

## **Panicking 181**

### Chapter 181: He Didn't Ask a Single Question

Juliana Jacobs remembered that day when Leona Sheridan caused trouble at the company, Summer Shaw had embarrassed her, and before leaving, Mrs. Langley had indeed left behind a harsh remark.

But she was already the high and mighty Mrs. Langley, would she really ruin her luxurious life over this old grudge?

"Elias Langley definitely doesn't know about this."

Juliana blurted out without a hint of hesitation, never once considering connecting Elias Langley to the suspect.

Evan felt a pang of sourness in his heart, smiled slightly, "What if the killer is someone he must protect?"

Juliana was stumped by his words.

Evan's smile deepened, "Caleb Shaw commissioned me to investigate who harmed Summer Shaw, and I already have a direction. Want to collaborate?"

Juliana handed the evidence bag back to him, "Caleb Shaw is your good friend, since you've been entrusted, you should properly do the job, don't betray his trust in you."

After speaking, she lifted her feet to leave.

Evan obviously didn't expect her to refuse.

The confident smile on his face gradually faded, his gaze following her departing figure, a shadow of darkness flitting through his eyes.

...

Juliana didn't go far, just took out her phone to call Elias Langley.

The phone rang just a few times before it was picked up.

"Did you see earlier?" she asked softly.

"What?"

"The open-air café. I saw your car pass by."

Elias Langley suddenly understood.

Was she calling specifically to explain?

He laughed, "As long as there's no emotional or physical infidelity, you have the right to associate with any opposite sex. If I believed such staged photos, wouldn't I be as foolish as those who get played by him?"

For some reason, Juliana felt very comforted hearing this.

She hesitated for a moment, then softly said, "Then... can I temporarily stay at the Langley Residence for a while?"

If the information Evan provided was correct, then the person who harmed Summer Shaw couldn't be said for sure to be in the Langley Family, but definitely has a connection to it.

She was determined to drag that person out, preferably rip his heart out for Summer.

There was a moment of silence on the other end of the line, which finally ended with just one word, "Okay."

Juliana was stunned.

She had already prepared to explain and even anticipated being questioned.

But in the end, he didn't ask a single additional question.

...

Jared Langley knew she was in a bad mood and didn't contact her all day.

Before returning to Aetherflame, Juliana went to the Langley Residence.

Leona Sheridan was outside playing cards with her friends, hurried home after receiving a call from the butler.

Juliana didn't enter the house, instead, waited in the backyard, drinking tea while admiring the "Black Lily of the Valley."

The pattern on this plant's leaves was identical to the small piece Evan had shown her, but she wasn't sure about the surrounding soil...

Juliana squatted down and was just about to reach out.

"Stay away from my flowers!"

Leona Sheridan was dressed in a dark green cheongsam, her hair gentle and graceful, yet her voice was sharp and completely at odds with her overall demeanor.

Juliana was startled, quickly withdrew her hand, frowned, "What kind of flower is so precious that it can't even be touched?"

Leona Sheridan gave her a disdainful look, "A dog's eyes can't recognize a treasure. Few plants like this can survive in the country, and this is the only one. If it gets damaged, selling you wouldn't be enough to compensate."

Juliana raised an eyebrow, "If it's so precious, why doesn't Mrs. Langley keep it locked in a greenhouse or have someone watch over it?"

Leona Sheridan rolled her eyes, "How do you know I haven't built a greenhouse for it? Now is just the right season for it to grow outdoors, so I had someone move it here in the yard. Everyone in the Langley Family knows this flower is my favorite. Anyone who dares touch it, I'll deal with them."

Juliana had her eyes opened; a flower more precious than a person.

Suddenly, her gaze fell on the lowest leaf.

Because the leaf was dragging on the ground, it was easy to accidentally step on it while walking. And the broken part perfectly matched the piece Evan had.

So he wasn't lying to her.

The perpetrator had contact with someone from the Langley Family.

Juliana's gaze landed lightly but firmly on Mrs. Langley.

"I heard that when Chairman Langley was young, he had many beauties around him, but all were dealt with obediently by Mrs. Langley, because those who weren't didn't survive. I want to learn some tactics from Mrs. Langley on how to keep my man in line in the future."

Leona Sheridan snorted lightly, "You're a divorced woman, it's a miracle any man would want you, let alone come here to learn tactics to control our Jared. I'm telling you, I'm very clear-headed. Don't think you can climb into his bed while his memory is confused. Even if you beg me, I won't agree to you two being together."

Juliana observed her reaction, then coldly laughed, "That's best, I hope you don't change your mind, and discipline your son well."

Leona Sheridan had long been infuriated by her.

"So why did you come to my house? What exactly do you want?"

Juliana's lips curled slightly; she was now about to talk business.

"To cooperate with Jared's treatment, I agreed to come stay for a while."

Leona Sheridan snorted lightly, "What? Can't play the hard-to-get game anymore?"

Juliana said nothing, Leona Sheridan arrogantly chuckled and ordered the butler to fetch her the agreement she had drafted.

"Your best friend was in trouble, so you gave in. If I had known, I should have let her get in trouble sooner."

Juliana's eyes narrowed slightly at her words, her voice tinged with frost, "So this time, Mrs. Langley isn't playing disappearance but direct murder?"

"Ah, spit! Don't talk nonsense, I've never made anyone disappear."

At this moment, the butler handed an agreement to Juliana.

Leona Sheridan said, "Sign it, and I'll grant you a temporary stay at my house. It's also a guarantee to prevent you from clinging to my son like chewed gum in the future."

This was an agreement for her and Jared Langley's "relationship," with extremely harsh conditions.

It required Juliana to unconditionally cooperate with Jared's treatment needs, and to immediately move out of the Langley Residence after Jared regained memory, and never use the relationship to demand any assets.

The most insulting part was the demand to guarantee marriage with another man within a week of leaving, providing proof of marriage, to "completely sever her delusions and restore peace to the Langley Family."

Juliana laughed at the content of the agreement, "How many times has Mrs. Langley used this trick?"

Leona Sheridan's tone became sharper, "For someone with a lowly background, unknown parents, who managed to deceive my son, having you sign this agreement already gives you face. If you want to stay at the Langley Family, hurry up and sign!"

Leona Sheridan looked arrogantly elsewhere.

Earlier, she had refused at every turn, acting all superior, now that Jared hadn't contacted her for a day, she panicked and rushed back to beg her.

Hmph! Without crushing her little self-esteem, there's no way to handle her in the Langley Family from now on.

Chapter 182: What's Wrong with Being a Low-Maintenance Person?

Judging by Leona Sheridan's reaction, it didn't seem like she was the one who attacked Summer Shaw.

Juliana Jacobs was contemplating whether to swallow her pride and sign the agreement to move into the Langley Residence to investigate, when the butler suddenly received a phone call. After whispering a few words to Leona Sheridan, she became somewhat anxious.

"Are you going to sign or not? If not, get out. Who knows, my son might tire of you before he even recovers. By then, if you refuse to leave the Langley Family, I'll have to arrange for someone to send you away."

As she finished speaking, a gentle female voice sounded.

"Is Mrs. Langley entertaining guests?"

Juliana Jacobs looked towards the source of the voice...

Isabelle Sinclair covered her mouth in surprise, saying, "Oh, it's Miss Jacobs."

Juliana Jacobs' gaze fixed on her face for two seconds, then she picked up the pen and signed the agreement.

Isabelle craned her neck to see and asked, "What's this about, Mrs. Langley?"

Leona Sheridan's expression softened considerably, and she sighed, "Isn't it just Jared's confused memory, treating trash as treasure? As his mother, I have to consider his present and also plan for his recovery."

Isabelle nodded, "You are the best mother."

Her words brought a gentle, motherly warmth to Leona Sheridan's eyes.

But when she glanced at Juliana, her gaze turned fierce and domineering once more.

"Do you have a marriage prospect?" she asked sharply.

Isabelle secretly clenched her fingers, waiting for Juliana's answer.

Juliana's expression remained calm, "No."

Isabelle smiled.

It seemed that the brother-in-law was just playing around with her.

She looked at Leona, "Since she doesn't have one, why not arrange one for her, Mrs. Langley?"

Leona instantly grasped the implication in Isabelle's words, smiling as she nodded, "Well, I'm just a helpful person."

Juliana glanced coldly at the two, sneering lightly, "You two have your own mess to deal with, yet you find time to pretend harmony in front of me. Try not to be a laughingstock yourselves before you meddle in others' affairs."

With that, she tossed the pen and turned to leave.

"Is this your attitude after moving into my house? Stand still for me!"

