

Panicking 121

Chapter 121: Getting a Taste of the Rich Lady Life in Advance

"Say that again?"

Juliana couldn't believe her ears.

A phone was held out next to her.

Rosalind wiped her tears, her tone unusually firm, "Go ahead, I'm recording. If a man doesn't keep his word, he's just a limp enoki mushroom."

Ethan's eyelids twitched, but Evan's expression remained unchanged as he looked deeply at Juliana.

"But there's one condition, which is a one-month cooling-off period. We have to act like a normal married couple."

Juliana scoffed lightly, "Do you think that's possible?"

Evan closed his eyes briefly, "I don't ask you to come home, I mean that when you need to appear as my wife, you should cooperate."

Rosalind pulled Juliana behind her and stepped forward, "Now you remember she's your wife? When those women bullied her, what was she then? A punching bag? Or an indestructible cockroach?"

"You've bullied her to this point, and you still have so many demands for the divorce. Are you a pig's tail? You like dragging things out."

Evan finally got a bit irritated with her, and he called Ethan.

"Go see if there are any empty graves available?"

Rosalind instantly fell silent, took a deep breath, and quickly hid behind Juliana.

Evan looked at Juliana and continued, "I'm in a difficult situation at the company right now, so let's not make our impending divorce public. During this month of the cooling-off period, we should interact normally as we did in the past. I promise I won't ignore your feelings like I did before."

Rosalind gently tugged on Juliana's sleeve from behind, signaling her not to agree.

Juliana thought for a moment, then raised her chin and said, "Okay, but let's go register for divorce at the civil affairs bureau right now."

Evan's already pale face turned even paler.

"I've brought the marriage certificate, shall we go together?" he asked.

"I drove," Juliana said.

Evan nodded forlornly.

As he left, Rosalind excitedly grabbed Juliana's hand, "He's suddenly so agreeable, he must be up to no good. How could you fall for it?"

Juliana smirked faintly, "Do you have a better way to make him register immediately?"

Rosalind was speechless.

Juliana was about to head to the parking lot.

Adrian approached and said, "You've been on vigil for your grandfather for three days without proper rest; I don't feel safe with you driving. I'll take you to the civil affairs bureau."

Upon hearing this, Jared scoffed, "Grandfather this, grandfather that, you're really attentive. What if Evan causes trouble halfway, can you handle it?"

He then looked at Juliana, "Let me take you there. With me escorting you, even grandfather's spirit would be at peace."

Adrian got angry, "Is he your grandfather? Why do you keep saying it?"

Jared contemptuously replied, "Are you the only one allowed to say it?"

Juliana looked at both of them, then gave Jared a push.

"Stop arguing, let's drive."

Driver Langley, "..."

Despite many concerns along the way, the process to apply for divorce at the civil affairs bureau was surprisingly smooth.

Juliana held the receipt stamped with the official seal, feeling a bit emotional.

In 30 days, she would regain her freedom.

And the only thing she needed to do now was ensure that Evan wouldn't go back on his word during these 30 days.

However, when she walked out of the civil affairs bureau lobby, she couldn't find Jared or his car anywhere.

Scanning around, she saw only a Jaguar parked in the lot, its hood covered in blue roses, resembling a wedding car at first glance.

Juliana didn't dare to recognize it at first, and as she was about to walk away, the car honked.

Jared stuck his head out from the car, smiling at her.

Juliana was stunned for a moment before finding her voice, "What happened to your car... why does it look like this?"

Jared leaned against the window, giving a bold smile, "Celebrating your second trip to the civil affairs bureau! One more time, and you'll be completely free, isn't that worth celebrating?"

Juliana took a deep breath, holding back a smile, "Can we pretend we don't know each other for now?"

"Why?" Jared raised an eyebrow.

"It's so tacky," Juliana finally couldn't help but laugh, "Really, it's so cheesy I almost didn't recognize it."

Jared laughed too, getting out of the car to open the door for her, saying, "The florist highly recommended it, said it's the latest trend. See, my money is so easy to deceive."

"I don't believe President Langley, a man of taste, couldn't tell."

Juliana thought he did it on purpose to cheer her up.

And Jared, with his deep gaze, raised an eyebrow deliberately, "Really?"

Juliana bent down to get into the passenger seat, unable to hold back her smile.

As Evan came out of the registration hall, he saw the two of them leaving happily.

Ethan frowned, "What's President Langley implying? Did he really prepare a divorce celebration car? Is he not even pretending anymore while stepping in?"

Evan watched the ridiculous flower-covered car leave, his gaze turning chillingly dark.

...

In the evening, Summer insisted on taking Juliana to a bar to celebrate.

Last time, they didn't pop champagne halfway through, and the divorce didn't go through.

This time, she didn't want to be low-key about it.

Juliana, initially tired and wanting to rest, couldn't resist her enthusiasm, so she went along.

Nightfire Bar.

The heavy bass seemed to thump directly in her chest, driving away all her sleepiness.

Summer reserved a spacious booth.

The place had a minimum spend requirement, but she didn't care.

The arduous path of her friend's divorce had reached this step, and this expense was necessary.

The waiter served the drinks, and Summer slapped a platinum card on the table, "Bring over your most handsome, smooth-talking, and free-spirited young man!"

The waiter thought for a moment, "You mean our leading man?"

Summer nodded.

Juliana tugged on her sleeve, "Are you serious?"

Summer waved her hand elegantly, "Once you're divorced, you'll be a wealthy single woman. Might as well get used to the lifestyle early."

She poured Juliana a drink, toasting her to a happy divorce.

Juliana took a sip of the colorful cocktail, its strong alcohol content burning her throat.

"I've never ordered one before, do you know how to play this?" she said uncertainly.

Summer, experienced, said, "What technique does it need? Just get a handsome man to drink and chat with. If you get drunk, you can feel his abs or lean on his chest."

Chest?

Juliana's thoughts drifted back to the morning she woke up.

Whose chest could compare to Elias Langley's?

Summer, unaware she was daydreaming, leaned closer and lowered her voice, "The best part is, after enjoying it all, you don't have to be responsible for him. Isn't that a stress reliever?"

Juliana still felt a bit nervous, "Maybe you could demonstrate first?"

Summer laughed easily, "Simple. Just watch how I handle him, and do the same."

No sooner had they finished talking than a man in a white shirt and black trousers, guided by a waiter, walked towards them.

The man's handsome features were undeniable, but there was a calm maturity about him that seemed out of place.

Summer, having already finished a cocktail, frowned at the approaching figure.

"What kind of young man is this? This 'duck' is too old!"

Juliana almost couldn't speak, reaching out to cover her mouth, making an effort to stay calm, "That's Jared."

Summer, "..."

Great, now he'd heard everything she said.

Chapter 122: Evan Gets Shut Down

"Mr. Shaw, what a coincidence."

Jared Langley squeezed in between the two, ignoring Juliana, and turned his head to look at Summer Shaw.

"Just now, did I hear Mr. Shaw questioning my charm?"

Who doesn't know that the eldest son of the Langley Family appears elegant and thorough on the surface, but his methods are ruthless underneath.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have ended up killing his own younger brother.

Summer Shaw's throat tightened, forcing himself to remain calm, "It's a misunderstanding, we mistook someone else."

Jared Langley neither agreed nor disagreed, turning his head toward Juliana, "Is the top performer booked for you?"

Juliana twisted her fingers, "We're just here to celebrate, because I don't really understand this..." so I just wanted to explore a bit.

However, before she could finish, Jared Langley interrupted, "Yes, it's worth celebrating, I'll make the arrangements."

Juliana, "..."

Three minutes later.

Two rows of handsome men stood neatly by the booth.

Ten on the left, ten on the right, varying from robust to slim, from wolf-like to puppy-like.

They wore professional flirtatious smiles, bowing in unison, "Good evening, sister!"

Juliana was too stunned to speak, wishing she could vanish on the spot.

Summer Shaw's mouth dropped open, involuntarily exclaiming, "Oh... crap!"

Juliana quickly stood up and said, "President Langley, this is too much, we really don't need..."

Little did she know, Jared Langley looked understanding and said with a smile, "Juliana, don't be polite with me, tonight it's all on my tab, just have fun."

As soon as Jared Langley finished speaking, he was about to leave, but as he took a step, he saw Evan standing at the edge of the booth, his expression cold, his gaze sharp as an arrow, directly targeting him.

Jared Langley paused slightly, then forced a smile that couldn't be faked.

"In the morning you were in a wheelchair, now at night you can party at a bar. President Grant... no, now it's Vice President Grant. Vice President Grant's self-repair speed is truly comparable to artificial intelligence."

Evan rushed over from the hospital upon learning that Juliana had gone to the bar.

At this moment, his face was still a bit pale.

"She never comes to places like this. President Langley bringing her to witness such a scene and arranging these people, is that appropriate?"

Jared Langley retorted mockingly, "Is your infidelity appropriate while her going out to have fun isn't? Vice President Grant's double standards are quite handy."

Evan very much wanted to strike back at Jared Langley with sharp words, but that would only make Juliana more repulsive toward him.

