

Substitute B 611

Chapter 611: Pregnant with Twins

Two days later, the engagement party.

This time, the engagement party between The King of Nine Peaks, Axel Ashworth, and the Princess of Alani, Serena Sterling, was exceedingly grand, held within the royal family.

Although Titus Ashworth was not fond of this marriage and constantly attempted to obstruct it, after successive setbacks, the marriage was inevitable and unstoppable.

Moreover, he was eager to meet Seraphina Linden, whom he had thought about for years, so the engagement party was organized beautifully, bringing together all the nobles of Westria tonight.

At the grand party, Consort Willow and Consort Melinda made appearances. As Titus Ashworth's favorite consorts, many people surrounded them, offering various flattery.

Consort Willow, even after so many years, you still radiate charm. We really need to learn from you the secret to eternal youth.

Consort Willow is so beautiful, no wonder she remains favored in front of the lord for so many years.

Consort Melinda is six months pregnant now, right? The lord values this pregnancy greatly. In the future, Consort Melinda, with your status elevated by your child, don't forget about us.

Consort Willow calmly and gracefully accepted these praises, nodding with a smile. After all, she's accustomed to grand scenes, while Consort Melinda seemed somewhat complacent, unable to resist showing off.

Originally, in front of Consort Willow, people would be cautious when praising Consort Melinda, but since Consort Willow and Consort Melinda are on the same front, there was no need for them to worry.

At that moment, someone suddenly said, "Oh, why is Consort Melinda's belly so large at six months? It looks like she's eight or nine months pregnant. Could it be twins inside?"

In fact, Consort Melinda's belly had been big since she got pregnant, but the doctors never mentioned twins, so people didn't think in that direction.

Now that it's been brought up, even Consort Melinda suspected, could she really be pregnant with twins?

In The State of Westria, being pregnant with twins is considered a great blessing.

Consort Melinda immediately beamed with happiness, her joy spreading across her face. She turned to Consort Willow beside her, "Sister Consort Willow, hurry and find a doctor for me! Maybe I really am carrying twins."

Consort Willow's heart was as clear as a mirror; she knew everything. Consort Melinda was indeed pregnant with twins!

The royal physicians had already informed her of the twin pregnancy news, but she kept it secret, waiting for today.

Soon, she planned to use Serena Sterling's hand to eliminate the twins in Consort Melinda's belly, and the loss of beloved children would certainly infuriate Titus Ashworth.

Serena Sterling, who would dare to harm two innocent lives, would be despised by the entire State of Westria for her malicious heart.

By then, the Princess of Alani would be hunted down like a rat, and Consort Willow could overthrow Serena Sterling without much effort.

"Sister Consort Melinda, don't worry. Such significant news of you being pregnant with twins must be reported to the lord. Isn't he supposed to come?" Consort Willow temporarily steadied the overly excited Consort Melinda.

At that moment, someone called out, "Look, the lord, The King of Nine Peaks, and the Princess of Alani have arrived."

Titus Ashworth appeared, the lord of The State of Westria, dressed smartly in a black robe inlaid with golden dragon threads.

The King of Nine Peaks, Axel Ashworth, today's prospective groom, wore a white palace shirt and black trousers, tall, handsome, and gentlemanly.

The last to appear was Serena Sterling, dressed in a white sheer mermaid gown that outlined her delicate and graceful figure exquisitely. Her pure black hair was tied up, adorned with a small crown, and her small face was extraordinarily beautiful, resembling a celestial enchantress at first glance.

Wow.

The hall quickly erupted with exclamations of praise. The Princess of Alani is so beautiful; wherever she appears, she instantly outshines the scene.

I see it now, the Princess of Alani seems to come with her own protagonist aura.

Melody Ashworth was also in the hall, but with Titus Ashworth and Consort Willow's warnings, she kept a low profile today. The royal family's gold-tier PR team had just suppressed her scandalous video. Earlier, when she appeared, she could already feel the unfriendly and gossiping glances from everyone.

She was sure that this scandalous incident was definitely connected to Serena Sterling, although she had no evidence. Seeing Serena Sterling make such a grand appearance now, receiving admiration and praise, she was so angry that her gums bled.

"Mother, look at Serena Sterling!" Melody Ashworth whispered to Consort Willow in accusation.

Consort Willow glanced at Serena Sterling indifferently, "Melody, let Serena Sterling have her moment, the real show is yet to come."

Melody Ashworth's eyes lit up, and she urged, "Mother, hurry up. I don't want to see Serena Sterling stealing the spotlight!"

Consort Willow patted Melody Ashworth's hand, then stepped forward and spoke with a charming smile, "Lord, I have great news for you. Today, the engagement banquet of The King of Nine Peaks and the Princess of Alani is likely to bring added joy."

Titus Ashworth had been waiting for the appearance of Seraphina Linden but hadn't seen her yet. He looked at Consort Willow, "Where does the joy come from, Consort Willow?"

Consort Willow pulled Consort Melinda forward and pushed her to Titus Ashworth's side, "Lord, look at Consort Melinda's belly, isn't it very large? Consort Melinda might be... pregnant with twins!"

"What?" Titus Ashworth quickly turned to look at Consort Melinda's belly, incredibly surprised, "Consort Melinda, are you really pregnant with twins?"

At this engagement banquet, Consort Melinda instantly became the center of attention due to her large belly, feeling even more proud. She smiled bashfully and said, "Lord, I'm not sure either. Why not call the Imperial Physician to confirm?"

"Summon the Imperial Physician! Quickly summon the Imperial Physician!" Titus Ashworth commanded and immediately took Consort Melinda's hand, "Consort Melinda, you sit down first, you can't stand now. You are precious beyond measure, and if you are indeed pregnant with twins, you are truly a great contributor, a great contributor to The State of Westria!"

Consort Melinda's lips curled up almost to the sky, and she secretly cast a glance at Serena Sterling.

Serena Sterling didn't speak, quietly cooperating as an observer. When Consort Melinda passed her a provocative, smug look, she merely curved her red lips slightly, indeed anticipating a lively night.

At this moment, Serena Sterling felt two gazes fall upon her face. She lifted her bright eyes and saw Consort Willow and Melody Ashworth both watching her, their smiles rather eerie.

Serena Sterling's gaze lightly drifted away from the two, then fell on Kyle Ashworth, the important guest tonight. Compared to his mother and sister, Kyle Ashworth seemed more preoccupied.

Upon hearing about Consort Melinda's twin pregnancy, Kyle Ashworth instinctively stepped back, as if wanting to distance himself.

Chapter 612: Drink This Bowl of Medicine

Serena Sterling smiled without saying a word.

At this moment, Axel Ashworth whispered, "Princess of Alani, I believe that Consort Melinda's pregnancy is targeting you. The entire family of Consort Willow is watching you like a hawk, so you must be careful."

Serena Sterling arched her delicate brows, "What's there to fear? Whoever comes, I'll fight one; if two come, I'll fight two!"

Seeing the calm composure in Serena Sterling's eyes, Axel Ashworth nodded. It seemed the Princess of Alani by his side was well prepared. Tonight would surely be thrilling.

At this moment, the Imperial Physician rushed in hurriedly, "Consort Melinda, please come with me to the side chamber for an ultrasound. It will be clear if you have twins."

Consort Melinda cooperated readily, "Alright, Imperial Physician, I'll come with you, but please examine carefully."

"Yes."

Consort Melinda followed the Imperial Physician into the side chamber, while Titus Ashworth waited anxiously outside. He already had quite a few children, but this pregnancy of Consort Melinda's was a late blessing for him, coupled with the auspicious sign of twins, so he placed particular importance on it.

Seeing Titus Ashworth holding such high regard for Consort Melinda's pregnancy, everyone else also grew tense, foreseeing that Consort Melinda was destined for grand fortune and prominence.

Soon, the Imperial Physician rushed out again, "Lord, good news, outstanding news! Consort Melinda indeed carries twins, and they are... two sons!"

What?

Titus Ashworth rejoiced, "Imperial Physician, are you certain Consort Melinda is carrying two sons?"

"I am certain," the Imperial Physician affirmed.

