

His kiss 1211

Chapter 1211

Alarm flashed across Zhuoming's face as he rushed to steady her. "Your stitches are still fresh — don't move like that!"

She pushed him aside and glared at her brother.

"If Mom and Dad were doing this for me, why did the relocation money have nothing to do with me at all, while you, ungrateful as you are, get to live in a new house with your girlfriend, then still travel miles to leech off me?"

"If they were doing this for me, why demand an 880,000-yuan dowry just to buy you a wife, tearing Kevin and me apart in the process?"

"If they were doing this for me, why drug me and try to ruin my reputation, just to frame Dr. Su?"

It was the first time Zhao Shanbao had seen her lose her temper this way, and for a moment he was struck speechless. By now, Aubrey was nearly shouting, realizing for the first time just how much she'd been suffocating under all of this for years.

"Why should you get every advantage? If you want me to drop the charges against Mom and Dad, fine — put my name on the new house!"

Zhao Shanbao didn't care for that at all, and his temper flared.

"I'm the son. Of course the house is mine! You're just a daughter — a burden — and now you want a house? Dream on."

Aubrey's eyes burned red with fury barely held back. "Then there's nothing left to discuss. Get out."

"Are you seriously rebelling against your own family now? How dare you speak to me like—"

Before he could finish, a fist slammed into his cheek.

Kevin appeared out of nowhere, throwing the punch, then grabbing his collar and dragging him toward the door, tossing him out like trash.

"Get out. Show your face around Aubrey again, and I'll do this every single time."

Gabriela crashed heavily onto the ground, likely injuring her back in the process.

She clutched one hand to the side of her face where Kevin's fist had landed and pressed the other against her waist. Her expression was a mix of terror and defiance, yet she continued to hurl insults with reckless abandon.

“Kevin, you dare hit me? You’ve got some nerve. Just you wait. If I let you marry my sister, I’ll swear to take your last name!”

Kevin had been merely angry before, but those words struck a nerve, unleashing a wave of long-suppressed emotion that surged to the forefront. His eyes darkened with a menacing fury.

If it hadn’t been for Aubrey’s parents standing in the way, he would have married her years ago.

But now, his girlfriend had become someone else’s wife.

He had lost her completely.

Kevin’s fist clenched tightly, and without a second thought, he grabbed Gabriela by the collar and hoisted him up, delivering a punch squarely to his nose.

The sickening crunch of bone echoed as Gabriela howled in pain, clutching his nose, blood streaming down his face.

“Kevin, stop it!” Aubrey cried out in alarm. “Don’t hit him anymore. Do you want to end up in jail?”

But as she tried to move, a sharp pain shot through her injury, and she stumbled, unable to intervene. Seeing her falter, Dr. Su Zhuoming quickly steadied her.

“Don’t move around. Let me handle this.”

Aubrey looked up at him, his calm and resolute gaze giving her an odd sense of reassurance. In a soft voice, she said, “I’m counting on you.”

Outside the hospital room, Kevin landed punch after punch on Gabriela with unyielding fury, blinded by rage.

A crowd had gathered at both ends of the hallway, eager to witness the commotion.

Initially, Gabriela had been defiant, shouting threats about suing Kevin and ensuring he’d be stripped of everything. But by now, he was reduced to pitiful groveling, tears and snot streaming down his face.

Yet Kevin was beyond reason, his fists relentless.

Dr. Su stepped in, firmly grabbing Kevin’s wrist. “That’s enough,” he said in a steady, commanding tone.

Though his voice was calm, it carried an undeniable authority. Kevin's rage finally subsided, and his fists slowly unclenched.

Gabriela collapsed onto the ground, cradling his face as he scrambled backward. "Kevin, you're finished. I'm calling the police to have you arrested!"

Dr. Su frowned, his voice cold and unwavering. "Get out of here."

Kevin bared his teeth, his voice low and threatening. "If you ever bother Aubrey again, I don't care if I have to go to jail. I'll break both your legs."

