

Panicking 191

Chapter 191: Entry "Etiquette"

Juliana's eyelashes drooped slightly, her fingertips gently rubbing her palm.

When she looked up again, her face wore a perfectly balanced expression, slightly shy but firm.

She looked at Jared Langley and spoke softly, her voice soothing, "I'm worried that if I move in, I might not take good care of you and instead cause you trouble. Moreover, you're still unwell, and we..."

Jared Langley understood immediately, "Actually, I think I'm perfectly normal the way I am now. If I never recover to the state you desire, are you going to live apart from me forever?"

"Jared," Victor Langley interjected, "You still have blood clots in your brain, and your mother and I worry about your health every day. I think Juliana's consideration comes from a good place. Anyway, our house has plenty of rooms, and living under the same roof means you'll still see each other every day."

Jared frowned at his father's words.

As a man, is his problem solved by just looking at someone?

But since his father had said so, and Juliana had agreed with difficulty.

With no other option, Jared nodded and held Juliana's hand tighter.

"I'll go home with you to pack your things."

Juliana smiled lightly, gently withdrawing her hand, her movements natural but creating distance.

"There's no need to trouble yourself. I don't have many things. You can wait for me downstairs at the apartment after work."

Jared's heart felt a pang from the distant tone in her words.

But Victor Langley laughed, "Then let's have a family dinner tonight. We'll invite your uncle back too. Consider it a welcome for you."

Hearing that Elias Langley would be present, Juliana's eyelashes suddenly drooped, concealing the complicated look that flashed in her eyes.

...

Jared insisted on taking Juliana back to the company, and Juliana found it hard to refuse, so she went with him.

Victor Langley boarded the back seat of the Rolls-Royce, his face slightly grim.

The assistant, observing carefully, said, "I'm sorry, Chairman Langley. I didn't know the eldest son would suddenly come here."

Victor Langley closed his eyes, his tone calm, "It was Juliana who called him here."

The assistant immediately understood, "It seems Miss Jacobs is indeed not interested. Finding someone with a similar appearance isn't hard. Should I look for a few more that resemble him more closely? I'll arrange it carefully this time, ensuring not to alert Mrs. Langley."

Victor Langley sighed, "Ordinary and vulgar women are like scratching an itch through the boot."

The assistant was at a loss for words.

Victor Langley remembered something, slowly opened his eyes, and his gaze sharpened.

"Do you think Elias has checked on her?"

The assistant hesitated, "He initially said he found something, but then denied it. Old Mr. Sinclair was furious, and Elias went back to Beijing to explain. But strangely, what he cared most about has had no movement since."

Victor Langley's fingers tapped the armrest lightly, his gaze growing deeper.

"Either he doesn't want to look anymore, or he's already found something but is deliberately staying still."

The assistant's eyes widened...

In the evening, Juliana brought a small suitcase and was picked up by Jared Langley to the Langley Residence.

The car slowly approached the main gate, the golden doors gradually opening.

Leona Sheridan stood in the middle of the road, wearing a qipao, dignified and appropriate, accompanied by the old housekeeper she brought from her family home and several burly maidservants.

Jared turned to Juliana and said, "Wait in the car; I'll go have a look."

After speaking, he got out of the car first and walked towards the gate.

"Mom, didn't you agree for Juliana to come back? What's going on now?"

Leona Sheridan held him back, whispering, "Son, since I agreed, I won't go back on my word. This is for your own good; you wouldn't want her to be hard to control in the future, right? I'm helping you."

Jared hesitated for a moment at her words.

"But you did something like that to her before. I've just managed to bring her back, and now you're going to scare her off."

Leona Sheridan sneered, "Silly son, can't you see she's playing hard to get? Our Langley Family holds a prestigious status. How could she be willing to leave you?"

In Leona Sheridan's heart, Juliana was just using the strategy of playing hard to get to keep her son attached.

Today, she intended to teach her a lesson, warning her that playing games was fine, but if she dared to have real intentions towards her son, the consequences would be worse than today.

Jared noticed the ice floating in the large wooden tub behind her, his brow furrowing even more.

"No way, in this weather, she'd get sick."

"Son, don't be so naive, alright?"

While mother and son were pulling at each other, Juliana took the initiative to get out of the car and walked over to them.

"Mrs. Langley," she spoke calmly, "what kind of entrance ceremony is this? Please enlighten me."

Leona Sheridan let go of her son and said, "The Langley family has high standards and strict rules. Jared is the legitimate grandson of the Langley Family, pure and clean, and can't have any filth around him. You... after all, have been married before; your body is impure, and your reputation is mixed. You must wash yourself from head to toe with water infused with pomelo leaves before you can enter this gate."

She raised her chin, her tone haughty as she spoke.

"Take off your clothes and get in to wash."

Jared quickly spoke up, "Mom, you..."

"Shut up, move aside!"

Surprisingly, the one who said this was Juliana.

Jared turned his head in surprise to look at her, only to see a faint smile playing at the corner of her mouth.

"Unexpectedly, the Langley Family in the 21st century still retains such degrading customs. My past is lawful and compliant; being divorced doesn't mean being inferior. However, your family's traditions have certainly opened my eyes."

Leona Sheridan blurted out, "A woman who's been slept with is cheap!"

Juliana calmly and slowly replied, "So Mrs. Langley has remained chaste until now? Are you that unappealing to Chairman Langley?"

Leona Sheridan, "..."

Unable to out-argue Juliana, Leona Sheridan became angry and ordered sharply to the maidservants beside her, "What are you standing there for?! Throw her into the tub for me!"

Several burly maids immediately rushed forward to grab Juliana.

Especially the fierce old housekeeper brought by Leona Sheridan from her family home, who pinched and pulled at Juliana, eager to strip her naked and throw her into the wooden tub.

Juliana's hands and body were pinched, leaving several red marks as she continuously "dodged."

And in this seemingly powerless resistance, she cleverly used the old housekeeper's forceful tugging momentum, taking a "stumble" as her shoulder thrust towards Leona Sheridan, who was standing by the tub watching coldly.

With a "splash," water splashed everywhere!

Amidst a chorus of exclamations, the elegant and dignified Leona Sheridan fell into the wooden tub filled with pomelo leaves and ice.

Everyone hurriedly let go of Juliana, scrambling to fish her out of the tub.

Leona Sheridan emerged soaking wet, her tailored qipao clinging to her body, dripping cold water. Several pomelo leaves stuck to her hair and shoulders; she was shivering, her lips trembling, teeth chattering, looking rather pathetic.

Jared promptly went up to support her.

"You!"

She pointed at Juliana, her voice tearful, just about to explode, when the Rolls-Royce pulled up behind the Jaguar.

Victor Langley stepped out of the car first.

Right after him, Elias Langley also got out from the other side.

Chapter 192: Tonight, She Must Have a Man

Leona Sheridan saw Victor Langley and felt even more aggrieved.

She rushed to him, not caring that she was soaking wet, and collapsed into his arms.

"Honey, she pushed me into a bucket of ice water, she's trying to kill me."

Juliana raised her eyebrows slightly and leisurely retorted, "Are you saying that I specially carried this wooden bucket to your house to harm you?"

Victor Langley looked at the scene before him and understood immediately.

He signaled to the servants with his eyes to support Leona Sheridan, then said displeased, "This is the entrance to the Langley Residence, people are coming and going, what are you doing? Madam acts on a whim and makes a scene, and you all indulge her. Since when do people working at the Langley Family not distinguish right from wrong?"

Although Victor Langley was reprimanding the servants, it was actually an implicit slap to Leona Sheridan.

Because he didn't say a word to blame Juliana.

"Honey..."

Leona Sheridan was just about to ask him to discipline Juliana, when Juliana interrupted her, saying to Victor Langley, "Indeed, the Langley Family's servants should be properly trained. Especially the older one."

She directly pointed the finger at the old housekeeper who had been with Linda Sheridan for many years, shocking Leona Sheridan.

And as Juliana spoke, she rolled up her sleeves to reveal several red marks on her arm.

"Luckily, today this only happened to me, but if such malicious servants are not dealt with, I'm afraid the Langley Family will lose face in front of outsiders in the future."

Elias Langley stood aside, his gaze swept across the red pinch marks on Juliana's arm, his expression subtly darkening.

Victor Langley's face tensed, and his gaze swept sternly towards the old housekeeper: "It seems my Langley Family has been poor hosts. Hurting others must have consequences. Mama Dalton, give three years' salary to Juliana as punishment. If it happens again, there's no need to stay by Madam's side."

Leona Sheridan looked at her husband in shock: "Honey, she's been with me from my parents' home and has served me for so many years in the Langley Family..."

Victor Langley coldly interrupted her, "She's been with you for so many years and still hasn't learned the rules, whose fault is that?"

Leona Sheridan was momentarily speechless.

Throughout it all, her husband hadn't said a single word of blame towards Juliana.

She understood well, her husband was using Mama Dalton to discipline her. But she was the dignified Mrs. Langley, Blackstar Technologies had today's success all thanks to her family's support back then.

He dared to embarrass her in front of everyone!

She would definitely hold Juliana accountable for this.

At this moment, the butler stepped forward appropriately: "Sir, the dinner is ready."