Consort Melinda's coy voice sounded, "My Lord~"

Titus Ashworth swiftly ran over and embraced Consort Melinda, "Consort Melinda, not only are you carrying twins, but they are also two sons. That is truly wonderful. It feels like a dream."

Everyone chimed in to echo his sentiments,

"Congratulations, Lord. Today is a day of great joy, a double happiness indeed."

"The royal family of Westria hasn't had twins for a hundred years; this is truly an auspicious omen."

"I never expected at this age for you, Lord, to have Consort Melinda carry twins. You are the embodiment of a true dragon, worthy of our reverence."

"It seems the State of Westria will continue to thrive under your leadership, Lord."

For a hundred years, the royal family of Westria indeed hadn't had twins. Now that Consort Melinda was pregnant with twins, and in such a dynasty that placed particular importance on offspring, and with both being sons, everyone was amazed and began singing praises for Titus Ashworth.

Titus Ashworth loved his reputation greatly, and being extolled and flattered by everyone made him beam with joy. He laughed heartily while holding Consort Melinda, feeling utterly delighted.

"Consort Melinda, you are precious now. You cannot afford even the slightest bump or bruise. All of you servants, be alert and serve Consort Melinda well. If anything befalls her, I won't spare you. Understand?" Titus Ashworth immediately warned and admonished the servants.

The servants nodded, trembling in fear, "Yes, Lord."

At this moment, Consort Willow stepped forward, "Lord, rest assured. Consort Melinda's pregnancy is our treasure now. We will all be cautious. Lord, let us not forget that today is the engagement party for the King of Nine Peaks and Princess of Alani. Let us now turn all our attention and blessings to the couple instead of outshining them."

Titus Ashworth was in excellent spirits, clearing away the gloom of the past few days. He nodded, "Alright."

Then Consort Melinda coquettishly said, "Lord, I feel a bit tired now. I'd like to rest for a while."

"Go ahead."

...

Upstairs in the room, Consort Melinda dropped her coy demeanor and strutted in with arrogance. She held her belly high, her expression screamed, "I am carrying twins, who can I fear!"

Consort Melinda placed a hand on her prominent belly. Being pregnant with twins had surprised even herself, and now that Titus Ashworth and the entire nation of Westria valued her pregnancy, her good days had just begun.

Consort Melinda thought of someone then—Kyle Ashworth!

She was eager to share this good news with Kyle Ashworth, since the true father of these twins was Kyle Ashworth!

Consort Melinda turned to leave.

But just then, the door to the room suddenly opened, and someone walked in.

Consort Melinda was startled and immediately scolded harshly, "Which blind servant went in without knocking? Are you trying to scare me to death? If anything happens to my two sons, your life wouldn't be enough to compensate!"

The person who entered was not a servant, but... Consort Willow.

Consort Willow walked in and looked at Consort Melinda, "Consort Melinda, knowing you carry twins, you've grown quite arrogant now."

"Consort... Consort Willow, elder sister," Consort Melinda's demeanor changed, and her earlier arrogance quickly withered. "I-I didn't know it was you. I thought it was some blind servant. I wouldn't dare to scold you, Consort Willow. Without you, I wouldn't be here now..."

Consort Melinda wanted to flatter further, but Consort Willow ran out of patience and cut her off, "Consort Melinda, let's get to the main point. Drink this medicine."

With a wave of Consort Willow's hand, her trusted maid brought over a bowl of dark medicinal soup.

Consort Melinda froze at the sight of the soup, her face turning ashen, "Consort Willow, sister, I..."

"Why, Consort Melinda, have you forgotten our plan? This child in your womb can only stay until now. Its greatest value is to bring down Serena Sterling at this engagement party!"

"But—but I'm pregnant with twins..."

"Precisely because you're carrying twins, their impact is enormous. By then, Serena Sterling and the nation of Alani will become the greatest enemies of the State of Westria. The seeds of hatred and warfare between the two countries will be sown!"

Consort Melinda looked at Consort Willow now, and saw the hatred blazing in her eyes, distorting her face into a terrifying sight.

Consort Melinda had known about the plan from the beginning and agreed to it, but now she regretted it. She was pregnant with twins; how could she bear to lose them?

This was her ticket to glory and wealth.

Recognizing Consort Melinda's hesitation, Consort Willow shot her an icy glare, "Consort Melinda, you better not be telling me you don't want to drink this medicine!"

Consort Melinda felt her scalp tingle, "No, no, I'll drink it, I'll drink it."

Consort Willow snorted coldly, "That's the best, otherwise, I'll have to intervene."

Having said that, Consort Willow left with her trusted maid.

The bowl of dark medicinal soup was left on the table. Consort Melinda mechanically walked over, reached out her trembling hand, and picked up the bowl.

Soon, she resignedly closed her eyes, intending to drink the medicine.

At this moment, a hand suddenly reached over and knocked over the bowl.

Chapter 613: She Had a Miscarriage

Who?

Consort Melinda quickly turned around to see her own trusted maid Carol coming over, even reaching out to overturn her medicine. "Carol, what are you doing?"

Carol grabbed Consort Melinda, "Consort Melinda, you absolutely cannot drink this bowl of medicine. You have twins in your belly, immensely precious. As long as you give birth to these twins safely, your status will surely surpass Consort Willow's!"

Consort Melinda was shocked. She suspiciously looked at Carol, "Carol, how do you know this? I haven't told you."

"Consort Melinda, earlier I heard Consort Willow talking with her maid outside. That Consort Willow said you're just a pawn in her hand. She has been indulging you until now because your belly is of the greatest value. Once your belly is gone, even the last value is lost, and Consort Willow will order people to eliminate you because only a dead person's mouth is tight enough!"

What?

Consort Melinda was utterly shaken, shocked, and horrified. "Carol, you didn't hear wrong, did you? Did Consort Willow really say that?"

Carol nodded forcefully, "Consort Melinda, it's absolutely true. I heard it with my own ears. Imagine how much the sovereign values the twins in your belly now. If the twins are safely born, they will surely threaten Consort Willow and Princess Melody's status. How could Consort Willow tolerate you?"

Consort Melinda's legs went weak, and she collapsed onto a chair. Consort Willow is really ruthless.

But what can she do?

Now the entire harem is controlled by Consort Willow. She is a weak woman without any background or backing. If it weren't for Consort Willow's support, she wouldn't have received Titus Ashworth's favor.

Now Consort Willow wants to kill her; she suddenly panicked.

"Carol, what should I do now?"

"Consort Melinda, don't panic. Think about it; you are pregnant with twins now. That's your greatest reliance!"

Consort Melinda lowered her head to look at her big belly and gradually calmed down. Yes, what was she panicking about? What was she afraid of? Now she is extremely valuable. As long as this big belly is safe, Consort Willow won't dare to harm her.

"Carol, you're right. I can't abort the twins in my belly, but what should I do about Consort Willow? Unless absolutely necessary, I don't want to turn against Consort Willow yet."

Carol quickly suggested, "Consort Melinda, why don't we play along? Secretly not drink this bowl of medicine, but feign a miscarriage and cooperate with Consort Willow for now."

Consort Melinda thought this idea was brilliant; she would first cooperate with Consort Willow to eliminate the annoying Serena Sterling. By then, Consort Willow's goals would be achieved, and with the sovereign's protection over the twins in her belly, it would be perfect.

At this time, Carol took out a bottle of red potion, "Consort Melinda, later you can use this to pretend you had a miscarriage with profuse bleeding."

Consort Melinda quickly took the red potion and realized her maid Carol was quite smart. Indeed, walking alone in the palace requires cultivating one's confidants.

"Carol, this time you've done well. As long as you are loyal to me, when I rise because of the children, you won't lack the glory of being a top maid!"

Carol was overjoyed, "Then I thank you in advance, Mistress!"

...

Consort Melinda went downstairs and reappeared at the engagement party. At this time, Consort Willow came to her side and quietly asked, "Did you drink that bowl of medicine?"

Consort Melinda nodded, "Consort Willow sister, I have already drunk it."

Consort Willow was satisfied and nodded; according to the medicine's properties, it should take effect soon.

Consort Willow glanced at Consort Melinda, who knowingly approached Serena Sterling. "Princess of Alani, you are getting engaged to the King of Nine Peaks today. Come, let's toast."

