

REBORN, REAWAKENED, REKINDLED

Chapter 16

Chapter 16 My mother-in-law Faith's voice floated in from outside, "Neil, Irene, are you guys in bed yet?" Neil quickly stashed the divorce papers under the sheets, and went to open the door, "Mom, why are you still up?" "I was about to go to bed, but I noticed your bedroom light was still on, so I wanted to check if you were asleep." Faith chatted with Neil at the door. "Mom!" I peeled off my face mask and joined them at the door, playing along with Neil in a perfectly orchestrated "husband and wife" act, "Neil and I were just about to hit the sack." I was even arm in arm with Neil, snuggling up against his shoulder with an air of sweetness. Neil glanced at me calmly without uttering a word. "Indeed, it's pretty late. Your father has a business summit to attend the day after tomorrow. He just arrived in Rosemont, and didn't plan on staying at a hotel. So he'll be staying here for a few days." Faith informed me with a smile. My parents-in-law usually live in Springvale, a short distance away. I put on a happy face, "That's great! I haven't seen you for so long and I'll take you out for some good food in the next few days, just to relax." "Alright, you guys should get to bed too, don't mess up your sleep." After reminding us, Faith finally left. In my past life, I misunderstood Neil, thought he was a maverick and didn't heed his family's words. I put all my heart into him, believing that as long as he fell in love with me, the rest of the Whitmore family didn't matter. Only later when I saw him striving for the Whitmores' approval and blessing for Bonnie did I realize how important family was to him. If I had a good relationship with my parents-in-law, or if I were pregnant, maybe I wouldn't have lost in my past life. After closing the door, I let out a sigh of relief and exchanged glances with Neil.

“Do you I want to sleep on the bed and I’ll take the couch, or vice versa?” I began to consider this issue.

Neil nonchalantly flopped onto the bed, answering indifferently, “Don’t fret, do you really think we’d have any interaction when sleeping together?” I have to admit, Neil’s words hit the nail on the head. “Fine.” Not wasting any more words, I just sprawled on the other side of the bed. This was the second time Neil and I had shared a bed since getting married. The first time was our wedding night, and he didn’t touch me then either. We slept back-to-back, as if the other didn’t exist. After a while, I broke the silence, “Can you give me Russel’s WhatsApp or phone number?” Neil didn’t respond. I turned to look at the back of his head, wondering if he’d fallen asleep. “I want to give him a piece of my mind.” I added. “I already did.” Neil’s cold voice came, simple and straightforward. Alright, I closed my eyes again, trying to fall asleep. Then, the rumbling of thunder started outside the window, signaling a thunderstorm. When I heard a loud clap of thunder, I gripped the quilt and pulled it over me. The thunder roared, but it couldn’t cover Neil’s voice in grinding teeth, “Irene!” I peeked out, looking at Neil’s annoyed face, and explained in a small voice, “Sorry, I’m scared of thunder.” “What does that have to do with me?” Neil was blunt and he straight up snatched the quilt back. “Boom!” There was another deafening thunderclap. I immediately jumped into Neil’s arms. The divorce could wait, safety was the priority now. Neil’s body stiffened noticeably, he seemed unable to accept it. Who could accept a skinny person clinging to him on a stormy night? I felt uncomfortable all over, as if poked by my own bones. Neil pushed me away, his face looking rather angry, “Don’t touch me, okay?” “Then don’t steal my quilt.” I tried to suppress my embarrassment and pain, attempting to keep clam. Neil kicked the quilt onto me, then got off the bed founding another quilt, and prepared to sleep on the floor. I wrapped myself in the quilt and my eyes landing on Neil on the floor. I began to imagine scenes

of him and Bonnie. If Bonnie were afraid of thunder, he would definitely do his best to protect her.

That night, I dreamt of my past life again, the despair and unwillingness were unforgettable. The next day, when I woke up, Neil was already gone. I got dressed and went downstairs, Ada was making breakfast, the other servants were cleaning, Faith was outside pruning the plants after last night's storm, and my father-in-law Ryan was exercising. "You are up early?" I stepped out and greeted my in-laws. "At our age, we can't sleep for too long. We like to get up and exercise." Faith chuckled. I went over and naturally took Faith's hand, ignoring her surprised look, and started to chat with her, "Mom, I have a friend who sells jewelry. She recently got a pair of violet sapphire bracelets, they're very beautiful. But she's short on cash, so I bought them, and I want to give them to you." Faith loved collecting precious gemstones and even had a special collection room at home. I did this to improve our relationship. Not to win Neil back, but to make the road of love between him and Bonnie more difficult. This counted as revenge, I guess. As expected, Faith's eyes lit up, "Violet sapphire bracelets? Good, bring them for me to see. If I like them, I'll buy them." "Mom, don't talk about buying and selling. I'll bring them to you in the next couple of days." I replied with a smile. I do have a pair of violet sapphire bracelets, a gift from my mother a few years ago. They're quite valuable, and if they can make Faith like me more and be harsher of Bonnie, then I think it was worth. "I know you're nice, but I can't let you give them to me for free. I'll give you what they're worth." Faith patted my hand, speaking kindly. I shook my head gently, "Mom, don't say that. As your daughter-in-law, I can't always be around to take care of you. So I can only compensate you with money. As long as you and Ryan are happy and healthy, any amount of money is worthy." My parents-in-law exchanged a glance, possibly feeling a bit puzzled. In the five years that Neil and I have been married, I've never spoken such sweet words. 18:01

Chapter 16 Ryan paused, dusting off his sleeve gently. "Irene, it's the kindness that counts. Faith and I don't really expect anything else. We just can't wait to hold our grandchild. You and Neil should get a move on!". Mentioning this, Faith seemed to recall something. She pulled me aside, speaking hesitantly, "Irene, have you and Neil been to the hospital for a medical test? Could it be that the lad has been living a luxury life with too much wine and women, so it had taken a toll on his health? I was taken aback. This was the first time I realized Faith was so considerate. She was quick to suspect her own son, not her daughter-in-law, in such a situation.