Just as Leona's voice fell, Adrian Langley hurriedly approached.

He seemed to have rushed back from the company.

"What are you doing here?"

With outsiders present, some things couldn't be said directly, so he had to ask ambiguously.

Juliana was about to answer when Leona sharply looked at him, "Shouldn't you be working at the company for our Jared? Why are you back here?"

Adrian bowed his head slightly, "Auntie, I came back to get a document and saw a friend here, just came to say hello."

Leona snorted coldly, "Don't think just because my son is injured now, you can seize the opportunity to take over the company. Humph! The Langley legacy will never be handed over to a bastard."

Juliana couldn't take it anymore and stepped in front of Adrian, "Blackstar Technologies is a joint-stock company, and what position he achieves depends on his ability and the board's decision. Rather than mocking his birth, Mrs. Langley, why not spend a little more time figuring out how to help Jared recover sooner?"

Leona, feeling that she was cursing her son, began trembling in rage.

"Butler! Bring the family rules!"

Juliana and Adrian both furrowed their brows.

Soon, an ebony whip was immediately handed to her.

Leona raised it towards Juliana!

Juliana was about to dodge when a figure swiftly shielded her front.

With a "snap," the whip landed squarely on Adrian's back.

Juliana's pupils contracted.

"Are you stupid! Grab the whip from her, how can you just stand there and let her hit you?"

She said, rushing forward to snatch the whip from Leona's hand.

Leona, used to bullying others and having never faced resistance, was stunned as Juliana suddenly fought back.

After seizing the whip, Juliana swung it fiercely towards the nearby tea table.

Tea splattered everywhere, spilling from the cooled porcelain pot onto Leona's hand, while the table turned into a mess.

Leona screeched, "You rebel! You're rebelling! This is simply..."

Juliana returned to Adrian's side, abruptly cutting off her words.

"Wouldn't it be better to stay out of the way? Those who understand will realize you're in menopause, those who don't might think you're a ghost released from an old haunted estate centuries ago, ready for a museum."

"You, you, you..." Leona was so furious she could barely stand.

Isabelle quickly stepped aside, afraid she might collapse onto her.

"Let's go, we're heading to the hospital."

Juliana grabbed Adrian and left.

Ultimately, the butler supported Leona.

Isabelle turned to the front yard to call Elias Langley.

The phone rang for a long time before it was answered.

"Brother-in-law..." she began, her voice already tinged with tears, "I was almost scared to death."

"What happened?" Elias asked in a low voice.

"It was Miss Jacobs who came to the Langley Residence to provoke Mrs. Langley. She only wanted to discipline that bastard, yet Juliana defended him in every way, even laying hands on Mrs. Langley. Mrs. Langley was so infuriated she nearly fainted. What's worse, Juliana didn't care for anyone else, only supporting that bastard, even personally driving him to the hospital."

Yet after hearing her out, Elias didn't ask which hospital they went to, but instead said, "You're a guest. You'd best not meddle in the Langley affairs, let alone get involved."

Such a blunt warning left Isabelle momentarily speechless.

She immediately realized her eagerness might have made him unhappy.

But she was unwilling to give up, and with a slight shift in tone, she added softly, "Brother-in-law, I wasn't trying to cause discord; I'm just concerned that your deep affection for Miss Jacobs might lead to trouble if she keeps acting so brazenly."

Elias's tone over the phone became more severe.

"Jared's condition is unique, and he can't endure any stimulation. Juliana is now his fiancée, a role everyone recognizes to aid in his treatment. Keep your mouth shut. If Jared faces any issues due to rumors, regardless of how much the Langley Family wants to be in good graces with the Sinclair Family, they won't be kind to you!"

Having said that, Elias ended the call.

Seeing the words "Recording saved" on the phone screen, an unspeakable frustration and anger welled up in Isabelle's chest.

She had intended to use the call to discern his relationship with that woman, then report to her grandfather to give him a wake-up call, but his words were impeccable.

However, the marital union between the Langley and Sinclair families couldn't be broken. At least the Langley Family depended on the Sinclairs, so even if he couldn't always hold on to a title, the person he should marry is her, not letting an outsider become his wife.

This is absolutely unacceptable!

"Juliana Jacobs, let's see how things go!" Isabelle said.

Juliana drove Adrian to the hospital.

After being hit by a whip, Adrian's pale complexion had gradually recovered.

"I'm fine." he said.

But Juliana remained insistent, "We're going to the hospital to leave a record of domestic violence for future use."

Adrian seemed to realize.

"What's the situation with the Sinclair Family?" Juliana asked.

"The Sinclairs of Kingsford?" Adrian thought for a moment, "The family operates in a very low profile. Victor Langley rarely mentions them, so I don't know much. But one thing is strange, the Sinclairs hold an exceptional status in the Langley Family and are treated as honored guests, even my second uncle shows them respect."

"Check it out," Juliana ordered.

When Elias Langley arrived at the hospital, Adrian's injured back had just been treated.

His delicate skin had suffered little over the years, so even without breaking the skin, the red marks it left were ominously evident.

Juliana handed him a shirt, her fingers lightly brushing across his spine, her eyes filled with undisguised concern...

Chapter 183: Elias Langley: "It Went Up Again, Lower It for Me.

Seeing Elias Langley standing at the doorway, he didn't take another step forward.

Quinn Shepherd glanced inside and deliberately asked in a normal tone, "Boss, are we going in?"

The two people in the treatment room turned to look at him simultaneously.

Adrian Langley quickly buttoned up his shirt, stood up, and called out, "Second Uncle."

Only then did Elias Langley leisurely walk in and ask, "Are you okay?"

Adrian Langley took the coat handed to him by Juliana Jacobs, "How strong can Auntie hit? I'm fine."

Elias Langley was noncommittal, "So am I here at a bad time?"

Adrian Langley was taken aback.

Juliana Jacobs avoided looking at him, adjusted Adrian Langley's shirt, and dragged him outside.

"To the office or going home to rest?"

"To the office, going home at this time..."

Juliana Jacobs laughed at his words, "Because of me, you had the courage to face Leona Sheridan, so why are you afraid when you're alone?"

Adrian Langley showed a bitter smile and said softly, "Father said we must respect her."

Juliana Jacobs escorted him to the car, "Although there's no skin broken, you should change the dressing. Do you know where to go?"

Adrian Langley nodded and headed to Celestial Vista to find his mother.

As Juliana Jacobs turned to leave, he grabbed her wrist and whispered, "I know you're staying at the Langley Residence to investigate something, but it shouldn't be Mrs. Langley."

Juliana Jacobs raised an eyebrow.

Adrian Langley said, "I've always been watching her people."

"Go to the company and apologize to your father first."

After saying this, Juliana Jacobs pulled her hand away.

After his car drove away, Juliana Jacobs turned to look at the man standing on the porch of the outpatient department.

Elias Langley's face didn't look well.

Juliana Jacobs approached him and sniffed.

Elias Langley frowned, "What are you doing?"

Juliana Jacobs rested her chin on his arm, "I smell a whiff of jealousy."

Elias Langley almost couldn't keep it together, tucked her under his arm, and took her to his car.

Once the car door closed, Elias Langley pressed her down on his lap, his gaze deep.

Was there any trace of his earlier composure?

"Jealousy?" he repeated quietly, lifting her chin with his finger, "Miss Jacobs has a sharp sense, so what else did you smell, hmm?"

The man's eyes burned intensely, and Juliana Jacobs felt trouble looming, her mind racing with countless excuses.

But before she could find the most fitting one, a punitive kiss descended, silencing all her rebuttals.

As the kiss ended, Elias Langley released her, his breathing warm, and casually took off his coat.

He was about to remove his shirt when Juliana Jacobs stopped him, "What are you doing?"

"Comparing if mine looks better or his."

Juliana Jacobs laughed at his words and helped him put his coat back on.

"Aren't you childish?"

Elias Langley grabbed her hand and said with a steady voice, "Too high, lower it for me."

Juliana Jacobs was momentarily stunned, suddenly recalling his health report, and instinctively glanced downward, confirming her suspicion, her cheeks turning red.

Just as he was about to press her hand down, "Knock, knock, knock!" Quinn Shepherd rapped on the car window.

Juliana Jacobs, like a startled bird, shook off his hand, slid off his lap, and sat by the car door, creating a large gap between them.

Elias Langley sighed, adjusted his clothes, and lowered the window.

"You'd better have something important."

Quinn Shepherd was taken aback by his cold tone and hastily said, "I just saw Mrs. Langley being brought to the hospital by ambulance, with bandages on her arm."