Serena Sterling raised her bright, almond-shaped eyes to look at Consort Melinda, then casually picked up a glass of red wine. She curled her red lips, "Then I thank Consort Melinda first."

Consort Melinda also had a glass of red wine in her hand. She clinked glasses with Serena Sterling, watching Serena Sterling gracefully take a sip, unaware of anything. Consort Melinda's lips curled triumphantly. Serena Sterling, you're so foolish!

Consort Melinda glanced at Consort Willow in front, the meaning was Consort Willow sister, everything is settled, rest assured I got it done.

Consort Willow saw everything progressing according to her plan and smiled too.

At this moment, with a "crash," Consort Melinda's glass of red wine fell directly to the floor. She covered her high, protruding belly with her hands and screamed, "Ah! My belly hurts, my belly hurts so much!"

What's going on?

The sudden change instantly attracted everyone's attention in the hall. Titus Ashworth hurried over, "Consort Melinda! Consort Melinda, what's wrong?"

Consort Melinda weakly collapsed into Titus Ashworth's arms, "Sovereign, save me, save the children... I feel my belly hurts so much..."

At this moment, Consort Willow made a timely appearance and pointed, "Sovereign, look, blood, so much blood, Consort Melinda sister is bleeding!"

Everyone's gaze instantly fell on Consort Melinda's dress, now stained with bright red blood, flowing down.

Consort Melinda is really bleeding!

Consort Melinda was just diagnosed as pregnant with twins; this was the State of Westria's auspicious sign, and now this auspicious sign is shattered. Everyone was stunned.

Titus Ashworth turned pale at the sight of all the blood. He quickly shouted, "Someone, quickly get the Imperial Physician here, I need to see the Imperial Physician now, immediately, at once!"

The Imperial Physician appeared as quickly as possible, checked Consort Melinda's body, and said, "Sovereign, it's not good, Consort Melinda... Consort Melinda had a miscarriage!"

This Imperial Physician has always been Consort Willow's person, so he was delivering lines.

"What, miscarriage?" Titus Ashworth knew nothing, so now he was passionately performing in earnest, "Consort Melinda was perfectly fine, how could she have a miscarriage? Investigate, find out the reason quickly!"

"Sovereign, I just found miscarriage medicine in Consort Melinda's pulse, so she accidentally ingested miscarriage medicine which caused the miscarriage."

"Miscarriage medicine? Where did miscarriage medicine come from?" Titus Ashworth asked.

At this time, Consort Melinda tightly clutched Titus Ashworth's sleeve, crying bitterly with tears and snot, "Sovereign, you must stand up for me, who fed me miscarriage medicine? This person has such a cruel heart; she killed the twins in my belly!"

Consort Willow also spoke, "Sovereign, this matter is very suspicious. Consort Melinda sister was fine just now; how could she suddenly ingest miscarriage medicine?"

The crowd in the hall was enraged,

Sovereign, this matter must be thoroughly investigated. Endangering royal progeny is a serious crime!

These twins were the auspicious sign for our State of Westria. Now the twins are lost, highly inauspicious. I feel there's a major conspiracy in this.

Chapter 614: Seraphina Linden Returns, Her Charisma Captivates All

Consort Melinda miscarried the twins in her womb, and this aroused everyone's anger. They all spoke in unison, demanding a thorough investigation of the culprit.

At this moment, the royal guards rushed in, surrounding the place tightly. Titus Ashworth angrily said, "I will investigate the culprit immediately. Until the culprit is brought to light, no one can leave here."

"Sister Melinda," Consort Willow held Melinda's hand with deep concern, "Think carefully, did you eat anything before the abdominal pain started?"

Consort Melinda thought for a moment, "I didn't eat anything, oh, I remember now, I just had a sip of red wine. At that time, I went to offer a toast to the Princess of Alani and clinked glasses with her."

What?

The Princess of Alani?

Melinda successfully shifted the suspicion onto Serena Sterling. Everyone's eyes turned sharply to Serena, shocked and puzzled.

Titus Ashworth's face darkened, and he quickly commanded, "Where is the Imperial Physician? Quickly check if there's anything wrong with the red wine glass that Consort Melinda and the Princess of Alani clinked."

"Yes, my lord."

The Imperial Physician stepped forward, picked up the shattered pieces of the red wine glass that Consort Melinda had dropped, and sniffed them. His expression changed dramatically, "My lord, there are components of the miscarriage drug on the rim of this red wine glass, which are identical to those that caused Consort Melinda's miscarriage."

Oh my god.

The whole room gasped. The Imperial Physician's confirmation was like a guilty verdict on Serena Sterling, suggesting she was responsible for the death of Consort Melinda's unborn twins.

"Princess of Alani, it really was you!" Consort Willow exclaimed with grief and indignation, "Sister Melinda kindly came to bless you and even clinked glasses with you. Did you intentionally apply the miscarriage drug to your own glass's rim, and then transfer it to Sister Melinda's glass when she clinked glasses with you? Princess of Alani, what on earth were your intentions in killing the twins in Consort Melinda's womb?"

Now Serena Sterling was surrounded, and everyone was staring at her. Consort Willow was aggressively questioning her, but Serena's stunning face showed no emotion. Her bright eyes glanced at Consort Willow with amusement as she curled her lips slightly, "Indeed, then what do you think my intentions were, Consort Willow?"

Instead of answering, Serena asked in return, showing no sign of panic in the sudden situation. Her calm demeanor exuded a subtle elegance, wielding silent power that even left Consort Willow momentarily stunned.

Consort Willow quickly regained her composure. With the evidence so conclusive, how could she let Serena escape?

"Princess of Alani, you know your own intentions best. The twins in Consort Melinda's womb were the heirs of the State of Westria, a symbol of good fortune. Now you've brought us misfortune; do you intend to provoke conflict between our two nations?"

Consort Willow's words made everyone suddenly realize,

Oh my god, could it be that the Princess of Alani came to our State of Westria with an undisclosed conspiracy this time?

Have you all forgotten the grievances between our State of Westria and Alani? Alani utterly despises us.

My lord, the evidence is conclusive now, hurry and take down this Princess of Alani. We mustn't let her return to Alani; this would be like letting a tiger return to the mountains, leaving endless troubles!

Yes, since she dared to harm the royal heirs, we should make her pay with her life, to serve as a warning to Alani!

Everyone was clamoring to take down Serena Sterling.

Titus Ashworth looked at Serena Sterling, "Princess of Alani, you are truly bold. Did you really not consider Westria or me in your actions? On my territory, you dared to act against Consort Melinda; did you not foresee that you might not return?"

Serena Sterling lifted her lips, looking at Titus Ashworth with an unyielding tone, her clear and elegant voice strong with rhythm, "Ruler Ashworth, if I say the matter with Consort Melinda has nothing to do with me, would you believe me?"

At this moment, Axel Ashworth stepped forward to stand by Serena Sterling's side, "Father, I believe the Princess of Alani, she absolutely did not do this."

Titus Ashworth immediately waved his sleeves, "Axel, with such conclusive evidence, do you still want to protect this wicked-hearted Princess of Alani? Even though today is your engagement banquet, you should deal with her as justice demands, even if she's your loved one!"

Kyle Ashworth was waiting for Axel Ashworth to step forward. This evening, there's no way Serena Sterling would escape; he definitely wanted to bind Axel and Serena on the same ship, ensuring they go down together!

Kyle Ashworth immediately said, "King of Nine Peaks, are you merely enchanted by the Princess of Alani's beauty, or are you actually on the same side as her?"

With these words, everyone's eyes on Axel Ashworth turned subtle.

Axel Ashworth lowered his voice, whispering in Serena Sterling's ear, "Princess of Alani, I've placed all my bets on you, now it's up to you."

Serena Sterling arched her delicate willow eyebrows, not hurriedly speaking.

Suddenly, a sweet and soft voice carried through, "Old Ashworth, I kindly offered my daughter in marriage to your son, and this is how you treat her? Does this mean you don't want this daughter-in-law?"

Who?

Titus Ashworth felt a fierce shock in his heart and immediately turned around, seeing... Seraphina Linden!

Seraphina Linden had finally arrived!

Today, Seraphina Linden wore a thin long dress of fiery red gauze, the dress complimenting her snow-white skin. Her wavy, chestnut hair rested lazily on her shoulders, revealing her stunningly beautiful face.

