

Substitute B 180

Chapter 180: The Treasure Chest Left by Seraphina Linden

Serena caught the main point, "Director, are you saying that Old Mrs. Rathborne was my grandma's good friend?"

"Yes, Old Mrs. Rathborne was your grandma's close friend. Zane is Mr. Crawford's younger brother, and we are all like family. Serena, don't you think you should lend a hand?"

Vincent Terry was trying to pair these two up for collaboration. Even those seasoned experts were not confident about Old Mrs. Rathborne's surgery. If the two joined forces, it would certainly be an extraordinary operation, guaranteed to be a success.

Serena curved her lips, "Director, I'm a doctor, of course, I'm willing, and I've told Old Mrs. Rathborne I'd do my best to save her."

"That's fantastic. Old Mrs. Rathborne's surgery can't be delayed any longer, let's schedule it for two days later. We'll finalize the surgical plan quickly, I have great confidence in you both!"

Zane gave Serena a glance, "I'll be off, call me if anything comes up."

Zane's cool and distant figure swiftly vanished from view.

"Serena, what's going on between you and Zane?" Vincent Terry suddenly asked.

What do you mean?

Serena blinked cluelessly with her long lashes.

"Serena, I've known Zane for quite a while. He's a cold and proud genius, many young girls admire and like him, but he's very discerning. So far, none have caught his eye. He's probably still a pure-hearted boy, you know what I mean, like someone who's never even held a girl's hand..."

Serena was surprised looking at Vincent Terry, the usually ethereal and sage-like director, was he... gossiping?

Oh my, his image just shattered into pieces!

"I think Zane quite likes you. The way he looks at you is electrifying, did you two hit it off back in Aethelgard two years ago? Don't mind what those reporters say. My mentor often said people like us, who do big things, see men as leisure pursuits, and once the novelty wears off, it's time for a change. Serena, if you also like Zane, you might consider ditching Mr. Crawford."

"..." Serena internally refused to believe Vincent Terry could be this kind of person, it must be his mentor leading him astray, "Director, you have a mentor too? And your mentor is a woman?"

Speaking of his mentor, Vincent Terry immediately showed blind admiration, "Yes, my mentor is a woman, and she was the founder of The Concordiat Research Institute!"

What?

Aunt Jacqueline had mentioned when she was lucid that the founder of The Concordiat Research Institute was her mother, and now her mother is Vincent Terry's mentor?

The critical point is, her mother actually said that men are purely for entertainment?

"Director, your mentor sounds really special."

"Of course, my mentor is the most remarkable woman I've ever met. Her medical skills amazed a whole era. She picked me from many people and taught me some longevity acupuncture techniques, thanks to which I've adopted a bit of otherworldly grace over the years. She even entrusted the Concordiat Research Institute to me..." Vincent Terry suddenly paused and looked at Serena, "Serena, are you interested in my mentor?"

Serena nodded vigorously, "Yes, Director, please tell me more about her."

"Alright, you should first become my apprentice, once I become your mentor, I'll naturally tell you tales about my mentor."

"..."

Serena sort of understood why her mama chose Vincent Terry to be an apprentice. Vincent Terry had a loving heart, a true healer, and his simple and carefree nature perfectly suited the longevity acupuncture.

"Director, did your mentor leave something here at the Concordiat Research Institute?"

Serena went straight to the point; she'd been waiting for Vincent Terry to return because Aunt Jacqueline said her mama left something for her.

Vincent Terry's face changed, "Serena, how do you know about that?"

"Someone told me. Director, can you give me that thing?"

Vincent Terry contemplated for a moment, "When my mentor disappeared, she mentioned someone would come for the box someday, though I still don't know how you know about this, but come with me."

So easy?

Serena hadn't expected to obtain the box left by her mama so effortlessly.

...

In the director's office.

Vincent Langdon opened the safe and took out a small box, "Serena, what my mentor left at the Institute is this box, but the box has a lock. If you can unlock it, I'll let you take it. If not, sorry, but I'll have to take it back."

There's a lock?

Serena knew it wouldn't be this easy; Aunt Jacqueline hadn't mentioned anything about a lock when she was lucid.

Serena examined the box's lock carefully. Her pupils shrank; this wasn't an ordinary lock. The core was embedded inside the box; there should be intricate and complex mechanical bearings inside, which couldn't be opened with a simple key or combination but was more like an ancient Eight Trigrams diagram.

Serena studied for a moment, then took out the silver needle she always carried with her, inserting it into the lock.

Vincent Langdon nodded approvingly, "Not bad, this box needs a silver needle to open it, and it's done through a set of acupuncture techniques. My mentor was like a divine being, everything she left behind are priceless treasures. However, whether you can take it depends on your skill."

Serena held her breath. As she inserted the first needle, her fingertips sensed the switch inside starting to turn. Her fingers lightly moved, transforming the acupuncture techniques into mechanical trajectories. With a click, the first layer opened.

Vincent Langdon clapped, "Worthy of my chosen disciple."

Serena then took up the second needle, and soon after, with another click, the second layer opened.

"Beautiful!" Vincent Langdon's eyes lit up.

Serena was already sweating profusely. As she progressed in overcoming the challenges, the acupuncture techniques involved became increasingly profound and mysterious, she started struggling.

With a click, the third layer opened.

Vincent Langdon gave a thumbs up, "Impressive!"

Serena felt a metallic taste in her throat, as if a surge of energy was about to burst from her chest. Although having studied medicine for so long, she now felt as if she was adrift in a vast ocean, herself only a floating waterweed, struggling due to inadequate skills to open the treasure box. Her energy was now in turmoil.

Serena slumped in the chair, forcefully suppressing the metallic taste in her throat, she waved her hand, "I can't go on. I won't pass the next layer; I give up."

Vincent Langdon returned the box to the safe, smiling warmly, "Serena, managing to pass three layers has truly astonished me. No worries, you can try again next time!"