

## **Panicking 251**

Chapter 251: Juliana Jacobs Is Surprised by His Appearance at This Moment

Juliana Jacobs' gaze turned fierce, "So how do you think someone as shrewd as Mason Sheridan ended up in a vegetative state?"

Dylan Paxton was genuinely stunned by her words.

Soon after, his kind face was completely overshadowed by a sinister look.

"Good, very good, I can let you go."

Then, he forced a cold smile, suppressing his anger, his tone still calm.

"When I speak of rules, they must be followed. No one has broken them until now. Tomorrow, you will become my lawful wife, and accidents will soon follow. According to the law, as your husband and sole heir, everything of yours will be perfectly inherited by me, including 'Genesis'."

Juliana's pupils contracted swiftly; indeed, Kenton was still too small, encountering someone as ruthless as Dylan was truly eye-opening.

At this moment, the elevator door opened with a "ding," and a secretary walked out silently, quickly approaching Dylan Paxton's side, leaning in to whisper a few words.

The indifference of having everything under control on Dylan's face slightly faltered, and the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes deepened imperceptibly.

"Interesting, let him come up."

Within two minutes, the elevator door opened again, and a man who hadn't been seen for several days emerged.

Juliana was surprised to see him appear at this moment.

Elias Langley's gaze first swept steadily around the room; seeing Juliana sitting there safely, he felt a weight lift off his chest.

Then he turned his gaze to Dylan Paxton, his voice void of emotion.

"Long time no see, how is Old Mr. Paxton's health?"

Dylan remained seated, smiling "amiably."

"Not bad, though I'm old and these old bones haven't scattered yet. You're in a different position now, and finding time in your busy schedule to boldly come to my little domain really makes this old man feel honored."

As he spoke, Elias had already sat down beside Juliana.

"Old Mr. Paxton jests; you have disciples and old friends all over the world, and so many seek your teachings but find no way in. Today, I was just anxious to visit with my spouse. I hope you can forgive the intrusion."

"Your spouse?"

Dylan's face just flashed with surprise when he saw Elias pick up the teacup in front of Juliana and take a sip without any awkwardness.

He instantly understood but dared not believe it.

"You two are together?"

Elias smiled, "We got our marriage certificate."

Dylan glanced at Juliana, then returned his gaze to Elias, pulling a smile at the corner of his lips devoid of warmth.

"Last time, when you married into the Sinclair Family, I was too busy to prepare a gift. This time, let me make it up to you with an Ancient Jade Inkstone, symbolizing... unwavering loyalty. You should take it back."

He gave a signal to the secretary, who hurriedly went to fetch it.

"But the Sinclair Family actually agreed for you to marry a woman from another family. This really makes me look at Old Man Sinclair's pettiness with new eyes."

Elias knew well the hint of provocation in Dylan's words.

He didn't respond, just calmly held Juliana's hand, rising with her.

"We appreciate Old Mr. Paxton's gesture, but we won't disturb you any longer today. Goodbye."

With that, he intended to leave.

But Dylan's voice called from behind, "Wait."

His gaze turned to Juliana, "Have your wife leave the antidote for what's in the incense."

Elias paused, glancing sideways at Juliana, and as if comprehending something, his lips curved slightly with a tone of helpless indulgence, "My spouse is playful, sorry for letting Old Mr. Paxton see this."

At this point, Dylan finally confirmed that he had been fooled by this little blond girl.

Elias said no more, taking Juliana's coat from the chair and holding her hand as they headed straight to the elevator.

As they neared the elevator, Dylan's voice came again, "Elias, your wife's eyebrows and eyes do bear some resemblance to Mrs. Sinclair."

Elias did not break stride, leading Juliana into the elevator before turning to meet Dylan's scrutinizing gaze.

"Every time I send samples to Kingsford for testing, I fear the comparison results you get are even more authentic than the ones I receive, aren't they, Old Mr. Paxton?"

Then, he pressed the down button.

Dylan's lips tightened abruptly, and the remaining words caught in his throat.

So, he had long been aware but had never exposed it.

Inside the elevator, Juliana tried to pull her hand away, but Elias only held it tighter.

Sudden familiarity greeted them as the elevator opened to reveal the familiar café scene.

They walked out together; they needed to cross the lobby to take the public elevator downstairs.

Juliana noticed Evan Grant hadn't left.

He stood silently by the table, seemingly waiting for her.

"Let go of me first, I want to say a few words to him."

Elias brushed his fingers over the back of her hand before releasing it.

Juliana approached Evan, who was about to speak, but in the next second, "Slap!"

A sharp slap landed squarely on Evan's face.

Elias turned his face away, looking elsewhere.

The burning sting spread across Evan's cheek, his eyes filled with disbelief and confusion.

"Evan Grant, you're utterly rotten to the core."

Juliana's voice was low and husky, strained with extreme anger.

"Isaac Grant approached Dylan Paxton to have us both killed. And now you're kneeling to lick that old man's boots. Was your pride, your disdain all an act for me?"

Evan frowned at her words.

He wanted to explain, but Juliana continued, "Was sending Mason Sheridan to the Langley Family your scheme too? You think if I suffer at the Langley Family, I'll remember your kindness? Did you rename yourself Naïve?"

"No, listen, I..."

Evan still looked like he needed to defend himself, but Juliana interrupted, pointing at his nose.

"Because of you, Tim Paxton was sent to Kenton. This blood debt also has your part. Evan Grant, from today, it's only enmity between us. You'd better pray you don't fall into my hands."

With that, Juliana turned and headed for the public elevator.

Elias hurried to catch up with her.

As he passed Evan, he didn't forget to cast a meaningful glance.

Evan ground his molars, loosening his tie, unable to find a place to vent his pent-up anger.

Outside the Cardinal Art Club.

A red flag car awaited at the foot of the steps, with Quinn Shepherd in the driver's seat.

As Juliana stepped out the door, the night breeze reminded her of something, and she suddenly turned back.

Elias was right behind, about to drape her coat over her.

But her hurried turn sent both coat and herself crashing into his embrace.

Chapter 252: Swipe Your Card, I Don't Care

Elias Langley tightened his arms, encircling her in his embrace, his voice low and intoxicating. "Why do you still want to go back?"

Juliana Jacobs looked up and glared at him. Her eyes still burning with anger towards Dylan Paxton, Evan Grant, and an inexplicable annoyance towards Elias. Her tone was sharp.

"Raine Kane is still up there, being controlled by Dylan's people. She's your subordinate after all; aren't you going to do something?"

Watching her eyes sparkle with anger, a faint smile flickered across Elias's eyes, but his arms held her tighter, not allowing her to break free.

"I take care of everything related to you. How could I abandon her? I've already told her to go and pack her things."

"Why is she packing? Are you firing her?"

Elias didn't answer her question and instead lifted her up directly.

"Get in the car, Mrs. Langley. Do you actually like this place?"

Juliana was momentarily stunned and instinctively wrapped her arms around his neck.

The chill from their fight a few days ago hadn't completely faded. She kept a straight face, struggling to get down, but the man held her even tighter, moving her into the backseat.

The car door closed, and the space inside instantly became cramped. Juliana turned her face to stare out the window, but her tightly pressed lips and heaving chest betrayed her turbulent emotions.

Elias, with good humor, adjusted the coat draped over her shoulders and playfully pinched her earlobe.

Juliana became more annoyed by his antics, waving her hand near her ear to swat at him, but missed his hand.

Then she turned around, her voice deliberately cold and hard, "You just told Dylan Paxton about our marriage. Are you ready for that?"

As soon as she spoke, the car suddenly jolted sharply.

Caught off guard, Juliana let out a low scream, her body tilting towards Elias due to inertia, and once again, she fell into his arms.

Elias caught her steadily, enclosing her in his embrace, but his gaze sharply caught Quinn Shepherd's eyes reflected in the rearview mirror, not fully withdrawn.

Their eyes met briefly in the mirror.

Silent, yet more piercing than the fiercest warning.

Quinn's fingers clenched tightly around the steering wheel, knuckles turning white, as he quickly steadied the car, his voice carrying a subtle tension, "Sorry, boss, I didn't notice."

Elias said nothing, just withdrew his gaze calmly.

At that moment, Juliana in his arms lifted her head and saw his tense jawline.

She mistakenly thought her earlier words had pressured him, her heart softened inexplicably, mixed with some anger and an unspeakable grievance, and she pounded lightly on his chest.

"If you didn't come, I could have left that awful place tonight myself. I don't need you."

Elias could tell she didn't want him to offend Dylan Paxton.

He lowered his eyes, looking at her, the cold in his eyes dissipating as if blown away by a spring breeze.

A gentle smile crept onto his lips, "But I need you. Don't you care about me?"

The sharp words at the tip of Juliana's tongue faded away when she met his dark, weary eyes.

"I don't want to care about you."

Juliana rested her cheek back against his strong chest, quietly listening to his steady and powerful heartbeat.

Elias tightened his arms, his chin gently touching the top of her head.

A while later, the car stopped in front of the hotel.

"You go up first; I'll be up to get you soon," Elias said.

Juliana didn't understand why he said that.

She wanted to ask but suddenly sensed an unusual subtlety in the car.

