

His kiss 1241

Chapter 1241

Watching her, though, she noticed Aubrey walking perfectly normally, with no trace of stiffness or discomfort.

And that, in itself, seemed a little off.

When Tessa had married Tyler, the two of them could barely get out of bed for two days straight.

Both of them had been through a previous marriage, and given how much older Tyler was, she'd assumed he wouldn't be particularly eager in that department. Instead, years of pent-up energy with no outlet had left him relentless, and he'd kept her occupied well into the night.

Once he was finally satisfied and they'd managed to fall asleep, he'd woken her again in the middle of the night for more.

Tyler wasn't a man for careful technique or drawn-out romance. He simply relied on raw stamina, pushing through without pause.

He was strong and forceful enough that Tessa genuinely couldn't leave the bed for two full days, with Tyler bringing meals to the room himself.

By comparison, however gentle and considerate Dr. Su clearly was, Aubrey's easy, normal gait seemed strange.

But this wasn't the kind of thing Tessa could ask about, close as they were, especially not with Aubrey's husband being the composed, dignified Dr. Su.

Even one question on the subject would feel disrespectful to him.

Unaware of the tangled thoughts running through Tessa's mind, Aubrey went about her work earnestly.

By noon, she headed to the hospital for her checkup.

As it happened, Fiona was accompanying Brenden to his physiotherapy session and insisted that Gabriela come along too.

Gabriela, driving her little Fit, knew Aubrey also needed to be at the hospital, so she offered her a ride.

Gabriela took the wheel, with Fiona and Brenden in the back seat, leaving Aubrey in the passenger seat up front.

Aubrey found the whole arrangement rather curious.

Gabriela and Fiona had never gotten along, always sniping at each other whenever their paths crossed.

Yet here was Fiona, practically insisting Gabriela tag along to the hospital with them?

Aubrey was dying to know why, her love of gossip fully awakened, itching to ask.

But with Fiona now the boss's wife, she didn't dare pry in front of them, and held her tongue.

When they arrived at the hospital and approached the entrance, a heated argument suddenly broke out ahead of them, loud voices and a scuffle drawing everyone's attention.

"You shameless hussy!"

The shout was followed immediately by the crack of a slap.

They all looked over instinctively, and recognized the faces at once.

Aubrey's troublesome, demanding relatives.

The one doing the hitting was Zhao Shanbao, his face twisted into something almost unrecognizable, his once-handsome features contorted with rage.

He had a fistful of Feng Shiyan's hair, yanking her toward him.

"You slut, tell me the truth, whose bastard are you carrying?"

Feng Shiyan winced in pain but held his gaze coldly. "Watch your mouth. My child is not a bastard."

The brief exchange made everything instantly clear to the onlookers: Feng Shiyan was pregnant, but the child wasn't Zhao Shanbao's.

Chapter 1242

He'd let his parents hound Aubrey for money over and over, paid a hefty bride price to marry Feng Shiyan in the end, and now here he was, raising another man's child.

Before Brenden and Fiona could react, a sharp crack echoed through the room.

This time, it was Aubrey's mother delivering the slap.

Of everyone caught up in this whole mess, her fury outstripped even her son Shanbao's.

She had spent months obsessing over the grandchild she believed Feng Shiyan was carrying. She'd pushed Aubrey relentlessly into arranged matches, hoping to secure a dowry payment and eventually hold a grandchild of her own.

For years, Aubrey's monthly salary had been handed over to the family without question.

And now? Not only was there no grandchild coming, there was no daughter left either. And the steady income she'd come to rely on? Gone, all of it.

"You little tramp!" Aubrey's mother spat, her voice trembling with rage. "You had the nerve to demand such a high dowry while carrying someone else's child? Have you no shame at all?"

Clutching her reddened cheek, Feng Shiyan's expression stayed defiant, her voice steady.

