Married to the Limped Prince, She Becomes the Billionaire's Sweet Wife

Chapter 11: Got Married in a Daze

Timid by nature, she jumped in surprise and fell right into his arms, completely caught off guard.

He had a light, clean scent.

Ashley Bowen found her face buried in his chest, pinned in place.

Yuri Sinclair leaned in, bringing his handsome face close to Ashley Bowen's.

Ashley Bowen quickly turned her face away, bobbing her head like a frantic chick.

"I'll remember, I'll remember." Only then did Yuri Sinclair shove her away.

His large, calloused hand enveloped her small one, squeezing it so tightly it felt like he wanted to crush it.

"From now on, you are forbidden from mentioning other men in my presence." His features were so fine you couldn't see a single pore.

A domineering air clung to his stern expression, as if he were laying claim to his property.

Ashley Bowen held her breath, not daring to even exhale, and quickly nodded.

"Under...

stood." Only then did Yuri Sinclair release her hand.

He gave a cold command to the person behind him.

"Push me inside." Though her mind was reeling with questions, Ashley Bowen meekly followed Yuri Sinclair and his entourage into the Civil Affairs Bureau.

By the time she came out, she was clutching a little red booklet.

Ashley Bowen opened the marriage certificate, her eyes landing on their photo against the red background.

Yuri Sinclair was drop-dead gorgeous.

‘If only he weren’t disabled...

how perfect would that be?’ Aaron pushed Yuri Sinclair out of the building.

Yuri didn’t spare Ashley Bowen a single glance.

“Um...

Your Highness, are you leaving already?” Ashley Bowen scrambled after them.

A luxurious, stretched Bentley was now parked outside the Civil Affairs Bureau.

A door slid open, and a steel ramp automatically descended from the vehicle.

Aaron was about to push the wheelchair up the ramp.

Yuri Sinclair motioned for him to stop, then looked back at Ashley Bowen.

“Wait for me.” He said it as a simple statement, his voice ice-cold, yet Ashley Bowen nodded frantically as if she were under a spell.

It was as if his words were a divine decree.

‘Wait for him...’ Yuri Sinclair was wheeled into the vehicle, and the car sped off, disappearing in a cloud of dust.

Ashley Bowen stood frozen in place for a moment, watching until the car had completely vanished from sight.

Only then did she look down at the red booklet in her hand.

She pressed the little red booklet to her chest, her heart blooming with joy.

‘I’m married,’ she thought, ‘and my husband is gorgeous, to boot.’ ‘Yuri Sinclair’s legs aren’t in the photo anyway.

If I just post a picture of this booklet, everyone will be so jealous they could die.’ At that thought, she pulled out her phone and snapped a selfie with the marriage certificate before tucking everything away in her bag, completely satisfied.

“Miss Bowen, you can’t post that on social media.” Just as Ashley Bowen was about to tap “Post,” a large hand blocked her screen.

She snapped her head up.

It was the stone-faced man.

His face remained a mask of indifference as he said coolly, “His Highness’s marriage requires the family’s formal approval.

The official announcement must come from the most authoritative member of the family.

When the time comes, it will be proclaimed to the entire nation, and foreign dignitaries will arrive to offer their congratulations.

You cannot leak the news before then, Miss Bowen.

It would cause unnecessary trouble for His Highness.” “Oh, I see.” Ashley Bowen reluctantly tapped “Cancel” and put her phone back in her bag.

She looked up at the stone-faced man with pleading, puppy-dog eyes.

“I can keep the photo, though, right?

I promise I won’t post it.” The corner of the stone-faced man’s mouth twitched.

“Please get in the car, Miss Bowen,” he said, a note of resignation in his voice.

The car drove along a wide, flat road that grew increasingly remote, yet the scenery became more and more beautiful.

As the car began to climb a winding mountain road, a vista of lush green peaks filled the window.

Ashley Bowen excitedly pulled out her phone and began snapping photos nonstop.

“Miss Bowen, you can’t post photos of this area on social media, either,” the stone-faced man reminded her from the passenger seat.

“This is His Highness’s private estate.

The location is a closely guarded secret.

Please, for His Highness’s safety.”

Chapter 12: A Rich Wife's Life Comes True

Ashley Bowen felt a bit frustrated.

She’d married into the royal family but couldn’t even show off her wealth.

‘There’s nothing more tragic in this world.’ In the past, she and her besties would post all about it even if they just went out for a buffet.

Showing off their happiness had always been the best way for a common girl like her to feel better about herself.

“Mhm, don’t worry.

I’m an Imperial Concubine now, so I’m also worried about revealing my location and getting kidnapped,” Ashley Bowen said with great innocence.

The stone-faced man’s lips twitched slightly, as if he were holding back a laugh.

The car finally came to a stop.

A villa that looked like an ancient castle appeared before them, its white spires soaring into the blue sky, partially hidden by the clouds.