Victor Langley nodded and led the way to the dining room.

Leona Sheridan, full of grievances, could only let Mama Dalton assist her back to the room to change.

Everyone composed themselves and proceeded to the dining room one after another.

Just as they reached the front porch, Isabelle Sinclair's crisp voice sounded: "Brother-in-law!"

Juliana instinctively turned her head to glance at her.

She saw her quickly walk to Elias Langley's side, naturally reaching out to take his arm.

But Elias Langley discreetly avoided her.

Isabelle's face immediately turned unpleasant.

Elias Langley just said lightly, "You've grown up, you should avoid suspicion."

"Brother-in-law~"

She stomped her foot coyly, still following him and clinging to him.

Elias Langley looked helpless.

Juliana withdrew her gaze and continued towards the dining room with Jared Langley, expressionless.

Victor Langley did not notice the subtle tension between them and said with a smile, "Isabelle is also at the age for marriage discussions, Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair will surely find you a good match."

Isabelle shyly glanced at Elias Langley, "They can't bear to see me suffer, but I haven't graduated yet, I'll think about dating later."

"Jared," Juliana suddenly took the arm of the man beside her, "Does your family grow tea trees? Why do I smell a Longjing tea spirit? You should get the person in your family who knows tea best to write a

book on 'The Art of Brewing Perfect Green Tea in the World of Humans,' it would definitely be a bestseller."

Elias Langley looked at her back, his gaze darkening for a moment.

Jared Langley's arm stiffened slightly, and he forced a smile, "We don't have tea trees."

Juliana nodded, "Got it, it's temporary."

Jared Langley: "..."

How could Isabelle not hear that she was being mocked, she pinched her palm, forcibly enduring it.

Because in a while, Juliana would embarrass herself in the dining room after eating the tampered Jade Soup.

Everyone waited for Leona Sheridan to change her clothes, and then formally started the meal.

As both Juliana and Isabelle were young women, they were arranged to sit together, with Isabelle sitting next to Elias Langley on the other side.

"Brother-in-law, I want to eat crab, could you crack one for me?" Isabelle said coyly.

Elias Langley chewed slowly and then replied lightly, "Don't you have hands?"

Isabelle, "..."

She was obviously cold-shouldered, but could only sulk in silence.

At this moment, the servants brought out the Jade Soup from the kitchen, one bowl per person. Leona Sheridan, as the hostess, naturally got up to personally serve everyone.

When it was Juliana's turn, she deliberately picked the bowl on the left and placed it in front of her with a smile, "It was my fault at the door just now. This is the chef's specialty, you must try it."

Juliana smirked inwardly.

Is this woman really so kind-hearted as to apologize to me?

She gave a faint smile and replied, "You're too kind, Mrs. Langley. If you ever want to cause yourself trouble, I'll be sure to oblige."

Jared Langley nearly burst into laughter beside her.

Leona Sheridan struggled to contain her displeasure as she returned to her seat.

Next to her, Isabelle Sinclair spooned a large ladle of Jade Soup into her mouth and nodded at Juliana Jacobs in praise, "Hmm, it's really delicious."

The insinuation was that she should have a taste too.

If she didn't, she would appear petty and rude.

Juliana didn't actually believe Isabelle would share the dish with her; instead, she became more certain that there was something wrong with the soup, and yet there was no way to avoid it.

As she lowered her gaze, a flash of light appeared in her eyes.

She smiled and stood up, "Excuse me, Miss Sinclair, I think I need to visit the restroom."

Jared Langley promptly directed a housemaid to lead her.

Leona Sheridan and Isabelle Sinclair exchanged a worried glance, afraid she might not return.

But soon enough, Juliana emerged from behind an indoor houseplant.

As she picked up the Jade Soup intending to gesture to Isabelle, a housemaid exclaimed.

Everyone's attention was immediately drawn.

The peace tree pot was emitting strange white smoke.

The butler quickly called two servants to swiftly carry the pot out.

"What's going on?" Victor Langley asked with a frown.

The butler hurriedly bowed and answered, "It's only smoking, no flames, it's already handled. I suspect someone carelessly threw a cigarette butt that wasn't fully extinguished."

"Such disregard for rules!"

Victor Langley reprimanded twice, and the banquet continued.

Isabelle Sinclair looked at Juliana, hinting for her to proceed with what she was about to do.

Juliana quickly picked up the Jade Soup, "Since Miss Sinclair recommends it, I should try it, shall we?"

Afraid she would become suspicious, Isabelle quickly agreed.

But as she looked down, she vaguely felt that the soup seemed a bit more than before, yet perhaps not.

Not thinking much of it, she scooped a spoonful into her mouth.

Juliana used a spoon to take a small sip, nodding, "It is indeed nice."

"My taste has always been impeccable," Isabelle grinned triumphantly.

She had bought a potent drug; just one sip, and ten minutes later, Juliana would shamelessly perform a strip dance in front of everyone.

Leona Sheridan's smile widened, happily serving Victor Langley more dishes.

But ten minutes later, the one losing control was not Juliana, but Isabelle.

She suddenly looked dazed, murmuring impatiently, even unzipping her dress.

If Elias Langley hadn't stopped her in time, the dress would have slipped to her ankles.

Everyone knew what this unnatural behavior indicated.

Especially Leona Sheridan, who was dumbfounded on the spot.

She never expected that Isabelle would be the one drugged.

And Juliana, though her cheeks were flushed, sat calmly there, equally surprised at Isabelle's actions with everyone else.

Did she mix up the Jade Soup?

Elias Langley, considering the situation, restrained Isabelle Sinclair and said, "She seems to have a sudden attack, I'll take her to the hospital."

Victor Langley came to his senses, responding repeatedly, "Go, go!"

Elias Langley picked up Isabelle Sinclair and left in large strides; naturally, the banquet ended in disarray.

Juliana forced herself to hold on until now, the heat waves inside her were surging, her palm nearly bleeding from her grip, her composure about to collapse.

Jared Langley noticed her abnormality, frowning, "Juliana, are you feeling unwell too?"

Juliana rubbed her nose, "Came down with a cold last night, I'm very tired now, want to rest."

Jared quickly got up to assist her.

But Juliana avoided his hand.

Suspicion flickered across Jared's face, "Your room is ready, I'll take you up now."

Once they reached the guest room on the second floor and the door was closed, all the forced composure instantly crumbled.

Juliana staggered into the bathroom, turned on the cold water, and let the icy stream pour over her.

However, it couldn't extinguish the emptiness and desire seeping from her bones.

Tonight, she needed a man.

But Elias Langley had carried Isabelle Sinclair away, and the only person she could call upon was...

Just as she was thinking, there was a "click."

The bathroom door was pushed open from the outside.

A tall and imposing silhouette appeared at the entrance.

Chapter 193: Juliana, Take Responsibility for Me!

Juliana panted as she saw the man in front of her was Jared Langley, yet stubbornly turned away, continuing to wash her burning skin with cold water.

"Aren't you afraid of catching a cold!"

Elias Langley strode into the bathroom and turned off the showerhead.

"Take care of your sister, get away."

Juliana pushed him forcefully, her face wet, indistinguishable whether it was cold water or tears, yet her body shivered uncontrollably due to his proximity.

Elias Langley grabbed her wrist, pinning her against the cold tile wall, his forehead against hers, feeling her abnormally high temperature.

His voice was deep and soothing, "I don't have a 'sister,' if I really had to say I do, right now isn't it you?"

Juliana resisted his closeness desperately, but the drug's effect left her body weak.

"Stop with the sweet talk... How do you explain today, denying it has nothing to do with Isabelle Sinclair?"

Injustice and heat surged together into overwhelming waves, almost drowning her.

First there was Stella Windsor, then Isabelle Sinclair.

Juliana felt that in this life she was destined to clash with "sisters."

Elias Langley caressed her face, "If it was her doing, I'll give you an explanation."

She felt the fire inside her burning more intensely, wishing he would touch every inch of her skin, but reason still lingered.

"I don't need you, go away!"

She struggled to pull her hand back, yanking at her long hair, trying to counter the itch and pain on her body akin to insect bites with physical pain.

Elias Langley quickly seized her hands, pinning them behind her back, holding her tightly in his embrace.

It was only when he embraced her fully that he realized the alarming heat of her body, not just her forehead but all over, as if on fire.

Such a strong drug had actually been used on her.

The man's heart twisted in agony, a turmoil of anger and tenderness.

"Your previous suspicions, I've thought carefully about. Over these years I haven't often returned to the Langley Family, and I do know little about the changes within, but if your friend's matter is truly linked to people of the Langley Family, I will not condone it."

Juliana bit her own tongue, maintaining a last shred of clarity through the slight pain.

"What if it's someone you cannot touch?"

Elias Langley gazed into her eyes filled with a shimmering mist, her enticingly red lips seemed to strongly invite him.

Clearly she was the one drugged, yet he felt his own reason was nearly burning away.

"I've never loved anyone like this in my life. Since I decided on you, from now on, anything related to you, I have no principles, I don't ask right or wrong, your position is my position, whoever touches you is my enemy."

Juliana looked at him in astonishment for two seconds, while the powerful drug's effect again tried to devour her remaining reason.

"These words, take them to coax someone else."