"I didn't dodge those two slaps. Consider them my apology for the deception." She paused, her gaze turning icy. "But if you lay a hand on me again, or keep shouting threats at me, don't blame me for what happens next."

Her defiance sent Shanbao into a blind fury. His eyes burned a dangerous red, his whole body shaking with the urge to strangle her right there.

"Feng Shiyan, you shameless whore!" he roared. "After everything you've done, you still have the gall to act this arrogant?"

The truth had come out after Shanbao's car accident. Following the fender bender, he'd dragged the whole family to the hospital for checkups.

The results came back: everyone else was perfectly healthy, except him. The next day, the hospital called with news that would upend his life. Shanbao was infertile.

Unwilling to accept it, he'd sought a second opinion at Su Zhuoming's hospital, gone through another exhaustive round of tests. The result was the same.

The realization hit him like a bolt from the blue. The shame of being cuckolded was more than he could bear.

Whatever love and devotion he'd once felt for Feng Shiyan curdled instantly into seething resentment.

Feng Shiyan sneered at his outburst. "Shanbao, you're the one who can't have children. And here you are, screaming like a lunatic. What exactly do I have to be ashamed of?"

The scene had already drawn a crowd, onlookers craning their necks for a better view.

But the once-affectionate couple paid no attention to the judgment surrounding them. Like two roosters locked in a bloody fight, they hurled the ugliest words they could find at each other.

For Feng Shiyao, there was no shame in any of this. If anything, it felt like a release.

Marrying a deadbeat like Shanbao had already been a compromise on her part. Who could have guessed he'd turn out so utterly useless he couldn't even father a child? And now her own secret was out in the open too.

Chapter 1243

"Feng Shiyao!" Shanbao growled through gritted teeth, his bloodshot eyes locked on her with unrelenting fury. "Say one more word and I swear I'll kill you."

"Go ahead and try," Feng Shiyao taunted, her smirk dripping with contempt. "Only your pathetic sister was ever going to put up with your tantrums and cater to your every whim. I'm not going to."

Aubrey, standing silently at the edge of the crowd, felt a surge of anger rising inside her.

Was that really how they saw her? Weak? Spineless?

Sensing her tension, Gabriela squeezed her hand gently and murmured, "Don't let it get to you. Don't draw their attention. To us, they're just strangers now."

She was right.

Watching this train wreck unfold, it was better to treat it as nothing more than a spectacle passing through, nothing worth getting emotionally tangled in.

Aubrey took a deep breath.

Logically, she agreed completely.

Emotionally, though, it still stung.

Then she thought of Dr. Su.

For his sake, she couldn't afford to get pulled back into these people's orbit ever again.

So she stayed rooted where she was in the crowd, resisting the urge to step forward.

"How dare you say that!" Shanbao bellowed, his voice hoarse with rage. "If it weren't for you, my sister never would have cut ties with us!"

In his mind, Aubrey had been the perfect cash cow.

As long as their parents were alive, they could always count on her to send money home.

But all of that had unraveled now, an eighty-eight-thousand-yuan dowry payment had cost him a sister who had once supported the family unconditionally.

"I'm warning you," Shanbao snarled. "Either show me some respect, or we're getting a divorce."

Feng Shiyan scoffed, her face full of contempt. "Shanbao, you should be thanking me. At least after we married, I gave you a child. Otherwise people would have mocked you for the rest of your life."

"Fine! Let's get a divorce, then!" Shanbao panted like a rabid animal, his voice dripping with venom. "Who'd even want a filthy, used-up woman like you anyway?"

"Don't make me laugh," Feng Shiyan shot back, her tone ice-cold. "You think I ever wanted you? A lazy bum, nearly thirty, still living off his parents, treating his own sister like a personal ATM?"

"You're useless. You can't even handle basic tasks. If a burglar broke into the house, you'd probably hide under the bed."

"Honestly, if I hadn't needed someone to clean up my mess, you wouldn't even be worth the dirt on my shoes."

