

Substitute B 232

Chapter 232: She Was Born to Be the Phoenix Empress

Now, this medical compendium is like a key, opening a new Chapter for Serena Sterling.

At this moment, lightning flashed in Serena's mind; all the needle techniques combined seemed like a Tai Chi Yin-Yang diagram, more like... the key to that treasure chest.

The treasure chest Seraphina Linden left in The Concordiat Research Institute, Serena tried it, overwhelming blood energy surged in the third stage, and these needle techniques seemed to be the key for what comes next.

Serena closed her eyes for a moment, her head in chaos; these profound and enigmatic needle techniques were hard to comprehend all at once, very perplexing.

Just then, a "knock knock" sounded at the door, and Leah Thorne came over, "Serena, what's wrong? If you have a headache, stop looking. Maybe someday you'll understand it all and feel suddenly enlightened."

Serena nodded and put away the medical compendium. Medicine takes time to study, understand, and practice clinically; there's no fast track. She's a bit tired today and plans to rest first.

"Serena, you're leaving in two days. Do you have any plans for these two days? How about I accompany you shopping?" Leah smiled.

Serena shook her head, holding Leah's small hand, "A lot has happened recently, and this City of Bayside is, after all, where I grew up. I don't want to shop; in these two days, I just want to walk around alone and have a look because perhaps I will never return in the future."

Leah acknowledged this; she fully respects every decision Serena makes, "Serena, I will soon go to the City of Aethelgard to find you."

"Leah, you're going to the City of Aethelgard too?"

"Yes, there's no family left for me in this Bayside, nor anything worth lingering. We sisters can head to Aethelgard together, and I've taken a new endorsement, the global ambassador for Fly Jewelry. I will work in Aethelgard for a while."

"Fly Jewelry?" Serena's pupils shrank sharply.

"Yes, Serena, why the big reaction? Haven't you heard of Fly Jewelry? Fly Jewelry was born over thirty years ago, and upon its inception, it dazzled the entire jewelry industry. Later, every new season of Fly's collection would be snatched up by socialites and noblewomen like a whirlwind. It was truly an unprecedented scene. Over the years, Fly has ascended to the jewelry hall of fame and become a classic. It is said that Fly's founder is a legendary figure."

Of course, Serena had heard of Fly; it was the jewelry brand meticulously created by Hayden Crawford's mom.

Seeing Serena's interest in Fly, Leah handed over several fashion magazines, "This is the founder of Fly and the first jewelry matriarch, Zelda Willow."

Serena lowered her long eyelashes; the cover featured a woman, Zelda Willow.

Zelda Willow was breathtakingly beautiful. Even though Serena herself was a beauty, her breath caught momentarily when she saw Zelda Willow. On the magazine, Zelda wearing a red dress, her face was stunningly gorgeous, each feature exquisitely crafted. It looked so perfect on one face that it left people breathless.

"Serena, Zelda Willow is very beautiful, isn't she? This photo was taken for her magazine cover at forty, yet there's no trace of age on her face, with such ageless growth, claiming she was twenty wouldn't be far off. Back then, she was the most beautiful woman in the City of Aethelgard."

This Zelda Willow was actually Hayden Crawford's stepmother, the biological mother of Zane Crawford.

Leah, and indeed everyone in Aethelgard, didn't know that back in the day, the Willow family had two daughters, Zelda Willow and Isabelle Willow, and they switched identities.

Isabelle Willow entered the public eye under the name of Zelda Willow, and after her death, not even her actual name was known. Everything she created was enjoyed by Zelda Willow.

And those who knew about Isabelle Willow were very few, such as Iris Crawford, who only hated Isabelle Willow.

Serena felt a deep sympathy for Isabelle Willow from the bottom of her heart. She should have had an exceptionally brilliant, unparalleled life, yet she lived in someone else's shadow.

With just a wind, everything scattered.

Aside from her son Hayden Crawford, there was nothing left.

Serena's heart ached; now she understood why, as a child, Hayden Crawford would go crazy seeing his mom's memorial tablet being burned.

Serena looked at Zelda Willow again, initially captivated by her stunning beauty, yet upon closer inspection, her eyes held hidden ambitions and a sharpness that felt somewhat uncomfortable.

Hayden Crawford once mentioned that his mom Isabella Willow and Zelda Willow resembled twins, with a nine-point similarity in appearance. He wondered what a tranquil, serene, yet stunning beauty Isabella Willow was like, and whether she was deserving of the title: the most beautiful woman in Aethelgard.

"Serena, this Zelda Willow is not only Aethelgard's first beauty but also, at her birth, a fortune-teller declared that the daughter of the Willow family had a destiny as an Empress, a fate richly blessed beyond words."

"Back then, the Willow family wasn't considered a prestigious family in Aethelgard, not to mention reaching the central circle of Aethelgard. But with Zelda Willow's birth, she perfectly illustrated what it means for a woman from a modest family to grow up, raised in deep seclusion, with natural beauty that cannot be concealed. Once chosen to be by a king's side, Zelda Willow was noticed by the eldest son of the Crawford family, Jude Crawford, who was the successor of The Crawford Group!"

Mentioning Jude Crawford, Leah winked mysteriously, "Serena, do you know what Jude Crawford is like?"

Serena didn't know; all she knew was that Jude Crawford was Hayden Crawford's biological father.

Regarding this father, Hayden Crawford had never mentioned him, not a word.

Leah tossed over a business magazine, "This is an out-of-print magazine from back in the day; it features a personal interview with Jude Crawford, the business world emperor of that era. You won't be able to see him now because he's become a mysterious figure no commercial weekly magazine can capture. If it wasn't for this collaboration, I wouldn't have gotten this magazine either. Serena, take a good look and see what it means to be truly outstanding."

Serena looked down and saw the man on the magazine cover, Hayden Crawford's biological father, Jude Crawford.

On the cover, Jude Crawford sat in a lofty business office building; he wore a white shirt with no hint of extravagance. Yet, every move radiated with a royal nobility's cold grace, as the dazzling sunlight from the window bathed him in splendor.

Looking at Jude Crawford's face, seemingly chiseled by divine craftsmanship, Serena realized whom Hayden Crawford resembled; Hayden really did look a lot like his biological father.

Serena seemed to see into the future, ten years, twenty years down the line to Hayden.

"Serena, this Jude Crawford is a genius in the business world. He entered the financial sector in his teens and established his massive business empire. Later, he took over the Crawford Group, added several refinements to the two empires, making it into the existing Crawford Group, astonishing an era in the business world. Even such an extraordinarily talented and mesmerizingly divine man was won over by Zelda Willow. Everyone says that Zelda Willow's destiny as an empress was prophesied."

Serena knew that what Leah said as Zelda Willow's entire story was actually all about Isabelle Willow; it was Isabelle Willow's life.

While Zelda Willow was always a sickly person who feared exposure to light, never stepping outside.

The first beauty of Aethelgard was Isabelle Willow; the founder of Fly Jewelry was Isabelle Willow; the prophecy of an empress's destiny was Isabelle Willow; the one noticed by Jude Crawford was also Isabelle Willow!