

## SUBSTITUTE BRIDE: UTTERLY PAMPERED BY HER BILLIONAIRE HUSBAND

### Chapter 18: Chapter 18: Face-Slapping

Lillian Sterling stared venomously at Serena Sterling, feeling that this MOO princess dress was tailored just for Serena. Her elegance was too captivating; even if she did nothing, she could easily become the center of attention.

If it weren't for the Sterling family's turmoil ten years ago, Serena would now be Bayside's top socialite.

Back then, Serena and Leah Thorne were at the height of their splendor, with black clouds of high-society crown princes surrounding their cars, all wanting a glimpse of the dazzling duo known as the Southern Serena and Northern Leah.

Southern Serena and Northern Leah...

Lillian Sterling took a deep breath and quickly donned a loving expression; now, Bayside's top socialite was her daughter, Yasmine Sterling!

Lillian Sterling stepped forward, affectionately holding Serena Sterling's little hand, "Serena, you've changed your dress. Come, let me introduce some friends to you... Wait a moment, why does your dress look so familiar, isn't this... the princess dress Vanessa is supposed to wear tonight?"

Serena Sterling showed no surprise, knowing the drama was about to unfold.

Bella Sterling looked at Serena Sterling, "Serena, why are you wearing my princess dress? Today is my birthday, and this MOO princess dress is a birthday gift from my mom."

Zoe quickly chimed in, "Serena Sterling, you're going too far. Today is Bella's birthday, and you even want to take her princess dress?"

All the socialites knew Bella had a MOO princess dress, so they immediately began to gossip,

What's wrong with this Serena? Is she trying to steal Bella's MOO princess dress to stand out at the party? That's just too selfish and vain.

I see she just came back from the countryside and was stunned by the MOO princess dress, eager to claim it as her own. Such a country bumpkin is really disgraceful!

Everyone's gaze toward Serena Sterling turned unkind.

At this moment, Gregory Sterling came over. After the previous incident, he really didn't want any more surprises that might embarrass him, so he looked at Serena Sterling with a displeased face and reprimanded, "Serena, today is Bella's birthday, and you even want to take her princess dress? These years you've been in the countryside, you've really lost all manners. Go upstairs and change your dress, and don't come down again."

Gregory Sterling, as a father, personally labeled Serena as ill-mannered and found her disgraceful, telling her not to come downstairs. This delighted Lillian Sterling and Bella Sterling immensely.

Bella Sterling pinched her thigh, her eyes quickly turning red and about to shed tears with a grievance expression, "Dad, forget about this matter, Serena and I are sisters after all. I just want everyone to be happy on my birthday, I'll let Serena have the princess dress."

As she spoke, Bella deliberately shed a couple of tears.

This caused all the wealthy wives and socialite daughters to look at Serena Sterling with disdain,

Today is Bella's birthday, is this Serena Sterling deliberately trying to sabotage the event? She actually made Bella cry.

Bella is just too kind-hearted. If it were me, I'd definitely make Serena Sterling take off the MOO princess dress.

Let's leave, we don't want to see her anymore!

The scene was firmly controlled now, and the MOO princess dress on Serena Sterling couldn't be denied. Lillian Sterling was thoroughly satisfied.

However, Lillian still spoke with feigned difficulty, "Serena, perhaps you should go upstairs first..."

Serena Sterling remained silent, but now she gently furrowed her elegant brows, softly saying, "This dress isn't Bella's."

This remark exploded among the crowd, causing Lillian Sterling to have a bad premonition. She quickly interjected, "Serena, I understand, but if you continue to argue, it would truly be too much."

Serena Sterling showed some grievance and meekness but persisted in repeating, "This dress is not Bella's, it's just... an imitation MOO."

What?

Imitation MOO?

Everyone here are ardent fans of MOO, so immediately someone stepped forward to verify the princess dress on Serena Sterling.

"This princess dress is indeed... an imitation, a counterfeit," someone concluded.

What?

Lillian Sterling and Bella Sterling felt as if a thunderbolt had struck on a clear day. Bella immediately ran forward, incredulous, and asked, "Did you see wrong? Is it really an imitation?"

"No mistake, this princess dress is very high-quality in imitation, almost indistinguishable from the real one, but MOO dresses have pure handmade gold thread within, and this dress does not."

With this explanation, everyone noticed the flaw in the princess dress.

Faces filled with confusion, people began to murmuring, "So Serena wasn't wearing Bella's princess dress. We misunderstood her, just... why would she wear an imitation dress to a party?"

Serena Sterling seemed not to hear the crowd's words; she lowered her long, delicate lashes, "Today is Bella's birthday party, Auntie called and reminded me to dress nicely, but I had no nice dresses, so I spent money on an imitation MOO, and the only one available was this princess dress."

As she spoke, Serena lifted her gaze to Gregory Sterling, after her earlier grievance, revealing hurt and sadness, "Dad, I don't want to embarrass you. I don't even hope for the affection you give Bella, nor dare I demand Bella's princess dress, I just... I really want to fit in with you all after all these years in the countryside."

Serena's heartfelt words instantly reversed the situation, leaving the wealthy wives and socialite daughters sighing in sympathy,

What's going on with this Sterling family? Without clarifying the princess dress issue, the father just calls his daughter ill-mannered.

You see Bella's grievance with tears, but it's just a dress. What a fuss, truly a spoiled rich lady, pretentious.

The crux is Lillian Sterling, with shrewd tactics, pretending to be a loving mother, but not willing to buy Serena even one dress. Meanwhile, look at the lavish birthday bash for Bella today — truly a stepmother!

The reversal was too swift, caught Lillian Sterling off guard, she couldn't understand how a MOO princess dress ended up being an imitation?

Gregory Sterling faced embarrassment again, his face turned steel gray, while Bella's tears, using all her acting skills, now hung as damning evidence of being a spoiled, temperamental princess, leaving her in a dilemma unable to cry or not.

Bella Sterling wanted to fight back, "This princess dress clearly is..."

Lillian swiftly interjected, "Silence!"

Lillian glared at Bella fiercely, stupid girl, claiming the imitation princess dress was bought by her, who would believe?

Not only would people not believe, but they'd also question why Bella was so sure, Bella couldn't admit she knew because it was all contrived?

Now Lillian could only swallow her wounded pride, realizing she'd been outsmarted by Serena once again.