to attend a prestigious university.

Her parents had gone deep into debt to fund her education, and once she’d started working, she’d been expected to send nearly every cent home to help pay it off.

Those debts had long since been settled — but by then, her mother had come to see her as the family’s most valuable asset. If Kevin wanted to marry her, he’d have to meet her mother’s terms: an 880,000-yuan dowry, a car, and a house. Not a cent less.

Kevin, with only a high school education, had worked himself to the bone over the years, managing to save something along the way.

But he was still nowhere close to meeting the sky-high figure her mother had set.

Through tears, Aubrey said, “I know 880,000 is a lot, but we can figure it out together. I’ll borrow some. After the wedding, we’ll pay it back together.”

Kevin had been her first love. She'd fallen for him at twenty and never once wavered since.

She didn't want anyone else.

Her mother had landed on 880,000 because her younger brother's future in-laws had demanded the exact same amount. Unable to come up with the money any other way, she'd turned to Aubrey as the solution.

Her mother refused to budge, and the impossible demand had left Kevin deeply frustrated.

Caught between the two of them, Aubrey felt utterly torn.

Listening to her, Kevin's anger simmered closer to the surface.

"Aubrey, your mother isn't marrying you off — she's selling you. Haven't you given enough of yourself over the years already? Why do you keep bending to whatever they demand?"

880,000 wasn't an astronomical sum, but it wasn't small, either. Starting a marriage buried under that kind of debt was a recipe for nothing but endless fighting.

And on top of all that, her mother was still demanding a car and a house.

Kevin had grown up poor, raised by a single mother.

His mother was ill, and he'd spent years working simply to keep them afloat.

He had no desire to begin married life crushed under that kind of financial weight.

"Kevin, I know my mom isn't perfect, but she raised me. She put me through school. I owe her that much," Aubrey sobbed, tears and everything else running together on her face. "I already told her — this dowry settles everything between us. It's how I pay her back for raising me. After this, I won't send home another cent."

She clung to his hand, her voice breaking with pleading.

"I've saved ninety thousand. Between us, we have over a hundred thousand already. If you agree, I can borrow the rest. Kevin, I make good money at Apex Group. Once we're married, everything's going to get better..."

Her sobbing only grew heavier, her words dissolving into something barely coherent. Her eyes were swollen and red, every bit of her usual charm stripped away.

Nine years.

Chapter 1155

Kevin, already somewhat worn down by the sight of her after all this time, suddenly found himself repulsed by her entirely.

She looked ugly, crying like this.

He shook her hand off his leg, his voice sharp with impatience. "Are you coming with me or not? I'll count to three. If you're not up by then, I'm leaving."

Aubrey stared up at him, disbelieving.

Visibly irritated now, Kevin started counting. "One. Two. Three..."

She sobbed harder, trying and failing to push herself upright, her legs numb from squatting too long.

Out of patience, Kevin turned and walked off.

The night wind cut sharp against Aubrey's eyes as she watched his figure shrink into the distance, panic beginning to claw its way up her throat.

Ignoring the numbness still crawling through her legs, Aubrey scrambled up at once and took off after Kevin.

But his stride was too long, and before she'd covered much ground, he'd disappeared into the dark without a trace.

She called out for him several times. No answer came back.

Frustrated and unsettled, she sank onto a nearby set of steps and started rubbing at her tingling legs.

The area wasn't far from her apartment complex, and it wasn't especially remote either. Still, it was nearly midnight, and the eerie quiet pressing in around her set her nerves on edge.

Just as her anxiety began to spike, she heard a few low, unpleasant chuckles.

"Well, well. What's a pretty girl like you doing out here, all alone, this late at night?"

Aubrey looked up to find three drunken men approaching. Two were thin and wiry; the third was heavysset, shirtless, his round belly on full display.

Wanting no part of them, she stood and tried to walk away.

One of the thinner men lunged forward and caught her arm, his grin unsettling, almost predatory. “No need to rush off. We can’t sleep anyway — why don’t you keep us company for a bit?”

As he spoke, his hand reached toward her.

Still boiling from the fight earlier, Aubrey didn’t hesitate. With a sharp shove and a kick, she threw him off balance, sending him stumbling to the ground.

Seeing their friend fall, the other two charged at her, furious.

Her moves were solid, well-practiced, but fending off two attackers at once proved harder. She managed to hold them both off after a hard-fought struggle — only for a sharp blow to land against the back of her head.

The first man, the one she’d kicked down earlier, had found a stick and swung it at her with full force. He raised it again, ready to strike a second time.