Suppressing the surge of anger, his voice was cold, "Is this President Langley's way of expressing 'affection'?"

Uh... Jared Langley suddenly realized Evan had misunderstood him as pursuing Juliana.

A hint of amusement flashed in his eyes, and he naturally put his arm around Juliana's shoulder, laughing softly, "I'm a real man. If she's happy, then I'm happy."

Evan choked on his words.

Juliana's face became slightly flushed, and she naturally slipped from Jared Langley's embrace, tapping his chest as if to appease him, but when she turned to Evan, her eyes became icy cold.

"I'll keep my promise to you, but my life has nothing to do with you, Vice President Grant, please leave, don't dampen everyone's spirits."

Evan's throat felt as if he had swallowed a red-hot iron piece; even breathing was painfully difficult.

Ethan Carter immediately stepped up to support him, "The doctor only allowed you to leave the hospital for half an hour."

Evan's emotions surged violently, his fingers clenched so tightly that they turned white, but ultimately, he only glared at Jared Langley fiercely before leaving the bar with Ethan's help.

Jared Langley turned to Juliana, raising his eyebrows smugly, "I helped you to annoy your soon-to-be ex-husband, how will you thank me?"

Juliana glanced at him indifferently and said, "Didn't you take advantage of me just now? We're even."

After she finished speaking, she told Summer Shaw she was going to the restroom.

As soon as she left, Summer Shaw glanced at the empty glasses on the table, suddenly stood up.

"Uh-oh! She drank that glass of strong liquor!"

"Oh no, she drank the entire glass!"

Jared Langley said nonchalantly, "Just one glass, not even enough for a warm-up."

Summer Shaw staggered as she chased after her, anxiously, "She's a lightweight with just two drinks!"

...

Juliana splashed some water on her face, still feeling a bit dizzy.

She wobbly walked out of the restroom, unexpectedly bumping into a warm "human wall."

Elias Langley held her waist steady, his eyes calm, "Does alcohol give you courage to dare?"

Juliana frowned upon realizing who he was, "Why are you everywhere I go?"

"Shouldn't I be asking you that?" Elias Langley didn't release her.

Juliana pushed him, "Let go! Always holding my waist, do you have some special fetish?"

Elias Langley's posture remained unchanged, his gaze lightly resting on her face.

For a moment, he inexplicably felt that she must have grown up to be like this.

But the next second, he regained his composure, secretly laughing.

He never wavered because of beauty, yet he vaguely hoped she would be the person he's searching for, which is a very dangerous signal.

A hint of elusive irritation surfaced in his brow, his voice casual, "You always make me feel like Lysander."

"What do you mean..." Juliana hadn't the chance to react when he suddenly let go and turned away.

Juliana lost her support unexpectedly, her high heel twisted sharply, and sharp pain shot through her ankle, causing her to gasp lightly.

Elias Langley paused for a moment, returned, and saw her leaning against the wall, rubbing her ankle.

"What happened again?"

The alcohol Juliana drank started to stir her temper at this moment.

She glared at him fiercely, "Can't you give a heads-up before letting go? Or did I offend Mr. Langley, making you want to revenge on me?"

Elias Langley glanced at her slightly swollen ankle, ultimately sighed almost imperceptibly and bent to lift her horizontally...

Jared Langley sat among a group of male models, having not seen them come back for a long time, contemplating whether to leave, when he suddenly saw Quinn Shepherd walking this way.

If he's here, it means his uncle is here too.

If his uncle saw him here with so many male models...

His heart skipped a beat, he hurriedly stood up to greet, forcing a smile to probe, "Secretary Shepherd came for a social gathering too?"

Quinn Shepherd wore a formulaic smile, "Mr. Langley is not here."

Just as Jared Langley breathed a sigh of relief, he heard Quinn Shepherd continue, "He's considering whether to let Adrian Langley replace you."

Jared Langley's back chilled, immediately explained, "These are prepared for business partners."

Quinn Shepherd's smile remained unchanged, but his words carried a caution, "Real business relies on genuine skills. I don't believe without these people, you can't seal a deal."

Jared Langley instantly understood, quickly took out tips to disperse the male models, and hastily left the scene.

As Jared Langley walked out, Summer Shaw ran back.

Juliana was missing, and she had sobered up, frantically searching for her phone to call Juliana.

Quinn Shepherd smiled, "I just saw Miss Jacobs, she said she was dizzy and left first."

Summer Shaw paused, "She... she went home?"

...

Elias Langley took her to the bottom of her apartment building.

He pondered for a few seconds, still asked, "Do you need me to carry you up?"

Juliana grabbed her high heels, her lips curling disdainfully, "No need, if you suddenly throw a fit halfway and drop me, I wouldn't even have to go to work tomorrow."

He knew she would say that.

Elias Langley didn't speak, only watched her hop on one foot going away, then took back his gaze.

At this moment, Quinn Shepherd called, "Boss, the eldest son gladly accepted your caution."

Elias Langley responded indifferently, "Mm."

Quinn Shepherd hurried to ask, "Then... did you get Miss Jacobs's hair?"

Elias Langley directly hung up the phone.

Quinn Shepherd, "..."

Juliana forgot the next day was the weekend, no need to go to work.

Early morning, while still drowsy, she was awakened by a ringing phone.

It was Evan calling.

She was irritated upon waking up, impatiently said, "You better have a good reason."

Evan's voice was hoarse and deep, "I'm at Serenity Temple, asking the master to do a ritual for our child; the master said it would be better if the mother is present..."

He paused for a bit, his voice carrying a plea, "Could you come over?"

Chapter 123: Evan Collapses on the First Day of the Cooling-Off Period

Juliana asked lightly, "Is it necessary?"

"Juliana, that child is not only your pain but also mine. Originally, we could have had another..."

Juliana didn't want to hear his insincere words and interrupted, "I'll do it."

Just don't regret it!

...

Over two hours later, she drove to Serenity Temple.

Evan still looked so frail, sitting in a wheelchair, with Ethan coming forward to open the car door for her.

Beside them, a monk in yellow robes was likely Master Kasyapa, as mentioned in Evan's message.

Juliana stepped forward and bowed to him.

Master Kasyapa carefully examined Juliana's face and said, "Mrs. Grant is a person of great fortune. Mr. Grant, despite his illness, insists on performing the spiritual ceremony for the lost child, showing commendable compassion. With such deep love and harmony between you two, you will surely move the Buddha and be blessed with another child."

Evan nodded slightly with a serene smile.

Juliana was about to remind the kind master to speak less, lest he regret it later, when a Mercedes sped in and stopped in front of them.

Yvonne got out of the car, saw Evan, and rushed toward him.

"Evan, I've missed you so much."

Not only did Evan's face darken, but even Ethan and Master Kasyapa were stunned.

Yvonne, not caring about others' stares, knelt by Evan's leg, grasped his hand, and looked up with tears streaming down her face.

"I heard you were critically ill. I called you, but no one answered. I couldn't reach your sister, and when I went to Cortexa Group to find you, your brother didn't let me in. I was worried sick."

Evan pulled his hand back, about to scold her, but suddenly recalled something and his tone turned exceedingly gentle.

"How did you know I was here?"

Yvonne glanced at Juliana.

Actually, it was Juliana who told her.

But she wasn't about to let Juliana score points with Evan.

"I was so worried about you that I couldn't sleep all night and eventually had no choice but to beg Miss Jacobs for your whereabouts."

Evan's expression turned grim, "Today, I'm here to perform a ceremony for the child of me and my wife. Please go back first; I'll contact you once I'm done."

"No," Yvonne clung to his wheelchair, "I want to stay and care for you."

Just when Evan was pondering how to gracefully ask her to leave, Juliana laughed and said, "Vice President Grant, Miss Quinn is deeply devoted to you. You should just accept her presence."

Evan suddenly understood that this was Juliana's doing and looked at her incredulously.

Master Kasyapa was put on the spot, but as a monk, he was accustomed to such turmoil.

He calmly said, "Amitabha, the temple seeks the peace of mind. If everyone can remain settled and not disrupt the tranquility, it would be a great merit."

Yvonne did not grasp that this was addressed to her.

Instead, she cheerily stepped forward, saying, "Rest assured, Master. I adhere to all rules. I wish to donate money for a spiritual ceremony to bless my boyfriend's health. Would a hundred thousand do?"

Master Kasyapa looked at her with neither joy nor sorrow, "Benefactor, sincere hearts matter most in prayers. Without a rightful title, it may be in vain."

Yvonne's smiling face instantly froze.

Evan felt a pang in his heart, "Master, my wife is here. Let's proceed with the ceremony for our child."

...

In no time, the solemn altar at Serenity Temple was enveloped by the chanting of sutras.

At this moment, Evan was not in the wheelchair. Instead, he kneeled beside Juliana, sincerely conducting the ceremony for their child.

However, just after a dozen minutes, he began to falter.

Ethan noticed his shaky posture and quickly offered him some ginseng tea.

Nonetheless, Evan, holding the ginseng tea, looked at the visibly thinner Juliana beside him, refraining from drinking and handing it to her instead.