Ashley Bowen pushed open the car door and couldn’t help but gasp in amazement.

“Wow!” “This way, Imperial Concubine!” a synchronized voice called out.

More than twenty people stood on both sides of the long driveway, all dressed in sharp suits.

They were bowed at a 45-degree angle, their posture utterly respectful.

Ashley Bowen clapped a hand over her mouth, her heart about to leap out of her throat!

‘This...

the life of luxury I’ve always dreamed of...

it’s really happening today!’ “Your Highness, the Imperial Concubine, I am Ryan Osborne, the butler of this villa.

Welcome home, Your Highness!” The stone-faced man stood before the others and gave Ashley Bowen a deep bow.

Flattered, Ashley Bowen rushed to help him up.

“So you’re Mr.

Osborne!

I’ll be in your care from now on!

I really will!” Surrounded by the staff who treated her like a queen, she entered the villa.

After a tour of the place, Ashley Bowen was grinning from ear to ear.

‘This place is paradise!’ “Imperial Concubine, His Highness will be away on business for a month.

During this time, please remain here at home.

We will be here to accompany you,” Ryan Osborne said.

Ashley Bowen sat on a tiger-skin sofa, stroking the soft fur as she nodded.

“Alright.

Sorry to trouble you.” She kicked off her shoes and stepped barefoot onto the wool carpet.

Ashley Bowen flopped onto her back with a sigh of relief, ready to relax properly.

But...

“Imperial Concubine, you must be mindful of your attire in the house.

In particular, you must not walk around barefoot.

His Highness does not like it.” Ryan Osborne reminded her.

Ashley Bowen quickly shoved her feet back into her slippers.

Frowning, she asked, “This morning, you said His Highness doesn’t like people whistling.

You couldn’t be talking about the Third Prince, could you?” “In my vocabulary, there is only one ‘His Highness.’ Naturally, I was referring to the Third Prince,” Ryan Osborne said, his speech meticulously formal.

Ashley Bowen immediately started scratching her head.

Her opinion of the Third Prince took a nosedive.

‘I really never would have thought the Third Prince would be such a nag.’ “Don’t worry, Butler Osborne.

I’ll remember,” Ashley Bowen said with a small smile, deliberately pouting to look cute.

Sweat almost beaded on Ryan Osborne’s forehead.

‘I thought the Third Prince would marry a dignified, virtuous young lady from a family of equal standing.

I never imagined it would be a vulgar, ill-mannered country bumpkin like this…’ “Now that the Imperial Concubine has married into the Sinclair family, I must inform you of the family rules—what you may and may not do.” GROWL.

Ashley Bowen pointed at her stomach.

“I got up so early I didn’t even eat breakfast.

I’m starving now.

Can we listen to the lecture after I’ve eaten?” “That brings me to the first house rule.

The Sinclair family’s three daily meals are served at strictly scheduled times.

Breakfast is at 7 a.m., lunch is at 12 p.m., and dinner is at 5 p.m.

If you miss them, you will not be served, and they will not be served early.” “What the hell?!

I’m still sleeping in at 7 a.m.!

And if dinner is that early, I’ll be hungry again later!” Ashley Bowen protested vehemently, instantly displeased.

‘There is no way I can accept this first rule!’

Chapter 13: I Want a Divorce

“All members of the Sinclair family, male or female, must maintain a trim figure, as they represent the family’s image at various social functions.

Not only must meals be eaten at specific times, but the menu itself is designed by world-class professional nutritionists.

The meal plan for all seven days of the week is predetermined.

We expect the Imperial Concubine to refrain from snacking outside of the three main meals.

This is the second rule.” “What?

So if I'm hungry at night and want some barbecue or spicy hot pot, I can't have any of it?" Ashley Bowen practically screamed.

'If I can't even decide what to eat, what's the point of living?!' "Those are unrefined foods, Imperial Concubine.

Now that you are a member of the Sinclair family, you must learn to gradually accept the ways of high society..." Ryan Osborne said, adopting the tone of a patient teacher.

Ashley Bowen was incredibly impatient, but she forced herself to keep listening.

"As for the third family rule, once the Imperial Concubine enters the palace, your daily activities and schedule will be recorded in the official chronicles.

Therefore, to ensure you can adapt, you must begin strictly following the palace's daily routine here at the villa.

Everything from major events, like your marital relations with His Highness, down to minor details like your menstrual cycle, how many times you urinate a day, and whether your bowel movements are regular, will be tracked and recorded by designated ladies-in-waiting..." Ryan Osborne described all this with the utmost seriousness, but Ashley Bowen couldn't take it anymore and immediately cut him off.

"You have to record when I take a shit or a piss?" "Yes." Ryan Osborne's expression remained perfectly calm.

"So you're going to have a shadow follow me around and watch everything I do?" Ryan Osborne didn't refute her, simply nodding.

"More than one.