And that subtlety emanated from him and Quinn.

So she said no more and entered the hotel.

The car drove into the hotel parking lot and stopped slowly but didn't turn off.

Quinn gripped the steering wheel tightly, his knuckles turning white from the force, cold sweat in his palms.

"Boss..."

His voice trembled slightly, distinctly heard in the closed car cabin.

Elias gazed steadily at the orange street view through the windshield, his voice neutral.

"You should understand why I didn't tell you about registering the marriage. I'll give you a chance, speak up yourself."

Quinn's last shred of hope shattered completely.

His shoulders slumped as he took a deep breath, as if gathering all his strength.

"I interfered with a blood sample submission once, and the investigation into the information about the lady's admission to the Arlan Children's Home... I leaked it. But only... those two times. Boss, I... I..."

With that, Quinn was about to unbuckle his seatbelt and get out.

Apparently intending to walk to the back and make a more humble plea.

"Sit, say it from there."

Elias' tone was calm but carried an invisible pressure.

Quinn's body froze, maintaining a half-turned, awkward posture, not daring to look back.

"My uncle faced some trouble, but actually... he was deceived. He funded my education in the past, so when my aunt came to plead with me, I felt very conflicted. I couldn't misuse your name for personal reasons, but I couldn't ignore him either. At that time, Old Mr. Paxton... he voluntarily helped me."

Quinn was very conflicted.

"I could have refused, but they already released the person. I... I lost my mind... and agreed to do two things that wouldn't violate my conscience as repayment, just those two times. Mr. Langley, I betrayed your trust, I'm sorry! Whatever you decide to do, I have no complaints."

Quinn finished speaking, as if unloading a massive burden, and exhaled heavily.

He knew Elias's ways; he'd never gone easy on traitors.

However, Elias didn't immediately speak.

After a long silence, he finally said, "For so many years, you stayed by my side like a friend. You can't imagine my feelings when I realized you had issues... but fortunately, I've been through a lot and look at things lightly."

"Boss..." Quinn was filled with guilt.

"If these two pieces of information let the other party find the Sinclair Family's daughter first, it would give them leverage to blackmail the Sinclairs. Do you know how serious that is?"

Quinn lowered his head, looking pained.

"Tomorrow someone will reassign you to another department; hand your work over to Zachary York."

"Mr. Langley..." Quinn's face was tear-streaked, "So you and Miss Jacobs registered to throw smoke in the eyes of everyone?"

Elias didn't respond to his words, just got out of the car.

When Juliana returned to the room, Raine Kane had already packed her things.

She was used to keeping all her things in her bag, so she could always be ready.

Seeing Juliana, she immediately asked, "Juliana, are you okay?"

Juliana shook her head, "What about you?"

Raine looked a bit embarrassed, "Sorry, Mr. Langley criticized me, I'll improve."

"As long as you're okay."

The worry Juliana had been carrying for her finally eased.

"Pack up quickly; Mr. Langley said you can't stay at a hotel while in Kingsford; you must return home."

Juliana was startled by her words, "Home? Which home?"

"How many homes do you have?" Elias, leaning against the door, asked.

Juliana glanced back at him, displeased, "I'm not moving; I'll just stay here. Anyway, it's your card, I'm not worried about spending it."

Elias walked in with a smile and started packing her luggage.

"If madam likes it, even if it's a presidential suite or a palace's inner court, you could live in it, but not today. This is our first time returning to Kingsford as husband and wife; it must be proper and aboveboard."

Although Juliana said she wouldn't move, Elias still led her into the car with her hand.

She was surprised to find Quinn was gone.

Raine drove, and the car didn't head for any known luxury residential area. Instead, it entered a quiet alley lined with wutong trees on both sides and finally stopped in front of a humble red-lacquered door.

There was no plaque above the door, just a small, color-faded old-fashioned doorplate embedded beside it that read: Number 17 Dovian Street.

Entering, they found an entirely different world.

It was a well-ordered quadrangle courtyard, with blue brick paving, walkways connecting the main room with the east and west wings. The furniture was in a simple Ming-style, without any unnecessary adornments, but the material and craftsmanship were exquisite, exuding a low-profile, understated richness.

As Juliana quietly assessed this space that aligned perfectly with his status and character, she hadn't even stepped fully into the main room before Elias embraced her from behind, his warm lips landing on the sensitive spot behind her ear.

Chapter 253: The Only Mistress of the House

"Welcome, Mrs. Langley, to your official residence at Langley Residence."

His low voice carried a hint of barely noticeable sigh.

Juliana, feeling ticklish, shrank her neck and raised an eyebrow, "Sneaking in the middle of the night, is this what you call officially moving in?"

Elias chuckled, his lips almost brushing against her earlobe.

"It's too late today, everyone is asleep. Tomorrow, I'll make it up to you with a grand welcome ceremony, and we'll celebrate for three days and nights."

His words made Juliana laugh, instantly dissolving her pretense of toughness.

"Forget the welcome ceremony, let's have a farewell one instead. This place is so quiet, I might as well take over and kick you out."

"That won't do."

Elias's arms gradually tightened, making her more acutely feel his change.

"The nest can be handed over, but how can the lady manage without a dedicated servant by her side."

Juliana blushed uncontrollably, her voice trembling as she said, "Let me go, I don't want to."

Elias didn't let go.

"Little fox, deliberately ignoring my calls, making me want to fly to you immediately, and now you're saying no. Say it again, do you want it or not?"

Before Juliana could open her mouth to respond, he had already lowered his head and locked her lips.

Just as Juliana's consciousness was gradually becoming blurry, almost dragged into the abyss by him, Elias's phone rang, abruptly tearing apart the romantic atmosphere in the room.

It was Mrs. Sinclair calling.

Elias quickly calmed his breathing, but still kept Juliana tightly embraced as he answered the call.

"Elias, are you back in Kingsford?" Mrs. Sinclair's voice was tinged with exhaustion, "I want to talk to you about Isabelle."

"Master's wife, not today."

"But Isabelle is still in the hospital, and she's in a lot of pain..."

Mrs. Sinclair's tone carried a mother's anxiety.

Juliana pursed her lips and looked elsewhere.

Elias looked at the person in his arms, whose face was still flushed, and said more firmly: "Today is my wife's first time home, I'm sorry."

There was a long silence on the other end of the line.

After a while, Mrs. Sinclair softly said, "Has she seen Helena's memorial plaque?"

Juliana's eyes flickered slightly.

Elias did not answer this question.

Mrs. Sinclair seemed to receive some sort of tacit understanding, and her tone deepened.

"You have to give our Sinclair family a good explanation for this matter."

With that, she hung up the phone.

Elias placed the phone back in its place, let out a barely audible sigh, and leaned down to continue the kiss that had been interrupted.

But Juliana turned her head away, placing her hand on his chest, her eyes clearing and filled with a hint of jealousy.

"You didn't come back for me at all, it was because Isabelle got injured that you rushed back, wasn't it?"

"No, it was because of you." Elias's gaze held hers steadily.

"I don't believe you."

Juliana tried to pull away from his embrace, with a woman's unique blend of coquettishness and stubborn persistence.

Elias, seeing her like this, chuckled softly and didn't offer up any more explanations. Instead, he scooped her up and headed towards the bathroom.

As he walked, he whispered in her ear, his warm breath continuing to tease at her nerves.

"Right now, nothing is more important than helping you take a bath. Soon, Mrs. Langley, you'll know just how true my feelings are."

Juliana's cheeks flushed with heat from his sudden actions and straightforward words.

The little bit of resentment she had felt earlier melted away completely under his forceful yet tender approach.

All she could do was bury her face in the crook of his neck, letting him carry her into the steamy, intimate atmosphere of the bathroom.

Juliana didn't know how the night passed; she was exhausted but slept deeply.

The next morning, she woke up in Elias's arms, feeling a sense of tranquil bliss.

She wanted to trace the man's eyebrows, but Elias, eyes closed, caught her hand.

"Waking up with my wife every morning, what more could one ask for?"

Juliana tried to pull her hand back, but he opened his eyes and kissed her hand gently by his lips.

"Good morning, madam."

Juliana's heart felt like it was being tickled by a feather, leaving her feeling tingly.

Her ears grew warm, but she didn't pull her hand away, just whispered in response, "...Good morning."

After washing up, they went to the dining hall located in the east wing of the courtyard.

As the dishes were being set up, a middle-aged man with a steady demeanor approached with a smile and bowed slightly to Juliana.

"Good morning, madam. I'm the steward here, you can just call me Old Fay. If there's anything you need around the house, feel free to let me know."

Juliana smiled and nodded.

Steward Fay then gestured to a simply dressed middle-aged couple standing nearby.

"This is Old Dalton and his wife Mrs. Dalton, who's in charge of managing the garden. They're responsible for the flowers, trees, and daily cleaning."

Mrs. Dalton smiled plainly and added along with Old Fay's introduction, "Yes, sir usually doesn't return for meals, so we just handle it casually. But if you, madam, have any special cravings, just give a word, and the chef will come right away."

Upon hearing this, Juliana paused momentarily with her spoon in midair, her poised smile fading away. She remained silent, simply keeping her eyes lowered at the porridge in her bowl.