Juliana Jacobs thought to herself: Darn, all because of a spilled pot of cold tea.

Elias Langley showed nothing but disdain, "Ignore her, drive."

...

Mrs. Langley quickly completed the hospital admission process and wrapped her hand like a cocoon, as if it was about to be amputated.

Then she informed Victor Langley's assistant, asking the doctor for a large bottle of glucose. Lying in bed, she waited for her husband to arrive at the hospital to seek "justice" for her.

Her plan seemed sound, but she waited long enough for her blood sugar to rise without seeing a trace of Victor Langley.

Victor Langley only sent an assistant to deliver a message.

"Chairman Langley is aware of this afternoon's incident. He's already scolded the third young master. Madam, please return home after the IV drip."

"And what else?" Leona Sheridan asked.

The assistant looked puzzled.

"About Juliana Jacobs?" Leona Sheridan prompted.

The assistant's face revealed a hint of unease, "Chairman Langley said if you don't ask about Miss Jacobs, it's fine. But if you do, I'm to convey that both Miss Jacobs and Miss Sinclair are guests of the Langley family, and you should be mindful of the family's reputation, so as not to be laughed at by outsiders."

Leona Sheridan, "..."

So, there's no issue with Juliana Jacobs?

Leona Sheridan was stifled by a surge of frustration, rushing to her son's hospital room to complain.

Jared Langley had been hospitalized for the past few days and was feeling irritable.

After hearing her complaints, especially about her using the family whip, his brow furrowed, ""Are you really using the Langley family rules to drive her away?"

Leona Sheridan's endless complaints got stuck in her throat.

"Son, I am your mother! I'm the only one in this world who truly has your best interests at heart!"

"I know, but Juliana Jacobs is someone I like. Why can't you try to accept her? Father's stance is clearly a hint for you to stop making a fuss. If you continue like this, you'll only annoy him."

Leona Sheridan, as if suddenly enlightened, fell silent.

Her husband found her meddlesome, and her son blamed her impulsive actions. But who was the root cause of all this?

If it weren't for Juliana Jacobs being sharp-tongued and always stirring trouble, she wouldn't be in this position.

She wouldn't let this frustration go unresolved!

...

The next evening, Juliana Jacobs visited the hospital to see Jared Langley.

Regarding yesterday's incident, Jared Langley pretended to be unaware and didn't mention it.

After peeling an apple for him, she was ready to leave.

Jared Langley suddenly grabbed her hand, surprising Juliana Jacobs.

Jared Langley's gaze towards her was deep, "I haven't disturbed you these past few days, has your mood improved?"

Juliana Jacobs tried to pull her hand back, but he held it tightly.

"I have to get back to the company and work overtime, take good care of yourself," she said.

Jared Langley frowned, "Do you think we seem like an engaged couple?"

Juliana Jacobs didn't avoid his gaze but sat by the bedside, looking directly at him and asked, "Do you think we look like one?"

Jared Langley thought for a few seconds, "We... should look like it."

Juliana Jacobs smiled, "If you have doubts yourself, there must be something amiss."

Jared Langley pondered for a few seconds, his breathing became rapid, and he uncontrollably pounded his head.

Juliana Jacobs didn't have time to rub her wrist, which he had hurt, as she quickly tried to hold down his hand.

"Wait until you feel better to think about it."

Jared Langley calmed down, his bloodshot eyes still fixed on her, "I like you, truly."

Juliana Jacobs' brow twitched, pausing for several seconds before saying, "I haven't lied to you either."

With that, she left his hospital room.

However, just as she reached the main door, someone intercepted her.

The person who stopped her was the Langley Residence's butler, whose respectful demeanor left no room for refusal, insisting on inviting her to a nearby teahouse.

Juliana Jacobs looked at him, "How did you know I was here?"

The butler instinctively glanced in the direction of the inpatient building, lowered his head, and said nothing.

Realizing the truth, Juliana Jacobs knew it must have been Jared Langley who told him.

Her gaze turned cold as she silently followed the butler out of the hospital.

In the elegant teahouse private room, Leona Sheridan was elegantly sipping tea.

Beside her sat a man, about fifty years old, with sparse hair and a large belly.

Seeing Juliana Jacobs enter, his murky eyes lit up instantly, and his unabashed scrutiny was discomfoting.

Leona Sheridan set down her teacup, a sharp curve forming on her red lips, and directly said to the man, "Mr. Tate, this is the one I mentioned to you, the woman just kicked out by a wealthy family. Look at this appearance, isn't it quite something?"

Chapter 184: Setting a Trap for Leona Sheridan

It felt like a brothel madam discussing a deal with a client.

Mr. Tate looked at Juliana Jacobs, almost drooling as he kept nodding and saying "good."

"Mrs. Langley, what is the meaning of this?" Juliana asked.

Leona Sheridan smiled faintly, "Isn't it obvious? I'm introducing you to a marriage prospect."

She pointed to the man next to her, "Mr. Tate is a fine young man, successful in his career, and his wife just passed away, so he's in need of a woman to warm his bed. Aren't you always seeking to marry up and find a wealthy man? Look how suitable you both are."

Juliana's gaze remained calm, even displaying a cooperative fake smile.

"Mrs. Langley, even to your own people, you're two-faced. What does family mean to you? Benefits, status, anyway, nothing related to family affection."

Leona's expression darkened, "These are the conditions if you want to live in the Langley home. If you don't agree, then everything is off the table."

Juliana could tell that unless she agreed to marry Mr. Tate, Leona wouldn't agree to her being with Jared Langley or entering the Langley family.

"Then... let me talk to Mr. Tate alone," Juliana said.

Seeing her consent, how could Mrs. Langley disagree?

She then gave a blatant look towards Mr. Tate, hinting, "This room is private; no one is allowed in without my permission. You two can 'connect' your feelings well."

Picking up on Leona's hint, as soon as the door was closed, Mr. Tate reached out to grab Juliana.

However, Juliana evaded him.

Mr. Tate smiled as he said, "Lady, don't resist, it's useless. You can't deny what Mrs. Langley has decided. Accept your fate, be compliant, and don't seek trouble."

Saying that, he lunged at Juliana.

Once again, Juliana artfully dodged, "Mr. Tate, even as anxious as you are, you have to let me finish talking."

Mr. Tate was indeed anxious, but seeing how beautiful she was, he held back his temper, saying, "Speak, speak, quickly."

Juliana lowered her eyelashes, appearing very troubled, "I don't know if I should say this... Actually, giving me to you is just an excuse by Mrs. Langley, she... she..."

"She what?" Mr. Tate asked impatiently.

"She admires you greatly."

Upon hearing this, Mr. Tate laughed, "No one has ever tricked me before. Don't stall for time, Mrs. Langley will reward us after we're done."

Before he could finish, Juliana stepped forward and interrupted him, "You may not know, but on the surface, Mrs. Langley looks fine, yet she's very troubled with her marital life. Despite Chairman Langley being in his prime, he's all show and no go, unable to satisfy her. She desires a vigorous, renowned man like you."

Mr. Tate widened his eyes, looking at her.

Juliana continued, "When we entered earlier, I saw the way she looked at you, I knew she longed for you. But as you know, with her age and status, she needs someone to cover for her, so she called me here."

Mr. Tate was speechless, his mouth agape, but he began to somewhat believe Juliana's words.

"If I were you, Mr. Tate, I'd think about how to satisfy her. After all, as long as she sweet-talks Chairman Langley, your business will flourish effortlessly."

"You..." Mr. Tate cleared his throat, "I'm not one to behave recklessly."

"I know, otherwise Mrs. Langley wouldn't fancy you," Juliana said.

Mr. Tate's lecherous gaze suddenly became much more normal.

Juliana added, "To see if I'm telling the truth, just let her in, I'll leave the room for both of you, and you can try actively, then you'll know."

Mr. Tate gave her a threatening look, "Fine! If what you say is true, you'll be rewarded, but if you're deceiving me, Mrs. Langley will give you to me in a package, and I enjoy playing the game of dripping candle wax on wounds."

Mr. Tate had never played with a rich woman like Mrs. Langley, unlike young, pretty women; to him, she was something fresh.

Juliana went next door to call Leona Sheridan over.

"Is it done?" Leona asked suspiciously.

Juliana gave a shy smile, "Yes, we're done talking, now you two talk."

With that, she left the room, tactfully closing the door for them.

Soon after, she was sitting next door, enjoying the fruit tea that Leona had ordered, when suddenly there was a loud "bang" from outside.

The door of the next room was flung open, and immediately Leona's terrified cries were heard.

"Husband, save me, please save me."