There will be chroniclers and various other personal ladies-in-waiting." "Are you people perverts?

I won't accept this!

I want a divorce!" Ashley Bowen finally snapped, leaping to her feet and roaring.

Ashley shot up abruptly.

She was better off not marrying into this powerful family!

"Imperial Concubine, you don't have the right to say no," Ryan Osborne explained patiently.

"The three-million-dollar check from the Second Prince is worthless.

The director of the Royal Finance Department works for His Highness.

If he doesn't approve the transaction, the funds won't be transferred to the Second Prince's account, which means you won't be able to withdraw anything.

As for your tuition, His Highness has already promised your mother he will arrange for you to attend the best university in the world." Ashley Bowen, who had just leaped to her feet, collapsed back onto the sofa.

'No wonder Mom agreed to this marriage.

So Yuri Sinclair made that promise.' 'I've always dreamed of studying medicine at the Norwyn Institute of Technology.

Could that really happen?' "Is everything you're saying true?

I could even go to the Norwyn Institute of Technology?" Ashley Bowen asked, batting her big eyes.

Ryan Osborne nodded.

"Once your marriage to His Highness is officially announced by the prominent families, you can study abroad under your status as an Imperial Concubine." "Fine!

I agree!" Ashley Bowen raised a clenched fist as if swearing an oath to the world.

"Dreams are food for the soul!

As long as I have my dream, I can't starve!" "..." Ryan Osborne's expression twitched for a good while before he braced himself to continue his lengthy lecture for this wild girl.

「Two hours later.」 Ashley Bowen sat with her chin in her hands, listening to Ryan Osborne's instructions and nodding repeatedly.

"Imperial Concubine, have you committed it all to memory?

There are 120 rules in total," Ryan Osborne said, his brow furrowed.

Looking utterly bored but feigning attentiveness, Ashley Bowen nodded like a chicken pecking at grain.

"Got it.

I've got it all.

I even recorded everything Head Steward Osborne just said.

I'll be sure to memorize it like a sacred mantra, even more fluently than I memorize my textbooks."

Chapter 14: His Highness Is Back

Holding up her phone, Ashley Bowen smiled.

Ryan Osborne nodded resignedly.

"Alright, it's noon.

The Imperial Concubine may have her meal." For one month, Ashley Bowen had been confined to this villa.

Aside from the occasional phone call to her mother, she was essentially under house arrest.

By now, she knew those 120 rules by heart.

Outside in the bright sunshine, Ashley Bowen was sunbathing under a large parasol, wearing a white T-shirt and a large pair of sunglasses.

The sound of an approaching car made Ashley Bowen sit up straight and look toward the driveway.

A long procession of vehicles was slowly pulling up in front of the villa.

Ryan Osborne and all the villa's servants were waiting respectfully.

A man in a black suit with a commanding presence stepped out of a luxury car.

Yuri Sinclair was back!

He actually came back after exactly one month!

Ashley Bowen quickly tossed aside her iPad, got up, and ran toward the villa.

Yuri Sinclair's wheelchair was pushed into the villa.

The moment he was inside, he shrugged off his heavy suit jacket and tossed it to Ryan Osborne, who was standing to the side.

He scanned the interior of the villa and, while loosening the tie around his neck, asked, "Where is she?" "The Imperial Concubine is in the courtyard sunbathing.

She said she was getting moldy from boredom and needed to sunbathe the dust mites off her…” Ryan Osborne lowered his voice.

Yuri Sinclair abruptly stopped what he was doing.

His lip twitched before he resumed loosening his tie.

“Isn’t she afraid of getting heatstroke in this summer heat?

Go, bring a box of ice out to cool her down.” “Huh?” Ryan Osborne’s jaw nearly hit the floor.

He had expected Yuri Sinclair to fly into a rage out of humiliation, not react like this.

“Yes, I’ll go get the ice right away.” Just as Ashley Bowen walked in, she happened to overhear this exchange.

Grinning, she walked up to Yuri Sinclair and eagerly took his tie.

“Your Highness, I’ve already sunbathed all the dust mites to death.” “You enjoy calling me ‘Your Highness’?” Yuri Sinclair asked, displeased, his cold gaze fixed on Ashley Bowen.

‘The entire empire calls him that, so of course I should too.

What else would I call him?’ “So, not ‘Your Highness’?

How about ‘Third Highness’?” Ashley Bowen frowned.

“…” Standing off to the side, Ryan Osborne felt a headache coming on.

‘Is there any difference between ‘Your Highness’ and ‘Third Highness’?’ “Call me Husband.” Yuri Sinclair suddenly pulled her into his arms, making her sit on his lap as he gripped her chin.

Forced to tilt her head up, Ashley Bowen looked into Yuri Sinclair’s sharp, hawk-like eyes and bobbed her head.

“Oh, okay.

Husband.” Saying the word felt awkward, and Ashley Bowen gave a silly laugh.

