

## Substitute B 60

Chapter 60: Bit Him

He used the word "again."

Serena Sterling thought of the last time the two of them almost had a falling out because of Rhonda Wallace. How could she have known he would get tangled up with Yasmine Sterling, the person she disliked most, bar none?

Serena lowered her long eyelashes, "How did Yasmine save you?"

She was really curious about it. That someone like Yasmine would go out of her way to save another—it's like the sun rose from the west.

Speaking of the events over seven years ago, Hayden Crawford's memories took him back to that icy and snowy place, where he had come from the majestic Aethelgard and almost lost his life.

The snow was heavy that day, the cold biting. His limbs were frozen stiff. Later, his eyelids felt heavier and heavier, and as he gently closed his eyes, he could feel his life slipping away—he was on the brink of death.

But in that very moment, a pair of soft little hands embraced him, and he heard a clear, childish voice filled with tension and urgency. "Big brother, what's wrong with you? Wake up, don't sleep!"

Someone had arrived and held him tight.

He wanted desperately to open his eyes to see the girl calling at his side, but he simply couldn't.

In a daze, he felt the girl struggling to move him to a nearby cave. Although he couldn't open his eyes, he could distinctly feel her collecting branches to start a fire for warmth. He lay on a pile of straw, and her hand touched his forehead—it was as cold as an ice cellar.

"Big brother, I won't let you die. You have to hold on. If you die, your family will be heartbroken."

Soon, her soft, small body nestled into his embrace, tightly holding him.

Hayden Crawford was just 20 at the time, in that transition from boy to man. He had never held a girl before, and when he reached out for warmth to draw her into his arms, he realized for the first time how incredibly soft a girl's body could be, like it was made of water.

He also caught the sweet and fresh scent of a young girl from her, it slowly enticed his senses and captivated him.

He made it through and turned peril into safety.

All these years, Hayden had never forgotten that night. When he was on the verge of despair, it was those little hands that saved him. Amidst the whirling snow outside, the girl nestled obediently in his arms, transmitting her warm and steadfast life force to him.

The next morning, it was the girl who woke up first. Seeing him, weak as he was, the girl said, "Big brother, it's dawn now. We need to leave, but I can't drag you. I'll go find help now, don't wander off."

The girl was about to leave.

He grabbed her slender, fair wrist and handed her a piece of jade he carried with him. Though it was a pity that he couldn't open his eyes to see her face, he hoarsely told her, "I will come back to find you."

The girl ran out and soon found people who took him away.

Later, Yasmine appeared in front of him with that piece of jade, calling sweetly, "Big brother, you finally came. I've been waiting for you all along."

Hayden briefly collected his thoughts from his memories to reality, as Serena was now asking how Yasmine had saved him. Hayden pressed his thin lips lightly together, "It's already in the past."

He didn't tell her.

Serena could actually understand. Hayden Crawford came from a noble background, with the highest education. Yasmine had saved his life, an undeniable fact, and he couldn't speak ill of that past behind her back. It's a basic decency for a man.

Serena didn't press further; actually, she regretted asking this as soon as she did because nothing he said would make her happy.

A smart man should brush over such matters as he just did.

Besides saving him, he had kept nothing from her, not even about sending Yasmine to Ferelden's The St. Lyra Academy.

But...

Girls tend to act unreasonable and get stuck in dead-end logic when they're angry. Serena was no different; right now, all she could think about was that Yasmine had only saved him. Since he had confessed everything, why wouldn't he tell her exactly how Yasmine saved him back then?

When a man evades and dodges topics like this, there's definitely something fishy.

Serena simply couldn't maintain a calm and composed attitude about this matter. The Rolls-Royce Phantom was already parked at the airport entrance.

Serena didn't want to stay another second. She unbuckled her seatbelt, reached for the car door, and wanted to get out immediately.

At that moment, Hayden grabbed her slender arm. His tall and stylish figure loomed over, and he cupped her small face with his large hand.

"What are you doing? Let go of me. Leah is back, I have to go pick her up!" Serena pushed him with all her strength.

Hayden held her firmly, "Serena, we haven't finished our conversation. I've already confessed about Yasmine, and there's nothing improper between us. Please don't be mad at me, okay?"

"Not okay, not okay at all. Hayden Crawford, you should know I can't tolerate sand in my eye. As long as the third issue about Yasmine remains unspoken, there'll always be a connection to that day. Handle your affairs before approaching me!"

Hayden saw that she was truly angry this time and that she was resisting his touch and affection. He furrowed his handsome brow, "Mrs. Crawford, you really are a heartless little thing. If I were you, knowing Yasmine likes me, shouldn't you hold my heart tighter to keep others from winning?"

"This time I insist on flipping the script. If you get entangled with Yasmine and it leads to bed, I'll definitely hand you condoms!"

Did she just say that?

Hayden was a bit angry too. He pulled her into his arms and bent down to kiss her red lips.

He just wanted to silence her, stopping her from saying more.

Earlier in the living room, she didn't let him kiss her.

The clean, crisp scent of the man enveloped her, with an added sharp, invasive aura. Serena kept dodging, completely unwilling to let him kiss her.

She quickly lowered her head and sank her teeth hard into his solid forearm.

Hiss.

Hayden winced from the pain and instantly released her.

Serena swiftly pulled open the front passenger door, running out without looking back.

Hayden leaned back into the driver's seat, lifting his hand to cover the scarlet at the corner of his eye. She could be deadly when allowed to kiss him, but more so when not allowed.

A tender yet prominent circle of teeth marks had appeared on his solid forearm. This time, she bit down hard, showing no sympathy.

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Serena entered the airport hall and almost immediately spotted Leah Thorne in the crowd.