Gabriela's face turned pale as he retreated to a safe distance, then scrambled to his feet and fled in panic, practically crawling away.

The hallway was splattered with blood, and a tooth lay discarded on the floor, a chilling testament to the violence. The onlookers hesitated to step forward, yet they lingered, unwilling to leave.

Aubrey struggled to make her way over.

Both men instinctively reached out to help her, but Kevin was a fraction of a second too slow.

Dr. Su caught her, his tone tinged with mild reproach. "You're in no condition to be moving around."

"I just..." Aubrey hesitated, her voice faltering.

She was worried Kevin had gone too far and might end up in serious trouble. After all, the person he had beaten was her younger brother.

But under Dr. Su's steady gaze, she found herself unable to voice these concerns. It felt disrespectful to do so in front of him.

"He's still my brother," she finally said, her voice barely above a whisper.

Kevin, standing nearby, heard her words. His cold, piercing gaze suddenly flickered with anger, which quickly gave way to a mix of humiliation and sadness.

There had been a time when Aubrey would have rushed to his side in moments like this, begging him to calm down. But now, she didn't even look his way.

Kevin lowered his head, turned, and walked away without another word.

Aubrey allowed Dr. Su to guide her back to the hospital room. She dared only glance at Kevin's retreating figure out of the corner of her eye.

His silhouette looked unbearably lonely.

Chapter 1213

She pressed her lips together, fighting the urge to call out to him. Instead, she remained silent, letting Dr. Su help her back to her bed.

Dr. Su, noticing her unease, gently ruffled her hair and said softly, "Don't worry. I'll make sure someone keeps an eye on Gabriela. He won't cause any more trouble."

The distant hum of cicadas echoed outside, as a warm breeze wafted through the half-open window, carrying a sense of quiet sadness. Aubrey felt an overwhelming urge to cry.

She clutched Dr. Su's sleeve, her voice trembling. "I'm sorry, Dr. Su."

I've caused you so much trouble again.

Ever since she had met Dr. Su, it seemed like all she'd done was burden him.

She had been living her life just fine, working a stable job and dating Kevin. But in what felt like the blink of an eye, she found herself lying in a hospital bed, married to a man she barely knew.

Her life had become an utter mess.

Hearing her soft sobs, Dr. Su pulled up a chair and sat beside her.

Using his thumb, he gently wiped away her tears. "Did it scare you?"

His fingers were warm and dry, and Aubrey froze, her wide eyes staring at him in a daze.

He sighed softly, as if exasperated. "If you're so timid, why did you rush in front of me that day to block the knife?"

"Because you're the best ophthalmologist in the country." Tears still clung to her lashes, but her expression was earnest. "Your hands are invaluable. If they were injured and you couldn't save patients anymore, it would be a tragedy."

That was her reason?

Dr. Su couldn't tell if he felt disappointed or touched by her concern. Still, in that moment, his heart softened in a way it never had before.

Even his voice became gentler. "So my hands are more important than your life?"

"I didn't think that far ahead," she admitted, embarrassed. "I just thought your hands shouldn't get hurt, no matter what."

Dr. Su's lips curved into a faint smile. "Silly girl. Nothing is more important than life itself. Promise me, no more reckless decisions like that in the future. Without your life, nothing else matters."

Aubrey nodded quickly. "I promise."

After Dr. Su left the room, Aubrey picked up her phone and called Gabriela.

Gabriela had just finished wrapping up some work at Everglow Group and was preparing to head to the hospital when she received the call.

"Hello? Aubrey, what's wrong?"

"I need a favor," Aubrey said hesitantly.

Gabriela tilted her head, holding the phone between her ear and shoulder as she gathered her belongings. "Is it urgent? If not, let's talk when I get to the hospital. I was just about to head over to see you."

Aubrey quickly replied, "If you're busy, you don't need to come. You've already done so much for me."

Gabriela had hired several caregivers to assist Aubrey during her recovery, and Aubrey wasn't sure how she'd ever repay her. The last thing she wanted was to trouble her further.