‘I can’t fight him,’ she thought.

‘I have to get on this moody Third Young Master’s good side.’ Only then did Yuri Sinclair release her, pushing her away.

“Aaron, push me upstairs.” The man called Aaron walked across the hall, took hold of the wheelchair’s handles, and carefully pushed Yuri Sinclair upstairs.

The Sinclair family’s staircase had a large ramp in the middle, likely designed specifically for wheelchair access.

Ashley Bowen watched as Aaron steadily pushed the man in the wheelchair up the ramp and couldn’t help but give him a thumbs-up.

“Butler Osborne, this Aaron guy is pretty impressive.

He pushed a man that size and a wheelchair upstairs without even breaking a sweat.” Ryan Osborne shot her a disdainful look and rolled his eyes.

“Aaron used to be the commander of the Army’s Third Legion.

Now he’s the captain of the Royal Guard.” This time, Ashley Bowen was completely dumbfounded.

She had thought he was just an ordinary guy who pushed a wheelchair, but she never imagined...

Chapter 15: You Must Eat with His Highness

“Hey, so when were His Highness’s legs crippled?” “...” Ashley Bowen was about to pry further when a cold, deep voice cut her off.

Yuri Sinclair reached the second floor in his wheelchair and suddenly looked back.

“Going stir-crazy from boredom?

And you think sunbathing really helps?” “Uh...” Ashley Bowen bit her finger, her brow furrowed in thought.

As she was trying to figure out how to respond, Yuri Sinclair’s toneless voice drifted over.

“No one’s tying you down.

You can go wherever you please.” Watching Yuri Sinclair and Aaron disappear down the corridor, Ashley Bowen immediately winked at Ryan Osborne.

“Butler Osborne, did you hear that?

His Highness said I’m free to come and go as I please!” ‘That damn stone-faced man.

He’s practically had me under house arrest for a month!’ Ryan Osborne gave an awkward twitch of his lips and said, very reluctantly, “If the Imperial Concubine wishes to go anywhere, please just inform me.

I will arrange for a car.” “I don’t need you to arrange a car.

Get me a bicycle.

I want to go have fun by myself!” Ashley Bowen genuinely disliked this Butler Osborne; she always felt like he was looking at her askance.

Ryan Osborne agreed sullenly.

“Very well.

And when will the Imperial Concubine be needing it?” “I’ll need it by lunchtime.

That shouldn’t be too difficult, should it, Butler Osborne?” Ashley Bowen gloated inwardly.

‘After being bossed around by this stone-faced butler for a month, I finally get to turn the tables and be the one in charge!

This feels incredible.

It’s the first time I’ve actually felt like the lady of a wealthy house.

Nice, very nice.

Hehe.’ “It’s already eleven-thirty.

Perhaps it would be better to wait until after lunch?” Ryan Osborne glanced up at the enormous quartz clock on the wall, his expression troubled.

‘I’m *trying* to make things difficult for you!’ Ashley Bowen beamed.

“But what if I don’t want to eat lunch at home?” “That’s out of the question.

His Highness has just returned.

According to the Sinclair family’s rules, you must stay and have lunch with him.” Ryan Osborne frowned.

In the end, Ashley Bowen compromised.

‘The Sinclair family rules are law.

It’s so infuriating!’ Lunch began promptly at 12:00 PM.

The dining table was a massive, Western-style piece, five meters long and one-and-a-half meters wide.

Yuri Sinclair, the master of the house, naturally sat at its head.

Ashley Bowen was seated in the first chair to his left.

The remaining twenty or so servants stood in two rows on either side of the table, simply watching them eat.

This was the first time Ashley Bowen had experienced such a grand display.

Gazing at the ridiculously large table, she saw it would be difficult to even reach the serving dishes.

A maid opened the metal lid of a steamer, deboned the succulent fish, and carefully placed portions onto Yuri Sinclair’s and Ashley Bowen’s plates.

Ashley Bowen took a bite of the fish.

It was incredibly bland—it tasted as if it had almost no salt or MSG at all.

It was absolutely awful.

“Is the food to your liking?” Suddenly, Yuri Sinclair wiped his mouth with his napkin and spoke up.

Ashley Bowen, of course, wanted to be honest, but she felt a sharp pinch from behind.

Feigning a smile, she nodded.

“Yes, I’m quite used to it!

This is exactly the kind of food you’d find on an enlightened monk’s menu.

It’s sure to extend one’s life!” Everyone present looked awkward.

Ryan Osborne couldn’t help but let out a couple of coughs.

‘Monks can eat meat?

And something this luxurious?

What a load of nonsense!’ “Enlightened monks?” Yuri Sinclair mulled over Ashley Bowen’s words and suddenly shifted his wheelchair.

The moment he saw this, Ryan Osborne hurried over to grip the handles of the wheelchair.

“Is Your Highness finished eating?” he asked obsequiously.

