

Substitute B 225

Chapter 225: Signing the Divorce Papers at the Civil Affairs Bureau

The old Mrs. Crawford stared blankly for a long time, unable to utter a word. She looked down at the man lying on her lap, "But, now that Serena is gone, what will you do?"

Hayden Crawford tugged at his pale, thin lips, "Life has just returned to how it used to be, I've gotten used to it."

His voice was low, weak, lifeless, and self-mocking.

The old Mrs. Crawford shed tears and tenderly stroked Hayden Crawford's short hair. The men of the Crawford family were all hopelessly devoted, both his father and him.

At this moment, the old lady did not even know if she had made a mistake. This arranged marriage ended so hastily, leaving him with nothing more than deeper scars in his heart and injuries all over his body.

"Alright, Grandma can promise you not to look for Serena. Serena is a good girl. Since both of you chose to let go, Grandma has nothing to say. But from today onwards, you must actively cooperate with treatment, whether it's for the injuries on your body, your insomnia, or psychological issues. Can you promise Grandma that?"

All of a sudden, the old lady seemed to have aged many years. After all, she was quite old and couldn't be with her grandson for many more years, and this grandson worried her endlessly.

Hayden Crawford gently closed his eyes, "Okay."

...

Leah Thorne received the call and quickly opened the apartment door. Serena Sterling stood outside, her eyes and nose red, looking lost and forlorn.

"Serena, what's wrong? Come in quickly!" Leah hurriedly pulled Serena inside, "Serena, why are your hands so cold? Your whole body feels like ice. What happened?"

Serena had precious blood to protect her before, always feeling warm, and Leah loved to hug her for that reason. It was the first time she found her body so cold.

Serena looked at Leah with red, swollen eyes, her voice hoarse, "Leah, I'm homeless now. Can you put me up for a few nights?"

"What are you saying? This is your home. You can stay as long as you want. Tell me what happened. Did you have a fight with Mr. Crawford to run out this late?"

Serena's bright pupils quickly filled with glistening tears again, "No, Mr. Crawford and I... divorced."

"What?" Leah felt like her ears were ringing. She couldn't believe it, "You divorced Mr. Crawford? Calm down, talk to me slowly. Have you had dinner? I'll heat up some food for you, fill your stomach first, and then talk."

A best friend's concern always starts with whether or not one has eaten. Leah couldn't cook herself, but an auntie in the apartment could. She microwaved some dishes and brought a glass of warm milk for Serena, letting her eat and talk at the same time.

Serena didn't say much, only the events that happened at the Sterling family today.

Leah furiously slammed the table, "Damn, that bitch Yasmine! I really want to tear her apart. But Mr. Crawford, I really didn't expect he'd cheat. I said Yasmine saving him would be a big trouble."

Serena lowered her head, silently eating a bite of rice without any appetite, chewing mechanically.

"Divorce then, it's no big deal. Kick to the curb a man who can't keep it in his pants, wait for the New Year? But Serena, negotiate a good deal for the divorce. He cheated first, turning you into a divorcee. You have to get substantial material compensation, best if you can get shares in his company!"

"I didn't ask for his money..."

"What are you saying, Serena? Are you out of your mind? If you don't spend his money, are you waiting for him to give it to Yasmine instead?"

Tears suddenly fell from Serena's eyes, holding chopsticks and lowering her head as tears rolled down incessantly—a truly pitiful sight.

Leah panicked, quickly reaching out to hug her, awkwardly patting her back, comforting, "Why are you crying again? Don't cry, don't cry. We won't take his money, we won't take his dirty money. From now on, I'll curse him every day for impotence, let's see how he enjoys other women then!"

Leah was so angry her teeth ached, vowing and handing tissues to Serena to wipe her tears.

But the tears wouldn't stop, and Serena kept crying until she started hiccuping.

Leah's heart ached terribly. She had grown up with Serena, knew her personality well—strong, independent, and brave. Even when she was sent away to the countryside nine years ago, she had never cried like this.

"Serena, stop crying. Crying over such a scumbag isn't worth it, and it would be a joke to those bitches like Yasmine," Leah said gently.

Serena wiped her face with her hand, but the more she wiped, the more tears flowed. Looking at Leah through blurry eyes, she sobbed, "I know... but my heart is still... so sad, Leah. I really... really liked him. He was... my first love. I don't want... to divorce him, not at all..."

Leah wiped Serena's tears and snot, "I know, I know it all, Serena. Just cry it all out. I'll stay with you, cry it all out, and everything will pass."

Serena hugged Leah, crying bitterly, realizing that breaking up felt so awful.

She lost Mr. Crawford.

...

The next morning.

When Serena arrived at the Civil Affairs Bureau, Hayden Crawford was already there. Today, Hayden was wearing a deep blue coat with a thin black turtleneck sweater, giving off a cold, ascetic, unattainable aura.

But his complexion was terrible, a stubble of blue shadow on his determined jaw, dark circles from sleepless nights, and a sickly pallor.

Of course, Serena was not in good shape either. She had cried all night, and Leah had constantly used eggs to soothe her eyes, but they still looked red and swollen.

Their eyes met; Serena indifferently looked away, "Let's go in."

Hayden looked at her and nodded hoarsely, "Alright."

They walked inside and sat on the chairs. The staff handed them the divorce papers, "Mr. Crawford, Mrs. Crawford, have you thought it through? If you have, then sign here below, and once signed, you'll be officially divorced."

Serena picked up the pen and signed her name, Serena Sterling, at the bottom.

Hayden watched her signing, then picked up the pen and signed his name as well.

They soon received their divorce certificates. Serena walked out, and it was windy today. She seemed much thinner these days and was wearing little. Her complexion was pale, as if she could be blown away by the wind.

"Where to? I'll give you a ride." Hayden looked at her.

Serena shook her head, "No, thank you."

They fell silent. The once closest lovers had grown distant.

"Mr. Crawford," Leah came over and pulled Serena behind her, "you and Serena are divorced now. From now on, Serena won't lack a car. There'll be plenty of passenger seats waiting for her to choose. You don't need to worry. As a decent ex, I hope you disappear gracefully, instead of occasionally popping up and bothering Serena. Serena, let's go!"