Chapter 1214

"It's no trouble. Things at the company have settled down for now."

Everglow Group's streamlined processes made Gabriela's role as director surprisingly relaxed, especially compared to the chaos of her family's small company.

As for her work at SK Elite Boutique, she had already informed Leo that she wouldn't be taking on any additional projects for the time being.

"Alright," Aubrey said, "I'll wait until you get here to explain."

When Gabriela arrived at the hospital, Aubrey asked her to close the door and even sent the caregivers out of the room.

"What's so secretive?" Gabriela asked, raising an eyebrow.

Aubrey struggled to sit up, wincing as her injury protested.

Gabriela immediately stopped her.

"If you don't stay lying down, I'm leaving."

Reluctantly, Aubrey lay back down. "Gabriela, Kevin might have caused serious trouble."

Gabriela frowned, sensing something was off, but she patiently asked, "What happened?"

"He got into a fight with my brother today... knocked out one of his teeth." Aubrey hesitated, clearly embarrassed. "My brother can be... difficult to deal with."

Gabriela nodded.

"I'll handle this matter."

Aubrey knew Gabriela would help her and quietly breathed a sigh of relief, gripping Gabriela's hand tightly.

“Thank you.”

Gabriela didn't respond right away, her expression somewhat serious. “Aubrey, what's going on between you and Kevin now?”

Dr. Su's mother, following traditional customs, had already finalized the wedding date, and the invitations were sent out. In two months, there would be a grand wedding feast.

If Aubrey and Kevin still had lingering emotional ties, it wouldn't be fair to Dr. Su or the entire Su family.

Aubrey was startled by Gabriela's speculation and quickly waved her hands in denial.

“No way! I won't make things difficult for Dr. Su.”

She felt grateful to Dr. Su. How could she do anything to embarrass him?

Gabriela, however, wasn't entirely convinced.

Matters of the heart, when deep enough, couldn't be suppressed by logic or reason.

During their time at Apex Group, Gabriela had witnessed how close Aubrey and Kevin were. They had been in a relationship for nine years; it wasn't something one could easily let go of.

She solemnly reminded her friend, "Aubrey, Dr. Su is a good man. If you're not sure you can let go of Kevin, it's best to be upfront with him."

The last thing anyone wanted was dramatic chaos, like disrupting the wedding or disappearing on the wedding day, which would be truly disastrous.

Aubrey's voice caught in her throat, and she found herself suddenly unable to respond.

She was sure she still loved Kevin.

Just seeing his lonely silhouette earlier had made her feel incredibly sad.

But she could swear to anyone that she would never do anything to disgrace Dr. Su.

"Gabriela, please don't tell Dr. Su that I asked you to help Kevin, okay?"

"There's nothing to hide here," Gabriela disagreed. "Dr. Su isn't petty. If you tell him honestly, it might not be a big deal."

But if you say nothing and Dr. Su finds out on his own, it'll be much harder to explain.

Chapter 1215

"Let's just not tell him for now, anyway."

Aubrey wasn't sure what Dr. Su's feelings for her were. After their serious talk, she'd sensed that his words implied he was simply at an age where he wanted to marry someone.

She happened to cross paths with him, and she happened to be someone he didn't dislike, so he was willing to marry her.

Dr. Su had said that being with her was comfortable.

Perhaps some people simply weren't built for love; in their lives, career came first, and family second. Finding someone they could comfortably be with might be the best marriage they could hope for.

She had agreed to marry Dr. Su wholeheartedly. She had only asked Gabriela to help Kevin because Kevin had injured her brother for her sake.

If Kevin got sued over this, she'd feel uneasy.

As for not letting Dr. Su know, it was just to keep him from worrying.

After hearing Aubrey's explanation, Gabriela furrowed her brow slightly. "Are you sure that's what you really think?"

So, in Aubrey's eyes, Dr. Su had no feelings for her at all?