His eyes were full of concern and worry for her.

Yet Juliana only paused on the tea for a second before turning to Yvonne, who was standing bored to death nearby, saying, "Vice President Grant is feeling unwell; it's more fitting for you to help him with the tea."

Yvonne's eyes lit up instantly, and she hurriedly moved toward Evan.

Evan stiffened entirely, and after a moment, he explained in a voice almost mournful, "Juliana, this tea is for you. I didn't mean for you to take care of me."

Juliana gave a faint smile, openly disregarding Yvonne's presence, and said, "Don't worry. I fully support you two being together. After all, I also want to see how Miss Quinn manages a sister-in-law who is inexplicably her husband's lover."

Evan's face instantly turned livid.

Stella!

A malicious gleam flashed in Yvonne's eyes, but she quickly put on a smiling face and grabbed the tea.

She held tightly onto Evan's arm, her voice so coy that it clashed with the surroundings.

"Evan, you look so uncomfortable. Why don't you lean on me? I'll accompany you to finish the rest of the ceremony."

At this, she puffed out her chest. Had she not had a cup of tea in her hand, Juliana would have thought she was about to breastfeed.

Evan wanted to break free, but given how closely she clung, he couldn't harshly throw her off in public, finding himself in an awkward predicament.

Master Kasyapa furrowed his brow, looked at Yvonne, and sternly said, "Female benefactor!"

Startled, Yvonne released her grip on Evan.

Evan, perhaps too furious, was ghostly pale now.

Master Kasyapa's voice was low, yet carried undeniable authority.

"The ceremony here is for the spirit of a child lost, not a place for worldly dramas. If there is no genuine compassion, only cunning remains, please cease speaking and withdraw, so as not to disturb the peace of the deceased and desecrate the solemnity of Buddhism."

As his words fell, the chanting stopped, and the hall fell silent.

This time, Yvonne finally understood the master's words, her face turning ashen and finding the tea in her hand scalding, she quickly returned it to Ethan.

Damn it, once again defeated by Juliana!

She ground her teeth in anger.

Seeing Yvonne embarrassed enough and Evan adequately infuriated, Juliana got up, walked to Master Kasyapa, and made a respectful gesture.

"Master, the child has already passed away. There's no worldly attachment and no parents. I believe it has already gone to the blissful afterlife. Whether the ceremony is performed or not doesn't make much of a difference."

Master Kasyapa gazed at her for a moment, a knowing compassion passing through his eyes.

"Amitabha. The benefactor is clear-minded. It was I who was attached to appearances. If a ceremony becomes a mere form, losing the essence of transcendence, it's better not to perform it."

With that, he personally stepped forward, gently covering a small memorial tablet, and waved to the monks.

The monks understood and all departed quietly.

"Mr. Grant, your donation of incense offerings, this temple cannot accept. Merit lies in the heart, not in materials. Without sincere faith, it breeds karma, tainting the purity of Buddhism. We will return it shortly."

Evan was already devoid of color, his chest filled with rage.

And Master Kasyapa turned to Juliana, slowly making the same gesture, "The benefactor, with a wise heart, is already free. Your fulfillment is not under the old trees of the former court. Head south, where the celestial radiance and the perfect jade formation await."

Juliana did not quite believe in mysticism, but she smiled, matched Evan's gaze, and her smile gradually turned fierce.

"You are not worthy to conduct the ceremony for my child!"

This was her purpose for coming today.

After speaking, Juliana walked away without looking back, indifferent to Evan collapsing onto Ethan or Yvonne's exclamation.

When she returned to the city, it was already noon.

Just as she was about to find a place to eat, she noticed a restaurant called "Southern Silversmiths."

Curious about what the place offered, she parked the car by the roadside and went in.

Outside, there didn't seem to be many people, but once inside, she found the restaurant bustling.

There were no vacant tables in the main hall, so Juliana asked if there were any private rooms.

But the private rooms were all booked as well.

Feeling a bit disappointed, Juliana was about to leave when her phone rang.

It was an unknown number.

She answered, and Elias Langley's deep voice came through the line, "Stop."

Juliana paused in her steps.

"Turn its head 70 degrees to the top right."

Juliana turned and saw Elias standing at the door of a private room on the second floor, waving at her.

"Do you need me to come down and carry you up?" he asked.

Chapter 124: Watching Him Struggle, Watching Him Heartbroken

Juliana hung up his call and walked up by herself.

Her ankle was still swollen; although she climbed the stairs slowly, she didn't keep him waiting long.

Elias placed a washed teacup in front of her and washed one for himself.

"Are you following me?" Juliana asked warily.

Elias raised his brows without looking up, "I'm not so bored that I'd need to track your daily life for amusement."

"Then you..."

"I just went to the restroom and happened to see you when I came back."

It might be a coincidence, Juliana relaxed.

The waiter brought the dishes, and Elias pushed a tube of ointment in front of her.

"Responsible to the end."

Juliana picked up the ointment and looked at it; it was for promoting blood circulation and removing bruises.

She immediately flared up.

"You bring this thing to an 'accidental' meeting with me? You are stalking me!"

Elias calmly nodded, "Between the fate of meeting you by chance and purposefully following you, I'd prefer to believe it's the fate of the latter."

Juliana, "..."

Elias didn't look at her dumbfounded expression and pushed a serving of tofu in peanut sauce in front of her, his eyes calm, "I don't know if you like spicy food, so I ordered two types of dips. There's also a signature dish here called stir-fried pork with tea tree mushrooms, it's quite good as well..."

Juliana didn't want to eat; she felt like she'd eaten her fill of anger.

In the private room next door.

Yvonne stormed in angrily.

Quentin and his wife had already ordered the dishes.

Seeing her, Quentin pulled out the chair next to him and said, "Weren't you busy? Why did you suddenly want to come?"

Yvonne stomped her foot in anger, "He ignores me and won't let me go to the hospital."

Mrs. Quinn asked, "Is it because he's dissatisfied that your father didn't give him the person he wanted?"

"We can't give him," Quentin said, "Unless he marries our little Yvonne, we can't let Ryan help him either."

Mrs. Quinn was still somewhat disapproving of their decision.

"He's already been demoted and might soon be kicked out of the company, and you're still banking on him?"

Quentin looked at her like she was crazy, "Do you know how much the Grant Family is worth? In Kenton, the Grants are second on the rich list, who's bold enough to claim first? As the saying goes, a camel dying of hunger is still bigger than a horse. Has your brain rusted?"

Mrs. Quinn realized at his words.

She patted her daughter's hand, "Men, you need to be a bit more forward and act pampered, and soon he'll be unable to resist. Then, he'll hand over all the Grant family's money to us. When I go out, I want 8 maids, 20 bodyguards, and a new Hermes bag every day, 365 days without repeating."

Yvonne withdrew her hand, "You think Evan Grant is that easy to handle?"

Quentin thought for a while, "Juliana's neither cold nor warm towards him, I don't think there's much left between them. But his half-sister isn't simple; rumors say they've slept together. Is it because of that woman..."

Yvonne snapped the porcelain chopsticks in her hand with a "snap."

"Stella Windsor doesn't deserve to be my stumbling block."

After a while, she went to the restroom.

Just as Juliana came out after washing her hands.

The two met at the corner.

Yvonne stared at her for two seconds, then said, "Even though you called me over, I don't feel at all grateful to you."

Juliana casually threw the paper towel in the trash.

"I don't need your gratitude because you didn't handle things well, making a mess. I had too high expectations of Miss Quinn; you've really disappointed me."

"What are you saying!" Yvonne was a bit angry.

Juliana chuckled scornfully, "Isn't it true? I delivered the person to you, and you still couldn't manage, I admit I overestimated you this time. Next time, I'll find someone more competent and surely they'll be able to win him over."

Yvonne should've been furious, but she suddenly became calm and assessed her.

"Do you... truly not want to be with Evan Grant anymore? He's so wealthy; many women are desperate to become his wife, you're willing to give up?"

Juliana laughed mockingly, "It's impossible to explain to someone with your IQ, now move."

Yvonne didn't budge, forcing herself to say, "Actually, your husband isn't completely uninterested in me. When we were together, he touched me — every place he should touch. If he hadn't been hospitalized, we might've slept together already."

Juliana looked at Yvonne and realized she really wasn't suitable as a chess piece, but could still be used as a tool.

So she nonchalantly said, "Then I wish you success in climbing the ladder soon, my friend is still waiting for me, excuse me."

Returning to the private room, Juliana saw Elias had just finished a phone call.

"Still eating?" he asked.

Juliana pondered, "Do you have time to come to the signing ceremony for Aetherflame's new energy truck battery?"

Elias raised an eyebrow, "Do you hate me, yet want me to come—are all women so contradictory?"

Juliana closed her eyes, suppressing her urge to argue.

"Forget I mentioned it. Thanks for the ointment, this meal's on me."

Thus, we owe each other nothing, and won't even need to see each other again.

As she finished speaking, she turned and left without hesitation.

Elias took a step outside, just as Quentin stepped out of the private room.

Seeing him, Quentin smiled ingratiatingly, "Mr. Langley, it must be fate."