“I’m finished.

I have a video conference.” Yuri Sinclair glanced at Ashley Bowen, who was putting on an innocent face, his own expression impassive.

Chapter 16: His Highness Doesn't Like This Sound

He was always a man of few words, never wasting a single one.

Hearing this, Ryan Osborne stepped aside.

Aaron took over the wheelchair and pushed Yuri Sinclair toward the study.

“Butler Osborne, does His Highness always hold meetings in the middle of the day?

The timing seems a bit off,” Ashley Bowen asked, ever the inquisitive one.

Ryan Osborne instructed someone to clear Yuri Sinclair’s plate, a slightly smug smile on his face.

“Imperial Concubine, this is something you wouldn’t understand.

His Highness’s video conferences are all international.

Today, he has a meeting with clients from Jahara.

There’s a three-hour time difference between Vardos and Jadenberg.” Ashley Bowen drew out a long “Ohhh.” She had zero interest in the topic of “time zones,” so she turned to a nearby maid and asked, “Do you have any Lao Gan Ma chili crisp here?” “Lao Gan Ma?” The maid’s jaw nearly hit the floor.

In such a luxurious villa, with such a lavish lunch, hearing a name like “Lao Gan Ma” felt completely out of place.

“Well, you must have vinegar and chili sauce, right?” Ashley Bowen rolled her eyes in exasperation.

‘This steamed fish with no oil or salt is completely inedible.’ “We have vinegar, but no chili sauce.

His Highness never eats spicy food.

Would seafood sauce or cheese sauce be acceptable?” the maid asked, trembling with apprehension.

‘Are you kidding me?

Dipping fish in cheese sauce?

It’s not a burger or a pizza!

As for the seafood sauce...

I guess that could work.’ “Forget it, the seafood sauce will do,” Ashley Bowen finally conceded.

‘Might as well make do.

Who was it that used to say the wealthy ate gourmet delicacies and feasts of meat and fish every day?’ ‘Yes, it really is a feast of meat and fish,’ she thought, ‘but the flavor is nothing to write home about.’ A moment later, the maid brought over an exquisite jar of seafood sauce and scooped some onto a small dish.

Ashley Bowen eyed its fancy packaging, then began dipping all her food in the seafood sauce, smacking her lips as she ate.

“Imperial Concubine, when you are eating, please refrain from making such shameful noises.” Ryan Osborne’s punchable voice chimed in again.

Ashley Bowen rolled her eyes and continued to eat with relish.

“Haven’t you seen how the Koryoese eat?

All those slurping sounds.

The louder the noise, the more delicious the food is supposed to be.

That’s what brings in more customers.” “But His Highness dislikes such sounds,” Ryan Osborne persisted.

“How would His Highness ever know, unless you go tattle on me?

If he finds out, it’ll definitely be because you snitched!” Ashley Bowen said as she speared a piece of steamed duck, dipped it in the sauce, and brought it to her mouth.

Ryan Osborne was so angry he was speechless for a long moment.

Hearing someone nearby snickering, Ryan Osborne quickly snapped, “What are you laughing at?

Get back to your duties, all of you!” ‘This stone-faced guy must not be very popular with the other servants,’ Ashley Bowen thought.

She was reminded of Grace Sullivan’s arrogant, domineering expression—it was exactly the same as Ryan Osborne’s.

By the railing on the second floor, Yuri Sinclair had Aaron stop.

He had overheard the entire exchange between Ashley Bowen and Ryan Osborne.

And between his cold, stern brows, there was now the faint hint of a smile.

After lunch, Ryan Osborne did indeed procure a bicycle for Ashley Bowen.

Ashley Bowen twisted the handlebars and tested the bike, finally nodding in satisfaction.

“This is a nice bike.

Thanks for your trouble, Butler Osborne.

Well, I’m off!” Two rows of servants stood respectfully, all bowing at a perfect forty-five-degree angle.

Ashley Bowen scratched her head, embarrassed, then pedaled away on the bicycle.

Chapter 17: The Privilege of Free Entry and Exit

On the second-floor balcony, Yuri Sinclair held a cup of coffee, watching the servants on the main path and Ashley Bowen’s carefree departure.

He took out his phone and dialed a number.

Downstairs, Ryan Osborne immediately turned his head.

Yuri Sinclair said coldly, “Have someone follow the Imperial Concubine.

I want to know her every move.” He listened for the confirmation on the other end of the line, then looked away and continued to sip his coffee.

After an hour and a half of cycling, Ashley Bowen finally made it back home.

‘I haven’t seen Mom in a month.

I’ve really missed her.’ She strode inside and was immediately greeted by the delicious aroma of home cooking.

Just then, her mother walked out of the kitchen.

Seeing Ashley, she quickly called out, “Come and eat!” “Mom, how did you know I was hungry?” Ashley pounced toward the dining table like a greedy kitten.