"If Dr. Su didn't like you, why would he agree to your parents' arrangement and be willing to pay a bride price to marry you?"

"Why would he travel across the country, making major sacrifices and taking on serious personal debt, just to help cure your eyes?"

Aubrey was taken aback by Gabriela's two questions.

Gabriela patted her shoulder. "You'd better think this through clearly, or Dr. Su is going to end up feeling like his kindness was wasted on someone ungrateful."

Aubrey mumbled, "I like Kevin so much, and yet I've managed not to see him or call him. I'm suffering too."

She had once been cheerful and lively, without a care in the world.

But lately, one troublesome thing after another had weighed her down, leaving her cautious and restrained.

Gabriela felt a pang of sympathy for her and reached out to ruffle her hair.

“But your suffering isn’t caused by Dr. Su. Without him, you’d be ten times worse off.”

“Besides, all of Dr. Su’s troubles exist because of you.”

With that, Gabriela left the hospital room, letting Aubrey sit with her thoughts.

No matter who Aubrey chose, it would be unfair to the other person. But the situation had already happened, and the problems were right in front of her. It was better to solve them now, before they got worse, than to wait until the wedding day, standing in front of a room full of family and friends, only to create the kind of dramatic chaos, disrupting the ceremony or vanishing altogether, that would be far too humiliating to recover from.

Gabriela had just stepped out of the elevator when she received a call from Matthew.

“Gabriela, if you have time today, why don’t you come over to the Jiang residence for a meal?”

Gabriela was quite surprised.

“Dad, is it the first day of the lunar month already?”

Has a month gone by that quickly?

Chapter 1216

Matthew sounded a bit awkward. “It doesn’t have to be the first day of the lunar month for us to have a meal together. Your grandma will be there too.”

Gabriela caught the low tone in his voice and asked with a smile, “Dad, did Eight Treasures Restaurant run into trouble again?”

She had been the one willing to speak up and help bring back Zeng Tong, knowing there would surely be follow-up issues.

Otherwise, why would she have helped Rebecca like that?

Matthew sighed. “I’ve already spoken with Rebecca. If you’re willing to come for dinner, she’ll behave.”

Gabriela raised an eyebrow. "Alright, I'll head over now."

The sound of shattering blue-and-white porcelain last time had been rather satisfying.

I wonder how many pieces will get smashed today.

While still on the call, Gabriela walked toward the parking lot. Spotting the car parked ahead, she smiled and said, "Dad, do you mind if I bring my boyfriend along?"

Matthew paused. "Gabriela, you know it's best not to do that."

Rebecca still admired Wesley, even though their engagement had been canceled, and even though Wesley's son was old enough to make his own decisions. Rebecca hadn't given up on him.

Otherwise, why would a woman in her thirties, who wasn't devoted to her career and wasn't committed to staying single, refuse to marry? It didn't make sense.

"Well, I don't care," Gabriela said. "To me, my boyfriend is the most important person in the world. Rebecca doesn't even compare to Ken's cat, so why should I make my boyfriend unhappy for her sake?"

Wesley, sitting in the car, overheard Gabriela's words and couldn't help but smile. His mood, gloomy all day, suddenly brightened.

Matthew was taken aback.

Are young people these days really this straightforward about their feelings?

Back in his day with Alanna, even holding hands had felt like a bold gesture.

"Alright, bring him along."

With me there as the future father-in-law, Wesley probably won't dare do anything too outrageous, right?

After hanging up, Matthew turned to Rebecca and told her that Wesley would be coming along with Gabriela.

Rebecca was furious.

Gabriela was definitely doing this on purpose.

Knowing Rebecca still had feelings for Wesley, Gabriela was clearly using the situation as an excuse to bring him along, just to spite her.

Seeing Rebecca's anger, Matthew quickly added, "If you don't want them to come, I'll call Gabriela and tell her not to."

Last time, Rebecca's sharp words had nearly driven Gabriela to tear the Jiang residence apart.

If Rebecca didn't hold herself back this time, there was no telling what Gabriela might do.