Steward Fay's expression changed, and he immediately reprimanded her, "Mrs. Dalton! What nonsense are you spouting! This is the madam, the only mistress of Langley Manor!"

"Yes, yes," Old Dalton chimed in quickly, sensing the tension, "she's the lady of the house, we must address her as such."

Mrs. Dalton, startled by the scolding, looked somewhat aggrieved.

"But...but half a year ago, when Miss Sinclair's memorial plaque was brought in, the steward also asked us to address her as 'mistress'... Now there are two 'mistresses', how should we distinguish between them?"

Elias put down his chopsticks and placed a hand on Juliana's shoulder, speaking with a quiet voice that made everyone hold their breath.

"Juliana is the sole mistress in this house. In my opinion, there is no such thing as male superiority; she and I are equals. Do you understand what I mean?"

Steward Fay quickly responded, "Understood, understood. Whether it's you or madam who want to dine at home, the chef will always be ready."

Just then, a woman dressed in a white suit walked in.

"Sir, your strategic cooperation meeting with the head of the energy storage enterprises is scheduled in an hour."

Elias looked at her and said, "Last night when you and Quinn Shepherd were transitioning responsibilities, I forgot to tell you to reschedule all my meetings this morning."

The woman nodded and went out to make phone calls in the courtyard.

Seeing Juliana's puzzled expression, Elias explained, "Her name is Zachary York, and she'll be taking over Quinn Shepherd's role from now on."

Juliana initially wanted to ask what happened to Quinn Shepherd, but on second thought, being reassigned must mean he had committed some unforgivable mistake, so she instead asked, "Why are you rescheduling the meeting?"

Elias smiled and asked, "Have you finished eating?"

Juliana nodded.

Elias stood up, "The morning's time is reserved for my wife. Let's go."

At the traditional medicine clinic, Juliana realized that she had taken the last pill the night before, and today he was taking her to adjust the prescription.

They directly entered the consulting room without needing to queue.

The consulting doctor looked exactly like the elder from Kenton who asserted she wouldn't live past thirty.

Elias told her this doctor was the twin brother of that elder.

Looking at the room filled with pennants, perhaps this one's medical skills were better than the other's.

During the consultation, apart from the diagnosis process, this twin mostly criticized his older brother: rigid and inflexible since childhood, with the same meals three times a day, the epitome of an obsessive-compulsive.

After his rambling conclusion, the new prescription was ready too.

Just as they were about to leave the consulting room, Juliana couldn't help herself and looked toward Elias, softly asking, "Will this medicine work?"

Before Elias could answer, the talkative doctor perked up and loudly said, "Girl, my brother is invincible, but the only one who can beat him is me. Rest assured and take the medicine, I guarantee you'll live longer than him!"

He pointed at Elias.

"You'll keep your word."

Elias left those words behind, taking Juliana out the door.

Afterward, he went to the pharmacy to get the medicine, leaving Juliana to sit behind the screen in the lobby and wait.

Juliana had just taken out her phone to handle some work when she heard a nurse call out, "Mrs. Sinclair, you've arrived."

Chapter 254: The One Who Made Her Childhood Less Lonely Was Elias

Juliana Jacobs instinctively lifted her head.

Outside the screen that only let shadows pass through, she saw a nurse warmly leading a mother and daughter inside.

"Elder Warner is seeing only ten patients today; there are just two more before it's Second Miss Sinclair's turn. Please wait a moment in the lounge."

Florence Sinclair, leaning on Mrs. Sinclair's arm, pouted and said, "Mom, the herbal medicine is so bitter."

Mrs. Sinclair patted her hand and laughed, "My dear daughter, Elder Warner is an exceptional doctor. Let him adjust your health so that right after you marry Auden, you can have children. Your father and I are eagerly waiting for a grandchild. I'll personally prepare it for you and add plenty of sugar so it tastes sweet."

The nurse leading them smiled and said, "Mrs. Sinclair is famous for doting on her daughter in Kingsford, you truly are a wonderful mother."

The three of them laughed and entered the VIP lounge.

Behind the screen, Juliana's lips curled into a chilly smile.

She recalled being ill as a child, always accompanied by the family's servants and Elias Langley, never her mother.

Back then, Mrs. Sinclair was always busy, taking care of her father like a national treasure while managing her own career.

Even when Juliana had a fever and craved a hug, her mother didn't have the time, let alone hope for Mrs. Sinclair's hands that explored the mysteries of life to prepare medicine for her.

But ever since she went missing, this woman who once tirelessly attended to her husband and career found time to personally care for a foster daughter, even becoming a notorious "daughter-loving demon."

How ironic.

"What are you thinking?"

With two boxes of pills in hand, Elias Langley lifted her chin, his brow slightly furrowed.

"Why are your eyes red?"

Juliana quickly calmed her emotions, "The table bumped my hand."

She forcefully rubbed her hand.

Elias hurriedly caught her hand, holding it in his palm.

"Take it easy. You'll bruise it if you keep rubbing."

His words made Juliana laugh.

Then, hand in hand, they left the clinic.

In the parking lot outside, Elias instinctively glanced at the white Alpha parked by the roadside.

Seemingly nonchalantly, Juliana asked, "Mrs. Sinclair and Florence are also at the clinic. Do you want to go back and say hi?"

Elias looked at her with a calm expression, "If we didn't run into them, it's better not to get involved."

"Are you avoiding them because of Isabelle Sinclair?"

Elias chuckled gently and ushered her into the passenger seat, "Mrs. Langley, you're overthinking it."

Afterwards, Elias drove her back to Number 17 Dovian Street and left, telling her he'd be home late tonight.

Juliana guessed he might visit the Sinclair Family tonight, so she didn't ask anything but made a plan in her heart.

As she passed Elias's study.

The door was open, and Mrs. Dalton was cleaning.

Curious, Juliana walked to the doorway and saw Steward Fay was also in the study.

This must be a critical place, so even the cleaning was supervised by Steward Fay.

"Ma'am, anything you need?" Steward Fay asked.

Juliana wisely stayed at the door, didn't go inside, and smiled, "Just passing by, saw the door open, got curious, decided to have a look."

Steward Fay promptly replied, "We should take you through the entire courtyard so you're familiar with it."

His words had just finished when Mrs. Dalton accidentally dropped a ceramic decoration on the carpet with a "thud."

It didn't break, but she quickly picked it up with care, touched it, and then wiped it with a towel.

"Oh dear, that scared me. This is something that belonged to that lady, and the master keeps it here all year, often holding and playing with it. If it breaks, I couldn't repay even if you took my head off."

Since they couldn't use titles like "First Lady" or "Second Lady" anymore, Mrs. Dalton referred to "that lady."

"So, be careful then," Steward Fay advised.

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Dalton promptly placed the little decoration back in its spot and nodded, "Yes, Steward Fay, I heard this was that lady's favorite item when she was a child, and the master has kept it nearby for many years, right? Oh, the master truly is a sentimental person."

How could Juliana not hear the words Mrs. Dalton intentionally said for her to hear?

But her face showed no emotion, nor did she respond.

The fallen ceramic figurine was a panda eating bamboo, paired with the smaller one on the table.

When she was seven, her mother had brought it back as a gift after accompanying her father on a business trip abroad.

Mrs. Sinclair said they represented a mother and daughter, but Juliana stubbornly believed it symbolized Elias Langley and herself.

With eight years between them, Elias was always a large figure in her mind's eye.

Not that she had any feelings at such a young age, but in her childhood memories, the happiest times were weekends and school breaks because someone would accompany her.

Elias graduated early at twenty, and despite being busy later, he always found time to appear before her when she needed someone.

In short, Elias, not her parents, ensured her childhood wasn't lonely.

Juliana's memory hadn't fully returned, but slight triggers would bring back some recollections.

A headache surged, and she rubbed her forehead.

"Mrs. Dalton, you talk too much," Steward Fay remarked.

"Okay, I'll shut up."

Mrs. Dalton cheerfully folded the rag, indicating the cleaning was done.

The two of them left the study one after the other.

Looking at Juliana's furrowed brows, Mrs. Dalton thought her words had hurt Juliana's feelings, softly advising, "Madam, please don't take it to heart. The master is a man of emotions; nostalgia is a good thing. A man with a broad heart that accommodates old acquaintances can naturally treat new ones kindly. Be understanding, and life will be harmonious."

In a man's hearing, it may sound ordinary, but a woman could discern the hidden implications.

With a quiet click, Steward Fay closed the door and went on with his duties.

Juliana looked at Mrs. Dalton's "good-hearted" face with a smile, her eyes reflecting deep thoughts.

"My husband's nostalgia is a testament to his noble character. It's not easy to work inside these doors, so I hope everyone at home stays focused on the present, speaks less, doesn't fantasize, and dutifully does their job. That way, the household remains peaceful, wouldn't you agree?"

The warm smile on Mrs. Dalton's face froze instantly, her hand clutching the soft cloth, and she quickly bowed her head.

"Yes... yes, Madam, you're right, I'll remember."

In the evening, Elias Langley went as promised to Sinclair Manor.

Medicinal herbs were brewing in the kitchen, the scent of medicine filling the living room. Old Mr. Sinclair and Mrs. Sinclair were present, each carrying a hint of chill in their gazes towards Elias.