Dizzy, and realizing she couldn’t win this fight, Aubrey turned and ran, dialing for help as she went.

The man gave chase, stick in hand, while Aubrey kept a frantic eye on him and somehow managed to get the call through.

The line connected, and a calm voice answered. “Who is this?”

“Help me!” Aubrey screamed.

Chapter 1156

She’d meant to call Gabriela, but in her panic, she’d hit the wrong number — one she’d only recently saved. Hearing a stranger’s voice on the other end, she didn’t care anymore. “There are men chasing me — drunk men! Please, come help!”

The person’s alarm was audible, and they urged her to call the police right away. But worried the police might take too long, they quickly asked, “Where are you? Tell me your location!”

“I’m near—” Aubrey started, but a sudden screech of brakes cut her off.

A scooter shot out of the shadows, weaving recklessly. The driver, never seeing her at all, couldn’t stop in time and slammed straight into her.

Aubrey was thrown off her feet, sent sprawling several yards away.

The drunken men, seeing the accident unfold, panicked and scattered.

The person on the other end of the call had been Allan. Earlier, during karaoke, he’d exchanged numbers with Aubrey.

Hearing her scream for help, he'd immediately called Gabriela, alarmed.

At that moment, Gabriela and Wesley had only just gotten home. The second Allan's call came through, they gave him Aubrey's address and rushed straight to the scene.

By the time they arrived, the ambulance Allan had called was already there.

The scooter driver was long gone, leaving Aubrey lying on the ground, bleeding heavily, her injuries plainly severe.

Paramedics gently transferred her onto a stretcher and loaded her into the ambulance.

Allan climbed in to monitor her condition, while Gabriela and Wesley followed close behind in their own car.

At the hospital, after a full examination, the doctors found severe injuries to her left arm and leg, along with a scattering of minor wounds elsewhere.

The worst of it was her left eye, pierced by a sharp tree branch during the fall. There was a real risk she could lose her sight entirely.

“This is serious.” Gabriela pleaded urgently with the doctors. “If she needs surgery, please arrange it right away. I’m begging you — do everything you can to save her eye.”

Just hours earlier, Aubrey had been singing, full of life. Now she lay gravely injured, and fury sparked in Gabriela’s chest.

Where was Kevin?

Why had Aubrey been left alone out there, and why hadn’t he shown up after the accident?

Unfortunately, Gabriela didn’t have his number, and Aubrey’s phone had been destroyed in the crash. There was nothing to do but wait for her to wake and reach him herself.

The doctor shook his head, grim.

“With a branch piercing the eye like that, removing it without doing further damage was already something of a miracle. I can’t promise a full recovery.”

At that, Allan stepped forward. “I’ll take the case.”

The doctor recognized him instantly. “Dr. Allan? When did you get back?”

“Please prep the surgical equipment. I’ll perform the operation myself.”

Wasting no time, Allan shed his coat and changed into scrubs the nurses handed him. Moments later, he disappeared into the operating room.

Gabriela gripped Wesley’s hand tight, silently praying that Aubrey would pull through.

After what felt like an eternity, Allan finally emerged. Aubrey was moved to recovery, and by then, daylight had broken outside.

Pulling off his mask, he looked exhausted, though his composure held.

Chapter 1157

“The surgery went well. But the eye sustained significant damage. Whether her vision returns depends on how she recovers.”

His measured tone let Gabriela finally breathe out in relief.

At least the operation itself had gone well.

She thanked him again and again.

“No need,” Allan said. “You can go in and see her now.”

Gabriela and Wesley stepped into the room.

Aubrey lay on the bed, pale, one eye wrapped in heavy bandages, looking frail and small.

Something tightened in Gabriela’s chest as she gently stroked Aubrey’s hair. “If anything hurts, anything at all, tell me, okay?” she said softly.

Aubrey looked back at her through her one uninjured eye and asked quietly, “What happened to my eye?”

“You hurt it. But don’t worry — Dr. Allan’s a well-known eye surgeon with years of experience. He operated on you himself. You’ll recover soon.”

Gabriela walked her through everything carefully, relieved to see her friend take it in with such calm.

She wanted to ask about Kevin but held back, worried it might upset Aubrey further.

Aubrey, though, brought it up herself, plainly.

“We had a fight. He went home without me. I doubt he even knows I got hurt.”

She was right. Kevin, waking up and finding Aubrey gone, had simply assumed she’d stormed off to her company apartment, and hadn’t bothered checking in.

He’d gotten ready for work and gone about his morning without giving her a single call.

It wasn’t that he didn’t care about her, exactly.

But after all these years together, he no longer treated her with the same careful attention he once had.