Titus Ashworth's pupils contracted sharply. Despite the passing years, the woman he had thought of and yearned for all these years looked almost exactly like she did in his memories.

Time had been extraordinarily kind to Seraphina Linden, not leaving a single mark on her.

Titus Ashworth had been unwilling to admit he had aged, but seeing Seraphina Linden now, he was suddenly aware of the truth; he was indeed older, but Seraphina Linden hadn't changed a bit.

In truth, Consort Willow had also preserved herself well, with not a wrinkle on her face, yet she and Seraphina Linden were completely different. Consort Willow's face was youthful, but her body no longer had a girlish charm, whereas Seraphina Linden defied time, exuding a silver-bell-like playful vivacity, appearing not much older than Serena Sterling.

Thump, thump.

Titus Ashworth suddenly felt his heartbeat quicken; he hadn't experienced such a heart-pounding sensation in many years.

With a swish, all eyes in the hall turned to Seraphina Linden, and everyone was awestruck by her astonishing beauty,

This, is this the current Queen of Alani, Seraphina Linden?

Consort Willow, Melody Ashworth, and Kyle Ashworth also saw Seraphina Linden. Even in an antagonistic stance, the three were shocked; twenty years later, Seraphina Linden had returned with the same captivating elegance.

"Mom, you've come?" Serena Sterling moved to Seraphina Linden's side.

Titus Ashworth also quickly approached. He had already put the matter of Consort Melinda and the twins out of his mind, focusing only on gazing at Seraphina Linden with obsession and admiration.

Chapter 615: Fake Miscarriage

"Seraphina... Seraphina, listen to my explanation, it's not what you think..." Titus Ashworth looked at Seraphina Linden ingratiatingly.

Seraphina Linden glanced at Titus Ashworth with her charming eyes, "Titus, we're not familiar, so who are you calling Seraphina?"

"I..." Titus was a bit embarrassed.

More than twenty years ago, Seraphina Linden, the esteemed Princess of Alani, stormed into Westria and the City of Aethelgard, gaining a huge following of admirers and zealous fans. Titus Ashworth was among them, always swearing Seraphina was his goddess, yet unattainable.

Seeing Titus Ashworth treating Seraphina Linden with such obsession as if she were a priceless gem, Consort Willow's face turned grim. Over the years, she had used charm and fragrance to captivate Titus's affection, but the moment Seraphina showed up, Titus seemed to forget her instantly.

Consort Willow's eyes flashed with deep jealousy at Seraphina Linden's enchanting beauty. Their Alani kingdom held an unresolved enmity with The Merfolk Clan. Years ago, Alani's ancestors flattened The Merfolk, condemning them to live in darkness and dampness, devoid of light, while their Alani kingdom mysteriously vanished. The captivating allure of Seraphina and Serena, the mother-daughter duo, set them strikingly apart from The Merfolk. How could one not be envious?

Consort Willow stepped forward immediately, "Queen of Alani, this is the daughter you raised? Your daughter used miscarriage potion to kill Consort Melinda's twins, a heart so vicious. How should this be handled?"

Everyone echoed in agreement,

Queen of Alani, we were all present when the Princess of Alani poisoned Consort Melinda's twins, and you must account for it.

Seraphina Linden's charming eyes landed on Consort Melinda and glanced lightly before raising an eyebrow and looking at Titus Ashworth beside her, "Titus, are you sure the twins in Consort Melinda's womb are yours?"

Titus was shocked, "Seraphina, what do you mean?"

"Oh, it's nothing significant. I was merely observing your visage. Over the years, you've indulged in feminine charms, so much so that your body has been hollowed out by such pleasures. Do you rely on medications for strength whenever you seek enjoyment? Alas, with your physique and condition, I doubt you could impregnate a woman with twins." As she spoke, Seraphina Linden shook her head, expressing great pity.

What?

Seraphina Linden's words were astonishingly bold and left those in power and esteem staring at Titus Ashworth with changed gazes.

It was known that Titus Ashworth had a very full harem and favored beautiful women, but it was unknown that he had reached the... medication... stage.

As for what specific medication, everyone speculated it must be... related to health and vitality enhancements.

Being exposed by his goddess about taking medication, Titus Ashworth was utterly stunned, "Seraphina, I..."

Consort Willow's complexion was so dark it was almost dripping, and she spoke immediately, "Queen of Alani, please watch your words. How can you criticize our lord's private life?"

Seraphina Linden pointed with her eyes at Consort Willow, "Titus, is this the favorite consort of yours who barks? That medicine was probably given by her to allure you, and she nearly hollowed out your body."

Everyone's eyes "swished" toward Consort Willow, gossiping,

Oh my, Consort Willow actually gives the lord medicine!

For years, Consort Willow had enjoyed much favor. It's said when the lord stayed overnight at her place, soothing melodies echoed from there.

This Consort Willow... she's not young anymore, yet she fancies herself a young girl!

That being said, Princess Melody truly takes after her mother, with an open nature.

This mother-daughter duo, along with Prince Creed, all hail from The Exotic Lands, renowned for their seductive arts, ensnaring men. They're truly disdained by people, so let's stay away from them in the future.

Listening to the gossip and seeing the colored glances, Consort Willow nearly twisted her face with rage. She never expected Seraphina Linden to unveil the truth of her favored situation so explosively from the outset.

People love gossip; in this crowded and talkative place, the story of her giving Titus medication would soon be all over town.

Not long ago, her daughter, Melody Ashworth, was involved in a scandal, and though the racy video had been suppressed, she still wasn't spared from being metaphorically flogged.

"Queen of Alani, you!" Consort Willow wanted to speak.

But there's a steely glint in Seraphina Linden's charming eyes as she looked loftily at Consort Willow, "Consort Willow, right now I'm having a conversation with your lord. What right do you have to interrupt? Stand back!"

Consort Willow was stumped, nearly choking on her own blood, almost spitting it out. Indeed, with the Westria lord talking to the Alani Queen, no mere consort has the right to butt in.

Titus Ashworth's face was grim. Regardless of his doubts, he never doubted Seraphina Linden's medical skills. When she said that medicine hollowed out his body, cold sweat began to build.

Titus cast a harsh glare at Consort Willow, indicating they'd have a serious talk about that medication later!

Meanwhile, Consort Melinda was anxiously desperate, realizing Seraphina Linden, the Queen of Alani's arrival, completely overwhelmed Consort Willow. Consort Willow was left raving mad.

Now Melinda was sidelined, ignored; she felt the blood in her veins drying up.

"Oh no, my lord, my stomach hurts... please save me." Consort Melinda quickly spoke, pulling Titus and everyone's attention back to her.

Only then did Titus remember Consort Melinda's issue, and he immediately said seriously, "Seraphina, let's set these matters aside for now. Let's discuss the twin issue in Consort Melinda's womb. At present, all evidence points to your daughter..."

Before Titus could finish speaking, Seraphina Linden swiftly covered her nose, "What a pungent smell; can't you all smell it?"

What's that smell?

Everyone sniffed hard, and there was indeed a sharp smell, "What is this smell? It resembles... chicken blood."

"Exactly, it smells like chicken blood, and it seems to be emanating from... Consort Melinda."

"Impossible, Consort Melinda is a human. How could a miscarriage smell like chicken blood?"

Everyone turned to Consort Melinda with suspicion.

Consort Melinda's heart tightened; earlier, she hid a blood bag in her clothes and discreetly popped it. This blood bag was handed to her by the maid, Carol, and she hadn't inquired what kind of blood it was.

Could it be the blood bag contained chicken blood?

Now Consort Melinda was panicking.

At that moment, Seraphina Linden curved her red lips, "Titus, your harem is indeed amusing. A miscarriage-prone consort smells of chicken blood, and the key point is, we've been standing here speaking for almost half an hour. A woman allegedly pregnant for six months miscarried yet can lie there so calmly. I dare say, is Consort Melinda faking a miscarriage?"

Chapter 616: Wearing a Green Hat

False miscarriage?

These three words echoed in everyone's ears like a bolt from the blue, hiss, the whole audience gasped.

How could it be?