"Got yourself a new sweetheart and no longer care about my daughter?" Mrs. Sinclair began.

Elias remained calm, "I've never given up searching for her."

"A sample of my daughter's blood appeared in Kenton. I don't believe it was a lab error, though the sample's now contaminated and can't be retested. I still think she's alive. But your progress is slow. How can I trust you're not evading?"

"Time will prove everything."

Elias, generally a man of few words outside, exasperated Mrs. Sinclair with his stance, but she found no outlet for her anger.

"Then, what about Isabelle's incident? She was beaten by that woman. Are we just going to let it pass?"

"When Isabelle Sinclair barged into the room, my wife was still in her nightgown. If I had been there, I would have hit harder."

"Elias!" Mrs. Sinclair was finally furious, "Don't forget you promised to treat her like you treated Helena!"

"But that doesn't mean I'd condone her unruly behavior."

Elias's calm retort left Mrs. Sinclair speechless.

Old Mr. Sinclair lifted his deep, piercing eyes, speaking slowly, "Elias, you married my granddaughter's tablet not six months ago before remarrying, do you treat us, this engagement, with any seriousness?"

Elias nodded slightly, "Your critique is warranted; it was a lack of judgment and courtesy on my end. Yet, whether marrying the tablet or my current wife, my intentions are sincere."

Old Mr. Sinclair's gaze remained intense, his tone rising slightly, "Knowing a mistake is one thing; accountability is another."

Elias removed his coat, "I understand, but I have duties that prevent me from kneeling."

Old Mr. Sinclair nodded, "Then proceed to the courtyard."

He then instructed the steward to summon the family law.

At that moment, a servant rushed in, reporting, "Sir, Madam, there's a woman claiming to be the wife's madam outside, requesting entry."

Chapter 255: Mother and Daughter Finally Meet

Mrs. Sinclair looked surprised, clearly not expecting this woman to have such audacity.

Is she foolish enough not to know that Elias Langley marrying her is a blatant challenge to the Sinclair Family's bottom line?

Old Mr. Sinclair snorted, about to speak, but Elias Langley interjected, his tone calm yet firm: "I came here in person today to make a formal statement about my marriage. This matter has nothing to do with my wife, so there's no need to involve her."

Old Mr. Sinclair scrutinized him for a moment, then instructed the housekeeper, "Go tell her that Sinclair Manor is not receiving guests today."

Elias Langley picked up his phone and sent out a message.

Once the housekeeper withdrew, the old man looked back at Elias Langley, his gaze sharper.

"Except for Helena, no one is worthy to be called your wife."

"Whether or not someone is worthy, that's for me to decide."

Elias Langley maintained an unperturbed demeanor.

Old Mr. Sinclair placed the tea cup in his hand heavily on the table.

"Elias, you grew up in the Sinclair Family, my son and daughter-in-law treated you like their own! Moreover, you are my granddaughter's husband. By all rights, I have the authority today to demand that you immediately divorce that woman and marry Isabelle!"

Elias Langley spoke with dignity, his tone steady yet undisputable.

"What you said is true. I will always remember the kindness of Mr. Sinclair and his wife. However, marriage is a matter of personal freedom, and no one can dictate my choices."

Old Mr. Sinclair understood his character.

Elias Langley responded to neither soft nor hard tactics, leaving only intimidation as an option.

"If you want to talk about freedom, then the Langley Family will have no descendants. Your elder brother called a few days ago, seemingly also planning to bring up your marriage with Isabelle. Wouldn't it be good to strengthen the bond between the Sinclair and Langley families?"

"My elder brother is in the process of divorce; if you want a marriage alliance with the Langley Family, he can marry her."

"Elias," Mrs. Sinclair spoke up displeased, taking over the conversation, "Even if you don't like her, you can't trample on Isabelle's genuine feelings for you."

Elias Langley pressed his lips together, saying nothing.

Old Mr. Sinclair lost his patience and rose angrily.

"Since you want the Langley Family to die out, I have nothing more to say. But I will not let go of the matter where that woman hurt Isabelle. Marrying behind our backs is unfilial. Fetch the punishment whip, serving in the courtyard!"

Elias Langley handed his coat to a servant, standing upright.

"Regarding family discipline today, I acknowledge the fault of not informing first. But in protecting her, I will not yield."

Elias Langley's words left Mrs. Sinclair greatly shocked.

Suddenly, she became curious about that woman.

What kind of woman could make this man, who has been closely connected with the Sinclair Family for over thirty years and was almost considered part of the family, for the first time so clearly stand against them, firmly defending her?

Meanwhile, outside the main gate, Juliana Jacobs, after hearing the housekeeper's refusal, raised an eyebrow and asked, "The more polite you are, the less you'll let me in?"

The housekeeper caught the implication in her words and sneered.

"The security system of the Sinclair Family was designed by the son-in-law himself, and no one has ever succeeded in forcing their way in."

Juliana Jacobs knew that this son-in-law referred to Elias Langley.

She was about to speak when Zachary York hurried over.

"Ma'am, Mr. Langley asks you to wait for him back home?"

Juliana Jacobs half-closed her beautiful eyes, "He sent you?"

Zachary York nodded.

"Then why didn't he tell me directly?"

Zachary York answered truthfully, "Maybe he was afraid you'd refuse."

"So," Juliana Jacobs changed her tone, "You think by stopping me, I won't refuse?"

Her words momentarily stumped Zachary York.

Seeing him at a loss for words, Juliana Jacobs continued, "Think about it. Doesn't he actually want you to protect me?"

Zachary York was taken aback, vaguely sensing something amiss, but it seemed logically sound.

"After all, he knows perfectly well what I might do," Juliana Jacobs added.

Zachary York suddenly had an epiphany.

The newly-appointed second secretary for Elias Langley hadn't even gotten fully acquainted with the workflow before being hoodwinked by their own lady.

"Alright then, what's your directive?"

Juliana Jacobs originally intended to make a phone call, but instead, she put down her phone and took out a marriage certificate from her bag.

"Go and invite the most renowned media and bloggers with the largest followings. If the Sinclair Family continues to hold my husband, I need an explanation now."

After giving her instructions, she turned her gaze sharply towards the housekeeper, whose gaze had been contemptuous, her eyes suddenly cold.

"Pass the message to them that if even a single strand of my husband's hair goes missing at the Sinclair Family, today's 'domestic affair' will be tomorrow's national headline news."

The housekeeper's face turned ghostly pale, forgetting everything else, and turned to rush inside to deliver the message.

With the phone still held against his chest, Zachary York couldn't help but admire Juliana Jacobs.

Merely two minutes later, the Sinclair Family gates opened.

The butler hurried out, nearly tripping in his haste upon seeing Juliana Jacobs.

Having worked for the Sinclair Family for twenty years, seeing Juliana's face would get this reaction from anyone in the Sinclair Family.

"Miss..." He steadied himself, "May I ask how I should address you?"

Juliana Jacobs raised her chin slightly, "I am Juliana Jacobs, Mrs. Elias Langley."

"Miss Jacobs, please."

Led by the butler, she stepped over the familiar yet foreign threshold.

Beneath her feet were the blue stone slabs she had walked countless times.

Back then, she skipped along this path, holding her father's hand, thinking it was just an ordinary journey, who knew it would be fourteen years before she returned.

At that time, her mother promised that as long as she behaved well on the road, there would be a table full of dishes waiting for her when she got back.

Unfortunately, to protect her father and not disappoint her mother, she nearly drowned in the icy river.

Now, she just wanted to ask Mrs. Sinclair whether she ever made that table of dishes she risked her life for.

The layout of the courtyard hadn't changed much.

As Juliana Jacobs walked into the front yard, she saw from afar Elias Langley standing in the center of the courtyard.

In the cold night wind, he wore only a white shirt, his posture tall and straight as a pine.

Beside him stood a slightly overweight man, holding an Armor-breaking Whip.

Old Mr. Sinclair stood on the steps above, his shrewd old eyes gleaming brightly.

Juliana Jacobs steadied herself and walked forward.

"Who dares to touch my husband?"

Mrs. Sinclair turned around at the sound.

At the moment their eyes met, she was clearly stunned.

This face, especially those eyes, was identical to her daughter who had been missing for fourteen years.

But upon closer inspection, the expression in the eyebrows was utterly different.

"You are the one Elias married... Who are you?"

Mrs. Sinclair forced herself to maintain composure, her tone carrying a hint of interrogation.

Chapter 256: I Must Uncover the Truth Myself

Juliana Jacobs looked her straight in the eye.

"Looks a lot like your daughter, doesn't she?" Her lips curled slightly, the smile carrying a hint of mischief and determination, "Too bad I don't have the luck to be named Sinclair."

Mrs. Sinclair's lips trembled slightly, instinctively glancing at Elias Langley.

"Elias, have you investigated her?"

Elias Langley's eyes were deep as a cold pool, revealing no emotion.

"She is not."

Mrs. Sinclair trusted him. Hearing these words, the joy that had just begun to rise in her heart, almost breaking through the surface, suddenly plummeted, breaking silently.

Her gaze returned to Juliana Jacobs, now somewhat crestfallen.