Matthew, though more partial to Gabriela, still cared for Rebecca as his daughter and wanted the best for her.

"Let her come!" Rebecca said through gritted teeth. "This time, no matter what she says or does, I'll endure it."

At most, I'll have to sit through the two of them flaunting their love and showing off.

I can handle it.

Rebecca, who had always been able to hold her temper, couldn't contain herself the moment she saw Gabriela walk in with Wesley on her arm.

It was just too much.

Chapter 1217

Back when she and Wesley were engaged, he'd always worn the same expressionless face. Why did he suddenly know how to smile when it came to Gabriela? And the tenderness in his eyes was unmistakable.

Rebecca clenched her fists tightly, almost wanting to lash out right then and there.

Wasn't it just some "Eight Treasures Cuisine"? Could she really not afford to lose it? Fine, she'd shut the business down if it came to that.

Lauren watched Gabriela and Wesley with cold eyes, a flash of malice crossing her gaze.

However, with her wealth of experience, she quickly suppressed her anger and discreetly took Rebecca's hand.

"A guest is a guest. Have you forgotten everything I've taught you?"

Beverley also glanced over coldly.

Rebecca took a deep breath.

Yes, I still need Gabriela's help today, so I have no choice but to endure this.

Seeing that Rebecca had calmed down, Beverley smiled at Wesley. "What brings you here today, Wesley?"

In the past, she would have addressed him as "Mr. Moss," but now that he was practically a grandson-in-law, she allowed herself the air of an elder.

Wesley was polite toward Beverley and didn't mind her assuming that authority.

"I went to the hospital to pick Gabriela up and heard she was coming to have dinner with the elders, so I came along."

Then Wesley greeted Matthew. "Future father-in-law."

Matthew, accustomed to Wesley's shamelessness by now, simply waved his hand. "Sit down. The food will be ready soon."

Matthew had grown used to it, but Rebecca was so infuriated by the words “future father-in-law” that her eyes turned red.

They haven’t even registered the marriage, and there isn’t even an engagement. How dare he call himself that?

Wesley is so obviously biased toward Gabriela.

One encounter, and Rebecca was already fuming.

Gabriela glanced at her, uninterested in the envy burning in Rebecca’s eyes.

Everyone took their seats at the table, and the food was quickly served.

One dish was a plate of cabbage, plain-looking, without a trace of oil.

However, after tasting it, Gabriela was pleasantly surprised and remarked to Wesley, “This dish is quite good.”

It looked unappetizing, but the taste was refreshingly clean, preserving almost perfectly the original flavor of the cabbage, with a delightful aftertaste.

Lauren smiled. "This dish is a famous Sichuan dish called Imperial Clear Broth Cabbage. It originated in the royal court's culinary tradition."

Seeing Wesley listening attentively, Rebecca felt she had regained some ground and proudly interjected, "The chef who made this dish is an internationally recognized culinary master. I went to great lengths to invite him."

Since starting Eight Treasures Cuisine, Rebecca had met many culinary experts. The new chef at her home had been invited with great effort, even though he'd only agreed to cook for them three times a month.

Wesley asked, "Could we invite the chef out to explain how this dish is prepared?"

"Of course!" Rebecca stood up, glancing triumphantly at Gabriela, and personally went to fetch the chef, Mr. Shang.

Chef Shang explained the process in detail before returning to the kitchen.

Chapter 1218

Gabriela couldn't help but remark, "It looks like such a simple dish, yet it involves so many steps and ingredients."

Cabbage, clear broth, old hen, ham hock, ribs, scallops...

Just hearing the list of ingredients was dizzying.

“What’s so difficult about that? Gabriela, I’m not trying to criticize you, but you’re always so busy with work. No matter how successful you are in the workplace, what does it really matter? If you neglect your family for too long, the people around you will grow cold. A woman can show her love through cooking for her partner.”

Rebecca lectured, casting a disdainful glance at Gabriela before turning shyly to Wesley.