Seeing it covered with all her favorite dishes, she grabbed her chopsticks and began to devour her food.

Her mother sat to the side, watching.

She reached out to straighten Ashley’s messy bangs, and tears began to fall from her eyes.

“I’m so sorry.” “Mom, why are you crying?” Ashley put down her chopsticks and threw herself into her mother’s arms, wiping away the tears on her face.

“There are so many rules in the royal family.

You must not be able to stand it.

I shouldn’t have agreed to this marriage, letting you repeat my past mistakes.” Ashley shook her head and quickly comforted her mother.

“It’s just that their food is terrible and doesn’t suit my tastes.

I’m really not suffering there.

If you don’t believe me, Mom, you can come with me and see for yourself!” ‘Mom never talks about her past.

She barely even mentions anything about Dad.

I never understood why she was so against marrying into a wealthy family, but after what she just let slip, I think I’m starting to get it.’ “Sigh...

it’s not that easy to just go there for a visit.

As long as you’re doing well, that’s what matters.” Her mother sighed, then got up and went into the kitchen to ladle a bowl of soup for Ashley.

“I haven’t moved into the palace yet.

Right now, I’m staying at the Third Prince’s private residence,” Ashley said, taking a sip of soup.

After the meal, Ashley got back on her bike and headed back.

The Sinclair family had a 7 p.m.

curfew; if she was any later, she wouldn’t be able to get in.

Not long after Ashley left, a black luxury car pulled up in front of the courtyard house.

Ryan Osborne, dressed in a suit, stepped out and went straight inside.

Ashley’s mother was clearing the dishes when she heard footsteps and looked up with a start.

“Hello, Madam.” Ryan Osborne bowed, taking a device from the person beside him.

“I am here on His Highness’s orders to bring you something.

This is a fingerprint scanner for the Sinclair family.

Please register your fingerprint here.

Once you do, you’ll be able to freely enter and exit the Sinclair residence.” The ride back was uphill, so it took Ashley two hours to cycle back to the villa.

The servants were once again waiting for her at the entrance.

Ryan Osborne greeted her with a wide smile.

“Welcome back, Imperial Concubine.” Ashley glanced at her watch—it was already past six.

‘Good thing I ate mom’s cooking,’ she thought.

‘Otherwise I’d have to go hungry tonight.’ She leisurely made her way up the spiral staircase.

When she reached the long, luxurious hallway, Ashley froze, stopping in her tracks as she stared at the row of identical doors.

‘This is my first day here.

Which room is mine?’ Suddenly, a voice came from behind her.

“Imperial Concubine, your room is this way.” Ashley turned around.

Ryan Osborne was standing behind her, though she hadn’t noticed when he’d arrived.

He was pointing to the left.

Ashley found it strange.

“My room?

Aren’t I sharing a room with His Highness?” “Yes, that is His Highness’s arrangement.

Please follow me, Imperial Concubine.” Ryan Osborne smiled, though there was a clear hint of mockery on his face.

Chapter 18: He Brought a Woman Home

Ashley Bowen pursed her lips and followed Ryan Osborne to the room at the far left.

Ryan Osborne gently pushed the door open, and an explosion of pink burst into view.

A luxurious, European-style ceiling hung overhead, and a massive fireplace immediately caught her eye.

A fine, patterned rug covered the floor.

The room featured a wide bed with pink curtains, and even the drapes drawn across the floor-to-ceiling windows were a matching shade of pink.

Ryan Osborne strode into the room and pulled back the bed curtains, letting the red glow of the sunset stream in and pool on the floor.

‘It’s gorgeous!

This room is so magical!’ Ashley Bowen dashed to the large bed and threw herself onto a doll that was taller than her, bursting into giggles.

“This was all arranged for the Imperial Concubine, according to His Highness’s instructions.” “Huh?” Ashley Bowen turned around in surprise and nodded, feeling incredibly flattered.

“I love it.

I love it so much.” “His Highness has gone out and may not return tonight.

The Imperial Concubine should get some rest.” Without another word, Ryan Osborne bowed, then turned and pulled the door closed behind him.

Ashley Bowen happily kicked off her shoes, sending them flying several feet away.

She hugged the large doll and bounced up and down on the soft bed.

“This place is amazing!” After rolling around on the bed a few more times, Ashley Bowen got up, deciding to take a bath.

As she passed a long bank of closets, Ashley Bowen stopped short.

She couldn’t resist reaching for a handle and pulling the door open.

Inside, a row of clothes was arranged in perfect order.

To her surprise, none of them had even been unwrapped from their packaging.

From blouses to jackets, pants, and skirts—it had everything imaginable.

She randomly picked up the tag on a formal dress—the price was 3,000!

‘Whoa, don’t tell me all these clothes are for me?’ It was her first time sleeping alone in such a large bed.

Ashley Bowen, who had always squeezed into a small bed with her mother, had a full-blown case of insomnia.