Her clothes were disheveled, and her hair was a mess, as she rushed into Victor Langley's embrace.

Jared Langley walked in in a few steps and gave the man named Tate a good beating, then called in the bodyguards to tie him up tightly.

"It was Juliana! She set me up!"

Leona, snuggling in Victor's arms, trembled and cried plaintively.

"This... couldn't be..." Jared's voice was full of doubt.

At this moment, Juliana, holding a fruit tea in one hand, casually played a recording on her phone with the other, and calmly walked to the doorway of the room.

From the phone, the conversation between Leona and Mr. Tate clearly came into Victor and Jared Langley's ears.

Leona jerked her head up, looking at Juliana incredulously.

She had always thought that this woman was unusually calm, turns out she secretly brought her husband and son, and recorded them, digging a big pit for her to fall into.

So vicious!

But the recording stopped abruptly right after Leona left the room.

Jared's gaze towards his mother gradually turned cold and distant.

"Mom, you say you approve of us being together, yet behind the scenes, you use such means to break us apart. What do you see me as?"

Leona, still shaken from what Mr. Tate had done, snuggled completely in her husband's embrace and said aggrievedly to her son, "No, didn't you hear it? She's provoking our mother-son relationship!"

"Oh?" Juliana raised an eyebrow, "According to Mrs. Langley, was it I who called Mr. Tate here to humiliate you?"

"Leona, how could you do such a thing?... I'm so disappointed in you."

Victor Langley frowned, slowly pushing her away from his embrace.

Leona, realizing she had been outsmarted by Juliana, hurriedly clutched onto the last flaw, pointing at Juliana, questioning her, "Why didn't you play the entire recording? How did you brainwash Mr. Tate in that room? You definitely don't dare to play the later part!"

Juliana said indifferently, "At that time, my phone happened to run out of battery."

Leona nearly burst into tears from laughter, "Listen to her! She says her phone ran out of battery. But now it's playing, she's clearly lying! She's trying to frame me!"

Juliana gently raised an eyebrow, "I just recharged it earlier."

The hallway fell into a brief silence.

"You... you're simply..."

Leona was almost falling apart.

Everybody knew she was finding excuses to avoid releasing the full recording, yet her husband and son didn't say a word in her defense.

Juliana shed her idle demeanor, a trace of sorrow flashing in her eyes.

"But I can briefly talk about what happened between me and Mr. Tate in that room. He grabbed my clothes and tried to kiss me..."

"Stop!"

Jared Langley's chest heaved violently.

"Why not let me speak?" Juliana looked him straight in the eye, "It was you who invited me to live in the Langley home, not me trying to reach higher. Yet your mother assumed I had designs on you, even inviting someone to defile me. Jared, do you think there can still be..."

Chapter 185: Elias Langley Turns Off the Light

"Please stop talking!!"

Jared Langley's face was pale, his breathing rapid, as if he were struggling not to fall ill.

"You go first, I'll give you an explanation for this matter."

Victor Langley said nothing, but it was clear that he had agreed with his son's decision.

Juliana Jacobs turned to leave.

As she passed by Leona Sheridan, she stopped, and with a mocking expression that only they could see and a voice only Leona could hear, she whispered:

"Signing the agreement doesn't mean you bought me. Don't mistake my cooperation for weakness. If you make me unhappy again, I guarantee you'll regret ever provoking me in this lifetime."

With that, she let out a mocking laugh and continued to leave.

"Honey! She threatened me!"

However, Victor Langley's voice was filled with icy disappointment.

"Look at the mess you've made! Using such underhanded means to ruin a woman's reputation, you've brought shame to the Langley Family! You... make me feel like I don't know you."

Leona Sheridan shook all over, stunned in disbelief.

However, Victor Langley didn't want to say another word and left her, heading outside.

Leona Sheridan turned to Jared Langley, her voice trembling.

"Son, your father is actually despising me because of that woman."

Jared Langley's brows were furrowed, his tone heavy, "Mom, over the years, you've used various means to drive away many women around Dad. Just because he hasn't said anything doesn't mean he doesn't care. I've advised you countless times to stop, but you've never listened. Now you've even laid hands on my fiancée; have you ever considered my feelings?"

"How can you blame me too? I am your mother; everything I've done is for you."

Jared Langley appeared a bit weary, "Thank you for doing so much for me. But I want to walk my own path."

He then took off his coat, draped it over her, but also left her behind.

Juliana Jacobs walked out of the teahouse as a Hongqi sedan slowly pulled up in front of her.

She was slightly startled, opened the car door, and sat in.

"Why are you here?" she asked, a bit surprised.

On the way, she had only notified Jared Langley and... she didn't have Victor Langley's number, but had informed his office manager.

Elias Langley didn't answer, pulling her into his arms and carefully checking if she was injured.

His fingertips brushed her neck, tickling her a bit.

Juliana Jacobs pushed him away, "He didn't touch me, it was your sister-in-law who almost got bullied by him."

Elias Langley paused, his gaze lingering on her face for a moment, his lips curling slightly, "You can protect yourself now; that's good."

Juliana Jacobs raised an eyebrow, "Aren't you going to say something for your sister-in-law? Your brother's reputation, your nephew's reputation, and the Langley men's reputation?"

He held her tighter, his cheek pressed against hers, whispering, "Other people's reputation has nothing to do with me. You're more important than my own face."

Juliana Jacobs was amused by his words and laughed happily.

"You haven't told me, how did you know I was here?"

Elias Langley's hand remained on her waist, and he leaned back against the seat.

He looked at her and just replied with four words, "A telepathic connection."

Fine, don't say it then.

Juliana Jacobs tried to get up from his lap, but he held her firmly.

She then realized that the car had already merged onto the highway.

"Where are we going?"

He pinched her chin, speaking with natural authority, "It's dark, if we're not going home, where else do you want to go?"

Juliana Jacobs was momentarily speechless.

She didn't speak, so Elias Langley began playing with her hair.

His fingers wrapped around a lock of her hair, twisting it a couple of times before letting go, enjoying the process immensely.

She frowned, 'rescuing' that lock of hair, and grabbed his wrist 'warningly': "If you pull out a single strand of my hair, you're dead."

Hearing this, Elias Langley laughed deeply.

The laughter resonated from deep within his chest, a rare indication of unguarded joy.

He rarely displayed such relaxed emotions in front of outsiders.

Quinn Shepherd, driving, glanced in the rearview mirror and let out a soft sigh.

He had privately suggested Elias to take the opportunity to collect a couple of strands of Miss Jacobs' hair for testing.

Yet, Elias had neither acted on his suggestion nor rejected it.

Was Elias hesitating, weighing options, or... afraid?

That was something he couldn't figure out.

The car stopped at the apartment building's entrance.

Juliana Jacobs got off Elias Langley's lap.

Curiously, this time the man was extremely well-behaved.

Ever since returning from Oakhaven, each meeting inevitably included a kiss, yet this time it stopped at a mere hug.

"I'll head up first, see you later."

She said as she pushed the door open to get out.

However, surprisingly, the man behind her also stepped out of the car with his long legs.

Juliana Jacobs paused, confused, and looked at him, "Why are you following me?"

Elias Langley slid his hands into the pockets of his suit pants, calmly walking towards the building door. Passing her, he just uttered two words, "Upstairs."

Juliana Jacobs followed behind him into the elevator, watching him expertly press the button for her floor, her curiosity only growing.

The elevator ascended slowly, the atmosphere in the cramped space growing increasingly subtle.

She couldn't help but study his defined profile, tentatively asking, "Didn't you say it's late and you wanted to go home early?"

Elias Langley glanced away from the floor numbers, a playful glint in his eyes, "Thinking about why I didn't kiss you today?"

Juliana Jacobs' face suddenly flushed red, avoiding his gaze.

The elevator doors opened, she hurried out, but Elias Langley followed closely at her side.

Juliana Jacobs stopped at her apartment door, ready to turn and ask him what he intended to do when she saw him approach the vacant apartment next door, enter a code, and open the door.

She was stunned.

"You..."

Elias Langley turned to her, his eyes filled with triumphant mirth, "We'll be neighbors from now on, Miss Jacobs. Looking forward to your care."

Juliana Jacobs rushed over, pushed him aside, and stepped into the room first.

The lights were on; the entire room was clean and bright, the furniture all new, evidently well-arranged long ago.

So when he asked that day, "Why not buy this place," it wasn't just a casual question.

"When did you..."

Juliana Jacobs turned around, not even finishing her question before Elias Langley took the opportunity to pin her against the wall by the door.

His kiss came as scheduled, even more intense and profound than any before.