Shanbao's fury finally broke. He lunged at her with a wild cry. "Feng Shiyan, I'll drag you down to hell with me!"

Aubrey's mother finally snapped out of her daze and grabbed hold of him. "Calm down! We'll deal with this at home!"

But Shanbao had lost all reason, thrashing wildly in her grip.

Aubrey's mother shot a pleading look at her husband. "Say something!"

Her father, silent until now, finally spoke, his face dark as a storm cloud. "Enough! Everyone, shut up and go home!"

Chapter 1244

For a man who valued his pride above everything, this was the ultimate humiliation. His son, infertile. His daughter-in-law, pregnant with another man's child.

If word of this reached the village, the Zhao family name would never recover.

What an unlucky family.

In the end, with her father-in-law's help, Aubrey's mother managed to drag Shanbao away, still screaming threats the whole way.

Feng Shiyan trailed behind them, unhurried. But just as she reached the edge of the crowd, she stopped and turned back. Her gaze swept over the onlookers until it landed on Aubrey.

She studied her for a moment, head to toe. "Lucky you," she said, her voice tinged with bitterness.

"You got out of that family of leeches early."

Without waiting for a response, she turned and strode off to catch up with Shanbao and the others.

Judging by the state of things, the war between Feng Shiyan and Shanbao was far from over.

The Zhao household would stay a circus of chaos for a long time to come.

Aubrey said nothing, but her fists clenched tightly at her sides.

She really was lucky. Meeting a kind doctor had been her way out, her escape from that nightmare of a family.

Brenden exchanged a glance with Fiona, both momentarily at a loss for words.

Finally Fiona spoke up. "Aubrey, just focus on doing good work at the company. I'll have Brenden give you a raise."

In Fiona's mind, throwing money at ordinary people was the surest way to comfort them. After all, she'd seen firsthand just how much Gabriela loved money.

Of course, it was also her way of smoothing things over with Gabriela. Some habits, apparently, never changed, condescension included.

But to Aubrey, the gesture still felt touching. "Thank you, ma'am," she said quickly.

Fiona waved her off. "Go find your Dr. Su. Gabriela's coming with us to rehab."

Samuel had stressed that the last few rehab sessions were critical. And given Brenden's recent streak of bad luck, Fiona had insisted on bringing along someone with a lucky aura, and that someone was Gabriela.

At first, Gabriela had rolled her eyes at the superstition, telling Fiona to trust the science instead.

But Fiona had countered with the story of how their marriage had seemingly brought Brenden back from the brink.

She'd even argued that Brenden getting hit by Myah's car had indirectly spared Gabriela from disaster herself, which made it practically Gabriela's obligation to return the favor.

Strangely enough, Gabriela found herself agreeing.

And so she'd taken on the role of chauffeur without complaint, driving them wherever they needed to go.

Brenden had mostly recovered by now, walking almost as easily as anyone in good health.

Rehab sessions weren't especially long, just two hours, but for someone as impatient as Brenden, those two hours might as well have been an eternity.

The most ridiculous part was that Fiona had come along to keep him company, but instead of cheering him on, she sat off to the side, scrolling through her phone with barely any interest in his progress.

"You need to take this seriously," she said, without looking up.

“The doctor said if you push through two or three more sessions, you won’t have to come back at all.”

Brenden shot his wife a look of pure grievance.

So it was true. Married couples could weather the hardest times side by side and still drift apart once things got easy.

Back when he’d been on the brink of death, Fiona had been willing to marry him, had gone to great lengths just to make it happen.

When his condition had started to improve, she’d stayed by his side day and night, tirelessly feeding him, helping him drink water.

Once he could stand and walk again, she’d come to every rehab session, cheering him on at every step.

But now that he was practically back to normal, she didn’t seem to care nearly as much.

He sighed heavily. “Fiona, could you put the phone down for just a moment?”