"Being able to marry Elias, that truly is a kind of fate."

Old Mr. Sinclair's expression immediately turned cold upon hearing she was not.

"Elias, since you married under Helena's memorial tablet, you are rightfully a son-in-law of our Sinclair Family. This relationship cannot be erased simply because you have a marriage certificate."

Saying this, he turned his eyes to Mrs. Sinclair.

"Jian Wei, you are Isabelle's mother. According to tradition, after Helena passed, the engagement with Elias should be inherited by Florence or Isabelle. Now that Florence is soon to join in an alliance through marriage with the Hughes Family, Elias should marry your daughter Isabelle, yet he went behind our backs and got the certificate with another woman. The Sinclair Family cannot let this matter slide easily."

"An engagement can be inherited?"

Juliana Jacobs seemed like she had heard a joke.

She walked to a servant, seized the coat from them, and came to Elias Langley, tiptoeing to drape it over him.

They exchanged looks without words, yet it was as if a thousand words had been spoken.

Juliana Jacobs straightened Elias Langley's clothes before looking at Old Mr. Sinclair.

"According to your most absurd reasoning, how do you plan for your two granddaughters to share my husband? Who takes 135, who takes 246, and who gets Sunday?"

"You insolent thing!"

Old Mr. Sinclair's face turned blue with rage, his cane striking the ground heavily.

"Elias! Look at the woman you've married! Speaking nonsense, having no manners!"

"The one speaking nonsense and losing their mind is you!" Juliana Jacobs retorted sharply, "My husband and I are legally married by the state, how is it wrong in your eyes? You're just bullying people with your age!"

This woman was too rude.

Old Mr. Sinclair was like he had turned into a vibrating mode, saying to the man holding the whip, "What are you waiting for? Execute family law! Do you really think just because there's a disturbance, the beating can be avoided?"

The slightly chubby man didn't dare hesitate any longer, raising the Armor-breaking Whip as he swung it towards Elias Langley's back.

In that instant, Juliana Jacobs suddenly lunged at Elias Langley's back, holding him tightly.

Seeing she was about to take the blow for him, Elias Langley's face changed drastically, instinctively gripping her arm and quickly turning around.

He would rather take the blow head-on than let Juliana Jacobs get hurt.

However, just as they were about to protect each other, no one expected Mrs. Sinclair would rush up at this moment, opening her arms to shield Elias Langley and Juliana Jacobs.

The whip wind had already arrived, too late to stop.

With a "snap," the whip landed heavily on Mrs. Sinclair's raised arm, causing her to let out a muffled groan of pain, staggering half a step, supported in time by Elias Langley.

Juliana Jacobs's anger flared up, bypassing Mrs. Sinclair to charge at the slightly chubby man.

The man, already scared for hitting the wrong person, became even more frightened, and as Juliana Jacobs charged at him, he fell to his knees, repeatedly begging for forgiveness.

But Juliana Jacobs only took the Armor-breaking Whip from his hand.

She looked towards the instigator standing on the steps.

"Is it that every place with old relics must be accompanied by old feudal rules? If so, go back to your grave, this era does not welcome you!"

Old Mr. Sinclair, used to flattering and obedience, was extremely uncomfortable with Juliana Jacobs's attitude.

He trembled with rage, pointing at her, "You, you..."

"Dad!"

Mrs. Sinclair's arm couldn't be raised, withdrawing her gaze from Juliana Jacobs, she took a deep breath, trying to control her voice.

"Marriage is a matter of choice, Elias has already married under Helena's memorial, we should not insist further."

"Jian Wei, what are you saying?"

"I took the whip for them, this matter ends here."

Old Mr. Sinclair looked at the striking blood mark on his daughter-in-law's arm, and met with her unyielding gaze, finally waved his hand, unwilling yet deflated.

Elias Langley took Juliana Jacobs's hand, interlocking their fingers, saying no more as he led her out.

Juliana Jacobs took a couple of steps and suddenly looked back at Mrs. Sinclair.

She saw Mrs. Sinclair, supported by the housekeeper, staring blankly at her.

Her daughter's stubborn eyes looked back at her, but there was now a trace of unfamiliarity and distance between the brows.

Mrs. Sinclair's eyes were filled with surging emotions, pain and complexity intertwining, almost overflowing.

Juliana Jacobs silently withdrew her gaze, walking side by side with Elias Langley, leaving without a backward glance.

"Madam, I'll call for the doctor right away." The housekeeper said.

"Add more sugar to the brewed medicine, then divide and send it to the Second Miss."

"Yes."

Mrs. Sinclair turned and went slowly into the house.

The slightly chubby man, seeing everyone dispersing, called twice to the old master.

Old Mr. Sinclair came back to his senses, "What is it?"

The slightly chubby man pointed towards the door, "That woman took away your ancestral whip."

Old Mr. Sinclair was so angry his eyes almost spouted fire, "Why didn't you say earlier?"

Elias Langley led Juliana Jacobs out of the Sinclair Manor gates, where Zachary York and Raine Kane immediately came up to meet them.

Both of them lowered their heads subconsciously when they met Elias Langley's gaze.

"Sir," Zachary York spoke first, "Did the Madam arrive on time?"

He was displeased that she let the person in when he had asked her to bring her back.

"Install a scam prevention app in your brain."

Zachary York earnestly explained, "But what the madam said made a lot of sense, I couldn't refute it..."

"Is it right just because it can't be refuted?" Elias Langley retorted.

Zachary straightened up, speaking righteously, "The madam's words are also an order, I cannot disobey."

These words rendered even Elias Langley speechless for a while.

Like finding evidence, Zachary York immediately said, "Look, sir, I was just like your expression at the time."

Juliana Jacobs couldn't help but laugh softly.

Elias Langley closed his eyes briefly, shooting Zachary York a sharp look, personally opening the rear car door for his wife.

As Juliana Jacobs passed by Raine Kane, she handed over the Armor-breaking Whip.

"It's yours."

Raine Kane, knowledgeable about weapons, was both surprised and delighted.

"This whip is a potent weapon, it's been around for quite some years. It draws blood when used, the least it'll do is break bones... Are you sure you want to give it to me?"

Raine Kane was exuberant with joy.

"Use it well, and only where it's needed."

After these words, Juliana Jacobs bent down and got into the car.

The vehicle smoothly merged into the night, Raine Kane focused on driving, while Zachary York, sitting in the passenger seat, occasionally checked the rear view.

Elias Langley glanced sideways at the silent Juliana Jacobs, softly spoke, "I checked Mrs. Sinclair's arm, it's just a superficial injury, no damage to the muscles or bones."

Juliana Jacobs watched the retreating scenery outside the window, her tone indifferent, "Whether she's hurt or not, what does it have to do with me?"

Elias Langley did not argue with her, merely gently holding her hand, the warmth of his palm making Juliana Jacobs shiver slightly...

Meanwhile, at Sinclair Manor.

The doctor carefully cleaned Mrs. Sinclair's wound, applied ointment, and left anti-inflammatory painkillers.

"Fortunately, the force of the whip was restrained, apply medication on time and rest well, there will be no issues. If it aches too much to sleep tonight or if a fever develops, take the medicine I left."

After sending the doctor off, the ever-concerned assistant couldn't help but speak, "Madam, you're too easygoing. The son-in-law marrying someone else, how can this be let go? Even if Miss Jacobs... does bear some resemblance, it can't be the reason."

Mrs. Sinclair leaned against a soft cushion, the burning pain in her arm making her face pale.

She shook her head weakly, her voice carrying a hint of frailty, "Susan, you don't understand, it's not because she resembles..."

Though trusting Elias Langley, the spirit in that girl's eyes, the flames that ignited when she got hurt, pushed her to personally uncover the truth.

A sharp pain coursed through her arm once more.

"Go," Mrs. Sinclair took a deep breath and instructed, "call Marcus Sinclair here. I want him to investigate who this Miss Jacobs really is..."

Chapter 257: Sis, Is Juliana Jacobs Really Mom's Daughter?

Returning to Number 17 Dorian Street, Juliana had something on her mind. After getting out of the car, she headed straight into the house without waiting for anyone.

Zachary reported two work-related issues to Elias, and she and Raine Kane were finally off duty.

Juliana lowered her head and pushed the door open, only to be pulled inside by a figure behind her, who gently pinned her against the wall.

A refreshing aura instantly surrounded her, and the man's heavy breathing revealed his current thoughts.

"Elias..." Juliana placed her hands on his chest, "I insisted on coming to Kingsford, don't you blame me?"

The kiss that was about to fall stopped because of her words, his voice was very low.

"Not only blame, there's also resentment in my heart. Why didn't you listen to my plan? Even if you had to come, you should have chosen a suitable time. Your arrival stirred a muddy pool, catching me off guard."

"Then are you... very angry?"

"Yeah," his voice deep, "What should we do? Will you give me a kiss?"

"Elias! I'm serious."

The man's chest shook with a pleasant low laugh.

"Now that you're here, do whatever you want. I'm here."

Juliana was moved.

He was supposed to be more qualified than Evan Grant to restrain her and give her orders, but he never did.

"Don't you think I'm a trouble?"