Juliana Jacobs found it a little too much, and pushed him away.

But this time he didn't let her go so easily; instead, he raised a hand and turned off the lights.

The belt buckle clicked open, and Juliana Jacobs' eyes widened.

But the man didn't give her a chance to hesitate, gripping the hand she wanted to hide...

Juliana Jacobs fled back to her apartment, shut the door behind her, and leaned against the cool door panel, breathing heavily.

No lights were on in the living room, and in the darkness, she could almost hear her own deafening heartbeat.

Her cheeks were burning, and the hand that had felt the hardness and intensity was even hotter.

Originally, her traditional values meant she needed a long time to accept a second man after leaving Evan Grant.

But Elias Langley, with a series of subtle tests, had gradually broken down her reserve.

And this breakthrough was only for him.

Her heart was in turmoil, disturbed by him.

Just then, the doorbell rang.

Chapter 186: So Early, Who Were You With?

Juliana was startled.

Elias Langley let go of her and went to shower; it shouldn't be that fast.

She thought about rubbing her face before opening the door, but her hand froze halfway up.

Eventually, she turned around, rushed into the bathroom, washed her hands and face thoroughly, and then went to open the door.

Adrian Langley patiently waited at the door.

Seeing her open the door, he smiled.

"Hungry?" he asked.

"There's cake in the fridge." Juliana stepped aside to let him in.

Adrian's eyes showed a hint of disappointment as he walked in, and it was then that Juliana saw the insulated lunchbox in his hand.

"Put it on the table; let's have this and then a snack later."

As Juliana finished speaking, Adrian's eyes lit up again.

The lid was opened, revealing a bowl of spicy noodles.

The aroma immediately revealed its maker—Rosalind Linton's craftsmanship.

Back when the Linton Family was struggling, a bowl of noodles made by Old Man Linton was a rare luxury for the family.

Today, this bowl of noodles was the only dish Rosalind Linton had inherited from Old Man Linton, the one that most resembled his skill.

"I just came back from getting a dressing change from her, and she asked me to bring this for you," Adrian said.

Juliana snapped back from her memories, her eyelashes fluttering, "What's the matter?"

Adrian was silent for a while before speaking gravely, "I've been set up by Leona Sheridan, and I might go to jail."

Juliana was just about to start eating with her left hand but looked up because of what he said.

Adrian explained, "To secure his son's position, he set up a shell company to trick me into signing a contract. Now the project might implode at any time, and if my dad finds out, he'll definitely kick me out of the company or even send me to jail."

Juliana furrowed her brows.

Adrian suddenly grabbed her hand, "I'm not telling you this to ask for your help. I just want you to know the ins and outs. If something happens to me, could you... look after my mom for me?"

He paused, lowering his voice. "Because Leona Sheridan's crony Nathan Chapman has been frequently appearing near Celestial Vista lately. I'm worried he's found something out."

"A cockroach?" Juliana's brow furrowed deeper.

"It's Nathan Chapman."

Adrian corrected.

"He's Leona Sheridan's most capable henchman, dealing with all of Victor Langley's flings. This man is ruthless and operates without boundaries; everyone fears him a bit. Before, I was afraid he'd harm you, so I had someone secretly keep tabs on him. I didn't expect to find out he's secretly investigating me for Leona Sheridan."

Juliana immediately understood that Rosalind Linton had her son bring this skillfully made bowl of noodles not just as a snack, but as a silent plea from a mother to save her son.

Juliana pondered for a moment, then looked at him intently, her voice teasing, "How about this, if you think you're beyond saving, hurry up and write a will, and I'll keep it for you."

Adrian, "..."

After a brief silence, Juliana asked about serious matters, "How's the investigation on the Sinclair Family in Kingsford going?"

She stopped eating noodles and went to the fridge for cake.

"I heard Isabelle Sinclair's father once held an extremely special position in a critical field, and there was even a bounty on his head from foreign forces back in the day. Because of this, much of their family's information remains classified to this day."

The implication was that his avenues for investigation faced obstacles.

Juliana took a scoop of cake and didn't inquire further.

Moments later, Adrian got up to leave.

However, Juliana got to the door first, peeking out cautiously, looking around, particularly scrutinizing the closed door next door before motioning him to tread lightly and hurry away.

Adrian found her series of somewhat 'suspicious' actions baffling and left with a head full of confusion.

Not long after closing the door, Juliana's phone buzzed.

The screen lit up with a text from Elias Langley, containing just a short sentence: "Am I a narrow-minded man?"

Juliana didn't reply, but thought of his stern face in the room next door and couldn't help but cover her face and laugh.

...

Elsewhere, Leona Sheridan returned to the Langley Residence, still fuming, and summoned her trusted Nathan Chapman.

"Did you find anything on Adrian Langley?"

Nathan lowered his head, "There's a lead, but it's still not clear."

Leona slammed her hand on the table, "You can't even handle this little task? I've wasted my years nurturing you!"

Nathan protested, "We can't make a move until we're sure. Better to be thorough before acting, right?"

Leona snorted coldly, "Anyway, that kid's going to jail soon. As long as his mother is alive, she'll definitely ask my husband for help, so you must act first. Now, go do something else for me."

Nathan's ears perked up.

"I don't want to see Juliana appearing in front of Jared anymore. Find a way to make her 'disappear' for a while, make sure it's clean!"

Nathan looked troubled, "But the young master needs her right now, doesn't he?"

Leona's voice turned sinister, "I want you to create an illusion that she left without saying goodbye. During this time, I'll arrange a marriage for Jared. When she returns, the position of the Langley Family's young mistress will no longer be hers, and she'll have to leave."

Nathan suddenly understood, "I get it; I'll handle it."

...

The next morning, Juliana was pulled over to the next door.

Elias Langley personally cooked breakfast for her.

She leaned against the side, supervising while sipping milk.

Elias was halfway through frying eggs when Jared's call came.

"I'm downstairs in the parking lot, here to take you to breakfast."

Juliana hesitantly looked at Elias.

The man at the stove paused slightly, then calmly reached out to turn off the frying pan.

This gesture seemed to imply consent and support her decision, but Juliana still acutely sensed his suppressed displeasure.

After hesitating briefly, she still said into the phone, "Okay, wait for me."

After hanging up, Juliana hugged him from behind, pressed her cheek to his broad back, and softly asked, "Are you mad?"

"A little."

Elias unhandled her and went to wash his hands.

Juliana followed him, whispering, "It's only temporary."

"Go ahead," Elias removed his apron, pulled her in, and kissed her forehead, "I won't ask why you have to move into the Langley Family, but I hope there are no barriers between us."

Juliana's lashes fluttered.

The words she wanted to say were swallowed back.

Before being certain, some things couldn't be revealed to him.

"I'll tell you when I get back. Don't be mad; remember to have breakfast too. I'll go now."

Elias watched her departing figure, his gaze quietly growing darker.

...

Jared lounged lazily against the car just like last time.

If not for Ben Hayes in the driver's seat, Juliana might almost mistake him for having regained his memory and reverting to the cunning and unpredictable eldest son of the Langley Family.

"Did the doctor allow you to be discharged?" Juliana asked.

The bandages on his forehead had been removed, but his eyes held a hidden depth, making him hard to approach.

Jared smiled gently, his gaze skimming over her slightly tense shoulders, his voice carrying a casual probe, "Who were you with so early?"

Chapter 187: The Little Bride Spoiled for Over a Decade

Juliana's heart trembled, but her serene expression didn't change a bit.

She said blandly, "What, should I go back and finish the breakfast I didn't complete?"

Jared Langley laughed and opened the car door for her.

"I'm glad you care about me."

But Juliana didn't respond, getting into the car and deliberately keeping a distance from him.

Jared watched her profile for a while, knowing she was upset, so he patiently explained, "I asked earlier because I really care about you."

Juliana looked out the window without responding.

After a moment of silence, Jared spoke again, "In fact, I could have been home recuperating already, the doctor has set up a treatment plan, and I'll actively cooperate."

Only then did Juliana's attitude soften, and she turned her attention from the window to him.

"Hmm, I hope you recover soon and remember how we should interact with each other."

The smile on Jared's lips slightly faded, with a faint, almost imperceptible gloom in his eyes.

The car slowly stopped outside an elegant breakfast diner.

They both got out of the car, but Jared naturally walked half a step ahead, unconsciously placing Juliana in a position behind him.

After entering the diner, he gentlemanly pulled out a chair for her, but when the waiter handed over the menu, he directly and smoothly ordered several dishes, then returned the menu to the waiter.

Throughout the process, he didn't ask Juliana once what she wanted to eat.