Without looking up, she shot back, “What else am I supposed to do for two hours? Sit here and stare into space?”

Brenden frowned. "You could look at me."

She lifted her head briefly, gave him a quick once-over, and said, "There. Done. Now get moving."

The unfairness of it all nearly crushed him.

Was it because he was past his prime now, no longer the charming man he used to be? Had she simply grown tired of him?

Gabriela, watching the exchange unfold from the sidelines, wasn't sure whether to keep playing third wheel or quietly slip away.

She clenched her fists and gave a small, encouraging gesture instead. "Come on, Mr. Saunders, you've got this!"

Brenden's spirits lifted instantly at the sight of her bright, encouraging eyes. "Gabby, you're amazing!" he called out, clearly moved. "Unlike someone, who's more interested in her phone than her own husband."

Fiona finally looked up, her gaze shifting from her phone to him.

Brenden smirked, feeling triumphant.

Gotcha. There's no way you're not the least bit jealous now.

After all, he'd once been head over heels for Gabriela. Surely that meant something to her.

But Fiona simply raised an eyebrow at him, then turned her attention fully to Gabriela, ignoring him completely. "Gabriela, I've had my eye on a few bracelets, but I can't decide between them. Want to help me pick?"

Gabriela walked over, leaned in to look, and pointed at one. "This one's lovely, it suits your style perfectly."

Fiona nodded in agreement. "That's exactly what I thought. Guess we've got similar taste."

"Oh, and speaking of which, I've also been thinking about a handbag to go with that dark green midi dress I have at home. Since you design bags, would you help me choose one of those too?"

The two of them fell immediately into a conversation about accessories and fashion, entirely forgetting the original purpose of the hospital visit.

Brenden, thoroughly abandoned, shuffled off to finish his rehab exercises alone.

Two hours later, the session finally wrapped up without any further drama.

Fiona let out a relieved breath and thanked Gabriela.

Chapter 1246

Brenden wasted no time cutting in. “Gabriela, you should go find Aubrey now. Our driver’s downstairs, so we won’t need your car.”

He’d had more than enough of the two of them together for one day.

Whenever Fiona and Gabriela teamed up, their entire world seemed to shrink down to jewelry, clothes, and shoes, and two hours clearly wasn’t enough for either of them.

Brenden silently vowed never to take the two of them out together again.

Gabriela didn’t mind his rather blunt dismissal in the least. She simply said her goodbyes and went to find Aubrey.

Brenden stormed off toward the hospital exit, with Fiona hurrying to keep pace beside him, a teasing grin on her face.

Once they reached the parking lot, she grabbed his arm.

“Hey, why are you walking so fast? Trying to show off those fully recovered legs of yours?”

Brenden huffed, clearly still sulking. “Fiona, do you regret marrying me?”

Everyone had moments of doubt, moments where reason gave way to insecurity.

Back then, he’d been gravely ill, and their marriage had been something of a desperate gamble to change his fortune. Fiona had genuinely cared for him, but what if she’d acted on impulse and had come to regret it since?

After all, the person Fiona had cared for most before him had been Wesley.

Fiona froze for a second. “What on earth are you talking about?”

“You’ve been acting so secretive lately. You won’t even sleep in the same room as me anymore. And now today...”

All these little signs seemed to point toward the same conclusion, that Fiona's feelings might have changed.

Understanding at last what was really eating at him, Fiona couldn't help but laugh.

"You're jealous, aren't you?" She tugged playfully at his sleeve, her voice full of amusement. "I never thought the infamous playboy Brenden Saunders would end up this insecure someday."

Brenden let out a cold snort.

"Don't laugh at me."

Straightening her expression, Fiona cleared her throat. "Brenden, do you even remember what day it is today?"

"What day?"

"It's your birthday. That's what I was doing with Gabriela, picking out your gift."