Someone quickly questioned,

Queen of Alani, you can't speak carelessly about this, do you have any evidence?

Consort Willow's gaze quickly fell on Consort Melinda. Just now, Seraphina Linden had captured all her attention, and she hadn't noticed Consort Melinda's anomaly. Now, she only saw that all the blood on Consort Melinda had dried, and no more blood was flowing out. This was quite suspicious.

"Consort Melinda, what on earth is going on? Imperial Physician, you go and take a look." Titus Ashworth said in a deep voice.

"Wait a moment!" Seraphina Linden quickly stopped Titus Ashworth, "Old Titus Ashworth, since this matter involves my daughter, it just so happens that my daughter knows some medical skills too. Why not let my daughter personally examine Consort Melinda? Who knows if this Imperial Physician is good or bad, unable to even distinguish chicken blood? Maybe he's already been bribed to join in harming my daughter!"

Titus Ashworth immediately glanced at the Imperial Physician, who was frightened and quickly averted his eyes.

At this moment, Serena Sterling stepped forward, "Lord Ashworth, then let me do it. If Consort Melinda hasn't miscarried and the twins are still there, it would be a joyous affair."

"Princess of Alani, then I'll trouble you." Titus Ashworth nodded.

Serena Sterling stretched her legs and approached Consort Melinda step by step, her bright eyes landing on Consort Melinda's face, slowly curling her red lips, "Consort Melinda, don't be afraid, I'm going to examine you now."

Serena Sterling spoke each word forcefully, and Consort Melinda felt she was a demon, and this demon was approaching her step by step.

Consort Melinda was already guilty. If she were diagnosed by Serena Sterling, she would be exposed. She quickly jumped up, "Ah, don't come over, don't touch me, Lord, help me!"

Consort Melinda quickly ran towards Titus Ashworth.

As she ran, everyone's eyes changed. A pregnant woman over six months into her term moving swiftly was quite unscientific.

Serena Sterling watched Consort Melinda run coldly, suddenly extending her hand, grabbing Consort Melinda's garment, and with a tearing sound, Consort Melinda's lower garment ripped, revealing her fair thighs.

At the same time, something else fell out, and that was... an empty blood bag.

Consort Melinda hadn't had time to dispose of the blood bag. Now, with a slap, the blood bag fell directly to the ground.

Consort Melinda's heart skipped a beat, knowing things were going south. She turned around to pick up the blood bag.

But it was too late. A fair hand reached out, picked up the blood bag first, and Serena Sterling, pinching the blood bag with curiosity, showed it to everyone, "Hey, what's this? How did it fall out from Consort Melinda's clothes?"

While saying this, Serena Sterling sniffed the blood bag in her hand slightly, then disdainfully knitted her eyebrows, "This blood bag smells like chicken blood; it must've been the chicken blood that Consort Melinda was leaking. Ah, Consort Melinda, so you didn't actually miscarry but squeezed this blood bag to frame me."

My God.

Everyone's face changed color,

Consort Melinda, how could you do such a thing? Are you joking with the royal heir, or are you treating us like fools?

Consort Melinda, what exactly are you trying to do? Why would you deliberately frame the Princess of Alani? Are you trying to incite hatred and war between two nations?

Consort Melinda was already scared out of her wits. She didn't know the matter could be exposed so easily. She shook her head in panic, "No, it's not like that."

Serena Sterling watched Consort Melinda, a dazzling smile spilling from her clear eyes, "Well, it seems Consort Melinda has had a miscarriage, the six-month-old twins are dead in the womb, and must be removed immediately. Now let me personally cut open and remove the babies!"

Saying this, a sharp knife appeared in Serena Sterling's small hand, and she pressed the blade toward Consort Melinda's large belly.

Consort Melinda's pupils contracted in fear, and she quickly dove into Titus Ashworth's arms, screaming, "Lord, save me, save the twins, they're still in my belly, don't let the Princess of Alani harm us!"

Serena Sterling's hand stopped, she curled her red lips and slowly said, "Consort Melinda, you finally confessed!"

Consort Melinda stiffened, she quickly raised her head, directly crashing into the sinister eyes of Titus Ashworth.

"Lord, I..."

Titus Ashworth was furious, he pushed Consort Melinda away, "Consort Melinda, so this was all an act of yours. Tell me, what was your motive!"

"Lord Ashworth," Serena Sterling spoke, "Now that Consort Melinda is pregnant with twins, she has no reason to risk herself unless... someone instructed her, you should ask who this mastermind is!"

"Consort Melinda, I'm giving you a chance now, quickly reveal this mastermind!" Titus Ashworth commanded.

"I, I..." Consort Melinda cautiously glanced at Consort Willow.

Consort Willow's hands at her sides clenched tightly into fists, nails embedded deeply in her palms, and she now had a mind to kill Consort Melinda.

This Consort Melinda didn't drink the abortion potion but instead used chicken blood to fool her, ruining her grand plan, utterly despicable!

Now that the lie was uncovered, Consort Willow couldn't allow herself to be exposed. She immediately said, "Lord, I think my sister Consort Melinda and the Princess of Alani have some discord, hence my sister staged this farce, now considering the twins, let's just drop it."

Titus Ashworth held Consort Melinda's belly in high regard; he hesitated, in fact he wanted to protect Consort Melinda.

At this time, Serena Sterling smiled unhurriedly, "Consort Willow's reminder triggered my memory about my disagreement with Consort Melinda. That day, Prince Kyle harassed me, was seen by Consort Melinda, and Consort Melinda seemed... extremely jealous, she even called me a slut. Those unaware might think Consort Melinda was Prince Kyle's consort."

What?

Serena Sterling's clear and melodious voice dropped another bombshell, leaving the onlookers bewildered, and everyone's gaze instantly fell on Kyle Ashworth and Consort Melinda.

Consort Melinda is Titus Ashworth's favorite consort, now tangled with Kyle Ashworth, this is... incest?!

The royal family is really in chaos.

Even Consort Willow was shocked, unaware that her son and Consort Melinda were having an affair right under her nose. Then these twins... whose are they?

Titus Ashworth was most concerned about face, and no man could tolerate being cuckolded, especially by his own son, it was utterly unbearable.

"Kyle Ashworth, Consort Melinda, what exactly is going on?" Titus Ashworth asked in a furious voice.

Kyle Ashworth had always wanted to keep a low profile, but the spotlight still inevitably landed on him, making it impossible to remain low-key. He stuttered, "Father King, you, don't listen to the Princess of Alani's nonsense, does she have any evidence?"

Chapter 617: A Legendary and Magnificent Woman

Consort Melinda quickly spoke, "My Lord, I, I am innocent with Prince Kyle, the Princess of Alani is making false accusations, you must believe us!"

Titus Ashworth looked at Serena Sterling, "Princess of Alani, you suspect Consort Melinda of having an affair with Kyle Ashworth, do you have any evidence?"

Serena Sterling shook her head, "I have none."

Kyle Ashworth and Consort Melinda both let out a huge sigh of relief, fortunately Serena Sterling had no evidence, otherwise they would be doomed today.

"However," Serena Sterling continued, "Lord Ashworth, the royal heirs are of great importance, and now Consort Melinda is already more than six months pregnant with these twins. I just need to use a silver needle to draw a little fetal blood from her on the spot, then perform a DNA paternity test with Kyle Ashworth's blood, and who the father of these twins is will be clear at once."

Fetal blood piercing?

DNA paternity test?

Kyle Ashworth and Consort Melinda, who had just caught their breath, immediately felt it taken away again, their faces turned deathly pale. They couldn't understand how a well-planned engagement party had evolved into this, all their plans were shattered, and now all eyes were on them.

Consort Willow had been secretly observing Kyle Ashworth and Consort Melinda. Seeing their expressions change, she knew the answer—it was definite that there was something going on between them.

Consort Willow was so angry that she felt dizzy, she knew very well what kind of character her son had, he loved romantic escapades, but she hadn't expected him to even get involved with his father's woman!

Consort Willow quickly said, "My Lord, the issue of fetal blood piercing needs to be carefully considered, because there are risks involved..."

Before Consort Willow could finish, Serena Sterling interrupted her directly, "Consort Willow, there is no risk at all in fetal blood piercing, it is a scientific method used in modern pregnancy. If any danger comes to the twins in Consort Melinda's belly at my hand, I will take full responsibility."