"I ordered all the signature dishes of this restaurant, trust my choice, it'll definitely suit your taste," Jared said.

Juliana smiled but didn't respond.

She had a purpose when she met him.

Before long, the dishes were served.

"Last night my father sternly reprimanded my mother for her various inappropriate behaviors yesterday, and I apologize on her behalf," Jared said.

Juliana quietly ate her white-cut chicken, neither accepting nor rejecting his apology.

Jared continued explaining, "She just loves me too much and was worried that I'd become distant after getting a fiancée, which led her to act irrationally. I believe she'll change. Juliana, come back with me..."

"Why is Isabelle Sinclair staying at your house?" Juliana suddenly interrupted him and asked.

Jared paused for a moment before catching up with her train of thought.

"Her mother comes from a family of medical professionals, and the Langley Family has always sought her and her family's help. She later married into the even more influential Sinclair Family, so we naturally treat the Sinclair children extra well."

Juliana was a bit curious, "So Isabelle benefits from her mother's connections?"

Jared laughed, "Not entirely. The Sinclair Family's status in Kingsford is special. Uncle Sinclair is a nationally revered expert in integrated circuits, having survived multiple overseas assassination attempts due to technical secrets; Auntie Vaughn's academic status is high, but marrying into the Sinclair Family was merely the icing on the cake."

His speech was calm, carrying a hint of coolness.

"The Sinclair Family's foundation is not in wealth, but in irreplaceable technology and influence. Such a family doesn't need to compare money or power with anyone; their confidence stands by itself."

Juliana's gaze held a trace of disdain, "So even if the Sinclair Family committed heinous acts, nobody would bother them."

Jared shook his head, "The Sinclair Family's values are strict, treating adopted children as their own, meticulously nurturing them, and the Sinclair children are all low-profile, never causing trouble."

Some people might not seem it, but that doesn't mean they're not bad people.

Juliana mused silently to herself.

Her instinct told her that Summer Shaw's harm might be connected to Isabelle Sinclair.

But so far, she hadn't found a motive for why Isabelle would want to snuff out Summer Shaw.

She set aside her doubts and asked instead, "Then which daughter of the Sinclair Family has your Uncle been searching for?"

"Uncle Sinclair and Auntie Vaughn's biological daughter once saved my Uncle's life. Because of this gratitude, when Uncle Sinclair jokingly proposed to marry off his daughter to my Uncle in the future, my Uncle took it seriously, doting on her as his fiancée for over a decade."

"Even though the girl disappeared years ago, my Uncle has never given up and continues to search diligently for her whereabouts, showing he genuinely cares."

Hearing this, Juliana's heart tightened as if squeezed by an invisible hand.

Such deep love, if the person was still alive, then he...

A hint of sadness crossed Juliana's eyes.

Seeing her stay silent, Jared said again, "Juliana, let the past be the past, tomorrow..."

Before he could finish, Juliana stood up and interrupted, "Sorry, I need to use the restroom."

Jared sighed.

Juliana walked along the carpet towards the restroom.

Probably due to the high expense, there weren't many diners, making the restroom at the end of the corridor seem quite secluded.

Just as she rounded the corner, suddenly the door to an ajar utility room next to her opened, a strong arm wrapped around her neck, and another large hand covered her mouth, stifling her scream.

Juliana widened her eyes in terror, struggling desperately, but the other person's strength was overwhelming.

Soon after, another person swiftly taped her mouth with prepared wide duct tape and deftly tied her hands behind her back with zip ties.

The two worked seamlessly, hauling the silenced and bound Juliana swiftly into the service corridor, heading towards a parked black business vehicle at the back door.

The whole process happened almost within seconds.

Juliana was stuffed into the car, and the two men jumped in after her.

"Nathan, it's done."

Nathan Chapman, sitting in the driver's seat, put down his phone and glanced back.

Confirming it was indeed Juliana, he said, "Miss Jacobs, don't panic. I'm just taking you somewhere; your life isn't in danger."

With that, he floored the accelerator to start the car.

However, the expected acceleration didn't happen. The entire vehicle just lurched violently once, then remained still, one side even slightly tilted.

The people inside the car hadn't reacted when they saw through the car window a black tire merrily rolling away as if it were free.

The whole car was dumbfounded.

At this moment, someone knocked on the driver's side window.

Nathan turned his face to see Raine Kane's smile, radiant as a deathly bloom, reflecting in his eyes.

Before he could respond, there was a "bang."

The window shattered, and Raine reached in, grabbing his throat.

The speed was so fast, even Nathan himself couldn't react.

"What... what do you want?" Nathan asked.

Raine didn't answer, merely tightened her grip on his throat.

Seeing Nathan's face turn a liver color, the two underlings jumped out to fight her.

Raine took them both down with just two moves.

Nathan seized the chance to fight back but was still firmly restrained by Raine.

Yet, a new problem arose.

With both her hands busy, who would untie Juliana?

Chapter 188: Sir, Miss Jacobs Doesn't Want You Anymore

At this moment, a Maybach pulled up beside them.

Evan Grant stepped out from inside...

Inside the business car, the situation suddenly changed.

The three men were tied up like worms, their faces unhurt, but their bodies in bad shape.

Raine Kane leaned against the car door and said to Juliana Jacobs, "There's one left who can still talk. Ask whatever you want."

Juliana exchanged a look with her, and Raine understood, swiftly retreating to a spot five meters away, maintaining her distance yet keeping them in sight.

Juliana nodded at her, a gesture of thanks for the unspoken understanding.

"Are you one of Mrs. Langley's people?" she asked.

Nathan Chapman was being held down by two burly men, breathing heavily but with resolve.

"I will never betray my boss."

Juliana took off her shoe.

The sharp heel was raised high, poised at his eye.

"Answer seriously."

Nathan swallowed, "I'm just following orders. If I weren't reliable, I wouldn't have lasted until now."

Alright, that's an indirect admission.

"Then..." Juliana paused, "Are you his most skilled bodyguard?"

"Of course."

Juliana raised the shoe again.

Nathan panicked, "It's the truth this time, I'm not lying."

"I've seen that assassin, tall and thin, his build doesn't match this chubby guy." Raine said from five meters away.

Juliana turned her eyes towards her.

The reason she stood far was so she wouldn't hear the conversation, but her ears were too keen...

Raine closed her mouth.

Juliana's gaze returned to Nathan, "Besides you, does Leona Sheridan have anyone else she can use?"

Nathan sighed, "No, with her standing, she knows the more people involved, the more likely mistakes will happen. People she can trust are too few, and even fewer she dares to use. She always contacts me directly, never through a third party."

Juliana frowned slightly at his words.

"Miss Jacobs, her malice towards you isn't that deep, she just wants you away from the young master for a while. Why don't you... take a vacation?"

Juliana laughed at his words, "Your young master is right in this restaurant. How about I send you to him and let them turn against each other?"

"Don't!" Nathan was a bit flustered, "The Madam will kill me."

"Then convince him to find someone to take the fall for Adrian Langley's situation."

Nathan was a bit stunned.

"The shell company that tricked him into signing the contract, don't pretend you don't know."

Nathan opened his mouth, seeming to want to agree but was troubled.

Juliana gestured to Raine.

Raine walked over.

"Is there any way to make him more confident in convincing his Madam?"

Raine looked at it as a small matter, "Leave it to me!"

The next second, the car door closed.

Nathan's wailing was completely muffled inside the car.

A few minutes later, Raine opened the car door and jumped out.

Inside, Nathan was stumbling through a phone call.

Raine dusted her hands and said to Juliana, "No big problem."

Juliana nodded.

Evan Grant, having grown impatient, got out of the car and approached.

"When do we leave together?"

Juliana's gaze was indifferent, "I'll go say a word to Jared Langley."

Evan chuckled with a sneer.

Juliana turned her eyes to Raine, "Once everything is settled, please send Leona Sheridan's dog back to her."

Raine didn't refuse, "But are you going with him?"

She glanced at Evan Grant.

Juliana nodded and headed towards the restaurant's back door.

Before she could reach the spot where she was kidnapped, Jared Langley found her.

"You've been gone so long, where did you go?"

Juliana didn't have a chance to respond before Jared's face darkened.

Because Evan Grant appeared behind her.

Evan said nonchalantly, "We were chatting outside for a bit. You only thought to find her now. If I were a dangerous person, would you be preparing to clean up her corpse?"

Juliana cast a glance at him, not speaking.

Jared lifted his chin, arrogantly retorting, "I'm not like you, keeping a murderer's brother and a ruthless stepsister around, letting them abuse your wife. She's safe with me."