She tossed and turned for what felt like ages and counted over a thousand sheep, but she wasn’t the least bit drowsy.

The villa, nestled in the mountains, grew exceptionally quiet at night.

Accustomed to being woken up by thunderous snoring from the next room, Ashley Bowen suddenly sat up.

She threw on a jacket and walked out to the balcony.

Leaning on the railing with her chin in her hand, she gazed at the moon and began to think about her future.

Suddenly, two points of light pierced the darkness.

A car turned into the driveway and stopped in front of the villa.

Ryan Osborne was waiting by the entrance with two maids, bowing as the car pulled up.

The door opened and a man stepped out.

It was Aaron.

He was impeccably dressed in a suit, as always, clearly paying great attention to his image.

He walked with a powerful, measured gait.

‘Just as you’d expect from a military man,’ she thought.

‘He even looks good in a suit.’ Ashley Bowen’s gaze remained fixed on the luxury car.

A moment later, a ramp extended from the vehicle, and Aaron carefully guided a wheelchair down it.

‘Didn’t they say he wasn’t coming back tonight?’ Ashley Bowen quickly ducked down, afraid he might spot her.

But then, another person stepped out of the car.

A woman!

The woman wore a simple, floral-patterned cheongsam and had a tall, slender figure.

She followed behind Yuri Sinclair’s wheelchair, moving gracefully as she entered the villa.

For Yuri Sinclair to bring a woman home this late...

Ashley Bowen knew exactly what that implied.

‘No wonder he didn’t want me to share a room with him,’ she thought.

‘I knew his heart wasn’t in this.’ She sighed.

A wave of disappointment washed over her.

‘After all, Yuri Sinclair is my husband now.

I never thought he’d be the type of person to bring a mistress home...

especially not on the very first day I’m here.’ Any positive feelings she had for Yuri Sinclair plummeted.

With her shoulders slumped, Ashley Bowen went back into her room and collapsed face-first onto the bed.

Chapter 19: That Woman Is His Sister-in-law

Soon, the sound of rolling wheels and footsteps echoed from the hallway.

The woman’s high heels made a particularly pleasant clicking sound.

A moment later, silence fell.

Ashley Bowen covered her head with a pillow and, hiding under the covers, cursed Yuri Sinclair for being a scumbag.

She drifted off into a groggy sleep.

By the time she woke up, sunlight was already flooding the room.

Ashley Bowen opened her eyes.

Rubbing them, she glanced at the alarm clock on the nightstand—it was exactly six-thirty.

She dragged her exhausted body out of bed, brushed her teeth, and trudged downstairs for breakfast.

As soon as she reached the first-floor landing, Ashley saw a woman sitting at the dining table in the hall.

Yuri Sinclair was in his usual place at the head of the table, eating his meal with slow, deliberate movements.

Ashley’s mouth fell open.

She descended the last few steps, walked to the dining table, and stopped across from the woman.

‘She’s sitting in my seat!’ The woman seemed to notice Ashley.

She looked up slightly, a gentle smile gracing her lips.

“Sister-in-law, you don’t mind me sitting here, do you?” ‘Sister-in-law?’ Ashley mulled over the term as a stream of curses flooded her mind.

‘Who is this woman?

And how dare she have the nerve to call me that?’ “You’re free to sit where you like.

I’m not fussy, but the Sinclair family has a rule: the first seat to the left of the head of the table is for the lady of the house.

Sister-in-law, it’s not appropriate for you to be sitting there.” When the woman heard this, her face went deathly pale, and the knife and fork in her hand clattered onto the table.

She turned to look at Yuri Sinclair, her voice faint.

“Yuri.” ‘This woman is obviously having an affair with Yuri.’ Ashley rolled her eyes.

The thought that this woman had shared a room with Yuri just last night filled her with contempt for them both.

“Sister-in-law, please change seats.

Ryan!” Yuri Sinclair paused his meal and said in a flat tone.

Ryan Osborne was startled.

He hurried to clear the woman’s tableware and ordered a servant to set a place for Ashley Bowen.

‘The Grand Imperial Concubine holds a unique place in His Highness’s heart,’ he thought.

‘Why would he upset her today for the sake of this wild brat?

It’s just so strange.’ Ashley Bowen gleefully sat down in her rightful place and began enjoying her breakfast as if no one else existed.

Warm, sweet milk; soft, fluffy toast; and sweet-and-sour strawberries...

everything was perfectly to her liking.

Claire Sutton clearly wasn’t enjoying her meal.

She poked at her food a few times with her knife and fork before setting them down.

With a gentle smile, she said, “Yuri, I’m full.

I’m going to get some fresh air in the courtyard.” Yuri Sinclair’s hand paused for a moment before he nodded.

“Go on.” Not a single word of comfort, nor any attempt to ask her to stay.

Though Claire Sutton maintained her serene expression, she shot Ashley Bowen a vicious glare as she walked past.