"But..."

"Consort Willow, your persistent obstruction of this matter raises suspicion as to whether you have long known about the affair between Consort Melinda and Prince Kyle?" Serena Sterling curled her lips and said.

Consort Willow's face changed, "Princess of Alani, don't spout nonsense!"

At this time, Seraphina Linden glanced at Titus Ashworth beside her, "Old Lord Ashworth, today, the fetal blood piercing is imperative, or else how will you stop the rumors from spreading? Everyone will laugh at you for mistaking your grandson for your son and raising another's child!"

The crowd began to shout,

My Lord, now please have the Princess of Alani pierce the fetal blood!

If these twins are the Lord's, it will clear their names, if they are not, then... both mother and child will be executed on the spot!

Both mother and child, executed on the spot!

These eight words struck heavily on Consort Melinda's heart, she trembled all over, almost collapsing to the ground.

At this time, Axel Ashworth leaned close to Serena Sterling's ear and whispered, "Princess of Alani, whose children does Consort Melinda actually bear?"

Serena Sterling arched her beautifully curved eyebrows, "Actually... I don't know either."

Axel Ashworth was stunned for a moment, then quickly curled his thin lips a few seconds later, "Princess of Alani, you've set quite the big play here."

Serena Sterling stood elegantly in her white gauzy long dress, her brows and eyes imbued with calm and composure, "As to who the father of these twins is, perhaps even Consort Melinda herself isn't sure. King of Nine Peaks, today's engagement party is the second gift I've given you."

Axel Ashworth watched the sparkling light in Serena Sterling's eyes, glittering like the shimmering sea, revealing an awe-inspiring glint of mysterious brilliance. He found that the more he associated with Serena Sterling, the more he discovered she was an enigma that continuously drew people deeper in.

"Oh?" Axel Ashworth curled his lips with interest.

"King of Nine Peaks, since everyone is here, why don't we take this opportunity to bring down Consort Willow and Kyle Ashworth, cast them into the abyss, what do you say?"

Axel Ashworth felt a tremor in his heart. This Princess of Alani had been in Westria for only a short time, yet each time she could stir up a storm and overturn the clouds.

Consort Willow had spent many years carefully securing her position in the Westrian palace, yet Serena Sterling intended to wipe them all out here.

This woman of Alani is destined to become renowned throughout the world.

Axel Ashworth nodded, "Alright, then I'll wait to receive the gift."

At this point, Titus Ashworth spoke with a sinister expression, "Princess of Alani, please proceed. If these twins are not mine, then they all will be executed!"

Titus Ashworth gave a vicious glance at Consort Melinda.

Consort Melinda could no longer stand steadily; she had once seen a palace maid executed from afar in the harem, the heavy wooden planks pounding the maid's body, leaving her skin and flesh torn, drenched in blood. Even though in the following days servants would clean the steps there daily with clear water, the stench never completely dissipated, leaving an aura of horror and nausea.

No, she did not want to be executed.

At this moment, Serena Sterling approached, her delicate white fingers holding a silver needle, "Consort Melinda, do not be afraid, I am gentle. As long as you cooperate, neither you nor the twins will be harmed!"

Consort Melinda looked at Serena Sterling in fear, at first, she greatly disliked Serena Sterling. Now, she only felt Serena Sterling was a demon, not to be provoked, an existence beyond her confrontation.

"No, don't! Ah!" Consort Melinda turned to flee, her psychological defenses completely collapsing. She only wanted to run to the place she believed to be the safest, which was... Kyle Ashworth's side.

Consort Melinda ran over and grabbed onto Kyle Ashworth, "Prince Kyle, save me, save our children, these twins are yours!"

Gasp.

The whole room inhaled sharply, Serena Sterling hadn't even acted, yet Consort Melinda confessed everything herself.

The crowd was in an uproar.

Axel Ashworth glanced again at Serena Sterling beside him, her exquisite face showed no trace of emotion, as if everything was within her control.

In the years to come, when Axel Ashworth watched Serena Sterling don the crown, revive Alani, and lead the Iron Wolf Cavalry into battle, pursuing the moon over a thousand miles, her long pure hair rippling magnificently in the air, her elegant and outstanding figure embedded in the grand and magnificent national map, Axel Ashworth never encountered another woman as legendary and illustrious as Serena Sterling in his life.

Kyle Ashworth's expression changed dramatically, he felt the entangling Consort Melinda would ruin him. He quickly reached out to push Consort Melinda away, "Consort Melinda, are you insane, how could these twins be mine, you need to wake up, don't talk nonsense!"

"Prince Kyle, these twins truly are yours, I clearly remember that day. Yes, I had just served the Lord, but you came later on, and I slept with you."

"The Lord's health has long been failing, ruined by Consort Willow's constant doses of herbal health treatments. Every time I am with the Lord, I find no satisfaction. Prince Kyle, I truly love you, we are so happy in bed, have you forgotten? You once said that when the Lord dies, and you ascend, you will make me your noble consort!"

Chapter 618: My Crown Princess Consort

Titus Ashworth's ears immediately rang. Had he said those words? He instantly reached out and forcefully covered Consort Melinda's mouth. "Melinda, have you lost your mind? I didn't say those things!"

Consort Melinda was already scared out of her wits. At this moment, she dared to say anything, she just wanted Kyle Ashworth to save her, to save the twins in her belly.

In any case, Kyle Ashworth was destined to be the ruler, and the twins she carried were his eldest sons. What was there to fear? She feared nothing, hahahaha!

"Kyle Ashworth!" At this moment, a snarling roar erupted beside them.

Kyle Ashworth looked up, only to see Titus Ashworth charging over in a fury and then, with a raised hand, slapped him directly across the face.

Unprepared, Kyle Ashworth was knocked to the ground. He tasted something metallic in his throat and immediately spat out a mouthful of blood.

But the beating did not end there. Titus Ashworth raised his foot and viciously beat him. "Kyle Ashworth, you unfilial son, you rebellious scoundrel, I tolerated you playing with women, but now you even lay a finger on my woman. Do I mean nothing to you?"

"Of course, I mean nothing to you. You can't wait for me to die so you can take the throne. Then you'd spend my money and sleep with my women, wouldn't you? I must have been blind to have doted on you all these years, you useless wretch!"

Kyle Ashworth cried out as he was beaten, sobbing, "Father, Father, I was wrong. Please stop hitting me, it hurts so much!"

At this time, Consort Melinda rushed over, trying to pull Titus Ashworth away, "Leave him alone, don't hit Prince Kyle."

It was like adding fuel to the fire. Titus Ashworth, seething with rage, cursed fiercely, "You harlot, someone come, take her away and beat her to death!"

Titus Ashworth shoved Consort Melinda. She stumbled backward, her high and round belly instantly hitting the sharp edge of the table.

Ah!

Consort Melinda let out a sharp scream. She felt a gush of hot blood burst forth, immediately soaking her clothes.

Consort Melinda touched it with her hand, it was blood, nothing but blood!

Her belly hurt so much!

Consort Melinda instantly broke out in a cold sweat from the pain, collapsing to the ground, begging in agony, "Save me, someone, help me, I'm having a miscarriage! This time, it's happening for real!"

Initially, Consort Melinda had faked a miscarriage, but who would have thought it would turn into a real one in the end, turning fiction into reality.

No one had any sympathy for Consort Melinda and Kyle Ashworth, instead, they pointed and commented,

The royal family is such a mess; the son slept with his father's woman, making a fool of the father.

Originally, carrying twins was considered an auspicious sign for The State of Westria, but now it was clear this was just a joke.

Titus Ashworth prided himself on maintaining face. He, too, overheard these comments. Initially, he was proud when Consort Melinda was pregnant, believing himself extremely competent in fathering a child at his age. When it was confirmed she was having twins, he was even more elated.

Now, not only did he wear a green hat, but it was as if a lush green meadow adorned his head, and who knows what kind of gossip would follow. He had become the biggest joke in Westria.

Titus Ashworth vented all his anger on Kyle Ashworth, beating and kicking him vigorously. Soon, Kyle Ashworth lay weakly on the ground.