Fiona looped her arms around his neck and said softly, "Brenden, if I'd ever stopped loving you, I wouldn't waste time playing games with you, I'd just ask for a divorce outright. I've never been one for the silent treatment."

Brenden pulled her into a tight embrace immediately, holding her close.

"You wouldn't dare divorce me."

"I wouldn't," Fiona laughed, and gave him a quick, playful kiss at the corner of his lips. "Honey, I only just realized today how jealous you can actually get, even over Gabriela. She used to be your dream girl, remember?"

Brenden silenced her with a kiss.

Right there, in the parking lot.

Fiona tried to push him away, her fists thumping weakly against his chest, but before long she gave up resisting and melted into his kiss instead.

Their driver, seated in the Bentley, quickly lowered his head, doing his best impression of a man who hadn't seen a thing.

After what felt like an eternity, Brenden finally let her go.

Looking at her lips, glistening now and slightly swollen, his gaze darkened. “Fiona,” he murmured, “it’s been over two weeks since you banished me to the study. When are you finally letting me back into our bedroom?”

Catching his meaning, Fiona shoved him back. “What are you thinking, in broad daylight? Get in the car.”

She climbed in first, then pulled him in after her. Once they were both seated, she handed him a document. “Here. Take a look.”

Puzzled, Brenden took the paper from her.

Their conspicuously white Bentley had been parked long enough by now to draw a few curious glances from passersby, especially once it seemed to rock slightly with the force of Brenden’s reaction.

A shout suddenly burst from inside the car. “Fiona, you’re pregnant?! I’m going to be a dad?!”

The volume alone was enough to make the car shudder, and pedestrians outside couldn’t help but glance over, wondering if the vehicle itself was actually vibrating.

Inside the “vibrating” car, Brenden pulled Fiona into a crushing hug. “I’m really going to be a father?”

Fiona laughed. “Not so fast. You’ve still got about seven months to wait.”

She’d only recently begun to suspect she might be pregnant, and with his birthday coming up, she’d decided to save the news as a surprise for today.

Of course, certain activities were off-limits in early pregnancy, and since Brenden was anything but restrained, she’d sent him off to the study as a precaution in the meantime.

Now that she’d finally explained everything, Brenden felt as though he might faint from sheer happiness.

“Fiona, I’ve known so many women in my life, but none of them ever made me want to settle down. I honestly thought I’d go my whole life without ever finding someone who truly loved me.”

His eyes reddened slightly as he leaned down to kiss her again.

“I’m so grateful I found you. You’re a blessing I never thought I’d deserve.”

It turned out all the misfortune of his earlier years had simply been the universe setting aside its blessings, saving them up to give him a wife as wonderful as Fiona.

Fiona punched him hard in the chest, her eyes narrowing dangerously.

“Are you trying to get yourself killed? You still dare to bring up all your old romantic escapades?”

Brenden winced at the pain, but his eyes stayed bright, a lingering smile still on his face.

“Fiona, I was reckless and immature back then, that’s why I kept switching girlfriends.” He pulled her into his arms, holding her close. “I’m so lucky you didn’t hold that against me and agreed to marry me anyway.”

Fiona settled into his embrace, listening quietly.

“From now on, I promise to treat you better than anyone else could, never let you suffer even the smallest grievance. If I fail, may my misfortune grow tenfold, and may I never have a single good day again.”

Chapter 1248

Fiona was touched by the words, and pinched him lightly on the waist.

“Other people swear oaths about being struck by lightning or worse. Yours feels a little tame by comparison, don’t you think?”

Brenden caught her mischievous hand and said, with genuine solemnity, “Because I don’t want to die. Fiona, I don’t want you to end up a widow, and I definitely don’t want you marrying anyone else after I’m gone.”

“So instead, I’ll live a long life and spend every single day of it right by your side.”

Even though the old playboy had genuinely turned over a new leaf, his gift for smooth, irresistible words hadn’t dulled a bit.