Elias, "..."

After a while, Quinn Shepherd picked Elias up.

He asked with concern, "You've eaten together, so there shouldn't be any barriers, right? Did Miss Jacobs give you the hair?"

Elias pursed his lips, not speaking.

Quinn understood, anxiously suggesting, "How about we just kidnap her and take her blood directly?"

Elias, "How long have you been with me?"

Quinn seriously calculated, "Ten years and three months."

Elias, "It's been ten years and you still have that bandit air? Grabbing hair right away is something street thugs do—in what we do, We must be civilized."

Quinn learned his lesson and nodded.

"By the way, the M&A case with Apex Corp, their chairman changed his mind again. That old guy's really cunning, trying to have his cake and eat it too."

Elias gave him a faint glance, "Then arrange for someone to take him out for a drink and let him learn the consequences of being greedy."

Quinn was taken aback, "Boss, we must be civilized."

Elias frowned, "I'm teaching you business tactics, and you're talking to me about civility?"

Quinn, "..."

Two days later.

Aetherflame Dynamics' signing ceremony for their new energy truck battery project was held in The Apex Hotel's conference hall.

Even Evan Grant received an invitation.

After careful consideration, Juliana and Summer Shaw decided to partner with Cryovault Titanium.

This meant that unless Ryan Donovan had a product that could surpass Aetherflame, his dominance in Cortexa's heavy truck business was entirely defeated.

Evan Grant could almost envision the curve of her lips as the woman handed him the invitation card.

She wanted to see him embarrassed, to see him heartbroken.

But if that made her feel good, then he would go.

Cryovault Titanium attached great importance to this signing ceremony; the Tahoe District president attended in person.

Summer Shaw stepped onto the stage in a sharp business suit and sincerely shook hands with the opposite president.

Behind her were Juliana and several company executives.

From a continually losing, unknown small company, to now officially standing on a stage attracting industry attention.

Aetherflame finally stepped into everyone's view.

Summer Shaw raised her champagne glass, her eyes glistening with tears.

Juliana placed her hand on her shoulder, letting her lean against her.

It felt as if to say, no matter how big the storm, as long as I'm here, as long as we face it together, we can get through it.

Evan Grant looked much better today; he sat in the audience, looking up at Juliana.

She had once done the same thing and said these very words during his toughest times.

How did the two of them end up like this in just four short years?

While feeling sentimental, Stella Windsor bent down and approached him from behind.

"Brother, the next event is the celebration banquet. The doctor said you shouldn't drink, so since the signing ceremony is over, why not leave now?"

Evan Grant nodded.

Just as he stood up, Stella instinctively reached out to support him.

At this moment, Juliana's voice came from behind them, "Vice President Grant, Mrs. Grant, are you leaving already?"

Chapter 125: How Can I Untangle the Knot in Your Heart

The two people froze simultaneously, both turning their heads.

Evan looked at Juliana with a restrained anger in his eyes, but he didn't speak.

Stella, who had been locked up for a few days and harshly reprimanded by Ethan, had become much more obedient.

She discreetly let go of Evan's arm.

"Sister-in-law, I'm just my brother's secretary now, how could you call me that?"

Everyone attending the signing ceremony today was a prominent businessperson from Kenton, and Stella cared about her reputation.

Juliana's eyes carried a hint of a smile, "Don't be confused. I don't have the fortune to become relatives with you. Today, only guests with invitations and their partners can enter, while everyone else must register with the company. I remember... your name wasn't on that list."

Stella opened her mouth.

When Ethan suddenly asked her to come over this morning, she felt something was wrong.

It wasn't that Ethan teamed up with Juliana to scheme against her, but Juliana suddenly became a bit intimidating, making Stella extremely wary.

"Sister-in-law, my brother and I are innocent. You're paranoid again. Every time you and Evan have disputes, why drag me into it..."

Just as she was about to squeeze out a few tears, an employee from Aetherflame ran over, shouting and interrupting her.

"Mrs. Grant, you dropped something."

Stella's voice stopped abruptly.

It was the cocktail hour, and the guests, chatting individually, turned their attention over.

The scene was incredibly awkward.

"Do I know you? Why are you calling me that?" Stella awkwardly replied.

The female employee was momentarily stunned and then smiled.

"When you registered, you said you were Mrs. Grant, which is why we let you in. I have a good memory; I wouldn't mistake it."

As she spoke, the employee handed over a bag tag.

"This fell off your bag, right?"

With the design of the mother-daughter bag, there was no room for dispute.

Stella's face turned white as she snatched the tag and held it tightly in her hand.

She didn't know why Juliana insisted on calling her Mrs. Grant, but it certainly wasn't a good thing. Just as she was thinking of an excuse to leave, Yvonne's voice approached.

"Shameless woman, seducing men everywhere and falsely claiming to be Mrs. Grant. Are you deliberately trying to disgrace the Grant family?"

Yvonne wore a conservative dress that did not fit her style and came over aggressively with a few sisters.

Stella froze and instantly understood Juliana's arrangement. This cocktail party was aimed at her.

She looked at Evan, knowing that a single word from him could stop Yvonne's commotion.

But Evan remained silent, his face sullen.

"Brother..."

Yvonne squeezed in between Evan and her, interrupting Stella's plea.

"Clucking all day, are you a hen? Your mom is dead, the Grant family kicked you out, and here you are, shamelessly clinging to him, acting like a pure white lotus, thinking all men in the world fall for your act?"

After speaking, she signaled to her sisters.

Her sisters caught on immediately and surrounded Stella.

"Stop embarrassing yourself here, come with us!"

Stella knew well that once she was out of Evan's sight, the consequences would be unimaginable.

She didn't want to leave, but Evan showed no attitude, and she couldn't resist the push of these women, being "escorted" away from the cocktail scene.

This time, Yvonne didn't cling to Evan, but instead walked out like a queen of justice, nodding to Juliana, "I can't tolerate a speck of sand in my eye. I'll take care of people like her."

With that, she followed out, walking with steps that made the Quinn family proud.

Juliana lightly smiled and raised her champagne glass to Evan, "Sorry, Vice President Grant, you were so indulgent with her that I thought you were actually married."

With that, she turned and left.

The savvy old CEOs present all had mockery plastered across their faces.

In the distance, Summer looked away and smiled slightly.

She then turned to the president of the signing party and said, "Our staff are too innocent, always getting fooled, sorry."

The party president, a thirty-something woman, nodded understandingly, saying she had matters to attend to, but would leave her Vice President and executives to continue at the cocktail party.

Jared Langley approached with a meaningful smile and remarked, "That woman, from the moment she stepped into this venue, fell into your infallible scheme. Mr. Shaw, you're so adorable, who could have guessed?"

Summer responded with a gentle smile, "If you couldn't see that, then the person who precisely planned her arrival must impress you even more. President Langley wasted those eyes."

Jared didn't get angry but sighed instead, "Indeed, you secretly planned to marry off my 'daughter' to someone else, yet still felt entitled to my kindness."

Summer chuckled lightly, "President Langley doesn't reflect on his own ability but blames us at Aetherflame for cheating him. Could it be he can't handle losing?"

Jared didn't retort, but instead laughed quietly.

Juliana went to the washroom, and just as she finished drying her hands, she saw Evan standing behind her.

"What do you want?"

She turned around, hands clutching the edge of the sink.

Evan laughed coldly, "I thought you were afraid of nothing."

Juliana raised her head, "You're wrong. I fear you because I have no confidence in your character. With the disparity in gender strength, if it comes to a physical confrontation, I'm not your match."

Evan nodded, "Oh, so you fear pain."

Juliana sneered, "Because you've never treated me as a person, you don't know that after being toyed with by you for four years, I felt pain, and even less do you realize, those wounds you left on me once made me wish I were dead..."

At this point, frost already spread across Juliana's face.

"I'm human, you're not. That's why we're not meant to be together."

Evan was pierced by her words, and the smile disappeared from his face.

"I never toyed with you. When I married you, I intended for us to be together forever. I was serious about loving you."

Juliana felt nauseated hearing his words.

"If stopping me is on behalf of your stepsister, just say what you want directly. Don't disgust me with these fake sentiments."

Evan finally reached his limit, and he cornered Juliana against the sink.

"Juliana, I swear to God, I've never touched Stella, and my relations with Yvonne were for... "

A hint of unspeakable bitterness crossed his face.

"...one day, you'll understand my intentions."

However, Juliana replied, "The fact that you hurt me repeatedly for Stella, is it true or not? The scars on me, which one wasn't left by you? These wounds aren't on you, so how can you think, upon realizing your intentions, I would forgive you?"

Evan was rendered speechless by her question, feeling a dense, overwhelming pain, each wave more piercing than the last.

After a long while, he managed to speak again, "Then tell me, what must I do to untie the knot in your heart?"

Chapter 126: His Gaze Was Fixed on Her Feet

Juliana did not feel soft-hearted at his forbearance and painful appearance.

"Don't think that just because you got rid of Stella for me, you'll gain my favor. Evan, I gave you a chance before and you didn't want it. Now you put on this face—it's laughable!"

