

## Substitute B 249

### Chapter 249: Being Serious About Love (2)

Serena gazed up at the handsome face of the man, her eyes sparkling with water. Unlike her alluring and charming demeanor, Hayden Crawford looked vibrant and spirited. Today, he wore a black coat, looking striking and stylish, and just with his model-like physique, he could easily overshadow those international male models. Now, he looked down at her, maintaining his refined and calm demeanor that still carried an irreverent and leisurely aura of authority, and scolding her in a low voice.

"It's all your fault, what an embarrassment!" Serena covered her flushed little face, "We both agreed to go out for a date and some serious romantic walk, but here we are, doing nothing, just staying in the room..."

Hayden raised an eyebrow, exuding the charm of a mature man, "Mrs. Crawford, why don't you tell me how we didn't seriously date in the room, where weren't we serious?"

"..."

Serena seriously suspected he was making a suggestive remark, so she ignored him!

In short, this honeymoon trip was completely different from what she had imagined, hard to put into words!

After parting with the aunties, the two of them started climbing the mountain. Serena certainly couldn't climb it on her own, so Hayden asked her to jump on his back, and he carried her up the mountain.

Though she was light, weighing around 90 pounds, she was nevertheless an adult girl. Yet, he carried her all the way up the mountain without even panting.

His stamina was really off the charts.

At this moment, Serena heard two bird calls. She looked up and pointed happily at a big tree, "Mr. Crawford, look quickly, there's a bird's nest on the tree."

Hayden glanced up, displaying little interest, "What's so fascinating about a bird's nest?"

"Mr. Crawford, you don't know? When I was little, I really wanted to climb a tree and take down a bird's nest. There must be eggs in it. I could hatch a chick, just think how fun that would be."

Hayden responded with a noncommittal grunt, quite perfunctory.

Serena tugged on his ear, "Don't ridicule me!"

No one had ever tugged on Hayden's ear before, "Mrs. Crawford, your courage has grown, hasn't it? Daring to pull my ear?"

Serena was actually quite intimidated. This man was a typical domineering CEO, and pulling at him was like pulling a tiger's whiskers. Yet now, she gathered her courage and tugged again, her slender, fair legs swinging in midair, tightly wrapped around his trim waist. "So what if I pull your ear? Not only will I pull your ear, but tonight I also want to... make you kneel!"

Kneel...

Hayden instantly grasped her intent. His large hand that supported her bottom tightened, pinching her as he warned lowly, "One more bold move and I'll crash you into something, believe it or not?"

"..."

Serena immediately conceded, realizing she could never outmatch him in banter.

"Mr. Crawford, I was wrong."

...

As night fell, Hayden carried Serena to the top of the mountain. Together, they set up a tent, but instead of sleeping inside, they sat side by side on the mountaintop.

Hayden wrapped her entirely in a soft blanket, bundling her up like a dumpling with only her little head sticking out, "It's chilly at night. Don't catch a cold."

Serena rested her head on his broad shoulder, smiling foolishly at him, "Mr. Crawford, I feel so happy right now."

He held her close, his thin lips brushing against her cheek, "You could choose to stay this happy all the time."

Serena's heart skipped a beat. They hadn't mentioned that unpleasant topic these past few days, yet now he was revisiting it.

"Serena, if you like, we can stay here forever, we..."

"Mr. Crawford," Serena interrupted him, "You should keep your promise. We agreed on a five-day honeymoon trip, and after the sunrise, we part ways."

Hayden's fingers tightened, his handsome eyelids lowered quietly. After a long while, he said, "Rest for a while, I'll hold you. When the sun rises, I'll wake you."

"Okay."

Serena nestled her little face into his warm embrace, listening to the steady, powerful beats of his heart—thump, thump, thump—so reassuring and dependable.

It was indeed a moment of happiness. Serena closed her eyes, "Mr. Crawford, do you sing? Sing me a song."

"What would you like to hear?"

"I'll listen to whatever you sing."

Hayden held her, really sang a song, an English version of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," a lullaby.

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,

How I wonder what you are.

Up above the world so high,

Like a diamond in the sky.

Serena's slender, fair fingers gripped the hem of his coat, melting entirely into his deep, magnetic voice. She'd heard many versions of this English lullaby, but now his pronunciation was proper and fluent, his singing low and gentle, so beautiful it seemed to impregnate the ears.

She imagined that perhaps in the future, he'd be a father, perhaps having a small, obedient daughter. After returning from work and removing his suit, he might cradle his daughter in his arms and sing her this lullaby.

What a pity that she wouldn't be part of his future.

The girl had already fallen asleep. Hayden held her tightly, not sleeping himself. The last night filled him with countless emotions of attachment and reluctance, and even greed.

He had once pushed away this girl in his arms, but now he didn't want to let go.

No one could tell how much time passed as the sky gradually lightened. A dawn sun rose slowly from the horizon.

"Serena, wake up, the sun is up."

In her dreams, Serena heard the man's low, gentle call. She opened her eyes, and the sun had already risen. In an instant, countless golden rays filtered through the tree branches, painting the entire world a shade of blushing crimson.

So grand and magnificent.

"Wow."

Serena's eyes shone bright, the sunrise so beautiful. Falling asleep to a lullaby from the man she loved and waking in his embrace, now sitting atop a mountain watching such a stunning sunrise, Serena felt her life was without regrets.

"Mr. Crawford, let's go back."

This honeymoon trip was now over.

Hayden stood up, his narrow eyes looking at her tenderly, "Shall I carry you?"

Serena extended her small hand into his palm, shaking her head, "No need, it's still early. Hold my hand, take me home."

"Alright."

...

The two of them descended the mountain and returned home. Hayden let go of her small hand, suddenly saying, "Wait for me here, I'll be back in a moment."

"Where are you going?"

Hayden didn't answer her, just hurriedly ran away.

Serena watched his disappearing figure. Just then, her phone chimed with a message alert.

It was from Jude Crawford. Ms. Sterling, the time of our agreement has come.

The time had come.

Serena replied with a message, acknowledging, I understand, come and fetch him.

Putting down the phone, Serena entered the room, where a datura flower was placed on the balcony, its bright red petals still vibrant and almost surreal.

Serena took out a syringe, the needle containing the flower's poison, and injected the poison into her body.