Fiona’s heart melted a little as she listened. “All right,” she said softly. “I believe you.”

Seizing the moment, Brenden asked, “So, can I sleep in our room tonight?”

Before she could refuse, he quickly raised a hand in oath. “For the baby’s sake, I swear I won’t do anything reckless.”

Only then did Fiona relent. “Fine.”

Not one to miss an opening, Brenden tacked on another request. “And can we stop bringing Gabby along on our dates from now on?”

He still couldn't quite believe how close those two had gotten, chattering away endlessly whenever they were together.

Fiona teased him deliberately. "I'll be sure to let Gabriela know about these jealous little comments of yours."

Brenden looked briefly uncomfortable, then quickly recovered his composure. "Go ahead and tell her. She has my brother now, she should be spending her time with him, not me."

Gabriela, entirely unaware she'd been dragged into any of this, had somehow earned Brenden's resentment simply for chatting with Fiona a bit too much.

She found Aubrey soon after, who had just finished her round of medical tests and was sitting quietly in a chair in the waiting area.

It was around two in the afternoon by then, and most of the hospital staff had already gone off-duty, leaving the waiting area unusually quiet.

Gabriela took the seat beside her.

"How'd the tests go?"

"Everything looks fine," Aubrey said. "Some of the results won't be back until later this afternoon."

Gabriela nodded and said nothing more.

Just then, Dr. Allan stepped out of his office, and a frail, hunched elderly woman rushed forward to block his path.

"Dr. Allan, please, save my son!"

The woman blocking him looked to be in her sixties, her voice hoarse and worn thin with desperation.

Dr. Allan explained patiently, "Mrs. Sun, it's not that I don't want to help. Your son's condition is extremely complicated. If we go ahead with surgery, the success rate is only around twenty percent. And if it fails, he'll lose what little vision he has left."

"Even twenty percent is better than nothing at all!"

Mrs. Sun clasped her hands together, pleading. "I'm begging you, Dr. Allan. You're the best ophthalmologist there is. If even you won't help him, my son has no hope left in this world."

Dr. Allan quickly helped her back to her feet.

Chapter 1249

Before he could respond, her son, Sun Gang, spoke up. “Dr. Allan, I’m already living like a broken man as it is. If the surgery leaves me completely blind, so be it. Please, I’m begging you, just do the surgery.”

Sun Gang had suffered from uveitis since childhood, enduring monthly dexamethasone injections starting at age six. Despite the treatment, his vision had slowly faded until he was left in complete darkness by sixteen.

Now, at thirty-five, he had no girlfriend and lived under the constant shadow of total blindness.

To him, Dr. Allan was his last lifeline.

Overhearing the desperation in Sun Gang’s voice, Gabriela found herself glancing his way more than once.

Maybe it was Myat’s situation still weighing on her, but she couldn’t help feeling a certain wariness toward people who were blind, or who showed this kind of obsessive intensity.

Her brow furrowed slightly.

Aubrey, meanwhile, hadn't noticed Gabriela's expression at all, too busy gazing at Dr. Allan with open admiration.

This was her husband. The best ophthalmologist in the entire country, the man who had restored sight to countless patients who'd lost hope.

So many people put their trust in him.

Even though it was well past office hours, Dr. Allan showed no trace of impatience. He spoke gently to the patient. "Let me discuss this with the other doctors first."

Sun Gang's case was genuinely complicated. Confident as Dr. Allan was in his own surgical skill, he couldn't agree recklessly to something this risky.

"Dr. Allan, I'm begging you to take this surgery on. Is it the cost you're worried about? Don't be, money isn't an issue at all. I'll have my parents transfer the surgical fees in advance, tomorrow if you'd like!"

The Sun family was financially comfortable and could easily afford the procedure.

Seeing how insistent they were, Dr. Allan finally sighed. "I'll think it over carefully."

After managing to persuade Mrs. Sun and her son to head home, he turned back to Aubrey.