After speaking, she tried to push him away.

However, she couldn't move him.

Juliana knew that after a few days of being subdued, this person was back to his old tricks.

"Move, or I'll stab you with snake venom again!"

Evan braced his hands against the edge of the sink, not giving her any opportunity to escape.

"I've prepared all kinds of anti-venom serums. Do you think I'd fall for the same trick twice?"

Juliana could only regret that there were few people using the restroom at this time; otherwise, this man might have had some scruples.

Seeing her struggle until her face turned red, Evan didn't want to pressure her too much and said, "Juliana, give me a feasible plan, I'll do it, and afterwards, you can consider whether to give me a chance to ease our relationship."

"Sure, bring my grandfather back to life."

Evan's body suddenly stiffened, pain he couldn't argue against swirling in his eyes. Just as he was about to speak, a man's relaxed and magnetic voice came from behind, "Vice President Grant, since your demotion, you seem quite leisurely."

Evan turned his head, only to see Elias Langley in a well-tailored dark suit, looking at them with a faint, mocking smile.

Juliana took advantage of his distraction, pushed him away without a moment's hesitation, and quickly left the restroom.

Elias Langley's tall figure blocked her escape.

The two men locked eyes, and the restroom fell into a dead silence.

Finally, Elias broke the silence, his voice laced with undisguised sarcasm.

"President Grant, since you've decided to let go, you should do it gracefully like a real man."

Evan glanced at the ring on Elias's left ring finger and retorted, "A man wearing a wedding ring, so eager to intervene for someone else's wife—how is that any manlier? Does the President's wife know you're so helpful?"

Elias wasn't angered by the remark; instead, a confident smirk appeared on his lips, "You and I are different; you're not worthy of comparison."

After saying that, he gave the other man no chance to retaliate—he turned crisply on his heel and strode quickly in the direction Juliana had left.

After returning to the party, Juliana greeted Summer Shaw briefly before leaving early.

Feeling unsettled and worried that Evan's ghost would linger around, she walked quickly.

Arriving at the parking garage via the elevator, as she was about to reach her car, she heard footsteps behind her.

Thinking it was that madman following her, she tripped over her own feet and fell forward.

Luckily, Elias Langley was quick to grab her before she hit the ground.

Seeing it was him, Juliana's anger flared up even more.

"Are you a cat, sneaking up behind people without making a sound?"

"If I were a cat, and started talking, you'd be scared to death anyway."

Elias calmly steadied her before gentlemanly letting her go.

However, his gaze remained fixed on her feet.

"What are you looking at?" Juliana asked, lowering her head as well.

She had chosen pants for today's signing ceremony.

From the hem of her pants, a pair of small black high heels poked out.

"Not all heights need heels to support them. Actually, being five centimeters shorter suits your impressively proportioned figure better."

Was he suggesting she had a poor figure?

Juliana recalled waking up that morning wearing his shirt.

Feeling embarrassed, she hadn't asked him how it got changed.

Now he was mocking her figure, meaning he'd... seen it?!

Juliana got angry and kicked at him.

Elias bent down, caught her heel, and held it gently, not daring to use force.

"Why is it that you have balance when kicking me but not when walking? Are you deliberately trying to get my attention?"

Juliana got even more annoyed and was about to pull her foot back when she saw Elias's face turn cold in an instant.

Before she could react, he let go of her foot with one hand and wrapped the other around her waist.

In that swift moment of turning, a steel pipe swung past Elias's shoulder and crashed to the floor with a thud.

A group of thugs quickly surrounded them.

The previously gentle and refined man now exuded a chilling aura.

"Who sent you?" Elias asked.

One thug replied with a smirk, "Your dad," and the others rushed forward.

However, even with Juliana in his arms, restricting his movements, Elias only needed a few punches to knock all the thugs down.

He pressed his polished shoe against the face of the thug who had spoken, slowly applying pressure.

Unable to bear it, the thug quickly said, "Someone hired us to give the woman in the photo a beating."

As he spoke, he clumsily pulled out his phone to show Elias.

It was a candid photo of Juliana, taken in the garden of Platinum Bay.

In the photo, Juliana's expression had no trace of heaviness or gloom, only the tenderness and innocence of a new bride.

It was clear the photo was taken years ago, and the photographer could only have been Evan.

However, Juliana's first suspicion was Stella.

Stella must have copied her photo secretly on Evan's phone.

"Who is behind this? How do you contact them?"

Elias, not noticing Juliana's distraction, focused all his attention on the interrogation.

"We don't know the client's identity; we just follow the rules and take jobs. All contact is virtual, and after completion, we go to the designated place to collect payment; there's no face-to-face interaction throughout," the thug replied, dejectedly.

Just then, Quinn Shepherd drove up, stopping beside them.

Elias turned to him, "You came just in time."

Quinn got out of the car, looking exceptionally apologetic, and whispered, "I only wanted to give you two some more alone time. Who could have guessed more lamp posts would show up."

Leaving Quinn to clean up the mess, Elias confiscated the thug's phone and drove Juliana away.

Watching the defeated thugs in the rearview mirror, Juliana suddenly realized Yvonne Quinn had placed the dagger back in Stella's hands.

...

Meanwhile, in the hotel room.

Stella had just ended a call, nearly throwing the phone away in anger.

"Can't even discipline a person properly, a bunch of useless bums, deserved..."

Before she could finish, a bruise pulled at her mouth, making her inhale sharply from the pain.

Actually, the injuries on her face were minor; her body was covered in bruises with barely any unblemished skin.

The worst part was even her bra had been torn by Yvonne's "close friends."

She and Yvonne both leaned against one end of the bed.

Yvonne was tired from hitting.

She was unable to stand up due to the beating.

"You believe everything she says? We've known each other for three years; if I had a divided heart, why would I give up such a good man like Evan to you? Besides, you have leverage over me, what reason do I have to invite trouble?"

Yvonne waved her hand, "Don't talk about nonsense. Evan is handsome and rich; I don't believe you're not tempted by him. What do you really want by pushing us together?"

Stella blinked; now that Yvonne believed she was making matches for them, it made things easier.

"I just want to stay by my brother's side, but Juliana can't tolerate me."

Yvonne gave a contemptuous smile, "Stop pretending to be noble. You let me marry Evan just to get some benefits while I'm inconvenient. Your way of doing things is no different from a concubine bringing a dowry from ancient times."

Stella said, "My family background isn't as good as yours, nor is my appearance, but at least I have self-awareness. You should know I'm guessing right."

Yvonne was silent, as if contemplating.

Stella snorted, "You listen to her slander me, but she sneaks around with Evan again. She's using you as a stepping stone while pretending she genuinely cares about you, huh!"

Yvonne made up her mind and punched the spring mattress.

"Playing me dirty, I have ways to make her life worse than death. Destroying a woman is my specialty."

Saying this, she pulled out her phone to make a call...

In the car.

Juliana sat in the passenger seat, sneaking glances at Elias several times.

Though she owed him for the trouble today, she couldn't bring herself to say the words "thank you."

Elias waited until she'd peeked at him numerous times before leisurely saying, "No need to thank me."

Juliana raised an eyebrow, not believing he could be so kind-hearted.

"As long as you give me two..."

Before Elias could finish his sentence, Juliana's phone rang.

Chapter 127: The Lady Has Been Found

It was Rosalind Linton calling.

Juliana answered.

Rosalind sounded a bit anxious on the phone.

"What should we do? Juliana. I just met with Aidan, and accidentally we were seen by Mrs. Langley. Now she might already suspect that Aidan's amnesia is fake."

Juliana instinctively glanced at Elias Langley.

She quietly turned down the volume on her phone even more.

"Didn't I remind you? How did this happen?"

Rosalind was crying on the other end, "I missed him too much."

Juliana couldn't talk conveniently, "Don't worry yet, I'll come find you later."

She hung up and looked at Elias Langley.

The man was driving calmly, seemingly unaware of the contents of her phone call.

"Earlier, you said... what do you want me to give you?" asked Juliana.

Elias was about to speak when his phone rang, it was Quinn Shepherd calling.

He switched on the Bluetooth.

"Boss, we've found your wife."

Elias was momentarily stunned.

Quinn continued, "Earlier, someone went to Hospital 547 to inquire about DNA sample match results, and the staff got cautious, asking for the exact day. It just so happened that it was the day your wife came for a blood test, and she was the only one. She's been detained."

"Alright, I got it."

Elias calmly hung up the phone.

The car slowly stopped by the roadside.

Juliana realized he might have something important to do, quickly understanding and said, "I'll get out here then."

Elias, however, leisurely took a bill out of his wallet, "Get me a bottle of water."

Juliana was stunned for a second.

The man raised his chin slightly, "Can't do shopping?"

Juliana frowned, "Ordering me around?"

Elias nodded with a smile.

Thinking she had overthought, Juliana took the money from his hand and got out of the car.

It wasn't until her silhouette disappeared at the entrance of the supermarket that Elias took out a pack of cigarettes...

Juliana spent ten-something minutes in the supermarket, and when she came out, the sky was covered with dark clouds.