“Actually, I’ve been studying cooking recently. I’ve already learned about seventy or eighty percent of this Imperial Clear Broth Cabbage. If you’d like to try it, you’re welcome to come by the Jiang residence anytime, and I’ll make it for you myself.”

Beverley’s brow furrowed.

Such a thoughtless woman. Today of all days, when she needs Gabriela’s help, and she’s flirting with Gabriela’s boyfriend right in front of her?

Blinded by love like this, she’s truly hopeless.

Matthew didn’t look pleased either.

Gabriela remained calm, eating several bites of cabbage before finally looking up.

But she said nothing.

Rebecca assumed Gabriela had no response, and, feeling even more pleased with herself, prepared to keep going.

But Wesley cut in first.

“Gabriela’s cooking is actually on par with Chef Shang’s. If she wanted to learn this dish, she could master it easily.”

Back when Gabriela first joined Apex Group, she had started out working as a “soup maker” and “vegetable picker” by his side.

Thinking back to those days when all she’d cared about was earning a raise, Gabriela felt a flicker of embarrassment.

Rebecca’s expression changed.

Wesley continued, "But Gabriela's so busy these days, she shouldn't waste her energy on such a complicated dish. If she really wants to eat it, I'll make it for her."

A thunderous crash.

Rebecca felt as if she'd been struck by lightning.

The crown prince of the Moss family wants to cook for Gabriela?

Has the world gone mad?

Gabriela smiled. "Can you actually make it? It sounds pretty complex."

"What's so hard about that?" In Wesley's eyes, there was nothing he couldn't learn. "If you want to eat it, I'll learn it, no matter how difficult it is."

Gabriela's eyes curved with her smile. "Alright then. Once you've learned it, I'll come taste Mr. Moss's cooking."

Rebecca couldn't listen to another word.

She knows exactly what she's doing, bringing Wesley here just to make me uncomfortable.

How could someone like Wesley cook for a mistress like Gabriela?

As Rebecca gripped her chopsticks so tightly she nearly hurt herself, she suddenly heard Gabriela ask, "Rebecca, did you actually have something to say today? If not, I'll leave once I'm done eating."

Only then did she loosen her grip.

"Gabriela, what's going on with Zeng Tong? I spent so much money bringing her back, but she only wants to handle the Century Hotel orders, and she says she'll leave the moment they're finished."

Chapter 1219

Gabriela looked at her in surprise, waiting for her to go on.

"And she said she's only working part-time for me." Rebecca's expression grew darker. "She told me I have no right to make her do anything she doesn't want to do!"

Gabriela looked puzzled. "She's your employee. Why are you asking me?"

Besides, when Zeng Tong had agreed to come back, her attitude had been perfectly agreeable. She wasn't the type to throw tantrums or act unreasonably. If she was clashing with Rebecca now, it was probably because Rebecca's own behavior had gone too far.

"You're the one who brought her back!" Rebecca's face twisted with resentment. "Did the two of you conspire to come back and cause trouble for me?"

Before Gabriela could respond, Wesley was already objecting.

He couldn't stand hearing anyone speak harshly to his woman. They'd come here for a meal, and she was being hit with accusations like this?

"Gabriela, I told you not to meddle in other people's affairs. See? Now it's caused trouble for you."

Rebecca felt a flash of embarrassment at his words, but if Gabriela and Zeng Tong weren't working together, why would Zeng Tong be acting against her?

"Don't worry, let me handle this," Gabriela said, calming Wesley before turning a cold gaze on Rebecca.

"Did you invite me here to ask for my help, or to interrogate me?"

Gabriela's words were blunt, and Rebecca's anger boiled over, barely contained.

“If it weren’t for you conspiring with Zeng Tong to deliberately embarrass me, I wouldn’t have questioned you, and I certainly wouldn’t have had to beg you!”

“Oh, is that so?” Gabriela nodded calmly, her expression composed. She turned to Beverley. “Grandma, I’ve got some harsh things to say. Would you rather step aside for this part?”