She writhed restlessly in his embrace, turning her face away, trying once more to bite her tongue for a moment of clarity.

But Elias Langley was quicker, grabbing her chin, his heated gaze even more enigmatic than hers.

"Juliana," he rasped, his eyes swirling with dark tides, "be responsible for me."

As the words fell, Juliana was enveloped by his domineering yet gentle desire.

From the bathroom to the bed, the cool air briefly awakened a bit of her consciousness.

Suddenly, she cupped Elias Langley's face, "That... won't work."

The flustered man, "?"

Juliana, "I have a cold, I'm contagious."

Elias Langley laughed, his eyes filled with unfathomable desire, his voice hoarser than ever.

"I have a strong immune system, immune to all poisons."

With that, he swiftly drew her into a deeper vortex...

Meanwhile, Victor Langley returned to the room, staring at Leona Sheridan without speaking.

Leona Sheridan was putting on a face mask, feeling uncomfortable under his gaze, she said irritably, "What are you looking at, the drug was bought by Isabelle herself, it has nothing to do with me."

"Do you think I'm a fool?" Victor Langley said.

"I helped her drug Juliana, but somehow she ended up taking it herself. But even if I did poison Juliana, so what?"

Leona sprang to her feet, her voice sharp.

"I'm your lawfully wedded wife, are you going to call the police and arrest me for that vixen?"

"You're simply unreasonable!" Victor Langley was furious, "Letting such despicable actions occur in the Langley Family, how do you think the Sinclair Family would perceive it? Even if it was the Sinclairs who were initially at fault, do you think they wouldn't hold us accountable? If it weren't for Elias's quick thinking tonight, suppressing this incident as a sudden illness, once it becomes public, you'd lose every last ounce of dignity!"

"Victor Langley!" Leona Sheridan's tone turned even more vicious, "You and your son are both bewitched by that vixen. If that's the case, don't blame me for using old methods to make her disappear."

Victor Langley's voice turned abruptly cold, "Those filthy things you've done to other women, I've turned a blind eye for the sake of marital harmony. But if you now seek pleasure without caring for your son's wellbeing... Leona Sheridan, don't push me to be unkind to you."

"Oh, look at you!" Leona looked at him arrogantly, "Think you're capable? Have you forgotten who got you where you are today? Without me, you'd still be hauling bricks on a construction site right now!"

Victor Langley frowned.

The thing men despise most is a woman who constantly brings up favors.

"All these years, I'm not unaware of the unspeakable things you've done. Did you also have a hand in that incident involving Juliana's friend?" Victor Langley questioned.

Leona's eyes flickered for a moment, but she quickly laughed even more arrogantly.

"So what if I did? So what if I didn't? Victor Langley, you'd better realize, if it weren't for the Sheridan Family, would the Langleys be where they are today? You're angry at me for that wench? Can you bear the consequences of the Sheridan Family's wrath?"

Victor Langley looked at his wife's ferocious face, the last vestige of warmth in his eyes dissipating,

"Leona, to think we've been together for almost thirty years, and there's still not a shred of equality or respect."

He sighed deeply, his tone filled with weariness.

"Enough, from now on I won't force you to do anything. The matter with Isabelle, Elias will handle it. But this is the last time. If the Sinclairs insist on directing their ire at you, I hope you can still keep mentioning the Sheridan Family as your protective charm like you do now."

With that, he turned and headed towards the door.

Leona was burning with rage, "Where are you going?"

"The study." Victor Langley didn't look back.

"Fine! Great! Then sleep in the study forever!"

Leona slammed the door shut.

...

As the night passed, Juliana had no idea when Elias Langley had left.

She only vaguely remembered that after the drug effect wore off, she softly begged for mercy, but it only led to his even more relentless entanglement.

Until she couldn't help but cry, did he finally relent, holding her in his arms and soothing her with gentle kisses and whispers.

She fell into a deep sleep, and when she opened her eyes again, it was the present.

For the first time staying overnight at the Langley Family, she woke up this late, and Juliana's heart tightened, quickly getting out of bed to freshen up.

But as she barely touched the ground, her legs buckled even more, almost causing her to fall, her waist and hips so sore and weak that even walking was difficult.

She cursed that man several times in her heart before managing to support herself into the bathroom.

After a hurried wash, just as she opened the door, she was startled to find Jared Langley standing at the entrance, her breath catching in surprise.

Chapter 194: Doctor: You Must... Exercise Restraint Recently

"Did I scare you?" Jared asked.

"It's almost nine o'clock. Didn't you go to the office?"

Juliana quickly steadied her breath.

Jared smiled, "Father said to wait until I'm fully recovered before returning to work."

Implying, he's to wait until his memory is back to normal.

"Don't you want to get better soon?" Juliana asked, following his lead.

Jared leaned leisurely against the door, "With Adrian working hard for us, it doesn't hurt to rest for a while."

Juliana appeared calm, but her heart sank slightly.

Even though Victor acknowledged Adrian, it was clear he valued Jared, his legitimate son, more.

Like the family dinner last night, Adrian wasn't even invited, let alone involved in the Langley Family's core matters.

And Jared should know all about the family's background and past secrets, provided his memories aren't scrambled...

"Juliana?" Jared called her back to reality, "Is your cold any better?"

Juliana was about to answer when the butler hurried over, looking troubled, "Young Master, Secretary Shepherd is here, downstairs, but Second Master hasn't gotten up, and his phone is unreachable, and there's no response to knocks. What should we do?"

Jared frowned immediately, "Uncle didn't stay at the hospital after taking Isabelle there?"

Juliana suddenly felt uneasy.

"Secretary Shepherd said he returned late in the night," the butler replied.

Juliana's anxiety eased.

Jared nodded but his expression turned serious.

"What's going on? Uncle is usually very disciplined, no matter how late he sleeps, he never wakes up late."

He said this and strode toward Elias's room.

The butler hurried to keep up, "I heard a flu virus is going around recently; it can cause fainting or, in severe cases, respiratory failure. You know, without Second Master's permission, no one can get in to have a look at his room. The last one who barged in ended up with a level three disability..."

Juliana frowned, looking at the tightly closed double redwood doors at the end of the hallway.

Remembering someone's tireless handwriting exercises from last night.

An absurd yet seemingly reasonable thought popped into her head.

Could it be that he's unconscious from kidney exhaustion after excessive exercise?

By this time, Jared had already reached the door of Elias's room.

He paused and looked at the butler, "This is urgent! What if Uncle has had an accident inside? Pull the door!"

"Young Master!" The butler, appearing decrepit, said, "I'm almost forty-five, my back and knees are weak, it's hard enough to get in bed, let alone kick a door down."

Jared was momentarily speechless but was about to retort when Juliana took out her phone.

"Call an ambulance. Leave the professional work to the professionals, and let them handle the job of breaking down the door."

She said while dialing the number.

Jared wanted to stop her, but Juliana had already given the address.

The butler looked at Juliana as if he were looking at a living Bodhisattva, compassionate and understanding.

"Juliana, wouldn't this embarrass Uncle?" Jared reminded.

Juliana suddenly realized, but quickly thought of a solution.

"That's simple!"

A dozen minutes later.

Elias was startled awake by the sound of the door being kicked open.

As he opened his eyes, a blue cloth covered him...

In his thirty-odd years, it was the first time Elias was wrapped like a rice dumpling and rushed to the emergency room.

After some examination, he was moved to a VIP ward.

The doctor gently stated, "We suspect he has a condition of excessive sympathetic nervous system excitement, caused by overwork, accompanied by severe lactic acidosis and... a mild cold."

Jared listened in bewilderment, "So, what exactly is the illness?"

The doctor paused and diplomatically replied, "In layman's terms, it's suggested the patient should... exercise restraint for now."

So last night, did Uncle play the sacrificial role of Isabelle's "antidote"?

Jared's eyes widened, envisioning an action movie in his mind.

"Do I have an aunt now?" he blurted out.

From the hospital bed, the exhausted man opened his eyes, "Get out!"

"Family members, please sign the admission papers," the doctor said.

Jared rubbed his nose, reluctantly turning away to sign the papers.

Just as he turned his back, Elias's fingers slipped out from under the blanket, hooking onto Juliana's little finger standing beside the bed.

Juliana's heart skipped a beat, and without thinking, she slapped his hand back with a sharp and quick motion.

At that moment, Jared turned around after signing, "What was that sound?"

Juliana turned to see the subdued Elias, "Was it Uncle who made that sound?"

Elias wore a grim expression, and seeing his displeasure, Jared quickly said, "With Secretary Shepherd here, we shouldn't disturb Uncle.

Juliana nodded and lightly walked over, taking his arm.

"You're right. Not only is Secretary Shepherd around, but Miss Sinclair might also be next door. It's none of our business; let's go."

Jared was taken aback by her sudden intimacy but nodded instinctively.

Juliana didn't glance again at the man on the hospital bed, wrapping her arm around her fiancé's, leaving without looking back.

Elias's eyes momentarily darkened as Quinn Shepherd entered, bowing slightly, "Boss, Miss Sinclair is awake and has been crying. How should we handle it?"

Without hesitation, Elias said, "Personally return to Kingsford and hand her and the person who sold her the drug over to Old Mr. Sinclair."