“Have you been waiting long?”

Aubrey shook her head, then asked, “It’s been so long past your shift, why are you still here?”

“It’s fine,” Dr. Allan said, and explained briefly.

It turned out Sun Gang had been receiving treatment at the hospital for years, and Dr. Allan had actually treated him once before, back before he’d gone abroad for further study.

Sun Gang was something of a fixture at the hospital, known for keeping his doctors well past their scheduled hours.

None of the staff held it against him exactly, but his persistence was something of a running joke among them.

The moment Dr. Allan had returned to the hospital, the other doctors had eagerly handed Sun Gang’s case over to him, well aware his skill in eye surgery had no equal.

Hearing all this, concern filled Aubrey’s eyes. “You work so hard.”

Her tone carried such genuine warmth that Dr. Allan couldn't help but smile. "It's fine. I don't have any surgeries scheduled this afternoon, so I can rest a while."

Once the couple had finished talking, Gabriela spoke up. "Dr. Allan, could you hand Sun Gang's case off to another doctor?"

Chapter 1250

Dr. Allan seemed to understand exactly what was worrying her, and smiled reassuringly. "Patients who've suffered this long often carry a great deal of emotional weight with them. There's no need to worry too much."

Calm as he seemed, Gabriela couldn't shake the uneasy feeling sitting heavy in her chest.

Pushing the thought aside for now, she joined the couple for lunch and later drove Aubrey back to Apex Group.

Once Aubrey had said goodbye to her husband, she noticed the furrow still lingering in Gabriela's brow.

"Gabriela, is something wrong?"

Gabriela hesitated, then pulled the car over and spoke seriously. "I don't quite know how to put this, but you remember Myat's situation. This Sun Gang gives me that same uneasy feeling."

Even though it felt unfair to judge someone purely on instinct, especially someone this desperate and out of options, Gabriela had grown far more guarded over time.

Her priority, naturally, was Dr. Allan's safety.

"You heard what your husband said, only a twenty-percent success rate. You should talk to him, try to talk him out of taking this surgery on."

Aubrey knew Gabriela well enough to know she wouldn't say something like that lightly. Sun Gang must have left a real impression on her.

She nodded at once. "Don't worry. I'll be sure to bring it up with him."

Aubrey had always been one to listen to reason, especially when it came to Dr. Su.

That evening, once she'd confirmed he'd be home for dinner, she went straight to work cooking a few of her specialty dishes.

As a girl raised in the countryside, Aubrey had never shied away from hard work. Cooking and managing a kitchen were basic skills she'd mastered long ago.

When Su Zhuoming got home, he found the house warmly lit, Aubrey sitting on the sofa scrolling through her phone.

His new wife, waiting for him to come home.

A faint smile tugged at his lips, warmth spreading through his chest.

Noticing his arrival, Aubrey quickly set her phone aside.

“You’re back!” she said, hurrying over to take his briefcase. “Go wash your hands. The food’s still warm.”

The two of them sat down to eat.

Aubrey’s cooking wasn’t exceptional, but it wasn’t bad either. The care she’d put into these simple, home-cooked dishes made them taste far better than any takeout ever could.

Su Zhuoming found his appetite unusually good that night, clearly in a good mood.

Seizing the opening, Aubrey asked, “Did that patient, Sun Gang, come see you again this afternoon?”

Su Zhuoming paused, chopsticks hovering mid-air. "He's very eager to have the surgery, but the risks are considerable. I need to think it through carefully."

"There's nothing to think about," Aubrey cut in. "Sun Gang's condition is even more complicated than Myah's used to be... oh, right, do you remember Myah? I heard you were her attending physician back then."

Su Zhuoming nodded. "I remember her."

In truth, Myah's case had been far worse than Sun Gang's. She'd lost even her perception of light entirely, which had made surgery pointless from the start.

But in the end, she'd been cured all the same.