

## Substitute B 255

### Chapter 255: Hayden Crawford's Little Pet

Hayden Crawford arrived.

Today, Hayden wore a bespoke black suit, the expensive fabric pressed to perfection without a single wrinkle, complementing his tall and upright figure. His bangs were pushed back, revealing a face as handsome as if sculpted by the gods. A luxury steel watch adorned his wrist, and every gesture exuded the elegance and sophistication of a high-society success story, making it impossible for anyone to look away.

Now he strode over with confident steps, his black trousers flawlessly tailored like a blade, creating a mesmerizing aura. After three months, Hayden Crawford was as lofty as ever, and the mature and restrained aura with hints of aloofness made the socialites present blush at the mere sight of him.

The happiest person was Anabelle Rathborne, who had been waiting for Hayden Crawford. Now that he was here, she eagerly went up to him, "Hayden, you're here?"

Hayden stopped, his deep and narrow eyes focusing on Anabelle's striking face, and in a low, magnetic voice, he said, "I promised you I would come, Annette. Happy birthday."

"Thank you, Hayden. Your arrival is the best gift I've received today!" she gazed at him with admiration and love.

Coming from a distinguished family herself, Anabelle was a true noble lady, accustomed to all sorts of admirers, but she had fallen for Hayden Crawford at first sight.

Unlike the other elites of City of Aethelgard, Hayden Crawford was truly a favored son of heaven, a noble in the business world. His cold and reserved charisma was enough to make hearts flutter.

The socialites of Aethelgard feared him. Anabelle was a little intimidated too, but among the socialites, discussions often revolved around Hayden Crawford, with bets on which family's socialite would finally capture the elusive heartthrob.

At this point, everyone gathered around, teasingly saying,

"Mr. Crawford, today is Annette's birthday. Where is your birthday gift?"

"How about this: Mr. Crawford, give a kiss as a gift. Kiss Annette."

"Kiss! Kiss!"

Everyone surrounded the two, chanting "Kiss," and Anabelle's heart raced as she looked at the man with a flushed face, "Hayden..."

Her hesitance spoke volumes, clearly hoping for a kiss from Hayden Crawford.

Hayden, tall and composed, stood there, unmoving. Under the brilliant lights, a golden glow enveloped him, his perfect facade enchanting to countless onlookers.

Anabelle stepped forward, tiptoeing to peck Hayden on the cheek.

Though Hayden hadn't kissed her, she took the initiative to kiss him.

As she stepped back, everyone let out a "Wow!"

"Annette, you're so bold."

"It's Annette's birthday; she calls the shots. How about another kiss, this time on the lips?"

"Kiss on the lips! Kiss on the lips!"

Anabelle, reputed as the most beautiful woman in Aethelgard, was pursued by countless suitors. She never paid them heed, but Hayden Crawford was the only man she actively sought.

"Kiss on the lips!"

Anabelle bit her red lips with her pearly teeth, her watery eyes shy and tense as she looked at Hayden. Hayden gazed back without reproach, his eyes gentle and indulgent.

Once more, Anabelle stepped forward, tiptoeing to kiss his thin lips.

But just as she got close, before their lips could meet, a fluffy creature darted between them, meowing loudly.

Anabelle glanced down quickly to see a snow-white kitten at Hayden's feet. The kitten looked up, its big round eyes glaring fiercely at her, meowing incessantly, "Meow! Meow! Stay away from my master!"

Anabelle felt embarrassed. Was there anyone in Aethelgard who didn't know that Hayden Crawford returned three months ago with a pet—a kitten?

While other domineering CEOs kept Tibetan Mastiffs or Golden Retrievers as pets, his was...a cat! It was truly unexpected.

This fiercely cute kitten seemed entirely at odds with his CEO demeanor, yet Hayden cherished this cat, taking it with him everywhere.

Anabelle knew this kitten didn't like her.

She was just about to kiss Hayden's thin lips when the kitten interrupted her.

Now, with the kitten glaring at her like a rival, how could she continue?

Awkwardly, Anabelle stepped back, "Hayden, your kitten is so adorable."

Even though she didn't like the kitten, for Hayden, she had to ingratiate herself with it. The fact that the daughter of the wealthiest family had to curry favor with a cat!

Hayden's handsome face remained emotionless, always calm. He glanced down at Ronda and said, "Its name is Ronda."

That name was given by his grandma. She had said it was called Ronda.

Anabelle forced a smile, continuing to praise earnestly, "Ronda is so cute."

With this turn of events, everyone dispersed, ceasing their teasing. Anabelle stood beside Hayden, speaking softly to him, "Hayden, how has Grandma Crawford been lately? My grandmother has been talking about visiting."

At this, Hayden furrowed his distinguished brows slightly, "Grandma hasn't had much appetite lately."

Since returning to Aethelgard, Grandma Crawford's appetite had been poor, and she seemed listless, often staying in her room, only occasionally chatting with him.

Grandma Crawford seemed to have aged significantly upon returning to Aethelgard, no longer the lively woman she once was.

Hayden sensed there was something on her mind, having even caught her wiping away tears secretly a few times.

The entire Crawford family was concerned about Grandma's health, changing several chefs and consulting nutritionists, but all efforts had little effect.

Anabelle furrowed her delicate brows too, "Hayden, I'll visit Grandma Crawford in a few days to chat and accompany her. I'm a nutritionist myself and learned several skills. When I visit, I'll showcase them for Grandma, and you can leave her diet to me. I promise to fix everything!"

Hayden looked at Anabelle. For some reason, the lively and playful vibe in her eyes felt very familiar to him, a feeling he liked.

Among so many girls, it was precisely because of her lively and playful eyes that he showed her softness.

Hayden reached out to touch Anabelle's pure and long hair. He thought he must like girls with a pure and lively appearance, and he especially liked Anabelle's straight black hair.

He rested his large hand on her hair, gently rubbing it.

Anabelle looked at him with bright eyes.

But soon, Hayden withdrew his hand.