The person most tormented inwardly was Consort Willow. Over the past two days, her children, Melody and Kyle Ashworth, consecutively faced troubles, leaving her deeply wounded.

Now, it seemed that Kyle Ashworth's position as Crown Prince was no longer secure.

Consort Willow was a very clever woman and understood restraint. At this time, she dared not step forward, only able to watch helplessly as her son was beaten nearly to death.

Exhausted from the beating, Titus Ashworth was panting heavily, soaked with sweat, while Kyle Ashworth, bloodied all over, lay weakly on the ground, barely hanging on, still pleading, "Fath...Father, please...stop beating..."

At this time, someone stepped forward,

"Ruler, Prince Kyle cannot bear the great responsibility and has committed serious transgressions, dishonoring the royal family. Why not exile him to the remote and frigid border, let him endure hardships for a few years before returning."

"Ruler, The King of Nine Peaks has achieved brilliant military successes over the years and was conferred as a Seven-Pearl Prince in his youth. Now, with such a virtuous wife as the Princess of Alani, we urge the Ruler to appoint The King of Nine Peaks as the Crown Prince."

"Ruler, recent royal scandals have occurred one after another, causing public opinion to decline sharply. There is talk that Consort Willow has maintained her favor over the years due to the Bewitching Technique. It's now confirmed that she drugged the Ruler, draining your vitality. We implore the Ruler to immediately banish Consort Willow to the Cold Palace, cleanse the unhealthy atmosphere, and restore the royal family's reputation!"

Consort Willow realized it was a lost cause today. She had plotted for so long, poured her efforts over many years, all waiting for this day to contend with Alani, but she lost so completely, so easily.

At this moment, Consort Willow felt a chilling gaze fall upon her. She looked up and saw Titus Ashworth staring at her, a gaze that sent shivers down her spine.

She had been coaxing Titus Ashworth into taking medicine, claiming it would prolong his life and allow him to experience eternal bliss, but Seraphina Linden had already exposed her lies, putting Titus Ashworth on alert. In that moment, Consort Willow saw ruthless murderous intent in Titus Ashworth's eyes.

Consort Willow's face turned pale.

At this moment, Titus Ashworth spoke, "Someone, take that rebellious son Kyle Ashworth away, exile him to the borders, never allow him to return to the capital without my summons."

Lying on the ground, Kyle Ashworth couldn't believe his imperial path had come to an end. He painfully moved and struggled on the ground, begging, "Father, no, I...I don't want to go to that...ghastly place at the border, Father..."

Kyle Ashworth wanted to say more, but a few guards quickly dragged him away.

At this point, Titus Ashworth looked at Consort Willow again and said, "Guards, send Consort Willow to the Cold Palace, and from this moment on, officially announce The King of Nine Peaks as the Crown Prince, declare it to the world."

"The Ruler is wise!"

Consort Willow felt icy cold all over. In this battle today, she fell from the exalted position of a favored consort to the depths of the abyss, losing everything she had long planned for. However, she was not going to let it end like this!

Consort Willow was taken away in silence, without struggling. Serena Sterling stood in place, watching the departing figures of Consort Willow and Kyle Ashworth, smiling slightly, "The King of Nine Peaks, congratulations on ascending to the position of Crown Prince. I have delivered my second gift, are you satisfied?"

Axel Ashworth looked at Serena Sterling's stunning face and replied, "I am very satisfied, my Crown Princess Consort."

...

Consort Willow was banished to the Cold Palace. Soon after, the door to the Cold Palace was pushed open; someone had arrived.

Outside, someone respectfully said, "Crown Princess Consort."

Crown Princess Consort?

Who is the Crown Princess Consort?

Consort Willow lifted her eyes and saw a refined figure walk in. The person wore a black cloak, lifted a small hand to remove the black hat, revealing the exquisite face of Serena Sterling.

Chapter 619: Hayden Crawford Arrives

Serena Sterling has arrived!

Consort Willow suddenly remembered that Axel Ashworth is now the Crown Prince, and at today's engagement party, Serena Sterling stood beside Axel Ashworth as the Crown Princess Consort.

Consort Willow sneered, "What a Princess of Alani, one can't help but admire you. Your brilliant plans, each one linked flawlessly to another, orchestrate such upheavals. It's likely that the men of this era are no match for you!"

Serena Sterling took off her hat, a black cloak draped over her shoulders, highlighting her stunning beauty. Her bright eyes fell on Consort Willow, "Consort Willow, have you reflected in this cold palace on precisely which move you made wrong, and how you lost?"

Consort Willow indeed had pondered over this question, and she had an answer, "It's all that wretched Consort Melinda's fault for ruining my grand plan. If she had drunk that concoction meant for miscarriage, you wouldn't have exploited the opportunity, nor would it have led to the subsequent series of events. I still can't figure out how Consort Melinda dared to defy my orders with such audacity."

"Consort Melinda, I can answer that for you. Look at who stands behind me." Serena said.

Only then did Consort Willow notice someone behind Serena Sterling, a maid.

The maid slowly lifted her head.

Consort Willow's pupils contracted, quickly recognizing the person, "You, you're the maid Carol from Consort Melinda's side. How are you here? Are you from Alani?"

The maid reached out and tore off the human skin mask on her face, revealing her true self, "Consort Willow, I'm not Carol. I'm Cherie, the lady-in-waiting beside Her Royal Highness, the Princess."

Consort Willow was shocked, and she soon understood everything. Cherie had disguised herself as the maid by Consort Melinda's side to incite her. So that's how it was.

Serena Sterling slowly curled her red lips, "Consort Willow, when people are greedy, their desires become inflated. Consort Melinda is pregnant with twins. Do you really think she would still let you control her? I merely seized this point and magnified the ugliness of human nature."

"Ha, hahaha," Consort Willow suddenly laughed, "Princess of Alani, so it turns out you're adept at playing mind games. I concede this loss willingly, but do you think you've won?"

Consort Willow showed a bizarre smile.

Serena Sterling stepped forward two paces, coming closer to Consort Willow, "Consort Willow, then display your skills for me to see, or else I will look down on your Merfolk Clan. Back then, your clan was nothing but dark and despicable, trampled and overrun by my Alani ancestors. You've been struggling to survive all these years, haven't you? You best hide well and not let me find you!"

"You!" Consort Willow was so furious she was at a loss for words. Now she realized Serena Sterling's purpose was to flaunt her success in front of her, the loser, a blatant declaration of conflict.

"Consort Willow, I have other matters to attend to, so I won't chat idly with you." With that, Serena Sterling took Cherie and turned to leave.

Consort Willow was left frozen in place, her eyes fixed venomously on the disappearing silhouette of Serena Sterling. She had not lost; she would not lose. One day, Serena Sterling, Seraphina Linden, and Alani would be destroyed!

...

The engagement party ended smoothly; according to tradition, the next step was to go to the palace temple to pay respects.

Serena Sterling changed clothes and then went to the temple with Titus Ashworth and Axel Ashworth.

The temple is located deep in the mountains behind the palace, housing the tablets of all the ancestors from The State of Westria, solemn and sacred.

"Axel, Princess of Alani, this is a sacred place. Don't touch anything; go forward and burn incense for the ancestors," Titus Ashworth instructed.

A maid brought two sticks of incense over. Serena Sterling took one and stood before the tablets, her clear eyes sweeping over each one. She wondered if these rulers, who ascended by stepping over the blood and bodies of Alani people, ever felt a hint of remorse.

"Pray," someone called out.

Serena Sterling held the incense and bowed reverently, thinking of all the ancestors. "Serena Sterling from Alani is here; it's our first meeting, please watch over me."

Serena Sterling and Axel Ashworth stepped forward and placed the incense in the burner, completing the ceremony.

Titus Ashworth did not intend to linger, "Axel, Princess of Alani, let's head back now."

"Alright, Father. Serena, let's go," Axel Ashworth said.

At this moment, Serena Sterling suddenly touched her ear, "Oh no, I lost an earring. I think it fell ahead; I'll go pick it up."

Serena Sterling quickly walked forward.

As she reached the corner, Cherie had already donned another human skin mask, disguising herself as Serena Sterling, and swiftly exited.

"Lord Ashworth, King of Nine Peaks, I found my earring. Let's go," Cherie disguised as Serena Sterling said, raising her hand with the earring and smiling.