"Old Mr. Sinclair is unforgiving towards wrongdoers, so this is a good approach. But what if Miss Sinclair exposes Miss Jacobs' existence?"

Elias squinted, "Old Mr. Sinclair values evidence. If she speaks without proof, she'll gain nothing and damage relations with me. She won't dare do it."

Quinn nodded, "We previously talked about investigating Miss Jacobs, but we haven't acquired a hair sample from her. Should we still proceed?"

Elias raised an eyebrow at him, "We've been tracking the blood sample from Hospital 547 linked to Miss Sinclair of the Sinclair Family, correct?"

Quinn was momentarily stunned: so they were not investigating Juliana anymore.

Why?

He couldn't figure it out.

As he pondered, Elias was already getting dressed.

"Boss, you're still unwell?" he remarked.

"I'm not sick; I just overslept today."

Elias's tone was calm, but inside he was unsettled.

The woman who clung to him repeatedly last night, after using him, went on to act intimately with someone else.

Thinking she can walk away and shirk responsibility?

No chance!

Tonight, I'll go and settle this with her.

In the evening, after clocking out from Aetherflame Dynamics, Juliana headed to Mercy Hospital.

Summer Shaw was placed in a solitary intensive care ward.

Juliana donned a sterile gown and chatted with her for a while.

She spoke about the company's recent project successes and Caleb Shaw's surprising performance.

At this moment, a tall, lean nurse came to administer medication to Summer.

The nurse adeptly opened the main injection port connected to Summer's heart.

But due to this action, Juliana instinctively glanced at her face.

Although the nurse wore a mask and her bangs covered part of her eyes, she seemed to sense Juliana's scrutiny.

The nurse's movements slightly paused and she too looked over.

The two locked eyes for two seconds.

Juliana expressionlessly asked, "Can you recite the 'Code of Conduct for Medical Staff'?"

Because the code clearly states that a nurse's bangs should not fall below the eyebrows, indicating that something was amiss.

The nurse's long lashes trembled, realizing she'd been discovered right as Juliana lunged to seize the syringe from her hand.

"Murder! Help!" she shouted.

Yet the "nurse" reacted with astonishing speed!

Instead of blocking, she swiftly sidestepped, reaching out to strangle Juliana's neck!

The immense force made Juliana momentarily breathless.

Before she could respond, the attacker pivoted sharply, forcing Juliana's back against her, and the cold needle pressed against her carotid artery.

"The syringe contains poison. Don't move."

A distinctly male voice whispered in her ear.

Chapter 195: I'm Already Your Man, Yet You Still Won't Trust Me a Little More?

"Was it you at the abandoned factory?" Juliana asked.

"You're very lucky," the man replied.

It was him.

"Why did you do it?"

The man chuckled slightly, "Even if you know, you'll die anyway. Want to hear the answer?"

Juliana pressed her lips together, "Even if I don't listen, you won't let me go."

"Smart women are rare."

The man moved closer, and Juliana noticed a faint sandalwood scent on him, barely detectable to those with a dulled sense of smell.

He whispered in her ear, "She was born to the wrong family and needs to reincarnate. But you're not so lucky; I only have one dose of poison meant for her, so for you..."

Just as the man placed the syringe aside and reached for the dagger hidden on the outside of his thigh, he suddenly hesitated, as if realizing something, and instinctively tried to tighten his grip on Juliana's arm.

But it was too late.

"Bang!"

The door was burst open by a rapid figure, which, without a pause, shot straight towards him like an arrow!

In a flash, the man had to kick Juliana away and hastily dodge.

Raine lunged in vain, immediately shielding Juliana behind her, glanced at the man disguised as a nurse, smiled slightly, and asked, "Are you a eunuch or a transvestite?"

The man, enraged by her taunt, shouted, "I am your grandfather!"

"Oh, so it's Grandpa. Already buried, why crawl out to scare people? Go back to hell!"

Raine rushed up and engaged him in combat.

On the other side, Juliana, enduring the pain from the kick to her side, staggered to her feet and immediately lunged towards the hospital bed, using her body to shield the still-unconscious Summer.

Seeing that he couldn't succeed quickly, the man crashed through the window glass and leaped out!

Raine hesitated not a second, swiftly flying in pursuit, their figures disappearing one after another into the dense night outside the window.

At this point, the hospital security finally arrived.

A doctor walked out from behind them, "Are you alright? We've already called the police."

After all, when facing a desperate fugitive, it's natural for ordinary people to protect themselves.

Upon hearing this, Juliana just softly said to the doctor, "Please check her."

She had secretly pocketed the syringe.

Summer was unaffected, and Raine, not lingering on the fight after the opponent escaped, immediately returned.

"Are you alright?" Raine asked, looking her over, phone in hand.

It seemed she was reporting to Elias Langley.

Juliana shook her head.

"The opponent had decent skills, and he got away again," Raine said.

"Are you sure he's not working with Nathan Chapman?" Juliana asked.

Raine thought seriously for a moment, "If I analyze it from my angle, a lone wolf assassin like him, even if serving the same master as Nathan Chapman, might not know of the other's existence."

Juliana detected a hint of something and nodded, then turned to leave.

"Where are you headed? Let me give you a ride," Raine offered.

Juliana paused and looked at her, "To hell as well?"

Raine was taken aback, then laughed, "Good people can't go there."

Juliana couldn't help but smile faintly, "Thanks for earlier, but I need to stop by the office."

With that, she continued to leave.

The Aetherflame Dynamics CEO's office was brightly lit.

When Juliana arrived, Caleb Shaw rose to meet her.

"Former colleagues called me, I was already halfway there when you asked me to come back here and wait, what's going on?"

Juliana handed him a syringe, "Someone disguised as a nurse tried to kill her, but Summer is fine. However, if the disguise had been more professional, it might have worked."

Caleb took the syringe, brow furrowed tightly.

"That person said..." Juliana hesitated, "Summer was born to the wrong family and needs to die."

"She's my biological sister, our whole family loves her, why should she die?" Caleb blurted out.

Juliana's eyes darkened slightly, "Maybe they got the wrong person."

"Got it wrong?" Caleb found it unimaginable.

Juliana didn't explain much, "Can you find a way to test what's in this syringe? I want to know its makeup, and trace where it came from."

Caleb put away the syringe promptly, "That's easy, leave the investigation to me as well."

Juliana neither agreed nor disagreed, "How's the connection with the labs in Kingsford?"

Caleb's expression turned grave, "They haven't outright refused, but they've set many harsh conditions. The key condition is a complete evaluation before they agree to the heart graft for Summer."

Juliana was silent for a moment, then said, "No matter how demanding, we should cooperate. Follow their requirements to avoid giving them anything to use against us, and find out their true intentions."

Caleb nodded, "But they've been saying they would send someone to check on Summer, and keep delaying."

Juliana looked at him, not speaking for some time.

"Is there anything else?" Caleb asked.

"If you want to trace the poison source, could you avoid involving Evan Grant?"

Caleb was silent for two seconds, then nodded, "Alright."

Leaving Aetherflame Dynamics, Juliana felt increasingly weighed down.

Returning to the Langley Residence, Jared Langley was waiting in the living room for her.

Leona Sheridan was there as well.

"Why are you back so late?" Jared came up, frowning.

"Overtime," Juliana replied curtly.

"Next time you work late, let me know ahead of time."

Jared's tone was forceful, laced with command.

Juliana suddenly felt a wave of irritation.

But she took a deep breath, suppressed her emotions, and responded flatly, "Understood."

Leona chimed in coolly from the side, "I know why Evan Grant doesn't want you. It's already 11PM and you're not home. What rich man would put up with that? A woman ought to prioritize a man above all else."

Juliana turned to glance at her indifferently, a faint smile on her lips, "So, has Mrs. Langley done well maintaining her role as an auxiliary all these years?"

"You..."

Leona was stumped by her words, her face turning pale.

"I'm very tired, going to rest now."

Juliana didn't look at them again and continued up the stairs, leaving behind the displeased Jared and the livid Leona.

"Son, wouldn't it be better to find a gentle and compliant woman, someone who'd kneel and change your shoes as soon as you got home? Why do you like someone like her?"

Jared surprisingly lost his look of displeasure at her words.

"I can pay for that kind of service. What's the point?"

With that, he headed to the kitchen.

Juliana closed the door and finally supported her aching side.

The kick hadn't been light.

She leaned against the door, closing her eyes and taking a couple of deep breaths, surrounded by a refreshing scent.

Elias Langley's arm wrapped around her waist, his deep voice murmured by her ear, "Didn't you say you were alright?"

Juliana leaned into his embrace, "I didn't want to bother others."

He chuckled lowly, his warm palm slipping under her clothes, massaging her lower back.

"You can trouble me all you want... is it here?"

His fingers pressed gently at a spot.

"A little to the left," Juliana replied.

"Here?"

Juliana nodded.

Elias lightly rubbed at the spot and slowly asked, "Have you eaten dinner?"

Juliana nodded.

"Why aren't you happy?"

Juliana bit her lip, "Summer is like this because of me, the one who should be in the hospital bed is me."

As she spoke, her eyes reddened.

Elias brushed his chin against her forehead.