Especially after their argument the night before — he’d figured she was still sulking, and he wasn’t in the mood to apologize first.

He assumed she’d come around eventually, once she’d cooled off.

Brenden had no idea Aubrey had been hurt, but by the next day, word had spread to nearly everyone in their circle.

Tessa, Cali, and Nina all came by with gifts to see her.

Even colleagues from other departments started dropping in one after another to check on her.

Brenden and Fiona came too. Brenden made a point of telling her to take her time recovering, assuring her the medical leave wouldn't affect her pay.

But Kevin?

He might as well have vanished entirely. Three full days, and not a single call.

Every day, Aubrey stared at the hospital room door with her one good eye, half-hoping he'd suddenly walk through it.

She felt like something forgotten, endlessly waiting on someone who might never come.

Gabriela couldn't stand it any longer and was ready to go find him herself.

"Don't," Aubrey said quickly, stopping her. "I just want to see how long it takes for him to remember I exist."

Her phone had been fixed and stayed on around the clock — and still, not one message from Kevin.

Ever since that disastrous fight, he'd refused to swallow his pride and reach out first.

It felt like a bad sign, the kind that might mean nine years of history was quietly slipping toward an end.

Chapter 1158

Watching Aubrey grow more withdrawn by the day, Gabriela finally said, softly, "You won't call him first, and you're not ready to let him go either. In the end, you're the one hurting the most out of all this."

Aubrey couldn't hold back her tears any longer.

"Gabriela, I can't let him go. Nine years — I stood by him through everything. We never once thought about giving up, not even during the hardest stretches."

But now, they were losing this fight to an exorbitant dowry — 880,000 yuan, roughly \$120,000.

Or maybe, more honestly, to reality itself.

"When I first met Kevin, his temper was even worse than it is now. He'd sulk for whole days, snap over the smallest things, impossible to reason with."

“But I liked him anyway. I was patient with him. Over time, he grew to appreciate that, and he started making room for me.”

Nine years, and Aubrey had slowly reshaped an angry, volatile young man into someone gentle, someone who genuinely cared about the people around him.

The longer she stayed, the more deeply she’d come to love him.

And the thought of losing him now — of some other woman stepping into her place, receiving all that patience and kindness he’d only learned because of her — was unbearable.

Those qualities in him, she’d spent nine years cultivating. How could she just hand him over to someone else?

Listening to Aubrey pour it all out, Gabriela let out a helpless sigh.

“But Kevin isn’t going to marry you like this. What’s your plan?”

However unwilling Aubrey was to let go, if he refused the 880,000-yuan dowry, they’d stay locked in this same standoff indefinitely.

“I don’t know.”

Aubrey had worked at Apex Group for years now; coming up with 880,000 yuan wouldn’t actually be that difficult for her. Worst case, she could always ask Gabriela, who wouldn’t hesitate to lend it to her.

But Kevin wouldn’t accept it, regardless.

He’d always objected to her mother’s demand for such a massive dowry in the first place. So even if Aubrey found the money on her own, he still wouldn’t give in.

He was even less willing to start their marriage already buried under crushing debt.

Give in on something like this once, he believed, and it opens the door for every unreasonable demand that follows.

With circumstances so different from her own, Gabriela couldn’t offer much practical advice.

She simply held Aubrey’s hand and said, sincerely, “If there’s anything I can do to help, please tell me.”

Aubrey understood exactly what she meant by that — the dowry.

Her eyes welled up again.

“Thank you, Gabby.”

Gabriela stayed a little longer before finally leaving.

She was busier now than ever, still adjusting to her new role heading up Everglow Group while also carving out time to work alongside Leo at SK Elite Boutique on new design concepts.

Worried about Aubrey’s limited mobility, she’d already arranged for two caregivers to take turns looking after her.

But the moment Gabriela left, Aubrey deflated all over again, sinking back into her gloom.

She opened her messaging app and scrolled back through her last exchange with Kevin, still frozen on a message from days earlier:

Chapter 1159

Aubrey: I made some snow fungus soup today. (traditional dessert)

Kevin: Working late.

Further up, the thread was almost entirely her messages, with only the occasional short reply from him scattered in between.

The more she read, the more her chest ached.

Maybe, after enough years together, love really did settle into something closer to family. However passionate things started out, eventually it all came down to the mundane, unglamorous grind of everyday life.

For the first time, Aubrey felt something close to defeat.

Fine. So be it.

In this standoff, whoever caved first would lose.

Kevin wasn't going to budge — he believed giving in on the dowry meant opening the door to every unreasonable demand that would follow it in their marriage.