Having thoroughly enjoyed her breakfast, Ashley Bowen wiped the corner of her mouth.

Seeing Yuri Sinclair about to leave, she quickly called out, “Um, Your Highness, I was thinking of going to school to study today.” “Go on,” Yuri Sinclair said flatly, steering his wheelchair toward the courtyard without another glance.

‘Those shameless adulterers!

How dare they have a rendezvous so brazenly, right in front of me?

And in my own home, no less!’ Ashley Bowen leaped up from her chair.

Like a thief, she pressed herself against the glass window, secretly watching the man and woman under the wisteria trellis outside.

‘Are they really just in-laws?

They’re obviously just a pair of cheating dogs.

Hmph!’ “Your Highness, you shouldn’t say that.

Before you were here, that seat was always Miss Sut— I mean, the Grand Imperial Concubine’s.” Startled by the voice behind her, Ashley Bowen jumped, pulling her head back from the window and accidentally bumping it against the maid’s forehead.

Holly Underwood clutched her forehead, crying out, “Ouch!”

Chapter 20: She Is the Eldest Prince's Newlywed Wife

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to.

You just said the First Imperial Concubine used to live here?" Ashley Bowen asked curiously.

Holly Underwood realized she'd let it slip and quickly turned to run.

"You should ask His Highness, Your Highness.

If we gossip, Butler Osborne will have us fired." 'So secretive!' Ashley Bowen's curiosity grew.

She glanced toward the glass window.

A moment ago, she'd heard Yuri Sinclair call that woman his sister-in-law.

'Does that mean she's the First Highness's new wife?' At the thought of the First Highness, an unconscious ache bloomed in Ashley Bowen's heart.

'Why did the man she loved marry someone else, while she herself was married off to another?' 'Why was the First Highness's wife having an affair with her husband?' 'If they could just switch places, wouldn't the ending be perfect?' 'She and this woman would trade.

She would become the First Highness's wife, and this woman could have Yuri Sinclair.' But what was the use of thinking about all this?

It only brought her more sorrow.

Her heart ached, so she decided to stop thinking about it.

Ashley Bowen moved a wicker chair onto the balcony of her second-floor room to read, but her eyes kept drifting to the man and woman in the courtyard below.

They seemed to be arguing about something.

Claire Sutton's expression was agitated, while Yuri Sinclair remained as cold as ever.

"Claire, I respect your choice.

Since you chose my older brother, you should live a good life with him." With that, Yuri Sinclair turned and began to wheel himself away.

An agitated Claire Sutton grabbed his wheelchair from behind, then moved around to kneel in front of him.

She pressed her tear-streaked face against his legs.

“You know you’ve always been the one I love.” Ashley Bowen pouted.

‘So shameless,’ she thought, feeling embarrassed for the woman.

‘How can someone like her exist?

She married his older brother, and now she’s here acting all pitiful, claiming she’s never loved anyone else?’ ‘Wait, what did Yuri Sinclair just call that woman?

Claire?’ She shot upright, nearly flinging the book off the balcony.

Ashley Bowen’s eyes widened in shock.

She tossed the book onto the coffee table and strained her ears to listen.

‘That night...

the man who slept with me...

wasn’t he calling out the name “Claire”?

So *she* was the one he was thinking about?’ ‘So the Second Highness likes this Claire Sutton, too?

She’s really something else, managing to make all three highnesses of the Sinclair family fall for her.’ Ashley Bowen felt like she had just stumbled upon some explosive information, and the tangled web of relationships was already giving her a headache.

‘Logically, this isn’t how things were supposed to be.’ While Ashley Bowen was lost in thought, the argument in the courtyard below ended.

Yuri Sinclair coldly wheeled himself away, while a deeply hurt-looking Claire Sutton turned and gazed toward the villa’s large iron gate.

Ashley Bowen assumed Claire Sutton was about to leave, but instead, she called the butler over and said something to him that Ashley couldn’t quite hear.

A few minutes later, she heard footsteps coming upstairs.

Following the sound, she saw Butler Ryan Osborne approaching respectfully.

With his hands folded politely in front of him, he announced, “Your Highness, the First Imperial Concubine asks if you are available.

She wishes to speak with you alone.” Ashley Bowen held up her book, about to say she wasn’t free.

But before she could, Claire Sutton arrived uninvited.

Her sharp stilettos made a CLICK-CLACK sound as they struck the floor.

Ashley Bowen looked into her room to see Claire Sutton already standing inside her bedroom, offering her a seductive smile.

‘Pah!’ she thought.

‘I’m not falling for that.

I’m not a man, so why would I be bewitched by this vixen?’ “What is it?” ‘Whatever she’s planning, I’ll deal with it.’ Since the shameless vixen had come looking for trouble, there was no way Ashley Bowen would back down.

Tossing her book onto the little table, she stepped over the threshold from the balcony and walked into her bedroom.