"Everyone has their fate, and besides, she hasn't given up on herself, and neither have you."

"But..."

Juliana thought of what Evan Grant had said, her eyes scrutinizing as she looked up at him.

"You obviously know which lab in Kingsford can do cell culture, yet you said nothing."

Elias smiled lightly, "Is it possible that keeping silent is more beneficial to getting things done than speaking up?"

Juliana was taken aback, suddenly realizing the deeper meaning behind his silence.

"And what about Raine?" Juliana continued, "When the assassin appeared, she was clearly on the scene. Why didn't she immediately save Summer? Is she just a robot following your orders?"

Elias' voice remained steady, not a trace of impatience, "You were downstairs at that time; she was downstairs. How could she know what was happening upstairs?"

Juliana's last bit of doubt finally dissipated.

He gently pressed her furrowed brow with his fingers, speaking softly, "I'm already your man, yet you still won't trust me a bit more?"

This possessive remark made Juliana's ears turn warm.

Just then, there was a knock on the door behind her.

Outside came Jared Langley's gentle voice, "Juliana, open up, I know you're not asleep yet."

Chapter 196: Langley Men Have Genetic Defects

Juliana Jacobs gave a start in Elias Langley's arms.

The man held her, his expression darkening instantly.

"I'll go kill him."

He said as he made a move to open the door.

Juliana quickly blocked the door handle.

"Go hide in the bathroom."

Elias frowned, "Every time you make me hide in the bathroom, am I a rat?"

"Be good," she gave him a push, "Hurry up."

Reluctantly, he clicked his tongue in annoyance but still went to the bathroom.

Juliana took a deep breath, deliberately messing up her clothes before opening the door.

Jared Langley stood at the door with a pot of stew in his hands.

Seeing her disheveled appearance, he was momentarily stunned, "Are you really going to rest?"

Juliana looked weary, "Do you think I'm just brushing you off?"

Embarrassment flickered in Jared's eyes, "This is chicken soup with fish maw that I specially asked the kitchen to prepare for you."

Juliana had a psychological shadow about the Langley Family's stews, and her brows furrowed instantly.

Jared saw through her thoughts and quickly said, "This is made by the family's chef, nothing extra added."

"I'm not really hungry, can I just drink the soup?" Juliana asked.

"Of course." Jared was pleased with her compliance.

Juliana picked up the pot and drank the soup in a few gulps without using a spoon, then placed the pot back.

Jared smiled lightly, taking out a tissue to wipe her mouth.

"Next time remember to use a spoon, sip by sip."

In other words, he disdained her eating manner.

Juliana didn't mind, smiled, and closed the door.

She took a deep breath and sank into the sofa.

Elias emerged from the bathroom, holding a warm wet towel, and sat beside her, gently lifting her hem to apply the warm towel.

The soothing warmth spread over her skin, instantly alleviating the faint pain.

Juliana's tense shoulders gradually relaxed.

Elias chuckled softly by her ear, "Is this service satisfactory?"

Juliana closed her eyes and nodded, "Not bad. If you lose your job in the future, you could open a massage parlor, and I'd book you every day."

"Getting cheekier, huh!"

Elias pinched her ticklish spot, making Juliana dodge away quickly.

"Does Miss Jacobs need assistance with bathing?" he raised an eyebrow and asked.

"In your dreams!"

Juliana laughed, got up, and quickly dodged into the bathroom, fearing he might really follow her in.

She figured if she dawdled in the shower long enough, he should be gone.

Surprisingly, when she stepped out, Elias was still there in the room.

"Aren't you tired?" Juliana subtly suggested he leave.

"Watching you, I'm full of energy, reluctant to leave."

Juliana understood his teasing, her face reddening uncontrollably.

Elias took the towel from her hand, positioned her in front of the vanity mirror, and picked up a hair dryer.

His fingers gently threaded through her hair, making her close her eyes in comfort.

As he looked at the woman before him, lazily resembling a cat, his fingertips softly grazed her scalp and over her hair, but came to a sudden stop upon encountering an old scar on the back of her head.

It was a small, raised, old scab.

Elias couldn't help but rub his fingertip over it repeatedly.

"How did you get this injury?" he asked.

Juliana replied casually, "I don't know, it was there when I woke up in the hospital, and no one told me what happened, just sent me to the orphanage."

Elias's fingers slowly tightened.

"Then..." his throat felt tight, "It must have been painful at the time?"

Juliana giggled, took the hair dryer from his hand, and turned it off.

"It didn't hurt, because when I woke up, it was already like this."

She put the hair dryer aside, then walked over to the bed.

She took out a pack of birth control pills from the bag on the nightstand, her smile gradually fading.

Elias approached her from behind.

Juliana whispered, "I bought them on the way to the company this morning, but I'm unlikely to get pregnant. I shouldn't need to take them, but I'm afraid of accidents. What should I do, take them or not?"

"Don't take them," Elias took the pills from her, "You won't get pregnant."

"Why?" Juliana was curious.

Elias tucked her loose hair behind her ear.

"Langley Family men have genetic defects, making it extremely difficult to conceive. Unless by sheer luck meeting someone with a perfectly matched genetic profile, natural conception is nearly impossible. In ten generations, maybe only one had such luck, resulting in multiple descendants. The rest almost entirely rely on medical technology for single heirs, several lines have even died out."

This was the first time Juliana heard of the Langley family's secret and was very surprised.

"Then your father..."

"Thanks to a successful experimental accident by Mother and Father, I became a backup. In case anything happened to my older brother, I would take over the Langley estate. Such arrangements naturally create rifts between brothers. That's why I was raised in Kingsford, not close to him. Now that Jared is of age, I'm of no use to the Langley family."

Juliana never imagined that in the eyes of outsiders, the illustrious Elias Langley was always considered a disposable spare.

This also explained why he would rather stay at The Apex Hotel than return to the Langley Estate when in Kenton.

She suddenly understood why the Langley family respected the Sinclair Family, as their lineage was in a precarious position, they naturally had to bow.

She turned to embrace Elias's neck, "But you've made a great life for yourself. You are the star of your own story, never a substitute for anyone."

Elias held her waist, smiling faintly, "Adrian was naturally conceived. His mother's genes were a perfect match with my elder brother, but alas, their fate was short-lived. So you needn't worry, don't take the pills. If you ever wish to have a child in the future..."

"Who wants to have a child!" Juliana released him, turning and diving into the sheets, "It's late, I want to sleep."

Footsteps indicated his departure.

Juliana secretly curved her lips in a smile; she was truly exhausted, finally able to sleep peacefully.

As she was about to drift into sleep, a rush of cool air suddenly crept under the covers.

The man embraced her with the refreshing scent of an after-bath fragrance.

"You forget how you ended up in the hospital this morning? Still not behaving..."

Elias interrupted her with a soft laugh, "Not doing anything, just holding you to sleep."

Juliana was at a loss for words with him.

In the middle of the night, Juliana was suddenly awakened by a stomachache, as she furrowed her brow trying to endure it, Elias's hand warmly covered the area.

"Does this hurt?"

His voice seemed to have just woken up too.

Juliana nodded.

He gently massaged the area for a while, and a soft noise emerged under the covers.

Juliana's body froze, instantly embarrassed and unable to move.

Elias chuckled softly, yet his hands didn't stop moving.

"I'm rubbing and coaxing, and you're just letting loose, hmm?"

Juliana's face instantly turned beet red, grabbing the blanket to change the air inside, then burrowing into Elias's arms, shaking with laughter.

At dawn, the alarm woke her, and the space beside her was already empty.

The room bore no traces of his presence.

Juliana rubbed her slightly warm face.

She began to think she should take the initiative to investigate the relationship between the hitman and the Langley family to leave this place and move back to her apartment sooner.

After washing up, she headed downstairs, encountering Jared by the stairs.

"Up so early today?" Jared asked.

"Yesterday was because of a cold, I slept a bit longer. The lab work is crucial right now, no slacking."

Jared's pleasant demeanor dimmed a bit, "I planned to go golfing with you later."

"Let's do it over the weekend," Juliana suggested.

Jared didn't respond.

They had already reached the dining area.

Victor Langley hadn't come down yet, but Leona Sheridan was up early, already eating.

The Langley Family breakfast was relatively flexible, not needing everyone's presence to start.

Juliana just sat down and had a sip of congee, quickly spitting it out.

The congee was full of fine sand.

She coldly glanced at Leona.

The old woman arrogantly said, "Since you're in the Langley Family now, you must follow the rules. From today on, you must be home by eight every night. Your daily attire and schedule must be reported a day in advance, and you'll need to write a detailed report every night on who you interact with and their contact information..."

As she spoke, her gaze wandered meaningfully to Juliana's abdomen.

"... All your sanitary supplies will be managed by Mama Dalton, who will distribute them as needed and keep daily records. That way, we can ascertain if you're pregnant at the earliest opportunity."

Chapter 197: Laying the Groundwork

After Leona Sheridan finished speaking, the entire dining room fell into a deep silence.

Jared Langley was the first to speak: "Mom, isn't the last rule a bit too much?"

Aren't the others too much as well?

Juliana Jacobs withdrew her gaze from him.