"Everything related to you is not a trouble." He gently stroked her cheek with his fingers, "I pamper you because I want to give you warmth, not chain you. So go ahead, if the sky falls, I'll hold it up."

Juliana's heart rippled with emotions; while she was feeling touched, Elias's lips were already close to her cheek.

"How did you call me in the Sinclair Family courtyard just now, call me that again."

How did she call him?

Juliana thought for a moment.

"Hubby?"

As the word fell, the man's lips covered hers.

A moment later, he retreated slightly, his breath unsteady.

"Call me once more."

"Hubby."

After repeating it thrice, Juliana was already utterly carried away.

"Good," he coaxed, "Call me again."

Juliana shook her head haphazardly, and the man already scooped her up.

"Let's change places for the calls!"

...

Now, in the hospital.

Isabelle Sinclair's hip injury finally began to scab over.

She was about to sit up happily when Florence Sinclair came to visit and said: "Don't move around, just rest and heal. Juliana went to the Sinclair Family, and it's uncertain how long you'll stay at home, so cherish it while you still can."

Isabelle paused in her move to sit up, "Why did she go to the Sinclair Family?"

Florence raised her eyebrows, "Didn't Grandpa ask Brother-in-law to divorce and marry you? Brother-in-law originally agreed, but then Juliana threatened the housekeeper and forced her way in. I don't know what happened later; all I know is Brother-in-law has decided not to divorce."

"How can that bitch do this?"

Isabelle clenched her hands, hatred gnawing at her teeth.

"I am going to marry Auden Hughes; even if Mother is fond of Juliana, it won't affect me. But you're different, your hope to marry Brother-in-law is dashed..."

Florence timely ceased her words.

Isabelle's face indeed showed a fear for her future fate.

"You know what to do, don't need me to teach you?" Florence said leisurely.

"I'm not stupid," Isabelle gritted her teeth.

Florence achieved her goal and smiled faintly, "If you need help, just ask, I'm your sister; I'll always help you."

After speaking, Isabelle suddenly turned her head to stare at her.

The scrutinizing look made Florence feel a bit guilty, "What's wrong?"

"Sis, is Juliana really Mom's daughter?"

Turns out she was worried about this, Florence secretly breathed a sigh of relief.

Last time Isabelle sent samples to Kingsford for testing, she personally did the analysis, and one of them indeed matched successfully.

But strangely, after Summer Shaw was admitted to the hospital, the re-testing showed a mismatch.

More peculiarly, the previous samples were later deemed contaminated, nullifying the test results.

"Whether she is or isn't, as long as she doesn't share a test with Mom, she'll never be."

Isabelle heard this and suddenly had clarity.

...

The next morning, Juliana slept a bit longer, waking up to find Elias already getting dressed.

The man's broad waist and narrow hips boasted a great figure.

Supported by her raised head, Juliana admired for a while. Seeing him choose a tie, she got up and walked over.

She glanced at the deep grey suit he had laid aside and asked, "What's on today?"

"Several meetings I can't skip."

Juliana picked a dark blue striped tie from the rack and skillfully tied it for him.

Elias held her waist to make it less strenuous for her to stand on tiptoe.

"Will it be convenient to take calls during the meeting?" Juliana continued her task, her tone natural, "If not, give me Zachary's contact."

"I'll ask her to contact you," Elias looked down at her focused brows, "However, as long as my phone's on, I'll personally take your calls."

Juliana's lips subtly curved.

Elias did not inquire why she suddenly asked such a question.

"I'm in a rush today, won't wait to have breakfast with you," he put on the suit jacket and adjusted the cuffs, "Miss me, send me a message, I've set a special alert tone."

Juliana's eyelashes fluttered slightly.

In four years with Evan Grant, she never received such treatment.

Turns out being earnestly kept in someone's heart felt this way.

"Who wants to think about you all the time."

Juliana softly muttered, taking a step back to admire her "work."

She was quite satisfied with the pairing.

Elias went to the dining room; when Juliana returned after washing up, he had already finished his meal and was preparing to leave.

Zachary had driven the car to the gate.

The entangle in Juliana's mind suddenly resolved; when Elias walked to the dining room door, she intercepted him.

While tidying up his suit, she casually asked, "Old Mr. Sinclair is so hard to deal with, how did you manage those years in the Sinclair Family?"

She genuinely wanted to know when her grandfather, who never liked her since birth, started living there.

Because before she left the Sinclair Family, the old man favored the son who had given him seven or eight grandsons and always lived over there.

"Why suddenly ask this?"

Juliana hid her thoughts well, most people wouldn't notice.

She curled her lips, "I don't like old traditionalists. He made you marry a placard, and you complied; now that you've made a home, don't go there if not necessary to avoid the fuss."

Elias stared at her for two seconds, the seriousness on his face melted into a clear smile, "Alright, I'll listen to my wife."

As he spoke, he kissed her cheek, but he didn't answer her question.

As Juliana shyly tucked her head, a slightly urgent voice came from far to near.

"Brother-in-law, you usually leave around this time; why are you still home today?"

Isabelle awkwardly limped along the path, her pose clumsy like a duck kicked on the backside.

Seeing Elias, her face showed both joy and worry that he might delay his work.

Chapter 258: Juliana Jacobs Is Injured

Juliana calmly stepped back two steps, distancing herself from Elias Langley.

Elias noticed that the person who had just warmed his heart had returned to her usual aloofness in a blink and unconsciously frowned.

"Steward Fay, why don't you remind the gentleman?"

Isabelle Sinclair's tone was familiar, exuding the air of a hostess.

"Third Miss Sinclair..."

Steward Fay bowed, looking troubled.

In the past, she could come and go frequently, but now...

"How did you get in?"

Elias Langley's voice was devoid of warmth.

But Isabelle was used to it, and she nodded towards the door.

"Mrs. Dalton was cleaning your car. When she saw me, she directly let me in, besides..."

She approached Elias, reaching out to link her arm with his.

"I often come to stay here. Isn't it just like coming back to my own home?"

Elias stepped aside, making her reach for empty air.

"In the past, it was my mentor's wife who instructed me. I notified Old Fay, so no one stopped you, but things are different now."

"Brother-in-law," Isabelle feigned innocence, starting to act coy, "I've been discharged from the hospital but don't want to recuperate at home. I want to stay here with you."

In reality, she had discharged herself forcefully.

The goal was to move in here and disgust Juliana.

However, before Elias could speak, Juliana took over the conversation.

"Steward Fay, does Miss Sinclair have a fixed room here?"

Steward Fay glanced at Elias and replied truthfully, "There is a guest room, not specifically meant for Third Miss Sinclair, but she has left many personal items there."

Juliana's expression remained calm. "Show Third Miss Sinclair to her room so she can gather her belongings."

"What do you mean? This is my brother-in-law's house!" Isabelle protested loudly.

Elias leisurely corrected her, "In this house, my wife calls the shots."

Isabelle was instantly shut down by his blunt words.

"Aren't you in a hurry?" Juliana looked at Elias.

Elias smiled, gently pinching her earlobe.

"Right, I'll leave everything to my wife to handle."

With that, he turned and left.

Isabelle watched the two sharing intimate gestures, her eyes practically spitting fire.

She absolutely could not let this continue!

Isabelle rummaged through her bag for a moment, then glared at Juliana.

"Now that my brother-in-law is gone, there's no need for you to keep up appearances. Isn't it just that you want to flaunt your power using my brother-in-law's identity? Let me tell you..."

"Enough," Juliana's tone was calm yet undeniably authoritative, "from now on, you're not welcome here."

"On what grounds?" Florence Sinclair was shocked, "Just because my brother-in-law married you, doesn't mean he can't have normal interactions?"

"I won't interfere with his normal social interactions, but as for Third Miss Sinclair..."

Juliana deliberately emphasized the word "Third," making it clear and resounding.

"...You are a woman others are trying to push onto my husband, and you have improper intentions towards him. I cannot tolerate you—I forbid you to set foot here."

"Clearly you stole my man, you..."

Juliana didn't want to waste any more time on her, glanced at Steward Fay, and scanned the courtyard.

Not spotting anyone she trusted, she shouted towards the door, "Raine Kane!"

Raine hurriedly came running, "Juliana, I was just about to come in, what's up?"

"Take this young lady and her belongings back to Sinclair Manor and inform the eldest of the Sinclair Family that if they can't teach their granddaughter the meaning of propriety, it might be better not to raise her."

"Got it!"

Raine immediately lifted Isabelle like a chick.

Isabelle struggled, screaming.

"Juliana, every word you just said, I recorded it all! I will send it word-for-word to my brother-in-law so he can see your true colors!"

Juliana's eyes flashed, "You recorded it?"

Raine also paused.

Isabelle triumphantly pulled out her phone, "How does it feel to be paid back in your own coin? Are you scared now?"

Juliana laughed, "Yes, please don't send it to him."

Isabelle became even prouder, "I insist on sending it to him!"

Juliana smirked, "Please don't—I'm afraid he'll be even more conceited hearing how much I care for him."

Isabelle was speechless, "..."

Raine couldn't hold back a laugh and swiftly dragged Isabelle away.

After Juliana leisurely finished her breakfast, Raine returned.

