

## Substitute B 32

### Chapter 32: Surrounded by Beauties

Everyone had dispersed, and Gregory helped Zoe up, "Are you okay?"

Zoe shook her head, "I'm fine."

"Here's the thing, I've booked a room here. Why don't you freshen up first? I'll have someone buy you a new set of clothes. Once you're ready, you should go to the hospital to get checked out. You have a lot of injuries."

Zoe stared blankly at Gregory. Although she always followed behind Bella, she didn't have much interaction with Gregory. Now it seemed that Gregory was eloquent and gentle.

Zoe, pale-faced, thanked him, "Alright."

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After handing the room card to Zoe, Gregory left to attend to social engagements. Zoe entered the room; it was a presidential suite.

Zoe had never stayed in a presidential suite before. Everything here was luxurious, making her truly feel the life of the upper class. Soon, Gregory's secretary arrived with a dress.

Zoe glanced at the brand; it was an international luxury brand.

She entered the bathroom to shower, washing away all the filth and humiliation left on her by Bella, then stood in front of the washbasin.

She looked at herself in the mirror. There was a swollen red slap mark on her face, but it couldn't hide the youthful beauty of her age.

Remembering today's humiliation, she clenched her fists tight, because of her poor background, everyone felt they could hit and scold her.

She didn't want to live like this anymore. Now there was a golden opportunity right in front of her, an upper-class lifestyle within reach.

She wanted to be with Gregory!

Just the thought of becoming Mrs. Sterling in the future, becoming Bella and Serena's stepmother, made Zoe's blood boil.

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Gregory returned to the presidential suite after the social event. He had drunk a lot of alcohol and collapsed onto the bed reeking of alcohol.

Just then, the phone rang. It was a call from Lillian Sterling.

Gregory didn't answer. Ever since the last time he slapped Lillian outside The Sovereign Hotel, she had been quarreling with him.

Lillian had the upper hand; over the years, she had used her connections to help Gregory secure many business deals. He still had feelings for his ex-wife, which made Lillian angry.

In their long marriage, Lillian had kept a tight leash on him, preventing him from being seduced by outside women.

The phone's ringing was too noisy, so Gregory turned it off, not wanting to deal with Lillian at all.

He took out his wallet and stared lovingly at the photo inside.

The photo was of Serena's mother, Seraphina Linden.

Seraphina was seated in a flower-covered wicker chair one summer afternoon, reading a medical book. Her lowered eyes were cold and stunning, timelessly beautiful.

Serena looked so much like her mother.

Gregory's fingers lovingly traced every inch of Seraphina's face in the photo, with devout affection, "Seraphina... Seraphina..."

Zoe walked out, came to the bedside, and Gregory was already asleep, but he was still murmuring Seraphina's name.

Zoe reached out to undress Gregory.

Though in his forties, Gregory had kept fit, his muscles firm and maturely imposing.

Suddenly, Gregory grabbed her hand, "Who?"

Zoe didn't expect Gregory to wake up, she stammered nervously, "Uncle, it's me, I..."

"Seraphina, you've returned?"

Gregory pulled Zoe into his arms, pinning her beneath him...

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Serena heard about Bella's assault on Zoe. These fair-weather friends couldn't withstand any test; none of them had ever disappointed her.

Serena had no sympathy for Zoe. Originally, Zoe could have lived with dignity, but she was vain and malicious at heart.

Serena planned to visit Zoe, but then Seth Sullivan approached, "Serena, I finally found you."

"Seth, what do you want with me?"

Seth tried to grab Serena's hand, "Come, I'll take you to see someone."

Serena deftly avoided his touch, stepping back, "Seth, the way you're so eager makes it seem like you're waiting to see me make a fool of myself. Don't touch me, I'll go with you."

Seth was in a good mood today, so he didn't argue with Serena, "Then let's go."

Serena followed him.

They arrived at the entrance of a luxurious private room, with Seth smirking, "Serena, take a look for yourself."

Serena glanced inside the room, filled with smoke, there were Bayside's elites, a few men playing cards, among them a familiar and distinguished figure — Hayden Crawford.

He hadn't returned for two days, playing cards in this bar.

The luxurious private room had a few scantily clad beauties, obviously the top picks from 1949, extremely beautiful.

Hayden had two beauties by his side, one on his left, the other on his right.

Serena felt a needle pierce her heart, not too obvious in pain, but densely pricking, making her eyes red.

Serena ran a few steps away, not wanting to look anymore.

Seth followed, intending to see Serena's heartbroken expression, but when that moment came he felt overwhelmingly angry, "Serena, you like him?"

Serena turned to Seth, "Yes, I like him. What's it to you?"

"Serena, you see him for what he is, just playing around with you. Men like him, with his background, never lack women. He finds you novel now, but once he has you, he'll lose interest and forget about you. What's worth liking about such a man?"

Serena's fair eyes were red. She knew he had women outside, but she just liked him, what could she do?

"Seth, you've seen the joke now, are you satisfied? If so, you can leave. I like him, not you!"

Seth's handsome face quickly darkened, sneering, "Serena, I shouldn't have offered myself just to be humiliated by you. Keep being stubborn. In a couple of days, it's Bella and my engagement party, you must come!"

Seth left in a fury.

Serena leaned against the wall, her long lashes drooping. So, this is what heartache feels like; Hayden, that man, made her heart ache.

Just then, the bar manager rushed over, shoving a fine drink into Serena's arms, "What are you dawdling for? The luxurious private room is waiting for you to serve drinks, all the influential people of Bayside are there. Be sharp and serve them carefully."

The bar manager pushed Serena into the luxurious private room without explanation.

Serena was dumbfounded; she wasn't there to serve drinks, she wanted to explain, but it was too late, she'd already been pushed in.

The commotion at the entrance caught the attention of the men at the card table. Among them, Seth Hawthorne looked up, his eyes lighting up at the sight of Serena, and he reminded the man opposite, "Second Brother, look who's here?"