Leona Sheridan said, "How is it too much? She's a divorced woman who lured you into the Langley Family, and if she caused any more out-of-wedlock pregnancies, wouldn't that be even more shameful for us?"

"Sorry," Juliana interrupted their conversation, "I want to know if these are Mrs. Langley's rules, or the Langley Family's rules?"

Leona Sheridan snorted coldly, "I am the matriarch of the Langley Family. My rules are the Langley Family's rules."

Juliana put down her spoon, a mocking smile on her lips, "Mrs. Langley is so obsessed with the old times, why not crawl back into a coffin and keep dreaming? Remember to close the lid so you don't dirty anyone else's hands."

"What did you just say?" Mrs. Langley, infuriated, stood up abruptly.

At this moment, Victor Langley came down the stairs.

Leona Sheridan, instead of backing down, became even more aggressive, "As Jared's fiancée, how much have you cared for him? Since you moved in, it's been clear to me that you're indifferent to him, which has done nothing to help his illness! You might as well move out sooner!"

"Mom!" Jared's voice was low, his tone visibly displeased, "You still want to try to convince us to break up, don't you?"

Since falling ill, Jared had hardly ever had such a low mood.

Leona Sheridan was stunned by his attitude, suddenly at a loss.

"I'm your mother, how could I..."

"I'm not denying that you're my mother," Jared interrupted her again, "but you can't control everything about me. If you really want me to accept your beloved Miss Caldwell, then bring her home."

As soon as Leona heard this, she was instantly excited, "Is it... true?"

Jared looked expressionless: "Of course it's to make her my mistress, for free. As long as the Caldwell Family can accept such terms, I have no objections."

"That's impossible!" Leona immediately refuted, "Without even a status, the Caldwell Family is a reputable family, how could they let their daughter suffer such grievance."

She paused for a moment, her tone softening slightly, as if she had thought of a "reasonable" solution,

"In my opinion, better that Miss Caldwell becomes the wife, and Juliana, if you like, you can stay as a concubine."

Jared scoffed, "For me, Miss Caldwell would just be a bed slave, so if Mother is happy, go ahead and arrange it."

Saying that, he didn't even eat breakfast, got up, and left the dining room.

Juliana chuckled, "Mrs. Langley's arrangement makes sense, if there were a gentleman in the family with such charm, you should definitely do the same, no double standards."

Victor Langley gave Juliana a deep look.

It was as if he tasted the warmth of being cared for, a warmth swelling in his heart.

Leona still wanted to target Juliana, but he interrupted, "Enough. I don't know what's gotten into you lately, our Langley Family has always been open-minded, since when did we start arranging concubines like the old times? You're becoming more and more like a feudal old lady."

"Are you saying I'm old?" Leona looked at him angrily.

Just then, the kitchen brought out breakfast for Victor Langley.

The porridge was too hot to drink.

Juliana pushed her porridge over, "Uncle Langley, I've only taken one sip, and I didn't put the used spoon back, it should be uncontaminated, if you don't mind, drink this bowl."

"It's fine, I've suffered hardships before, I'm not that picky."

Before Leona could stop him, Victor Langley had already taken Juliana's porridge.

Juliana stood up, nodded, and took her leave.

Victor Langley took a sip, and his features instantly scrunched together.

With a "bang," he slammed the spoon heavily back into the bowl!

"Who made this porridge!"

His gaze was calm yet carried an undeniable pressure, sweeping through the entire dining room.

Leona Sheridan wasn't going to admit it, so she chose to keep quiet.

The housemaids didn't dare make a sound.

Victor Langley snorted coldly, "Very well, no one admits it. From today on, anyone who entered the kitchen this morning will drink this porridge every meal, for a full month!"

...

Juliana didn't know what happened afterward, nor did she want to know.

During her lunch break, she went to Celestial Vista.

Since Leona Sheridan seemed to love returning to feudal society so much, then let her have it.

"You mean you want me to be the bait?" Rosalind Linton asked.

Juliana nodded, "There will be some danger, but you'll also gain more, like having an endless beauty budget every month, and... letting your son hold his ground in the Langley Family."

Upon hearing the last sentence, a glimmer appeared in Rosalind Linton's eyes.

But then she calmed herself.

"I was born beautiful, I don't need much of a beauty budget, but I must consider for my son's sake."

Juliana slightly raised the corners of her lips.

"Don't rush to answer. I'm asking you to get close to Victor Langley to force Leona Sheridan to show her hand, only by causing her to lose her composure can we find out if she's the real culprit behind harming my friend. But be clear, this road is extremely risky. If you still hold old feelings for Victor Langley, she could turn it against you, and then you might not even be able to save your own life."

She deliberately paused, "So think it over before answering me."

But Rosalind Linton, due to Juliana's words, tightened her fingers.

"That bastard deceived me by hiding his marital status when we were dating, and after I got pregnant, he vanished. I gave up my studies at nineteen to give birth to Aidan and never trusted any man since... I

thought my life would be like this, until unexpectedly, there's a chance to slap him in the face. Lately life's been too dull, so it's fine if you give me something to do."

Juliana's eyes held a faint hint of a smile, "Very well, I can at most help you smoothly get back to Victor Langley's side, ensuring Leona Sheridan can't touch you. But as for what comes next, that's up to you."

Rosalind Linton reminded her, "Victor Langley is very suspicious. If you make the slightest mistake, he won't trust you at all, to plot against him, your thoughts must be even more meticulous than his."

Juliana nodded, "Don't worry about that, it won't affect your son in the slightest. Ms. Linton, prepare to go to the Langley Residence, compete for yourself and your son."

As soon as she finished speaking, a sudden cramp hit her abdomen, causing her to nearly kneel to the ground in pain.

"What's wrong?" Rosalind Linton quickly stepped forward to support her.

Juliana pressed hard on her abdomen, her voice trembling: "My stomach... it hurts."

It hurt even more than last night's episode

Rosalind Linton frowned, "Your menstrual cycle wouldn't hurt like this, could it be you've eaten too much cold food recently?"

Juliana, sweating profusely, shook her head, "Since being diagnosed as difficult to conceive, I haven't liked eating cold things."

Rosalind Linton pondered for a moment, her eyes turned sharp, "Could it be poisoning?"

As soon as she finished speaking, Juliana's vision went black, and she collapsed...

Chapter 198: Jared Langley Suddenly Grabbed Her Wrist

Rosalind Linton didn't dare call an ambulance, but instead summoned Adrian Langley back.

By this time, Juliana Jacobs' abdominal pain had subsided, and she was much more conscious, but Adrian Langley insisted on taking her to Hospital 547.

After a round of checks, nothing was found amiss.

Rosalind Linton's gaze shifted, and she decisively said, "Let's go to the traditional Chinese medicine clinic and have a look."

The Chinese medicine practitioner carefully checked Juliana Jacobs' pulse and solemnly said: "You've consumed excessively cold items recently. You're naturally cold and deficient in blood, and the invasion of coldness has damaged your vital energy, hence the acute abdominal pain and other severe reactions. If you truly value your health, you should avoid these things."

These words left Juliana Jacobs completely baffled.

"I haven't even taken cold medicine recently."

She hadn't taken any medicine for her cold and had managed to pass it onto Elias Langley instead.

Rosalind Linton thought, "What kind of meals does the Langley Family usually have?"

In a flash, Juliana Jacobs came to a realization...

That afternoon, Juliana Jacobs returned to the Langley Residence right after work.

Leona Sheridan sneered, "I set the rule that you must be home by eight every night, and you're doing such a good job on the first day. You must have a guilty conscience, worried that your shady activities outside will be discovered, so you're rushing back to put on an act."

"Mom," Jared Langley objected, "she's already back on time, there's no need to criticize her."

Juliana Jacobs wasn't grateful for him speaking up.

"You're saying I'm wrong for working late or coming back on time, so I'm wrong no matter what in your eyes?"

Mama Dalton stood by Leona Sheridan, glancing disdainfully at Juliana Jacobs, "Isn't that so? If you were smart, you wouldn't seduce the young master. How can you not have any self-awareness and keep angering our madam?"

"Mama Dalton, this is none of your business, step aside," Jared Langley said.

Mama Dalton nodded slightly and walked away.

Juliana Jacobs glanced in the direction she left, which was the kitchen.

She said nothing more and turned to go upstairs to put her bag down.

Jared Langley followed her.

Opening the door, she noticed that the room's furnishings had changed.

She was looking around when Jared Langley came in, "I had someone tidy up your room, and noticed you brought few personal items, clearly you don't intend to stay long."

Juliana Jacobs turned to face him, her voice calm yet sharp, "In your family, what kind of person is entitled to privacy?"

Jared Langley heard her displeasure, approached her, and took her hand into his palm.

"You never gave me a sense of security. Juliana, I wanted to know what you're thinking, so I used my way to find the answer. Ask yourself honestly, do we seem like a couple about to get married?"

Juliana Jacobs didn't argue, she calmly asked in return, "In your memory, what were we before?"

Jared Langley pondered, frowning slightly from a mild headache.

"The first time I saw you, I thought you were very ordinary. But after you played me twice, I somehow found you particularly interesting. Yes, I said from a perspective of interest, you're the most suitable marriage partner, but it's not like I don't have feelings for you. Wasn't the time we lived together beautiful?"