Beverley’s heart trembled.

Gabriela, this girl, was excellent in every way, intelligent and polite, but sometimes she left herself no room to retreat. Her words and actions were sharp enough to leave others speechless.

A temperament like that might make it difficult for her to take on the role of Everglow Group’s successor someday.

Still...

Beverley glanced at Wesley, standing nearby.

Gabriela certainly had the standing to be unapologetic about her choices.

With a sigh, Beverley said, “Gabriela, if you have a way to help Rebecca, please do. She’s immature and ungrateful, I know, but I’ll remember this favor on her behalf.”

Although Beverley wasn’t particularly fond of Rebecca, she was still Matthew’s flesh and blood.

With no male heirs in their branch of the family, the two sisters couldn’t be expected to get along perfectly. But at the very least, they shouldn’t be at each other’s throats.

Gabriela shook her head and replied deliberately, “Grandma, first, you need to understand something. If I had truly conspired with Zeng Tong, a few questions from Rebecca wouldn’t have been enough to stop me. I could easily have made sure Zeng Tong never even considered taking on the Century Hotel business.”

Beverley was stunned into silence.

Chapter 1220

Gabriela’s words might have been unpleasant, but they were undeniably logical.

“And another thing,” Gabriela continued, turning to Rebecca. “If I genuinely brought Zeng Tong back to help you, and then, because you couldn’t manage your relationship with her, you decided to take it out on me instead...”

She paused briefly before continuing. “That kind of behavior is deeply disheartening. Even if I’d had the best intentions of helping you, I’d walk away without a second thought.”

Rebecca, though five or six years older than Gabriela, found herself being lectured and outmatched by her younger cousin.

Her anger nearly boiled over, yet she couldn't afford to lose her temper.

Even foolish as she sometimes was, she could see that Gabriela's reasoning was airtight. Beverley, standing beside her, was already nodding in agreement.

Rebecca swallowed her rage and asked, "Fine. Let's say it's my fault. What do you want?"

Gabriela looked even more surprised.

"Rebecca, what do you mean, 'let's say it's your fault'? Whether you're at fault or not has nothing to do with me. You ruined my good mood today, and now I don't feel like saying another word to you. I'm leaving."

With that, she stood up.

Wesley immediately rose as well, taking her hand and softly coaxing her.

“Don’t be upset. I’ll cook something delicious for you when we get home.”

Rebecca could only watch as Gabriela and Wesley walked toward the door.

Her anger boiled to the point where she felt she could commit murder.

Lauren, however, remained composed and called out gently, “Gabriela, Rebecca’s been going through a rough patch lately. She’s frustrated, and her words came out wrong. Please don’t take it to heart.”

Gabriela paused mid-step.

Lauren’s voice grew even softer. “I’ll apologize on Rebecca’s behalf. Please forgive her.”

Gabriela turned back to Lauren. “No need for an apology. But I’ll be honest with you. When Zeng Tong first agreed to come back, her attitude was quite cooperative.”

“After all, a request from someone of standing carries weight, and Zeng Tong was willing to give face.”

“But now that Rebecca and Zeng Tong can’t seem to get along, asking me for help isn’t going to solve the actual problem.”

What Rebecca hated most was Gabriela's attitude, that air of being fully in control while making a show of it.

Impatient, she demanded, "Just say it. What do you want from me in exchange for your help?"

Gabriela spread her hands. "There's nothing I can do to help."

Rebecca gritted her teeth. "You want to smash something? Fine, go ahead and smash it!"

Gabriela looked incredulous. "Are you serious?"

Everyone waited to hear what she'd say next.

She finally continued, "Last time I broke a piece of blue-and-white porcelain, your mother insisted I pay for it. Now you want me to risk smashing something else, when you're the one who needs my help? How does that make any sense?"

Rebecca hadn't quite processed Gabriela's words yet, but Lauren understood immediately.

Steeling herself, she said firmly, "Gabriela, if something needs smashing, let Rebecca do it."