Elias just happened to finish a cigarette while leaning on the car's hood.

Seeing her walking over, he put out the cigarette butt and tossed it into a nearby trash bin.

Juliana handed the water over to him, and Elias took it, intentionally glancing at the brand.

"One yuan per bottle?"

Juliana nodded.

"So where's the rest of the money?"

Juliana lifted the large bag in her hand to show him, "Do I get no money for my errands?"

The remaining 99 yuan had become her snacks.

Elias had been teasing her all along, and now his smile was even more apparent.

After so many encounters, this was the first time Juliana saw him genuinely smile.

It was... quite attractive.

Elias turned to walk to the driver's seat, and Juliana quickly followed into the passenger's seat.

Whether it was her imagination or not, after taking the call, every look Elias gave her seemed profound.

"Juliana," this was arguably the first time Elias called her by her full name, "Something urgent has come up, I need to rush over now."

Juliana instinctively looked out the windshield at the sky and turned to him in disbelief.

That gaze clearly meant: Why didn't you say so earlier, it's about to rain.

In just a few seconds, Juliana's expression returned to normal, "My car's still parked at the event's parking lot, since we just left, anyway, why don't you drop me off on the way back."

Elias buckled his seatbelt, "Give me your car keys, I'll have someone drive it over for you, just let me know where it's parked."

Juliana shot him a glance, didn't hand over her car keys, and opened the door with a smile.

"Thanks for today's help."

Suddenly, she became much more formal.

Elias accepted her thanks with ease.

"Things with the Grant family are complicated, Isaac Grant isn't as easy to deal with as his brother might think, try to avoid meeting Evan Grant..."

Juliana interrupted him, "Does Mr. Langley always take such an interest in other people's private affairs?"

Elias did not respond to her question, turned his face, and started the car.

The sky began to rain.

Juliana cursed "jerk," found a place to shelter from the rain, and used her phone to call for a car.

Returning to Celestial Vista, as she opened the door, Rosalind frowned.

"Why are your clothes wet?"

Juliana put down a bag of snacks, "Just got a bit wet getting in and out, it's fine. What happened with you and Adrian?"

Was it just a bit of rain?

It was pouring outside.

Rosalind still had lingering fear from what happened at the mall, so she didn't pay further attention to why Juliana got wet.

"Aidan wanted to know what your grandfather said on his deathbed. During the funeral days, Jared Langley was also there, so my son and I couldn't talk properly, and so today..."

She cautiously glanced at Juliana's face.

"...We were already being very careful, thinking that meeting at the mall with a lot of people would provide good cover, but ended up running into Mrs. Langley. Now we're uncertain if she recognized us or not."

Juliana frowned, "What do you mean by uncertain?"

Rosalind said, "At most, she only saw our backs."

For someone familiar, even seeing your back can be serious.

Juliana pondered for a while, then went to the window to call Adrian, "How is the situation?"

On the other end, Adrian spoke with a helpless tone, "I had people delete the mall's surveillance and nearby ones, she shouldn't be able to determine whether the back she saw was mine or Jared's."

The two brothers were almost the same height and body shape, taking after their father.

Juliana lowered her gaze, "Why not just come clean to your mom, that way you two can meet openly in the future."

Adrian anxiously retorted, "No way, you don't understand what kind of tough character Mrs. Langley is, all these years Victor Langley hasn't had any scandals, do you think it's because he doesn't want any? No, it's because every woman he's ever been with was quietly dealt with by Mrs. Langley."

"And yet you still allowed your mom to see you when she wanted to?"

Adrian fell silent.

Juliana, "The path you chose yourself, you must abandon what needs to be abandoned. Your mom will live well without you. Not being connected will be better for both of you, and for me."

She hung up and looked at Rosalind with unfeeling eyes.

"And now you blame me for not telling you?"

Rosalind's eyes reddened, holding her hand, "Juliana, please, as Auntie Linton, I ask you, help Aidan this once, I won't see him again after this."

"I really can't help."

Juliana removed her hand.

At that moment, her phone rang, the screen showed Jared Langley's number...

Elias drove to Hospital 547, only to find a woman looking about fifty in the director's office.

"Boss," Quinn whispered, "She's here asking on behalf of her adopted daughter, saying they've lived in Crestfall all these years."

Over a thousand kilometers away, that far?

Before Elias could utter a word, the woman straightforwardly asked, "Are you the extra relative?"

Elias frowned.

Quinn quickly explained, "It's just a name, the girl they adopted is named Extra."

Clearly, a case of gender preference.

Elias unclenched and relaxed his furrowed brows.

"When did you adopt her?" he asked.

The woman said, "Fourteen years ago."

The timeline matches.

Elias, "Why not look for her all these years?"

"She was just twelve then, what could she make sense of? My husband asked her things, and she couldn't clarify." The woman briskly continued, "Our village is isolated, a landline only came through ten years ago."

Elias's face gave nothing away, "How did she get to your place?"

The woman didn't need to think before answering, "Back then, my husband was working in Arlan City, she fell into the water and was rescued. Seeing that no one wanted her, feeling sorry, he took her back to our home."

Elias, "Why didn't she come personally?"

The woman said, "A month ago, she died of illness, and remembering that she had this final wish, I came to inquire."

The office fell silent instantly.

Chapter 128: What Is the Relationship Between Juliana Jacobs and Elias Langley?

For some reason, Elias felt no sadness in his heart.

He slightly raised his sword-like eyebrows, "You're sick, yet you still came here specifically to draw blood for a DNA test?"

The village woman hurriedly replied, "She used to work here. Not long after having her blood drawn, she fell ill, couldn't bear it alone, and returned to her hometown, only to die before finding out the cause of her illness."

As she spoke, she took out a stack of receipts.

"We've been supporting Dorian Lowell for 14 years. We've provided her food and clothing. Later, when she was ill and hospitalized, our family spent quite a bit of money. These are all the medical expenses from the village clinic. You should reimburse these expenses for the past years."

Elias didn't take the receipts from her hand.

Quinn stepped forward and said, "Rest assured, once we clarify everything, you'll get what you're owed, not a penny less."

The village woman became anxious, "The person is dead, how can you clarify? I'm telling you, to take her ashes away, you also need to pay."

Quinn saw through her greedy face and said half-warning, "Whether what you said is true or not, we need to verify. If your daughter is indeed the person we're looking for, you'll get what you're owed. But if you're deceiving us... you'll have to bear the consequences."

"It's all true, really." The village woman shut her mouth.

...

Juliana learned that Mrs. Langley would visit a beauty center at The Meridian Plaza at a fixed time.

Just so happened, Jared asked her out.

So she set the meeting place at a café next to the beauty center.

She even reserved a table in advance.

At 2 PM, Jared arrived first and messaged her.

Juliana stood in a glass corridor on the fourth floor, looking down at Jared, who sat with his back to the beauty center, and quickly replied, "I'll be there in ten minutes."

Jared closed the chat window and opened a trading software to check stocks.

Adrian felt a little nervous, "Are you sure there's nothing that can go wrong?"

Juliana remained expressionless, "Not sure."

Adrian, "..."

A few minutes later, Mrs. Langley, surrounded by several assistants and bodyguards, came up from the parking lot.

Just as she approached the beauty salon entrance, an assistant's eyes lit up and pointed towards the café.

"Madam, isn't that the Young Master?"

Mrs. Langley looked in the direction her assistant pointed, and it seemed to be her son.

She changed direction to head towards the café first.

Just then, a slender woman in high heels entered the café, heading straight for Jared.

Mrs. Langley paused in her steps.

The woman, in her forties, came and sat beside Jared.

"Have you been waiting for me long?"

Her voice was rather shrill.

Jared quickly turned his face, coldly saying, "You've mistaken me for someone else."

The woman didn't mind, leaning towards him, quietly saying, "If you dare to stand up, I'll scream harassment."

Jared, "..."

Over there, as Mrs. Langley saw them sitting close, her face turned sour.

"Isn't this the same woman we saw yesterday?"

An assistant took out a phone, snapped a photo of the woman's back, and compared two images using professional software.

"It's... it's the same one."

The software showed a 96% similarity.

Upstairs, Juliana slightly curved her lips.

This actress was specifically chosen from a theater, and even the decoration of her back was referenced with professional comparison software.

As the assistant's voice fell, Mrs. Langley's chest heaved with anger.

"So, the one with that woman yesterday was Jared, not that illegitimate child?"

The assistant replied cautiously, "Could it be that the Young Master actually likes older women and hasn't dared to date because he's afraid you wouldn't approve?"

Mrs. Langley stomped her foot angrily, "Who is this woman? I want her identity, how come no one has found it yet?"

Seeing this, Juliana's smile faded. She said to Adrian, "Let's split up. You go upstairs to watch a movie before leaving."

"Not going to continue watching?"

Adrian still wanted to see more, but Juliana was heading toward the vertical elevator.

Back there, Jared received a phone call from his mother, his face darkening, eyes seemingly wanting to devour the woman opposite.

"Who told you to come?"

The woman smiled, stood up, "If you don't want to chat, never mind, I'm leaving."