Juliana Jacobs was perplexed.

Was he mixing up memories with someone else onto her?

"But you've seen your mother's attitude. Even the strongest feeling can still get torn open."

With that, she turned to distance herself from him.

However, Jared Langley suddenly grabbed her wrist, pulling her back forcefully, and as Juliana Jacobs fell into his embrace, he encircled her waist tightly with his arm, holding her in place.

Juliana Jacobs' whole body stiffened, she pushed against his chest as if facing an enemy, her voice trembling with tension, "What are you doing? Let me go!"

"I'm your fiancé; isn't it normal for me to do this?" Jared Langley said.

As he spoke, he released her wrist but seized her hair from behind.

"Jared, you can't handle any stress right now! I don't want to stress you either... I'll cooperate by staying where you can see me, but let's talk about other matters after you recover, okay?"

Juliana Jacobs felt severely uncomfortable with his behavior, turning her head to evade his attempts at kissing her.

Yet her resistance only fueled Jared Langley's urge to control, not letting go but rather tightening his grip on her neck.

"Isn't it all about marrying you after I recover?"

Jared Langley finished and moved to kiss her again.

Juliana Jacobs' head was firmly controlled by him, just about to be kissed.

Her heart raced uncontrollably.

Just then,

"Knock, knock, knock."

The butler's voice timely sounded at the door: "Young Master, Miss Jacobs, the master and third young master have returned. They're inviting you both to join them for dinner in the dining room."

Jared Langley's actions suddenly paused.

He took a deep breath, forcefully suppressing the dark tide in his eyes, and released her.

Juliana Jacobs immediately stepped back several steps, quickly fixing her disheveled collar, her fingertips still slightly trembling.

She tried to control her breathing, seriously saying, "Jared, what you need now is rest, and what we need between us is to get along well! If you keep acting like this, I'm afraid even the slightest goodwill we have can't withstand the turmoil."

She reminded Jared Langley that forcing her might lead to irreparable consequences.

"Do I look like someone who responds to threats?" Jared Langley said.

"Then go ahead and try!"

Juliana Jacobs straightened her back, no longer hiding her angry emotions.

Jared Langley stared into her eyes full of resistance and devoid of any past affection, eventually feeling as if something pricked him. He slowly exhaled and abandoned any thoughts of doing more to her.

A moment later, they both went downstairs one after the other.

Jared Langley pulled out a chair for Juliana Jacobs, and with nothing to say, she sat down.

Leona Sheridan complained loudly, "Haven't had dinner, and already can't speak?"

Juliana Jacobs looked at her, confused.

Leona Sheridan's anger flared at her "ignorant" demeanor, "Doesn't your mother teach you to say thank you?"

Juliana Jacobs calmly replied, "I don't have a mother, so I lack manners, which is why I'm only fit to speak to someone like you."

"You..."

"Enough, are we having dinner or not?" Victor Langley frowned and said.

The butler quickly began serving dishes, and Leona Sheridan snorted, her gaze shifting elsewhere.

Another stew cup was placed in front of Juliana Jacobs.

"How come there's more?" she asked instinctively.

Jared Langley, sitting beside her as if nothing had happened, smiled softly, "As long as you're home, I'll have the kitchen prepare a nourishing stew cup for you."

"So this is your idea?" Juliana Jacobs asked with hidden meaning.

Jared Langley didn't grasp her words, scooping a spoonful of soup naturally to her lips.

"This pigeon soup has been simmered for over four hours; it tastes great, have a try."

Juliana Jacobs leaned back slightly, unsure if it was reluctance to drink the soup or resistance to his feeding.

Adrian Langley, watching from the side, spoke up, "Bro, if she doesn't want it, don't force it."

Leona Sheridan immediately snapped, "Outrageous! Since when is it your place to speak at this table? Take your bowl and eat by the door!"

Adrian Langley lowered his head.

That's the treatment he received in the Langley Family; even with his father present, not a word was spoken for him.

Soon after, Leona Sheridan redirected her ire to Juliana Jacobs, "The soup was specially prepared by my son for you. Drink it, or we'll find someone to force it down, your choice!"

Juliana Jacobs looked up at her, her gaze intensifying, "What's in this soup that you insist I must drink it, Mrs. Langley?"

Leona Sheridan was startled for a moment but quickly regained composure.

She wouldn't find out.

She absolutely wouldn't find out.

As Leona Sheridan was about to reply to Juliana Jacobs, a housemaid hurried in to report, "Master, madam, some police officers have come outside... saying someone here is involved with illegal substances."

Chapter 199: Elias Langley Holds Her Captive

Victor Langley immediately frowned, "Nonsense, the Langley Family has always been clean, how could there be such a thing?"

However, as soon as he spoke, he recalled the incident not long ago when Isabelle Sinclair had drugged Juliana Jacobs, and a hint of hesitation crossed his mind.

He shot a cold glance at Leona Sheridan, leaving a remark: "You've really set a great example."

Then he stood up and walked towards the living room.

As he moved, everyone immediately followed.

In the living room, four policemen stood waiting. The leader showed his badge and said, "Mr. Langley, we received a report alleging that your kitchen has contraband drugs hidden. Please cooperate with the search."

"Who told you that? The Langley Family can't tolerate such things!"

As Victor Langley finished speaking, Juliana Jacobs stepped forward and said, "I called the police."

Victor Langley looked at her with incredulous shock and anger in his eyes.

"Juliana, you usually don't get along with my wife, and a little argument is fine, but bringing the police into the house... Is the reputation of the Langley Family and your future family worth so little to you?"

The words were harsh, but this was the effect Juliana wanted.

She had no intention of leaving a good impression on him.

"If Chairman Langley wants to clear things up, I'm afraid you'll have to let the police conduct a search."

"You..." Victor Langley suppressed his anger.

He wasn't Leona Sheridan, and wouldn't lash out like an ignorant villager.

"Very well, the Langleys have always abided by the law. Since it's come to this, let the police conduct a thorough search to prove the innocence of the Langley Family!"

But a few minutes later, Victor Langley was met with a harsh reality.

The police found an inconspicuous brown vial with a rubber dropper in the kitchen spice rack.

On-site testing confirmed it was indeed contraband drugs.

Everyone present, except Juliana Jacobs and Adrian Langley, was stunned.

"Whose is this?" the police asked.

"We Langleys never touch such things. Who knows where it came from?" said Leona Sheridan.

"The kitchen has surveillance. It'll be clear once you check." Juliana calmly replied.

"There's no surveillance in the kitchen! You've only been here a few days; you don't understand anything and you're trying to slander the Langley Family? You're simply..."

"There is surveillance. I installed it."

Leona Sheridan's sharp rebuke was abruptly interrupted.

Elias Langley stepped in, his voice cool as he took over the conversation.

"Second brother?" Victor Langley found it unbelievable.

"The house has been unstable recently, and the incidents always relate to the kitchen, which is a blind spot for surveillance, so I installed a few cameras as a precaution."

Leona Sheridan widened her eyes, "It's such a small place, and you installed several cameras? Are you trying to create a 3D panoramic view?"

As soon as she finished speaking, Mama Dalton's legs gave way, and she collapsed on the floor with a thud.

"This bottle... It's just concentrated Chinese medicine for the cold, not contraband!" Mama Dalton palely defended herself.

At this time, the police also brought up the surveillance footage.

The footage clearly showed Mama Dalton stealthily dropping a few drops from the small bottle into Juliana's tonic about half an hour ago.

"I'm being wronged! I... I only wanted to add some medicine for the cold to prevent Miss Jacobs from being able to conceive. I didn't know..."

"Mama Dalton!" Jared Langley roared in anger, "Why did you do this!"

Mama Dalton knelt before Jared Langley, "Young Master! Madam raised you with great care for over twenty years; she really doesn't get along with Miss Jacobs. I can't bear to see her so stressed and with headaches because of her... For the sake of Madam, for the peace of this home, please break up with Miss Jacobs!"

"Break up?"

Jared Langley's head suddenly throbbed with pain, and his body swayed.

Adrian Langley, who was closest to him, quickly supported him.

Leona Sheridan ran over, "Son, don't break up, Mom didn't ask you to break up."

"You lied to me; you always lie to me!" Jared Langley's eyes were blood red.

Seeing this, Victor Langley immediately instructed Adrian Langley,

"Quick, take your brother upstairs! Call a doctor!"

Adrian Langley and Leona Sheridan quickly helped Jared up the stairs.

Mama Dalton wanted to follow but was stopped by the police.

"You need to come with us."

"It's really not me; someone must have switched the medicine inside. I've never touched any contraband!" Mama Dalton cried out in grievance.

"Whether you did or not, we will investigate thoroughly. Now, please cooperate."

Without further ado, the police took her away.

Leona Sheridan was halfway up the stairs when she saw Mama Dalton being taken away and wanted to come down to stop it.

Victor Langley said, "Do you want your son, or do you want her?"

Leona Sheridan hesitated for a moment.

Ultimately, she could only watch as the police left with Mama Dalton.

She glared fiercely at Juliana Jacobs before turning to continue up the stairs.

Victor Langley took a deep breath and tiredly looked at Elias Langley, "After all, Mama Dalton belongs to your sister-in-law, and this..."