She reported excitedly, "Juliana, you didn't see it, but when I delivered your message, Old Mr. Sinclair's face turned bright red, like a monkey's behind."

Upon hearing this, Juliana merely lifted the corners of her lips slightly, "Getting high blood pressure so easily won't do—I'll be stressing him further in the future."

With that, she got up and stepped out of the dining room.

While passing the courtyard, Old Dalton was trimming the lawn.

Juliana glanced past him without stopping, heading straight for the main gate.

Today she was going to Vivacore Bio to inquire about Summer Shaw's heart project application result.

When she reached the entrance and saw her car, she almost thought she was seeing things.

"This is..."

She instinctively looked at Raine, who was walking towards her from behind.

Raine shook the car keys in her hand.

"Sir thought you might stay in Kingsford for a while, and worried you'd have trouble using other cars, so he specially arranged to have this car shipped from Kenton."

An indescribable sense of stability crept into her heart.

He could treat her so well, even raise her to the skies, but why did he give up on her at the beginning?

Her slightly cool fingertips involuntarily curled, but Juliana said nothing and opened the car door to sit in the driver's seat.

Soon, she appeared in the general manager's office of Vivacore Bio.

Auden Hughes poured her a glass of pure water, but she only looked at it with no intention of drinking.

"I want to know the result of Summer Shaw's application."

Auden gazed into her eyes, "Is that all you came for?"

Juliana gave him no idea of false hope, seriously nodding.

A feeling of loss washed over him, yet Auden smiled.

"First, I must formally apologize for last time. It was my oversight in choosing the wrong way and place, which upset you. I'm sorry. But I hope you will give me a chance to explain."

Auden spoke quickly, not giving Juliana a chance to interrupt.

"Wanting to take you to a couple's restaurant has been my dream for years, but back then, Aidan Linton was always by your side, watching over you too closely, so I never had the chance. This time, upon finally meeting you again, I don't want to miss the opportunity, nor do I want to... let go of you."

Juliana ignored his affection and said coldly, "I am married."

Auden nodded, "To Elias Langley, I know. But his identity... for you, I think it's unsuitable."

Juliana sensed something behind his words, "Why do you say that?"

Auden shrugged, raising an eyebrow, "Just a hunch."

Juliana looked at him quietly for a few seconds, "There's no need for you to worry about my private matters, Mr. Hughes. Right now, I just want to know whether Summer Shaw's application has been approved."

Seeing her iron resolve, Auden felt anxious, moved past his desk to stand before her, his tone turning urgent and passionate.

"Juliana! Don't you understand yet? Aidan is too weak, not suited for you, Evan is too pragmatic, also not suitable for you, and there is no affection between Florence and me – it's merely a business marriage. If you just give the nod, I can annul the engagement any time! Everything I've done is for..."

"For what, Auden Hughes?"

The office door was suddenly yanked open.

"How can you be so vile!"

Florence burst in, her face pale, seized the utility knife from the desk, and swung it towards Juliana!

Juliana couldn't dodge in time, and the tip of the blade left a cut bleeding out.

Her heart skipped a beat, with a sense of foreboding.

Chapter 259: Using the Sinclair Family Heiress as a Bargaining Chip

"Florence Sinclair! Are you crazy?"

Auden Hughes hurried forward and yanked Florence Sinclair away.

"If you keep making a scene like this, I won't mind using your true nature as the reason for canceling our engagement!"

These words hit Florence Sinclair like a bucket of cold water, instantly subduing her.

Her objective had not yet been achieved, and the engagement with the Hughes Family was important to her.

Florence Sinclair was the one who had hurt others, yet tears welled up in her eyes.

"You threaten me for her. Who is she to you, and who am I?"

However, despite her emotional gaze, Auden Hughes coldly curled the corners of his lips.

"Haven't you always asked whose school uniform jacket it was? Today I'll give you an answer."

Florence Sinclair's breath caught.

Auden Hughes pulled Juliana Jacobs farther away from her and pressed the intercom button on the office phone, "Bring the medical kit."

The injury on Juliana Jacobs's hand was not serious, just a few drops of blood.

A person in a white protective suit walked into the office carrying a medical kit.

After placing the kit down, the person did not leave, seemingly waiting to take it back after they were done.

Auden Hughes took a cotton swab from the kit and wiped the blood off Juliana Jacobs's hand, then disinfected it with iodine.

At this moment, Juliana, who had been on guard, saw the person in the protective suit quickly snatch the cotton swab Auden Hughes was about to discard.

Originally, it was a very normal gesture of appeasement, but Juliana pushed Auden Hughes away and rushed over to seize the cotton swab.

But the person hurriedly dodged, not allowing Juliana to succeed.

"Who are you?"

When Juliana failed to grab the swab, she tore off the other person's protective suit in one swift motion.

A fair face was exposed before everyone, unable to hide in time.

"Marcus Sinclair!"

Florence Sinclair exclaimed in surprise.

Mother indeed suspected Juliana was the biological daughter.

"Second Miss Sinclair."

Marcus lowered his head.

Auden Hughes frowned, "How can outsiders enter and leave my company so easily?"

Juliana instantly understood everything, she looked at Florence Sinclair, speaking in a tone that was too calm to detect any provocation.

"Second Miss Sinclair, your Sinclair Family is indeed full of talent. First, we have daughters pestering others' husbands tirelessly; then we have servants engaging in sneaky blood thefts. Is your family's tradition to teach people how to do these disgraceful acts?"

Juliana's words snapped Florence Sinclair into awareness.

Marcus appearing here must have been at her mother's behest to investigate Juliana.

And the simplest and most straightforward way was to obtain Juliana's biological material for testing.

If by any chance Juliana really was the missing Sinclair heir... she couldn't take the risk.

She immediately vented her anger on Marcus, stepping forward with the authority of the second miss, commanding sternly, "Hand over the filthy thing in your hand!"

"Second Miss..."

Marcus hesitated for a moment but eventually handed over the bloodied swab.

"What do you need this thing for?" Juliana asked deliberately, trying to cover up.

"What I'm doing has nothing to do with you. The matter between you and my fiancé isn't over yet."

Plainly, Florence had no intention of letting Juliana and Marcus have much contact; after snapping off the swab tip, she tossed it down the drain.

Juliana breathed a sigh of relief, turning her gaze to Auden Hughes, speaking icily, "Mr. Hughes, whether my friend's application can be approved, I hope you give an answer soon. If you're too busy, I have a way to free up your schedule."

After saying that, she turned and left.

"Juliana..."

Auden Hughes moved to pursue her but was blocked by Florence.

"With Marcus here, what happened today, my mother will surely know, you need to give me an explanation!"

Auden Hughes glared at her unkindly, "You're delusional every day, thinking the whole world is against you; in front of your parents, you're well-behaved and docile, yet today you hurt my guest right in front of me. I now suspect you have a split personality; shouldn't the Sinclair Family give me an explanation?"

"You're the one with a split personality!"

Lacking confidence, Florence Sinclair, after saying this, turned her anger towards Marcus, "What did my mother send you here for?"

"Miss, please don't ask."

He truly hadn't expected the cautious Miss Jacobs would so shamelessly tear off his protective gear.

Having failed the task, he was quite embarrassed, but the Sinclair family rules meant he couldn't betray Mrs. Sinclair.

"When you see my mother, know what to say and what not to say, understood?"

Marcus pressed his lips together, not answering.

Florence Sinclair held her breath, fuming silently, her chest aching.

Juliana walked down to the lobby, Raine Kane drove over, keenly noticing her hand was injured.

"What happened?" Raine asked.

Juliana got into the passenger seat, opened the glove compartment, and sprayed the wound with iodine, "Florence Sinclair did it."

"See, you can't do without me, can you?"

Raine started the car.

Juliana took out her phone, initially intending to message, but ultimately decided to call.

It took a while for Elias Langley to answer, and he spoke in a low, subdued voice.

"Missed me?"

Juliana's previously heavy mood dissipated with that one line.

She spoke softly, "I've seen multiple complaints online regarding Vivacore Bio's clinical trial disputes. No one is handling it. Can someone intervene?"

Elias Langley remained silent.

Juliana knew the reason.

"I miss you."

The man on the other end chuckled deeply, "Someone will handle it."

Juliana paused, still saying, "I might have caused you trouble. Mrs. Sinclair might call you in again. Anyway, just remember I'm the woman who waits for you to come home every night, that's enough."

"Yes, I know."

Elias Langley hung up, the warmth in his eyes transforming into a cold frost in an instant.

He turned and walked towards Sean Paxton, seated not far away.

The quiet office echoed with the sound of footsteps.

"Elias, once a man is tied by marriage, he's bound to get entangled. My granduncle's conditions, you'd best consider them seriously."

Sean Paxton relaxed confidently, his tone exuding a complete control of the situation.

Elias Langley sat across from him, sipped some tea, and casually replied, "Misconstruing my refusal as hesitation — is it I who's entangled, or are you leaving room for yourself?"

Sean Paxton was not offended; he laughed instead.

"You, you, after all these years, still not speaking pleasing words. Good thing we're old classmates who know your nature, but..."

He switched tack.