Five minutes of performance, 2000 bucks fee, the woman left in high spirits.

Juliana reached the parking lot and was about to open the car door when Jared slammed his hand on it.

Juliana turned her gaze to face his slightly angry expression and smiled, "Is President Langley mad because I stood you up?"

Surprisingly, Jared didn't lash out at her, but a cool chill emerged on his refined face.

"Playing tricks with me, are you ready to handle what's coming?"

Juliana raised her brows, "So, ruining my reputation wasn't President Langley's worst move."

Jared squinted slightly, a wave of irritation washing over him.

He loosened his tie.

"So you didn't reject my advances, just looking for a chance for revenge?"

Juliana nodded without hesitation, "It's an honor that President Langley appreciates Aetherflame's influence, otherwise I wouldn't have had the chance to play you for a fool, but..."

She deliberately paused.

"Just having your mom bicker with you is way too small compared to the harm you did to me. But I'm generous, consider us even. If President Langley wishes to cooperate with Aetherflame in the future, you can go through proper channels."

With that, she went to open the car door again.

This time, Jared loosened his grip.

"Juliana, don't regret this!"

Jared turned and walked away, his back resolute.

Juliana felt very calm inside.

People who don't matter can't stir waves.

...

The crisis of Adrian and his mother was considered resolved.

Back at Aetherflame Dynamics, just about to change into work clothes, Summer Shaw hooked her arm around hers mysteriously, "Still want to find your parents?"

Juliana thought for two seconds, "Not really."

Summer, "..."

"But what if your parents are also looking for you but don't know there's such a DNA search platform?"

Juliana sat on the sofa, "Do you think that's possible?"

After so long without contact, it proved they were not really concerned about losing a daughter once.

If they're not concerned, why should she care about them?

"Juliana," Summer's tone grew heavier, "What if... just if, they are no longer in this world? Wouldn't it be better to find out first before deciding whether to acknowledge them?"

An hour later, Summer parked the car below a newly opened psychology clinic.

She looked at the brand-new sign and said, "Although this Dr. Monroe is young, he's already a leading authority in psychology. If it weren't for his chain of therapy centers opening, him personally visiting for a few days, we wouldn't have had a chance to book him."

Juliana took a deep breath, "Being an authority doesn't guarantee solving all problems."

Summer hooked her arm, "Come on, your appointment time is here. What if after hypnosis, you can recall past events?"

Across the street, unnoticed by them, two brown sedans silently slid into parking spots.

The man in the front car, eyes fixed on Juliana, reported into his phone, "Isaac, confirmed, it's Juliana herself, on Goldengrove Road here."

On the other end of the line, Isaac Grant's sinister voice came through, "Elias's flight leaves Kenton at eight tonight, make sure they're on Airport Road by six."

"Understood."

Isaac hung up, his cold gaze turning to Stella Windsor sitting opposite.

"You're sure Evan's neglect of Juliana is to drive her to Elias, to bring him into his camp?"

The bruise on Stella's mouth was barely visible now, but her body hadn't fully recovered, so she wore long sleeves and pants today.

"There's no benefit in lying to you. If Juliana isn't removed, you'll never touch the Grant family's fortune."

Isaac slapped the table, "Do you even know what kind of person Elias is? If you anger him, you can't handle the consequences."

Stella stood up, "I'll bet you that Juliana has long been entangled with Elias. If you don't act, Evan Grant is going to overturn the situation."

However, this time Isaac just gave her a glance.

"Don't provoke me. We'll soon know what the relationship between Juliana and Elias is, but if I find out you're trying to use me to kill again..."

Isaac leaned back in his chair.

"...you know the consequences."

Chapter 129: Count to One Hundred and I'll Come Find You

There must be something wrong with them.

Juliana must die.

Stella secretly clenched her fists, suppressing the surging emotions.

...

Inside the psychological clinic.

Juliana lay on the treatment chair, taking deep breaths.

Dr. Monroe warmly said, "Miss Jacobs, even though you've signed the necessary consent forms, I still need to remind you again. Hypnotherapy involves deep exploration of your subconscious, but the process can have serious side effects. Are you sure you want to continue?"

Juliana nodded.

"Ok, then please relax with me..."

Juliana slowly closed her eyes, and soon beads of sweat started to form on her forehead.

She gripped the armrests tightly, her body trembled, and her breathing gradually became rapid and difficult.

In the darkness of her consciousness, violent shakings accompanied by a woman's screams pierced her nerves.

Blurred images frequently flashed back, a glaring red light suddenly emerged, followed by a tearing headache and an almost suffocating sense of pressure.

"No..."

Juliana abruptly opened her eyes, a violent dizziness and nausea surged up, and she slid off the treatment chair, kneeling on the ground and vomiting intensely.

After she calmed down, Dr. Monroe helped her back into the treatment chair.

Then he called in Summer Shaw, who had been waiting outside.

Seeing her near-exhausted appearance, Summer felt heartbroken and quickly gave her some water.

"When you lost consciousness just now, what was the last thing you heard, saw, or felt?" Dr. Monroe asked.

Juliana dared not recall, as thinking about it seemed to make her brain explode, and she shook her head vigorously.

"Nothing, nothing at all."

Dr. Monroe looked a bit disappointed, "We were trying to approach your core memories, but the emotional intensity they contained exceeded the limits your current psychological defense system could bear. So I suggest pausing the hypnotherapy, we can start from..."

Dr. Monroe hadn't finished when Juliana waved her hand.

"Maybe forgetting is a good thing, I won't seek it, neither my memories nor my parents."

This time, Summer Shaw wholeheartedly agreed.

In fact, all these years, Juliana had been doing fine on her own without them.

Without the warmth of a home, she could warm herself, there was no need to make herself so miserable.

After a while of resting, Juliana, with Summer's help, left the psychological clinic.

In the passenger seat, the headache and palpitations from hypnotherapy had not subsided. She leaned back and closed her eyes to rest.

"Don't go to the office today, go back and rest for a couple of days."

Summer said while starting the car.

"It's fine, I'll be okay after a nap."

Juliana adjusted her sitting position and curled up.

As the car just passed an intersection, a brown sedan suddenly swerved in from the side, and Summer quickly turned the steering wheel to change lanes.

Juliana opened her eyes alertly and looked at the brown sedan.

"Can you shake him off?" Juliana asked.

Summer held the steering wheel tightly, "There's quite some traffic, it won't be easy."

Juliana somewhat regretted it. Because she was going for therapy today, she went in Summer's car.

"No matter what, don't leave the city."

Juliana instinctively grasped the car's roof handle, her pale face breaking out in a cold sweat again. She took out her phone to call the police.

However, that car followed them closely, repeatedly squeezing their driving space, forcing Summer's car onto the overpass.

"It's not working," Summer said, her hands trembling on the steering wheel, "If we go any further, we'll be on the airport expressway."

As soon as she finished, the car that had swerved at them earlier suddenly accelerated and rammed them from behind.

Summer increased the speed, successfully widening the distance between them and the other car.

But the car had also entered the airport expressway.

Juliana, with a tense face, stared at the rearview mirror, as the car once again stuck to them like a ghost.

What on earth did they want?

At this moment, a business vehicle suddenly rushed out from the side ramp.

Summer couldn't dodge in time; the massive impact sent their car spinning out of control, the whole world whirling in chaos.

During the violent shaking, fragments of memory shattered and surged in Juliana's mind like glass.

In just two seconds, she lost consciousness, and everything came to a halt.

Their car rolled over and crashed on the roadside, plunging into silence.

"Isaac, it's done," the driver said excitedly after checking.

"Get out of here quickly, make sure they can't find you or trace back to me."

"Yes."

Then the two vehicles sped away from the scene, disappearing without a trace.

Not far away, a Red Flag L5 smoothly headed toward the airport.

The driver noticed the vehicle overturned on the roadside ahead, the undercarriage facing up, double flashes still flickering rapidly.

He slowed down slightly and asked, "It looks like there's been an accident up ahead. Should we assist?"

Quinn Shepherd raised his wrist, about to check the time to decide, but then he heard Elias Langley in the back seat speak sternly, "Stop."

The car pulled over onto the emergency lane.

Quinn Shepherd was the first to jump out of the car, quickly running towards the overturned vehicle.

Upon seeing the situation inside the car, his pupils tightened immediately, and he bent down to reach into the deformed cabin, pulling the semi-conscious Summer out.

"Boss, Juliana's in the passenger seat," he called out urgently.

Elias Langley frowned, about to step forward, but the driver quickly moved ahead, deftly prying open the dented car door by hand, carefully rescuing the unconscious Juliana, and gently laying her on the roadside.

"She's breathing, but her head was hit; it's hard to say how bad it is," the driver said after checking.

Even though Summer was trembling uncontrollably, she still staggered over to Juliana.

"Juliana, Juliana..."

She patted Juliana's face, but Juliana didn't respond.

If they hadn't gone to the psychological clinic, Juliana's condition might not have been this dire.

She grabbed Elias Langley's trouser leg, "Please save her, save her."

Elias Langley gazed at the person on the ground without speaking immediately.