Elias Langley interrupted him expressionlessly, "Exactly, which is why it's not appropriate for me to intervene. Moreover, I suggest that you, big brother, should also distance yourself from her."

Which means Mama Dalton isn't getting out of this.

Victor Langley understood the implication, sighed heavily, and also headed upstairs.

And so, a scene of chaos came to an end.

Juliana Jacobs pursed her lips, preparing to return to her room. Meeting Elias Langley's scrutinizing gaze, she raised an eyebrow and left.

The family doctor came over, and Jared Langley's condition stabilized.

Leona Sheridan wanted Elias Langley to plead for Mama Dalton, but Victor Langley stopped her.

The two of them quarreled again.

Juliana Jacobs didn't care.

Right now, she had to think of a foolproof plan: one that would allow Rosalind Linton to appear naturally in front of Victor Langley without arousing suspicion; and at the same time, ensure that Adrian Langley's previous feigned amnesia wouldn't set off Victor Langley's wrath.

Finding a perfect solution to satisfy both of these stringent conditions was quite taxing.

She thought as she dried her hair.

The window suddenly opened, and Elias Langley climbed in from outside.

Juliana Jacobs looked away to grab a hairdryer.

"Who switched Mama Dalton's medicine?" Elias Langley asked as he approached her.

Juliana Jacobs answered without hesitation, "I distracted Leona Sheridan. Adrian switched it. The kitchen cameras were set up by him beforehand."

"Where did he get such drugs?" Elias Langley inherently carried a sense of intimidation when expressionless.

Juliana Jacobs pressed her lips, "I don't know. Why, are you interrogating me to clear Mama Dalton's name?"

"Mama Dalton merely tried to harm you with cold medicine, and you put her in prison... Isn't that a bit much?" Elias Langley's voice was devoid of emotion.

Juliana Jacobs made no pretense, a cold smirk tugging at her lips.

"She wanted to make me infertile, so I let her do some jail time. It's quite fair. If you want to be just and impartial, then arrest me. It was my idea, nothing to do with Adrian Langley."

Elias Langley pulled her into his embrace, and as Juliana struggled, he held her tight.

Chapter 200: He Will Be Her Strength

"Alright, before I send you in, let me have a little taste."

With that, he kissed her.

Juliana tried to dodge, but he held the back of her head.

He seized her breath with undeniable force.

Juliana was nearly out of breath when he finally released her, resting his forehead against hers and breathing heavily.

"Didn't say you did something wrong, why are you upset? I'm worried Adrian Langley might not be thorough enough and drag you into trouble. Such a serious matter, why didn't you tell me first? Juliana..."

Elias Langley held the back of her neck.

"...Have you not realized yet that I'm your man?"

The searing breath approached once again, throwing Juliana's breathing into chaos, almost pressing against his lips.

"I was also afraid of implicating you..." Her voice carried a trace of grievance, "that's why I let him go."

Elias chuckled lowly, his fingertips brushing over her lip corner: "Do whatever you want, but things with risks, you must tell me first."

His gaze was calm and determined, "Always remember, I am your backing no matter what."

He had seen clearly what happened tonight.

Juliana's retaliation was no longer a tooth-for-a-tooth but a more daunting suppression.

Since she understood how to protect herself, all he needed was to be her most robust confidence.

Juliana was stunned by his words.

The man pinched her face, smiling: "Did my words move you, Miss Jacobs? Do you love me a little more now?"

Juliana snapped back to reality and averted her gaze, stubbornly saying, "No, not at all."

Elias chuckled and took the hairdryer from her hands, sitting her down on the stool to dry her hair.

For some reason, Juliana always felt that he particularly favored the scabs on the back of her head.

Whenever he had the chance, his fingertips would linger over them.

After drying her hair, Juliana put away the hairdryer and tried to chase him away.

"Why can't I stay?" the man asked.

"This is the Langley Residence, after what happened last time, I'm still scared to death. What if... what if someone comes in?"

"Then come to my room, no one dares to intrude there."

"No, I still have to sneak back in the morning."

Elias chuckled softly at her words.

"When can we stop sneaking around like this?"

Juliana bit her lip at his words.

Jared's condition showed no progress, but she had to hurry to do what needed to be done in the Langley Family.

In the end, she couldn't chase away the man, and they nestled in the same quilt.

Juliana lay with her back to him, her tied-up hair askew to one side, and Elias saw the red marks on her neck.

Not hickeys, but from a hand's grasp.

His gaze darkened as he hugged her from behind, his hand slowly touching her lower abdomen, the warmth from his palm making Juliana squint in comfort.

"Do those medicines have a severe impact on you?" he asked.

"The doctor said as long as I don't come into contact with them again, I'll be fine. They were going to prescribe me medicine, but since it's inconvenient with me staying here, I didn't take it."

Elias paused for a second, "I'll take you to get checked tomorrow."

Juliana turned over with a smile, nestling into his embrace.

"It's fine, it's just that I've always had a cold womb, so the reaction was that strong."

"Cold?" he chuckled lowly, "I have a 'heating device' here, want me to warm you up?"

Without waiting for Juliana's agreement, he proceeded...

The next day, when Juliana woke up, he was gone again.

After washing up, she went downstairs, where the entire Langley Family was seated neatly in the dining room.

Jared saw her and pulled her to sit beside him.

Victor was still talking to Elias, not even giving her a glance, his manner indifferent like a stranger's.

This was precisely the result Juliana wanted; while calculating Leona Sheridan's lackeys, it also alienated Victor Langley—a two-pronged strategy.

She lowered her gaze, focusing on her breakfast: a bowl of truffle abalone porridge, a plate of beef buns, accompanied by milk and blueberries.

She wondered if Elias had specially arranged this, as it was all her favorite food.

On the other side, Victor Langley and Elias Langley's conversation continued.

"Why the sudden idea of coming back to live here?" Victor asked.

Elias huffed in displeasure, "If I don't return to oversee things, this Langley Family might soon become a cesspool, dragging me down with it."

Victor was momentarily at a loss for words at his response.

Leona Sheridan mumbled weakly, "Second Brother's words seem unfair. After all, it's just little household squabbles. Behind closed doors, everything can be settled nicely. But then some outsiders deliberately stir trouble, insisting on turning family matters into police cases, bringing everything to light with malicious intent!"

Juliana ate her bun, coming to a realization, "Turns out, any issue can be settled behind closed doors."

Leona Sheridan gave her a cold look, "Isn't it? I think you just can't stand our Langley Family being at peace. Either you're up to no good, or you're just bad luck."

Elias didn't lift an eyelid, slowly wiping his mouth with a napkin, his voice icy as he continued, "According to Sister-in-law, if you cover up the wrong things, they magically turn into gold? When did the Langley Family change its rules, weighing in on who has the thicker face and the tighter mouth, regardless of right and wrong?"

"I'm your sister-in-law, how could you..."

"Second Brother is right!" Victor Langley interrupted her, "Don't forget, you still need to go to the police station and clarify things with Mama Dalton."

Leona Sheridan's face turned pale.

She had hoped to use breakfast as a chance to ask Second Brother to speak on her behalf, sparing her the trouble.

But seeing how things were going, she could only consult her lawyer about how to sever ties with Mama Dalton.

At this moment, Quinn Shepherd walked into the dining room, coming directly to Elias's side and whispering two sentences.

No expression showed on Elias's face, "If she's coming, then she's coming, do I need to arrange a welcome ceremony?"

"Second Brother, who's coming?" Victor Langley asked.

Elias remained silent; Quinn glanced at his expression and answered for him, "It's Second Miss Sinclair, Florence Sinclair. Miss Isabelle mishandled things and was punished to kneel in the ancestral hall for seven days upon return. Old Mr. Sinclair sent Second Miss Sinclair here to clear up misunderstandings with the Langley Family."

Yes, it was a misunderstanding between the Sinclair and Langley Families, unrelated to the victim surnamed Jacobs.

Juliana smirked sarcastically and continued to sip her porridge.

"Oh, well, this requires a reception. Leona, quickly arrange for another guest room to be cleaned up."

Elias didn't say anything, stood up, and prepared to leave.

Juliana gave him a glance, her mouth saying she wouldn't go but feeling anxious inside.

She stopped eating, wiped her mouth, and said to Jared, "You have a follow-up check-up today, don't you?"

Jared looked pleasantly surprised, "You remember?"

Juliana nodded, "I've remembered all your doctor's instructions, let's go, I'll accompany you."

He was injured because of her, so she should accompany him.

Juliana didn't give Elias a look and left with Jared.

The man preparing to get in the car, his gaze darkened.

At the hospital, Juliana patiently accompanied Jared through all the tests.

As they were nearing the end, the primary doctor hurried over.

"Young Master, after re-evaluating your condition with the specialists, we believe a special full-body nerve conduction function test is necessary."

"What's special about it?" Jared asked.

The doctor spoke steadily, "To ensure precise results, you'll need to remove all your clothes. And since unexpected risks may arise during the process, someone needs to accompany you throughout."

A dark look crossed Jared's eyes, and he turned to Juliana.

If she was willing to accompany him in, did it mean they wouldn't have to sleep separately tonight?