The swap happened so quickly, almost in a passing moment, so neither Titus Ashworth nor Axel Ashworth suspected anything, "Let's go."

Serena Sterling hid at the corner, listening to the sounds outside gradually fade away; everyone had left.

Serena Sterling took out the map she had long kept hidden. Based on the map, the Sky Sword should be in the temple.

Serena Sterling quickly turned back to the temple.

The temple was now pitch-black, exuding an eerie chill. Serena Sterling reached the inner chamber, extending her small hand to push open the wooden door.

The door creaked open, and inside, nothing could be seen in the darkness.

Might there be traps inside?

Serena Sterling stepped inside cautiously.

But the interior was safe; there were no mechanisms.

Soon, Serena Sterling realized something was off. She had indeed come to the temple, but the scene shifted, and she now stood on a cliff.

The frigid wind cut her face like knives, sharply reminding her that none of this was an illusion. She had genuinely arrived at the edge of the cliff.

Serena Sterling looked down; the cliff was so high it seemed bottomless.

She immediately broke into a cold sweat. What was happening? Serena Sterling suddenly recalled the mind-control sorcery she encountered three years ago in the restricted area of Aethelgard. She must have fallen into another kind of array, but this one was more formidable and perilous than her mother's mind-control sorcery.

While Serena Sterling's mind was in a turmoil, the soil under her foot suddenly loosened, causing her slender body to plummet down the cliff.

The abrupt sensation of weightlessness made Serena's pupils constrict sharply, and she instinctively let out a cry of alarm!

Was she about to fall?

If she fell, she'd likely leave no trace!

In the nick of time, suddenly a large hand with defined knuckles shot out like lightning, grasping her slender wrist.

Now Serena Sterling hung in mid-air, she quickly lifted her head. An achingly familiar handsome visage magnified in her sight.

Hayden Crawford has arrived!

He actually came.

Serena Sterling was stunned, perplexed, "Hayden Crawford, how did you come here?"

Chapter 620: Hayden Crawford Jumped Down After Her

The last time they were at the Cloud Sea, they parted on bad terms. They hadn't contacted each other for two days, and Serena Sterling truly didn't expect him to come.

Hayden Crawford's handsome features were as cold as ice. He forcefully grabbed her little hand, trying to pull her up, "Shut up!"

"..."

At this moment, the soil by Hayden Crawford's feet began to loosen as well. It was clear that it couldn't support the weight of two people. If this continued, he wouldn't just fail to save her; he'd fall down with her.

Serena Sterling looked fearfully at the abyss below, "Hayden Crawford, let go."

Hayden Crawford pressed his thin lips into a grim, pale line, gritting his teeth, "Serena Sterling, are you deaf? I told you to shut up!"

This ungentle man!

Serena Sterling slowly curved her red lips, her clear eyes filled with Hayden Crawford's handsome face. Whether three years ago or now, every time she was in danger, he'd always be by her side.

Although he was sometimes late, he never missed a single time.

Serena Sterling's eyes welled up with shimmering tears. She raised her other small hand to pry open his fingers.

Hayden Crawford's pupils contracted, already sensing her intention, "Serena Sterling, what are you doing?"

Serena Sterling unwrapped his tightly clenched long fingers one by one, and amidst her tears, she smiled brilliantly, "Hayden Crawford, I can finally escape you. Love Caden well, and forget about me."

Her slender wrist swiftly slipped from his palm, and Serena Sterling fell directly down.

"Serena Sterling!"

Hayden Crawford immediately bellowed, watching her slender figure disappear into the abyss. He felt as if his eyes were about to burst, and a crimson layer rapidly covered the ends of his long eyes.

Her final words echoed in his ears: Hayden Crawford, I can finally escape you!

So, she always wanted to escape him, to the point of death.

Hayden Crawford thought himself truly laughable. After parting at the Cloud Sea, he should have tried to forget her, but he couldn't.

He knew she'd come to the ancestral hall, where danger lurked at every corner, so he came too.

He hates her so much, with an unforgettable hatred.

But, he also loves her so much, with deep passion that eats at his bones.

For every bit of hate he had before, he now had as much love for her.

Hayden Crawford felt his whole heart go empty. If... there was no Serena Sterling in this world, then how... would he live?

What would Hayden Crawford be like without Serena Sterling?

A sense of panic and despair spread from his heart, engulfing him instantly.

Hayden Crawford leapt down, following her without hesitation.

"Young Master!"

Exclamations erupted from above.

...

Serena Sterling had fallen, and the weightlessness made fear and unease flood her whole body.

Was she going to die like this?

Serena Sterling looked up, seeing the sky adorned with stars. She still didn't want to die; she had so many things left undone.

She hadn't yet revived Alani, the mission she bore on her shoulders.

And her Caden, Pip, and Stella—she hadn't had the chance to watch them grow up.

And... her Hayden Crawford...

When she was falling off the cliff just now, she told him, Hayden Crawford, this time I can finally escape you, but honestly, she didn't want to say that sentence.

She wanted to tell him, Hayden Crawford, Caden, Pip, and Stella are your children, the triplets I endured ten months to give birth to for you. I've never given up on our children, even in the toughest times, I've used my life to protect them.

But as the words reached her lips, she changed her mind.

She thought, how upset would Hayden Crawford be hearing these words?

How guilty and heartbroken would he feel afterwards?

Rather than that, saying nothing at all was better.

She didn't want him to feel sad because of her.

Serena Sterling closed her eyes, a bitter smile on her lips; she still couldn't believe, was she really going to die like this?

Serena Sterling shouldn't die like this.

At this moment, a strong arm suddenly encircled her slender, soft waist, and with a firm tug, her body was pulled directly into a warm, solid chest.

Serena Sterling froze completely, opening her eyes rapidly.

Hayden Crawford's face, as beautiful as jade, magnified in her sight.

Him?

Serena Sterling gasped, forgetting to react.

Hayden Crawford gazed down at the person in his arms. Her little face was very pale, her long eyelashes trembled slightly, and tears brimmed in her eyes. She had shed the usual cleverness and grace, revealing the softness and charm a girl in her twenties should possess. This kind of her was especially delicate and poignant.

Hayden Crawford slowly curved his thin lips, "Scared?"

Serena Sterling was utterly bewildered, not knowing how he had fallen down too?

"What are you afraid of? Aren't you usually quite brave?"

Serena Sterling sniffed her red little nose. In the face of death, people become particularly fragile and wronged, "Hayden Crawford, I really hate you so much."

"Why?"

"Because you are always lingering like a ghost!"

Listening to her accusations, Hayden Crawford's deep voice softened, "Serena Sterling, trying to escape me? Probably not possible in this lifetime, maybe in the next."

Serena Sterling tugged at his black shirt, looking up at him with tearful eyes, "So you jumped down too?"

Looking at her, Hayden Crawford said, "I told you, you can't escape. I won't let you go. You're my woman!"

Because she was his woman, he jumped down with her.

This fact alone was enough for a woman to be utterly dedicated to him.

"Hold tight." He reminded in a low voice then.

Serena Sterling quickly reached out her small hands to tightly hug his solid waist.

As they were about to fall, Hayden Crawford swiftly drew out a dagger. The sharp blade slid across the cliff face, sparking along the way.

Bang, a deafening sound.

Serena Sterling didn't feel any pain; her slender body was entrapped in his solid chest. But she clearly felt his broad back heavily hit the sharp cliff, still holding onto his waist; soon her palms felt wet.

He was bleeding.

Unsure where the blood came from?

The tremendous sense of weightlessness and the impact caused by the collision were deadly; the moment they struck, he had firmly enclosed her waist to protect her within his embrace.

He protected her.

But he received a lethal blow.

Serena Sterling trembled all over, her tears blurring her vision, looking up at him, "Are you... okay?"

Hayden Crawford's handsome face was very pale, but his deep, narrow eyes were calm and powerful. Looking at her, he slowly brought out a slightly bright smile, "Can you swim?"

"What?" She didn't understand.

"Inhale, exhale, swim hard."

As soon as the words fell, a loud "bang" sounded, and the two were submerged in the vast ocean.

The icy water instantly engulfed them, nearly drowning them.