Quinn Shepherd stood by, rationally saying, "Boss, the ambulance is on its way, and our flight is about to take off. We only preset the meeting time and place with that lady; she doesn't have a phone, and if we miss it..."

Summer got anxious upon hearing this, "Even when the ambulance gets here it'll take at least ten more minutes, isn't using your car faster?"

Elias Langley lowered himself into a half-squat, reaching out to feel Juliana's pulse.

At this point, fragments of memories kept crashing into Juliana, dragging her deeper, but when someone firmly took hold of her wrist, she stopped falling, and the world suddenly turned bright.

"Count to one hundred, and I'll come find you when you reach one hundred."

The voice was familiar, but it didn't match any of the faces in her mind.

Juliana tried hard to see the person's appearance, but all she could see was the hand firmly gripping hers and a clean, crisp white shirt cuff.

Just then, that hand suddenly let go.

After checking Juliana's pulse, Elias Langley stood up.

Juliana suddenly struggled to regain a hint of consciousness, returned to reality, and saw that the person in front of her was him.

She used all her strength to lift her weak wrist, trying to grasp his departing hand, and called out, "Manager."

Chapter 130: The Quinn Family's Good News Is Coming Soon

The light wasn't bright, and the surroundings were very noisy.

Even Elias Langley didn't notice her action.

Juliana Jacobs' slightly raised hand grasped nothing, and as the last thread of consciousness slipped away, she fell into darkness once more.

"In her current condition, it's better to wait for the ambulance to move her."

"But..."

Elias Langley didn't wait for Summer Shaw to say more, pulled his pant leg free, left the driver to help deal with the situation, and left with Quinn Shepherd.

Over there, Isaac Grant received a report from the scene and lifted his hand to slap Stella Windsor.

"Didn't you say they had an affair? And what did Elias Langley do? Just played the good guy bystander? You were trying to use me as a pawn to clear the path for yourself, weren't you? I warned you, are you tired of living?"

Stella Windsor lost hearing in one ear, while the other was filled with a buzzing sound, preventing her from hearing what Isaac Grant was saying.

Fearful of being hit, she became terrified.

"They must be pretending! Just like Evan Grant, deliberately staying away from Juliana to fool you."

But Isaac Grant didn't listen to her defense at all.

"Because of you, I've lost two men," he kicked over a chair beside him in a fury and grabbed her hair, "you're a curse! If it weren't for the usefulness of using you against George Grant, I'd have killed you already!"

After speaking, unable to contain his anger, he picked up a chair and smashed it towards her.

The wooden chair shattered on Stella Windsor's back, the agony from both old and new injuries made her scream terribly...

...

Juliana Jacobs woke up in the hospital, it was already the second day.

Summer Shaw was having breakfast, and when she saw Juliana awake, she excitedly pressed the call button.

In fact, Juliana only had some scrapes, but for safety's sake, she needed to be under observation for a day.

So, Caleb Shaw arranged for the two of them to stay in a VIP double room at Mercy Hospital.

"How are you feeling, does your head hurt, does your body hurt?"

Summer Shaw leaned on her bed, eager to hear her speak.

If she could speak, she was normal.

Juliana Jacobs, wearing an oxygen mask, opened her mouth but made no sound before Caleb Shaw walked in.

Seeing this, Caleb Shaw yelled with years of accumulated resentment, "My ancestor!"

Summer Shaw was stunned, looked at him.

"You're pressing her oxygen tube!" Caleb Shaw said.

Only then did Summer Shaw get off Juliana's bed.

Juliana removed the oxygen mask herself, and her pale face showed a trace of color as she breathed fresh air.

"No wonder they say 'beware of fire, theft, and best friends', luckily I'm not a dying patient."

Summer Shaw, seeing her joking, figured she was okay, and immediately shook her fist, "Say that again, and I'll hit you."

Unable to stand it, Caleb Shaw pushed her back to her own bed and then conducted a few checks on Juliana.

"Currently, there's no sign of internal bleeding, just a more serious injury on your foot, but if you rest, you'll recover in at most half a month."

Juliana nodded, "I called the police when the incident happened yesterday, did they come later?"

Caleb Shaw's complexion darkened for a moment, "The two cars that sandwiched you were using false plates, and we haven't caught anyone yet."

Which means there isn't any clue to pursue.

Juliana was silent.

Caleb Shaw reassured her, "You actually know who it is. Don't worry, this matter won't end just like that."

Juliana didn't understand what he meant but still said, "Thank you, Dr. Shaw."

Caleb Shaw smiled sheepishly, "It's my honor that you'd still trust me."

After giving a few more instructions, he left to attend to other patients.

As soon as the door closed, Summer Shaw punched the pillow.

"Elias Langley isn't a good person either. I begged him to take you, but he rushed off to catch a flight, leaving you to the ambulance."

Juliana was surprised, "He was at the scene?"

Summer Shaw thought about it, "It seemed like he was just passing by. But even if he was passing by and saw you unconscious, he should have paused any important matters, right?"

After the crash, Juliana couldn't remember much.

But hearing Summer Shaw describe what happened back then, she remained very calm.

"The relationship is thin, the fact that he called an ambulance for us was already good."

After saying this, she turned her gaze away, hiding a very faint sense of loss.

Suddenly Summer Shaw thought of something and laughed, "Quentin Quinn has called Aetherflame several times wanting you to go to his birthday banquet, your foot injury gives you a good reason to decline."

Hearing this, Juliana's eyes deepened...

Meanwhile, in a remote mountain village in Crestfall.

After getting off the plane, Elias Langley transferred to a helicopter and only arrived here by dawn.

In front of Dorian Lowell's tombstone, a village woman took out a faded red string, with a faded shell threaded on it.

"This is what she was wearing on her hand when she was found, this was the only token, nothing else."

Quinn Shepherd took it and handed it to Elias Langley.

Elias Langley examined it closely; it was very similar to the one he had once made.

In a daze, a deep memory seemed to resurface, as if hearing her call him "Guan Guan" again...

Elias Langley's face suddenly became heavy.

"Are you sure the person buried here is the daughter you adopted?" Quinn Shepherd asked.

The village woman nodded quickly, "Absolutely."

Quinn Shepherd waved a hand, "Then dig it up."

The village woman quickly stopped them, "Why dig her up when she's already dead."

Quinn Shepherd, "Without digging her up for identification, how do we know if she's the one we're looking for?"

The village woman was anxious, "How can you do an identification after cremation? Are you trying to avoid paying?"

...

At the entrance of The Gilded Cage.

Isaac Grant had just opened the car door and before his foot touched the ground, a young man on a ghost fire motorbike screeched to a stop in front of him.

"What the..."

Before he could finish his question, the young man suddenly shoved him back into the car.

Then, with a powerful swing of a wrench in his hand, struck brutally and precisely on Isaac's left and right knees.

Everything happened in the blink of an eye.

The bodyguards didn't even react before the young man jumped back onto the motorbike, the engine roared as he sped away.

Isaac Grant's face was twisted with pain as he cursed, "You bunch of useless people, useless! Take me to the hospital quickly."

...

Juliana Jacobs had stayed at the hospital for two days.

Aside from her foot injury, she was generally fine.

When Summer Shaw walked into her ward, she was already grumbling.

Upon inquiry, it turned out that the Quinn family had sent people to Aetherflame Dynamics to fetch Juliana, claiming they wouldn't leave without her, leaving everyone unsure of how to close the office for the day.

Juliana lowered her gaze, thinking for a few seconds, and then got up from the bed.

"Since I can be discharged, I may as well go take a look."

Summer Shaw was surprised, "Sis, knowing it's a trap, you're still going?"

Juliana's lips curved with a faint, indistinguishable smile, "Can't spoil their fun, can I?"

Summer Shaw seemed to understand.

Immediately, she arranged for two formal dresses to be brought over.

She wasn't comfortable with Juliana going alone, so she planned to go as well.

The venue for Quentin Quinn's birthday banquet was a rented villa, incredibly luxurious inside.

Apart from the hall on the first floor, there were dozens of rooms upstairs.

The entire building resembled a castle.

Juliana Jacobs wore an ankle brace on her right foot, leaning on a cane, and walked in limping.

Summer Shaw accompanied her, whispering curiously as they walked, "How can he rent such an expensive villa on just his retirement salary?"

Juliana didn't reply.

When they approached the hall, they saw Quentin Quinn with his precious daughter, Yvonne Quinn, chatting warmly with a few friends.

Yvonne was wearing a low-cut white dress, looking bright and attractive.

Quentin Quinn appeared to be in an excellent mood.

"Last time was all a misunderstanding. We're all friends here, don't be afraid to say it. President Grant's marriage is basically over..."

As he said this, he smugly gestured around them.

"See this? The entire villa was rented specially for my dear Yvonne by him."

One of his old friends jokingly asked, "So, is there good news coming to the Quinn family?"

Quentin Quinn nodded, beaming with pride, "That's right, President Grant is about to propose to my daughter very soon."

As soon as he finished speaking, his gaze swept over to Juliana not far away, and his expression froze for a moment.