

## SUBSTITUTE BRIDE: UTTERLY PAMPERED BY HER BILLIONAIRE HUSBAND

### Chapter 10: Chapter 10: Biting a Mark on His Shoulder

When Serena Sterling was nine, she was sent to the countryside. She shouldn't have expected anything from her so-called father, Gregory Sterling. As expected, this call had no surprises.

Gregory Sterling was still the man she knew, obsessed with medicine, vain, and eager to bring glory to The Sterling Group in the medical field.

Now, his most proud daughter was Yasmine Sterling, while Serena, who returned from the countryside, could be used to bring good fortune and serve as a bed companion.

"Dad, I understand, I'll go tomorrow."

Her obedient and compliant response softened Gregory's tone a bit, "Serena, you're marrying to bring good fortune. Your critically ill husband will soon die, and once Cox's matter is resolved, dad will find a good match for you."

"Well, thank you, dad." Serena hung up the phone.

Turning off her phone, Serena closed her eyes in Hayden Crawford's embrace, feeling truly sad inside. She was just an orphan.

She wished to be like a normal child, loved by her parents, having a simple and peaceful life. But for her, this was a mere indulgence.

She had no home.

She was just a wild child without parental love.

Perhaps feeling cold, Serena curled up closer in Hayden's embrace, which was firm, solid, and warm, able to shield any woman from wind and rain.

Her head rested on his chest, bam, bam, bam; his strong and powerful heartbeat brought her a great sense of security.

Serena thought she would have insomnia, but in this man's embrace, she slept soundly till morning, having a good night's sleep.

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Hayden Crawford slowly opened his eyes. It was now the dawn of the next day, and the brilliant morning light filtered through the layers of curtains, spreading countless golden-hued particles in the air.

Hayden's eyes were tinged with the drowsiness of just waking up and a momentary daze.

It had been many years, many years since he woke naturally in the beautiful morning light.

Hayden closed his eyes and reached to hug the girl in his arms.

He knew she had slept in his arms all night because his embrace still held her lingering warmth and fragrance.

However, he didn't hold onto anything, his arms were empty, Serena Sterling was gone.

Hayden instantly felt wide awake, tossed aside the silk duvet, and got up.

Just then the study's door was pushed open, and Butler Felix walked in with a face full of delight, "Young Master, you're awake? The Young Mistress told me not to disturb you while she was leaving, letting you sleep a bit more. For how many years has it been since you've woken naturally? Even Mr. North couldn't make it happen, but the Young Mistress did. What kind of magic does she have?"

Butler Felix felt it too unbelievable. He knew the best about the Young Master's physical condition. Last night, after the Young Mistress went in, he was worried but the Young Master ended up holding her all night.

Hayden looked outside the door, "Where is the Young Mistress?"

"Young Master, the Young Mistress said she was going out to handle some matters and will return in the evening."

"Did she say where she was going?"

"No."

"Understood."

Hayden returned to the bedroom, went into the bathroom to shower, and when he took off his white shirt, he saw in the mirror the deep little bite mark on his shoulder.

She bit him.

Just looking at this little bite mark, it was imaginable how hard she bit back then. Now it's leaving her mark on him.

Hayden didn't go to the office today, instead working in the study. In the evening when he glanced at his wristwatch, it was eight o'clock, and Serena hadn't returned yet.

He took out his phone, she hadn't sent any messages nor called him.

Hayden felt a bit stifled and displeased, and at that moment, a melodious phone ringtone sounded. He received a call.

Hayden pressed the button to answer, "Hello."

Seth Hawthorne's voice quickly transmitted from the other end, "Second Brother, it's been ages since you came out to play. Did granny marry you a new bride, and now you're indulged, living a househubby's life?"

House... what?

Hayden frowned his dashing eyebrows impatiently, "Keep babbling, and I'll hang up."

"Don't do that Second Brother, come out to play. Brother Justin and I are waiting for you at the 1949 Bar."

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Bar.

In a secluded private box, Hayden Crawford sat on the main seat of the sofa, with a cigarette between his slender fingers.

Smoke lingered, obscuring his handsome face, only faintly showing his furrowed brow, clear and chilly.

Seth Hawthorne was pouring the wine, "Second Brother, what's wrong? Why are you smoking as soon as you come in? I think you are too overheated, and should cool down a bit."

As he spoke, Seth pushed over a beauty beside him, "Second Brother, this is the new headliner at 1949, she's clean. I specially reserved her for you. Sherry, let's see if you can feed this wine to my Second Brother."

Bar has always been a place for men to splurge; it wasn't lacking beauties, and men coming here for entertainment could spend thousands in a single night, and this bar was a Hawthorne family business.

Among the four great families of Bayside—Crawford, Xavier, Hawthorne, and Su, three gathered today; these three grew up playing in the same open-crotch pants.

Pushed beside the man, Sherry's pretty innocent face quickly turned red. Tonight, Hayden Crawford was simply dressed in black, but as The Crawford Group's leader, even when smoking he exudes an irresistible charm of a mature and successful man, coupled with his definitively handsome appearance, even without money, Sherry was willing to be with him.

Sherry picked up the wine glass, giving a charming smile, "Mr. Crawford, care for a drink?"

Hayden instantly detected the artificial perfume scent on Sherry. He gave her a faint glance, "Stay away from me."

Sherry's pretty face instantly turned pale.

Seth quickly chased her away, "Second Brother, you've been so bland for years, really not interested in women? Granny even forbids me from seeking you out, afraid we might turn to guys!"

At this moment, Justin Xavier spoke up, "Hayden, I heard that the Sterling family married you a daughter, named Serena Sterling."

Upon hearing the name, Hayden looked up at Justin Xavier.

Justin Xavier was very handsome, wearing a sophisticated pair of gold-rimmed glasses. He took a sip of the red wine in his hand and then looked forward, "Look over there, who is it?"

Hayden looked up and quickly spotted a slender figure, Serena Sterling.

Beside Serena was a man, the potbellied Cox.

"Damn," Seth slammed the table, "Second Brother, how come Serena Sterling is drinking with an old man, she dares to put a green hat on you!"

Seth grabbed a wine bottle ready to charge up, The Hawthorne Crown Prince, the little overlord of Bayside, "Second Brother, I'll go teach them a lesson for you!"