Evan's smile didn't reach his eyes, "It seems President Langley is different from before; you didn't use to be so full of yourself."

Jared didn't want outsiders seeing the flaws in his fragmented memory, so he looked at Juliana, "Once you're done talking, let's leave."

But Juliana remained where she stood, "It's not over yet. He'll take me to the office, and we'll talk on the way."

Jared's expression subtly changed, repressing his emotions, "Remember whose fiancée you are now!"

Evan raised a playful brow.

Juliana remained calm, even coldly retorted, "I'm just talking to him, is that something shameful? Does it have to make you this tense?"

Jared was choked by her words, his face turning more unsightly.

Juliana feared he might have an episode, so she quickly stepped forward and patted his back, "I know what you want to say to me, but let me think about it. I have something to do today; I'll go now."

Saying that, without waiting for his reaction, Juliana left the restaurant with Evan.

Things went smoothly on Raine's end, but not long after, Elias Langley's call came through.

After hearing Elias's question, Raine looked at the departing Maybach and reported directly, "Sir, Miss Jacobs doesn't want you anymore; she left with her ex-husband."

Elias Langley, "..."

In the Maybach, Juliana sat leaning against the car door, gazing out the window.

Evan smiled faintly, "I know Jared hurt his brain, but I didn't expect Elias Langley actually agreed to make you his fiancée. Are women shared in the Langley Family?"

Juliana turned her eyes, her gaze at him void of warmth, "Jared saved me. I'm cooperating with his treatment. Even if there's something between us, it's none of your business. Didn't you say developments are happening on your end?"

Evan's gaze darkened as he shifted back to the main topic, "The woman who was protecting you earlier, she was also at the abandoned factory that day."

"So what?"

"She was present when Summer was killed, but didn't intervene. There's something else; the lab that Mr. Shaw found in Kingsford, capable of cultivating heart cells, guess who's in charge?"

Juliana furrowed her brows, an unidentified unease rising in her heart.

Evan's smile deepened.

"It's the Sinclair Family's second daughter, Florence Sinclair. Which means, the day we were desperate over Summer Shaw's heart, devastated, Elias Langley knew of the Sinclair Family's shortcut but watched you in despair, saying nothing. Do you know what that implies?"

Juliana clenched her fingers, dispelling the wavering in her heart.

But Evan answered for her, "Juliana, if you were his beloved, your matters would be his, but if he only sees you as a substitute, he has no reason to bother. Do you still believe..."

"Enough!" Juliana shouted at him.

Those words were like a cold key unlocking the Pandora's box named "uncertainty" in her heart.

The little wife he pampered for over a decade, even willing to marry just her memorial tablet, and the authority to let the so-called "sister-in-law" roam around his hotel in a short nightdress.

This was the unease she felt being with Elias Langley these days.

Evan keenly sensed the crack in Juliana's emotions, believing the time was right.

He reached out, wanting to gently caress her cheek as he used to,

However, before his fingertips could touch, Juliana, as if approached by a wild beast, forcefully slapped his hand away, shouting fiercely: "Don't touch me!"

"Juliana, the danger around me is resolved, we can re..."

Evan was about to assertively approach again.

A Hongqi suddenly overtook from the side, forcing their car to a halt.

The car door opened, Elias Langley stepped out and looked at the pair in the backseat through the Maybach's windshield.

Chapter 189: Aren't You Going to Argue With Me?

The man's face showed no expression, but even through the glass, one could feel the heavy pressure he exuded.

"Open the door, let me out," Juliana said.

The driver glanced in the rearview mirror, received Evan's nod of approval, and unlocked the central lock.

Juliana quickly got out of the car and ran towards Elias.

The turmoil of anger and coldness in Elias's heart quietly dissipated the moment she eagerly rushed to him, and his tense face unconsciously relaxed.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

"I'm fine," Juliana said softly.

"Did you finish talking with him?"

Juliana glanced at him in surprise, then lowered her eyes, "Finished talking."

"Go wait for me in the car," Elias instructed.

Juliana didn't spare Evan another glance and sat in the back seat of the Hongqi.

A sting of pain flashed through Evan's heart, but he quickly suppressed it.

With a provocative smile on his lips, he spoke first, "Isn't forcing me to stop like this a bit too rude, Mr. Langley? It seems you don't care about her safety at all."

Elias looked at him with a faint gaze, "Rest assured, I won't do anything I'm not confident in; her safety is a higher priority than mine."

Evan chuckled lightly, his voice sharp, "So, does the Sinclair family know you're together?"

Elias's lips tensed slightly.

Evan's smile widened, "Old Mr. Sinclair is not a kind-hearted man, and you're still under Sinclair's control. Since you married his granddaughter's memorial tablet, you must be faithful to that 'ghost.' If he finds out about Juliana's existence, how confident are you in protecting her?"

A hint of cold mockery flashed in Elias's eyes, his voice low but each word like a knife.

"I'm not you; at least I won't let someone I love be bullied to the extent of needing a divorce for survival. Whether I can protect her or not, just keep your eyes open, and even if I'm not at my best, I'm still better than some people who can't even hold onto their wives, left with nothing but sour grapes."

With that, Elias didn't spare Evan a glance at his pained expression and turned to get into the car.

"I want to go to the company," Juliana said.

Elias placed his hand on her shoulder, met Quinn Shepherd's gaze briefly through the rearview mirror.

Quinn understood and adjusted the route.

"Did you have breakfast?" he asked.

"Was it Raine Kane who told you my whereabouts?" Juliana looked at him, her gaze displeased, "Did you always send her to secretly follow me?"

"It's protection," Elias corrected her.

She was indeed in the eye of the storm and needed protection, but Raine's pervasive 'care' suffocated her.

"But you weren't like this before. Before, you respected my boundaries and privacy. How is this 'protection' any different from those I need to guard against?"

The words were harsh, but Elias didn't get angry; instead, he said calmly, "I'll talk to Raine about this."

Juliana's gaze turned to surprise.

Elias, holding her shoulder, his eyes still gentle, "It's Raine's first time as a personal bodyguard; she might not know the boundaries yet. You can communicate directly with her; she'll adjust."

Juliana looked at him, unable to speak for a moment.

His excessively calm and rational response made her previous hostility seem abrupt.

"What's wrong?" he pinched her chin.

"Aren't you going to argue with me?" she couldn't help but ask.

Elias chuckled at her words, "When you're being childish, I can't be."

Juliana suddenly realized that her reaction, triggered by Evan's words, was somewhat impolite and unjust.

After a moment of silence, she confessed, "The person who harmed Summer Shaw has been to your Langley residence."

Elias immediately understood her insinuation and denied it flatly, "The Langley family doesn't have the guts."

"Not even your sister-in-law, Leona Sheridan?" Juliana challenged him.

"To do it without leaving a trace, Nathan Chapman doesn't have that ability. Leona managed to get rid of the women around my brother because... no one bothered to investigate seriously," he replied.

Juliana sneered, "So, in the end, you are still covering for them. Including Isabelle Sinclair, who is currently staying at Langley Residence."

"It's even less likely to be Isabelle Sinclair," Elias said with unwavering certainty.

Juliana, angered by his unwavering protection, flared up, "Would you bet your life on it?"

Elias finally frowned, his tone lowered.

"I understand your urgency to find the culprit, but you can't lose your judgment and suspect everything because of what Evan said. If he were that trustworthy, why did you divorce him in the first place?"

Upon hearing this, a flash of clear pain and self-mockery crossed Juliana's eyes.

"Yes, I have no judgment, I'm suspicious. How can I compare to the Sinclair daughter in your heart for over a decade? You're even willing to marry her memorial tablet, naturally favoring and protecting her family at all costs. And what about me? We've known each other for only a few days, indeed incomparable."

Her words pierced precisely at Elias's raw nerve.

The man's face darkened abruptly, and his tone was colder and harsher than ever, "Juliana, you shouldn't say that! And you shouldn't think that way!"

Juliana sneered, "Because I've hit a sore spot and you can't explain it. Is that it?"

The air in the car instantly froze.

Elias's face was taut, silent, as Juliana looked out the window.

A stifling silence quickly spread.

Quinn, driving, felt cold sweat on his palms.

Just then, the car arrived at the entrance of Aetherflame Dynamics.

Juliana pushed open the car door, leaving without looking back.

Elias furrowed his brows tightly and still said nothing as her figure disappeared into the company's entrance.

Quinn glanced in the rearview mirror several times, tentatively speaking out, "Should I go and carefully investigate Miss Isabelle?"

"No need," Elias replied almost without hesitation.