And she wasn't going to budge either.

Educated and self-aware as she was, Aubrey knew there was something troubling about playing the self-sacrificing sister propping up her brother's future. And yet, deep down, she couldn't fully shake her agreement with her mother's reasoning.

If not for her parents giving her life, if not for everything her family had sacrificed to send her to college, would she have the career she had today at all?

It was that sense of debt that made her willing to scrape together the 880,000 yuan, just to avoid disappointing her parents.

Leaning back against her pillow, lost in her own misery, a gentle voice broke through her thoughts.

"How are you feeling today? Is the eye still bothering you much?"

Aubrey opened her eyes to find Dr. Su Zhuoming standing beside her bed in his white coat, a small crowd of interns trailing behind him.

He was her attending physician, checking on her eye every day to track her progress.

And every day, a small flock of admiring interns trailed dutifully in his wake.

"It hurts," Aubrey admitted, "but I can manage."

“If it gets too much, let us know. We can adjust your painkiller dose.”

“Okay. Thank you, Dr. Su.”

Seeing how easily she cooperated, a faint smile crossed his face. After a few more instructions, he moved on with the interns to the next patient.

That afternoon, an unexpected visitor arrived —

Aubrey’s mother.

The moment she stepped into the room and saw the bandage over Aubrey’s eye, she gasped.

“How did this happen to you?”

Aubrey’s face fell at the sight of her.

“Mom. Why are you here?”

Every time her mother showed up, it was always about money — a duty Aubrey had long since internalized as part of being a daughter.

“I actually came with wonderful news this time!” her mother announced brightly. “There’s a new railway line going through the village, and our house is on the demolition list!”

At the word demolition, Aubrey froze for a beat, then smiled.

“That’s great news, Mom. How much compensation are they offering?”

“They offered 1.35 million yuan — around \$185,000 — but since your brother’s going to need a place of his own soon, we chose a different option instead. A new apartment.”

Chapter 1160

The apartment was located right in the city center, a spacious 120 square meters, with a parking spot included.

Best of all, it came fully furnished, ready to move into the moment the paperwork cleared.

“That’s a good deal,” Aubrey said, her mood lifting slightly at her mother’s excitement.

But then she hesitated. “Mom — whose name is it registered under?”

“Your brother’s, obviously,” her mother said, as though the question were absurd. “He’s the only son in the Zhao family. Who else would it be for?”

“I wasn’t implying anything,” Aubrey said quickly.

She’d never once wanted to compete with her brother over anything — but the flat certainty in her mother’s voice still stung, all the same.

Shaking off the disappointment, she asked instead, “Mom, if the house is being demolished, why did you come all the way out here?”

“It’s not just me,” her mother said. “Your father’s here too.”

“We don’t have a home anymore now. We’re counting on you.”

Aubrey froze in place.

“Mom, I’m staying at the company apartment,” she said carefully.

Her mother answered matter-of-factly, “I know. You sent me pictures before, remember? That place only has two female employees living there, and you mentioned the other one barely stays overnight. Your dad and I can just lay a mat out in the corner of the living room. We won’t get in anyone’s way...”

The implication was clear enough — she and Aubrey’s father intended to move into the company-provided apartment right alongside her.

Seeing her mother push things further and further, Aubrey cut in quickly.

“Mom, that’s employee housing from the company. You can’t just have other people move in.”

“We’re not ‘other people,’” her mother shot back, entirely sure of herself. “We’re your parents. Just talk to your bosses. Explain your family’s going through a hard time. Ask them to let us stay a while.”

Aubrey went quiet for several long moments.

The two caregivers nearby exchanged looks, both clearly stunned by what they were witnessing.

In this day and age, how did parents like this still exist — favoring a son so blatantly over a daughter?

When Aubrey didn’t respond, her mother grew impatient. “Your father and I have already left the village. We brought everything we own here. If you won’t let us stay, we’ve got nowhere else to go.”

“Mom!” Aubrey swallowed her frustration and finally asked, “Didn’t you just say the relocation gave you a new house? Why don’t you and Dad just live there?”

“That house is for your brother and his fiancée,” her mother said, plain as anything. “You’ve met her before, haven’t you? She’s delicate, likes her peace and quiet. She doesn’t want to live with us old folks around.”

“His fiancée hasn’t even married into the family yet, and she’s already pushing you two out of your own house?” Aubrey’s eyes went wide. “And you’re just fine with that?”

“How is that pushing us out?” her mother argued. “Besides, your brother still hasn’t managed to marry Shiyan, and that’s because of you!”