"Stopping them from conducting a DNA test on Juliana, isn't that just signaling to everyone that she indeed is the missing Sinclair heiress?"

Elias Langley's expression remained unchanged as he slowly poured tea, "If my mind was really so easy to read, you wouldn't have waited until today to reluctantly sit at the same table with me."

Sean Paxton was unfazed by the derision, a gleam flashing in his eyes.

"So, you already know where the real Sinclair heiress is?"

Elias Langley did not answer.

Sean Paxton leaned forward, lowering his voice, "Do you plan to use her as a bargaining chip to coerce the Paxton and Sinclair families?"

Elias Langley still did not respond.

Sean Paxton leaned in slightly, his elbows rested on his knees, growing more intrigued.

"So, are you planning to use the Sinclair heiress as a bargaining chip to compel the Paxton and Sinclair families to surrender the data, rectify past wrongs, achieve advancement, and then replace my granduncle to become the rule-maker?"

Chapter 260: Less Talk, More Action

As he finished speaking, Elias Langley suddenly broke into a smile.

"Why are you, a grown man, watching palace dramas for no reason? Go see a psychologist, clear out the demons in your heart."

Then, his smile faded.

"All these years, you've been helping Old Mr. Paxton find the Sinclair Family's heiress and even planted someone by my side. You get the first-hand news even faster than I do. If you haven't found her whereabouts, how could I?"

"Tsk, when have I ever placed a spy by your side? Don't falsely accuse me."

Sean Paxton looked innocent.

"My granduncle never tells me everything. If he were willing to disclose even a bit of news about you, I would have found her by now."

"Then continue trying; there's hope you might find her before I do." Elias Langley's tone was indifferent.

Sean Paxton fell silent for a few seconds, then spoke with a heartfelt tone.

"Elias, you got Juliana, so give Aetherflame to my granduncle. That's a fair competition."

"That's fairness by your Paxton Family's standards, not mine."

"But don't forget, back then, when you failed to protect Julian Sinclair and lost critical data, leading to consequences that are still irreparable, it was my granduncle who backed you up, allowing you to have what you have today. Not only are you not grateful, but you've also turned against him. Isn't that a bit ungrateful?"

Elias Langley's smile deepened as he listened to him.

"Old Mr. Paxton has been so invested in the Sinclair Family's matters over the years, it reminds me of an old incident. Back when Mr. Sinclair was being hunted, the other side could always cut off his escape route just in advance, as if... they knew all his plans."

"You suspect it was my granduncle? That's impossible!"

Sean Paxton's expression suddenly turned serious.

"My cousin and Julian Sinclair were like brothers in life, and because of that connection, my granduncle became friends with Old Mr. Sinclair. How could he have possibly gone after his son's best friend after my cousin passed? It doesn't make sense."

Elias Langley said casually, "Just mentioning an old case that's never been solved, why are you so tense?"

"Such jokes aren't funny."

Elias Langley curled his lips, "Mr. Sinclair's attacker must have been someone familiar. As to whom, after so long, it's still unclear. The Sinclair Family has always been wide open to others, allowing some to exploit them to different values. So, if we're talking about ungratefulness, some people are much better at accounting than I am."

Sean Paxton's expression didn't change, but his index finger on the armrest twitched almost imperceptibly.

Elias Langley stood up and cast a cold gaze upon him.

"Juliana is my wife, and in Kingsford, to make a move on someone I, Elias Langley, have married openly means you know the consequences. Tim Paxton's matter isn't over, I've noted it down. From now on, whoever dares to lay a hand on her is my enemy."

"Elias, you're taking this too seriously."

Seeing the conversation get more and more awkward, Sean Paxton stood up.

"I came today just to pass on a message, not expecting to persuade you. Alright, the issues between you and my granduncle, you handle them yourselves. When you have time, ask Miles Monroe out for a drink."

He patted Elias Langley's shoulder and walked out of the office.

Elias Langley's gaze gradually sharpened...

In the evening, he indeed received a call from Mrs. Sinclair.

When he arrived at Sinclair Manor, Old Mr. Sinclair wasn't there.

Mrs. Sinclair had specifically chosen this time; Elias was aware that she didn't want to make matters bigger.

The study was filled with the faint scent of Calming Incense.

Mrs. Sinclair got straight to the point.

"Elias, Florence and Auden had a fight today. Auden threatened to cancel the engagement, and the reason is your wife. Do you know the relationship between your wife and Auden?"

Elias Langley's expression didn't change a bit, "Auden Hughes lived in Kenton during his teens and was classmates with Juliana only in high school, nothing more."

Mrs. Sinclair's brows were furrowed, "Aren't you worried there might be something between them?"

Elias Langley's lips curled slightly, his tone calm yet certain, "I'm still capable enough; Juliana shouldn't have the mind to think of other men."

Mrs. Sinclair was momentarily taken aback by his words.

"Elias, I've watched you grow up. I know you've always felt guilty about what happened back then, but you can't rush into marriage with Juliana because she looks like Helena. Marriage isn't child's play; it's about love, not compensation."

"Madam," Elias Langley's face was calm, "I married her not because she looks like anyone but because she is Juliana."

Mrs. Sinclair stared at him for a long time, emotions swirling in her eyes, and finally lowered her voice to ask, "Elias, there's no one else here, tell me the truth, is she... is she my daughter?"

Elias Langley was silent for a moment, a complexity flashed in his eyes.

He lowered his head slightly, "Madam, you also understand that some things cannot be forced. Letting go and accepting things as they come is true relief."

Is he not saying, or is she truly not?

Mrs. Sinclair's hand on the table trembled slightly.

She took a deep breath, barely managing to steady her emotions before she spoke, "What about my daughter's memorial? I want you to treat it as if she were still alive; have you done that?"

Elias Langley nodded, "Yes. Always have. Madam, if you have any questions regarding Juliana, you can ask me directly. Tell Marcus to stop; he won't find anything else, moreover..."

He deliberately paused.

"Florence has hurt my wife. For your sake, this is the last time."

Having said that, Elias Langley left Mrs. Sinclair's study.

The limousine was parked right at the entrance of Sinclair Manor.

But tonight, something was different.

Zachary York saw him and stayed in the car, not coming out to open the door for him.

Elias Langley raised an eyebrow slightly, reaching out to pull open the rear car door himself.

A familiar figure was nestled in the seat.

As the door opened, Juliana quickly reached out to grab his tie, pulling him into the car.

"President Langley, surprised?"

She straddled his lap, checking to see if he was injured.

Zachary York silently raised the divider and started the car.

Her slender fingers reached the front of his chest, where Elias Langley caught her hand, his voice hoarse, "I'm fine, don't touch around randomly; the time on the road... isn't enough."

"I came to pick you up and make sure you weren't bullied, and you still won't let me touch you."

As she spoke, she started to get off his lap.

Elias Langley chuckled lowly, held her down, and looked at her as if he was about to draw her in.

"Just sit like this; don't get down all night."

Juliana felt her ears getting warm...

Graduating from kindergarten, she finally understood his hint.

The next morning, Juliana woke up feeling sore. As she softly groaned, a warm hand was already on her lower back, massaging it gently but effectively.

"Is the lady satisfied with my service?"

The man's voice, sleepy and hoarse, resounded in her ear.

Juliana remembered last night, feeling nailed down, unable to move, and responded irritably, "Not satisfied, I want to bite someone."

However, the man's voice turned even more teasing, "Alright, next time you can bite."

Juliana got the hint again, her face turning impossibly red, and she hid it in his chest, grumbling, "I'm not speaking to you anymore, and you don't speak to me either."

"Mhm, talk less, do more."

"Elias Langley!"

As the two were fooling around, the phone on the bedside table vibrated.

Elias Langley glanced at the screen, his expression tightened, and he gently patted her back before getting up to answer it by the window.

The conversation on the phone was quiet, and despite straining her ears, Juliana couldn't make out the exact words.

But she did hear the words "Mr. Sinclair," which startled her.

Elias Langley hung up and returned to the bedside, bending down to kiss her forehead softly.

"I need to handle an urgent matter; you need to have breakfast obediently, okay?"

"What's it about?" Juliana asked deliberately.

Elias Langley chuckled, ruffled her hair, quickly changed his clothes, and left.

Juliana stared at the closed bedroom door as her suspicion regarding "Mr. Sinclair" quietly grew.

Since returning to Kingsford, she hadn't seen her father. As a national treasure-level chip expert, his whereabouts were always top secret; she had always thought he was at some secret base, engrossed in his work...

She got ready and moved to the dining hall.

Steward Fay was busy elsewhere, and Mrs. Dalton stood by, hands unconsciously rubbing the edge of her apron, looking as if she wanted to speak but hesitated.

Juliana ate a few bites, looked up at her, and asked, "Is there something?"

"Madam, sorry to interrupt your meal. I have a matter to ask for your help?"

Mrs. Dalton's face showed a troubled expression, but she spoke very simply.

"My daughter is graduating this year and hasn't found a job yet. Our family is struggling financially. She wants to come to the city to look for a job. You know, in Kingsford, the expenses are high, and she can't really afford to stay at a hotel... I'm hoping to ask if she could temporarily stay in the servants' quarters? Just for a few days, once she finds a job, she'll move out immediately."