"But if Miss Isabelle's suspicion isn't cleared, then Miss Jacobs might still target Miss Isabelle."

Elias raised his hand to rub his tired brow, his voice carrying a hint of helplessness.

"Let her investigate the Langley Residence herself. Unless she sees the wall firsthand, she won't give up."

"But Mrs. Langley probably won't let her have it easy," Quinn reminded.

"No worries, I'm here; no one can bully her."

Upon hearing this, Quinn started the car and half-jokingly, half-seriously said, "President Langley, do you think Miss Jacobs's big reaction just now could be because you're favoring Miss Isabelle... maybe she's jealous?"

Elias glanced at him lightly through the rearview mirror, "Just focus on driving."

Meanwhile, at Langley Residence.

Raine Kane dumped three dogs, tightly bound, at the back door, striding away.

All three had their ribs broken, with Nathan Chapman in the worst condition, his jaw dislocated.

Leona Sheridan ordered them to be taken to the hospital, shaking with rage in the courtyard.

"Good for you, Juliana, daring to threaten me! Don't think that just because you've succeeded this time, that you've beaten me! Do you think you can promote that illegitimate child to deal with me? Pah, I'll take your life sooner or later!"

"Ma'am, keep your voice down."

The old housekeeper saw Isabelle Sinclair approaching and quickly reminded her.

Leona took a deep breath, swiftly adjusting her facial muscles, preparing to squeeze out the usual, insincere smile.

But as Isabelle Sinclair walked closer, her gaze was fixed on the anger still lingering on Leona's face.

She spoke first, "It seems Mrs. Langley doesn't like Miss Jacobs much either. But... just making fierce remarks behind her back won't remove a thorn from the heart."

Chapter 190: Father and Son Showdown

Leona Sheridan's heart leapt suddenly, instinctively trying to cover it up.

"What are you talking about? I didn't... I didn't say anything bad, you misheard."

"No need to deny, ma'am," Isabelle Sinclair gently interrupted, a deeper smile on her face, "I heard it all. To be honest, I also dislike Juliana. She's always finding ways to get close to my brother-in-law, it's really annoying."

"What?" Leona Sheridan immediately dropped her pretense, angrily saying, "So she agreed to be my son's fiancée under the guise of repaying a favor just to cozy up to our second son, so our second son can give her advantages? I knew this woman was not simple!"

Isabelle glanced at her, secretly disdainful of her stupidity.

The relationship between Juliana and Elias Langley, she didn't dare to openly talk about.

Firstly, because she feared Elias Langley, and secondly, because saying it wouldn't benefit her either, so she might as well cover it up for a while in case it came in handy one day.

But she had already hinted to Mrs. Langley like this, yet Mrs. Langley's IQ...

She looked at Leona Sheridan, her tone carrying a hint of superior teaching.

"To deal with this kind of person, the best way is to keep her where you can see her, keep her in a... place where she thinks she can succeed but actually can't escape. By then, whether to squash or flatten her, won't it all be up to you? Taking it slow makes it more interesting, don't you think?"

Hearing this, Leona Sheridan's eyes brightened, and a look of sudden understanding with a hint of vicious excitement appeared on her face, as if she could already see Juliana being at her mercy in the future.

...

In the evening, Juliana returned to her apartment and took a shower.

Thinking about the unpleasantness with Elias Langley during the day, she felt they should calmly talk it out.

So, she went next door.

There was no answer after ringing the doorbell several times.

Maybe he hadn't come back yet.

Remembering the morning he had given her the password, Juliana hesitated for a moment, then decided to input the password and pushed the door open.

The furnishings inside were the same as when she left in the morning, only the used pots and pans in the kitchen had been cleaned and put away neatly.

Juliana could imagine him disposing of the unfinished breakfast after she left, cleaning up the dishes with a sense of loss.

She regretted not calmly asking him for confirmation in the morning.

Juliana sat on the sofa, waiting for him to return.

However, she ended up falling asleep, and it was morning when she woke.

She woke up on the sofa with a slight headache.

Probably caught a cold from not having a blanket last night.

But what surprised her was that Elias Langley hadn't come back all night.

So she had moved here just to show him?

Juliana suppressed the bitterness in her heart and returned to her own apartment.

That's when she received a call from the company, a colleague working overtime in the laboratory had made a small mistake and needed her to come quickly.

So she left without drinking the cold medicine she had just made.

But just under ten minutes after she left, Elias Langley returned from outside, stood in front of her door for a moment, finally gave up knocking, and went back to his place.

...

Juliana was busy until the afternoon.

Her head was slightly aching; she was planning to buy some medicine.

An unfamiliar call came in.

After hesitating for a moment, she answered the call.

"Hello, is this Miss Jacobs? I'm the assistant to Chairman Langley. The chairman would like to invite you for a cup of tea; is that convenient for you now?"

What could Victor Langley want with her?

Juliana paused, holding the phone...

When she arrived at the Japanese tea house, the assistant who had called was waiting for her at the door.

Soon, she was led into a private room.

Victor Langley was seated cross-legged on the tatami, preparing the tea.

Despite being in his fifties, he maintained his physique very well, his tailored shirt outlining firm muscular lines. His gaze was calm and authoritative, his demeanor composed and unhurried, his whole person exuding a mature aura honed by time.

"Hello, Chairman Langley."

Juliana cautiously sat opposite him.

"Since you're now my son's 'fiancée', there's no need to be so polite. You can call me Uncle Langley, and I'll call you Juliana."

Victor Langley's tone was gentle, yet it still carried the undeniable authority typical of someone in his position.

Juliana nodded, "Jared did me a favor, I just hope..."

The chairman gestured to indicate she needn't continue.

"I understand all that. Nowadays, there aren't many like you who repay kindness."

"One just strives for a clear conscience," Juliana said softly.

Victor Langley pushed a cup of tea towards her, his eyes full of undisguised appreciation.

"My wife is impulsive by nature, and has been spoiled by me over the years. I apologize on her behalf for that night when you were frightened."

Juliana was quite surprised.

So he had specifically come to apologize for Leona Sheridan?

Juliana held the teacup but did not drink from it.

She thought for a moment, lowering her eyes, saying, "Actually, I should apologize to Mrs. Langley as well. But that night, when she locked me in the private room alone with Mr. Tate, I had no choice but to

find a way to extricate myself. I really didn't expect Mr. Tate to be so bold as to directly lay hands on Mrs. Langley."

Victor Langley curled his lips into a knowing smile at her words.

"When in difficult situations, it's instinctive to choose the path most beneficial to oneself; there's no blame in that. I've already warned her afterwards. You knowing how to protect yourself is a good thing. But the Langley Family ultimately owes you respect, and I want to personally make amends."

"I haven't lost anything, you really don't need to..."

Juliana attempted to refuse, but Victor Langley calmly took out two exquisite tickets, placing them on the table.

"It's not about money or material things, you don't need to feel any pressure. Just two tickets to a ballet performance, 'Dream of the Red Chamber' on Thursday night, which I thought might suit your taste."

Juliana looked at the tickets, her heart slightly trembling, but maintaining a calm demeanor: "Uncle Langley, this..."

Victor Langley's gaze deeply fixed on her face.

"Jared has been spoiled by us, and not to mention that he's sick now, ordinarily he's just a big child who doesn't know how to take care of others, let alone be considerate. So, if you ever have any difficulties or just want someone to talk to, you can come to me directly."

His hints couldn't have been more explicit, and Juliana's heart was instantly thrown into turmoil.

Victor Langley watched as she said nothing, pushed the tickets forward, his gaze intense, voice even lower, "So Thursday night, are you free?"

At that moment, the door to the tearoom opened.

Jared Langley walked in.

Seeing his father and Juliana, his face lit up with pure delight.

"Dad, Juliana, what are you talking about?"

Victor Langley's actions stiffened for an almost imperceptible moment, but Juliana touched her hair behind her ear, calmly replying, "Uncle Langley was worried I might have opinions about you because of what Mrs. Langley did. He even... specifically bought us theater tickets, suggesting we go together to unwind."

With this response, Victor Langley's awkwardness disappeared.

Jared looked at his father with gratitude, "Thanks, Dad, with you speaking up, Juliana will surely forgive me. Juliana..."

He took Juliana's hand.

"You see, my dad is so supportive of us living together, why not move back to the Langley Residence? That way, I can see you every day."

Victor Langley's eyes paused on Juliana's seemingly composed yet masked face, a deeper intrigue flickering in their depths.

He leisurely finished his slightly cooled tea, speaking in a decisive tone: "Jared's right, no need to wait any longer, you should move 'back' today."