

Substitute B 661

Chapter 661: Took His Virginity!

Hayden Crawford knew that his mother-in-law was about to embark on an earth-shattering task.

Seraphina Linden held her phone, smiling charmingly at the man on the other end of the line, "Mr. Rathborne, it's like this, I'm playing a game of Truth or Dare, and Miss Sawyer here dared me to call my first man, so, I could only call you."

Sss.

The room drew a collective breath, everyone was stunned as they glanced at Seraphina and then at Julian Rathborne, they? Them!

Meggie Sawyer and Kate Lee felt as if they had been struck by thunder, they had planned to use this game of Truth or Dare to make Seraphina embarrassed, but now Seraphina had directly dialed Julian Rathborne, it turned out... Julian Rathborne was really her first man!

Oh my.

At this moment, Meggie felt a sharp and cold gaze land on her, she looked up quickly, meeting Julian Rathborne's phoenix eyes.

Julian Rathborne glanced at her briefly, then quickly looked away.

Meggie felt a chill run down her spine, like a bucket of cold water had been poured over her head, only then did she realize she seemed to have offended Julian Rathborne.

Meggie's legs went weak, she quickly looked at Seraphina, who was still charmingly seated on her chair, her lively and playful eyes also looking at her, but there was a few traces of sharpness in her gaze, making one afraid.

Meggie understood now, Seraphina had seen through her scheme from the start, she was simply going along with the ploy.

It wasn't her who was playing Seraphina, but Seraphina was playing her.

It's over.

Seeing Meggie's ashen face, a cold and captivating arc formed at the corner of Seraphina Linden's lips, she had said so, she was very skilled at playing games.

Over two decades in the City of Aethelgard, she had leveled up and battled monsters, seen all kinds of demons and ghosts, Meggie was at most an insignificant little demon.

At this point, Julian Rathborne's deep and magnetic voice came through the phone, "You're calling me just for this? I'm your first man, so you're boasting?"

"..." Seraphina Linden had witnessed Julian Rathborne's arrogance, after all, not any man would easily say things like "You want to sleep with me? Not a chance."

Seraphina lifted her lively eyes to look at Julian Rathborne in front, their gazes collided, she smiled, "Mr. Rathborne, you speak as if you're my first man, and I'm not your first woman, to break Mr. Rathborne's virginity, of course, it's worth boasting!"

Oh my god!

The whole room was shocked, their mouths agape, what had they just heard? Could it be auditory hallucinations?

Everyone knew that Julian Rathborne, Aethelgard's son, was not close to women, yet now inexplicably a woman claims she took his virginity, this... is this even human speech?

Riley Sutton stood quietly nearby, he had just informed their big boss about the Truth or Dare game, with the boss's intellect, it wasn't hard to guess that Seraphina dug a pit for him to fall into, yet the boss still connected the call.

This only showed that one dug the pit, the other willingly jumped; the boss was happy to pamper this woman named Seraphina Linden.

Julian Rathborne thought Seraphina really dared to say anything, he didn't show any emotional fluctuations but directly hung up the phone and turned to leave.

...

Seraphina Linden truly made a name for herself, she plastered the label "took Julian Rathborne's virginity" on herself, flaunting it everywhere.

Walking through the corridor, Seraphina saw two familiar faces ahead, Kate Lee and Meggie Sawyer.

Now Kate's eyes were red, clearly she had been crying, while Meggie glared at her resentfully, probably wishing to kill her with her gaze.

"Seraphina Linden, you did it on purpose, your scheming is too deep, how could Mr. Rathborne fancy a woman like you?" Meggie tugged her fist and voiced.

Seraphina stepped forward two steps, arriving in front of Meggie, she lazily tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, "Mr. Rathborne shouldn't fancy me, then who should he fancy, you?"

Kate's sad expression paused, surprised, she looked up at Meggie.

Meggie's face changed, "Seraphina Linden, what nonsense are you saying? It's Kiki who likes Mr. Rathborne, Kiki is my best friend!"

"Yes, it's your best friend who likes Mr. Rathborne, how could you like a man your best friend likes? It's something I'm also curious about." Seraphina laughed.

"Kiki, don't listen to her nonsense, she's sowing discord..."

"Is that so?" Seraphina directly interrupted Meggie, her lively and compelling eyes stared straight at Meggie, leaving her no place to hide, "Julian Rathborne is a very charming man, clearly attracts female attention, Kiki had a crush on Julian Rathborne when she came of age, but at the same time, the person who had a crush, must have been you, Meggie too."

"However, the Lee family is aristocratic, while the Sawyer family's conditions are not as good, so Meggie you also have self-awareness, knowing Julian Rathborne is a dream beyond your reach, so you obeyed family arrangements and married a wealthy man, unfortunately, your husband likes gambling and often beats you, your marriage is terribly unhappy."

"Now Kate was favored by Old Mrs. Rathborne for a blind date with Julian Rathborne, and upon hearing the news, your good friend returned immediately by private jet, only you know what you're truly thinking."

"You're so indignantly seeking me, truly standing up for your good friend, or is it because you yourself are envious and resentful? Your feelings for your good friend must be very complicated, on one hand you don't want your good friend to end up with Julian Rathborne, on the other hand you hope your good friend succeeds in dating Julian Rathborne, then proximity could allow you a chance too."

"Heh, considering this, you really have deep feelings for Julian Rathborne."

Seraphina slowly laid out these words, casually yet terrifyingly, Kate and Meggie froze.

Meggie's face turned as pale as paper, a storm raged in her heart, she didn't know how Seraphina knew all of this.

Suddenly, Meggie felt Seraphina was too frightening, she regretted provoking such a powerful adversary.

Kate looked at Meggie in shock, if not for Seraphina revealing these matters, she would never believe in guarding against friends, "Meggie, I truly regarded you as a sister, yet you treat me like this?"

Kate questioned Meggie.

Meggie instantly panicked, as the Sawyer family relied heavily on the Lee family's businesses, she hurriedly explained, "Kiki, let me explain..."

Seraphina had no interest in hearing this, she turned to leave.

But as she turned, she saw a tall and straight figure ahead, Julian Rathborne had arrived.

Chapter 662: Reunion

Julian Rathborne had arrived at some point, and now his phoenix eyes fell upon Seraphina Linden's face.

Seraphina greeted him graciously, "Mr. Rathborne~"

After speaking, Seraphina left.

Once Seraphina was gone, Kate Lee and Meggie Sawyer froze, especially Meggie, whose face turned red and white with shame and humiliation. It was obvious Julian had been there long enough to hear everything Seraphina had said.

Meggie gathered the courage to look at Julian, who stood there like a noble cedar, just casually glancing at her with an indescribable disdain and coldness in his eyes.

Meggie felt like a clown at that moment, as Seraphina had revealed all of her inherent selfishness, ugliness, and scheming nature in front of Julian.

Back then, both Meggie and Kate fell for Julian at first sight. All these years later, this son of Aethelgard was still as distinguished and noble as ever, while she was so disgraceful.

Julian didn't say anything else then; he turned around and left.

Kate and Meggie's legs went weak, and both collapsed onto the carpet.

...

Hayden Crawford stood on the second floor, witnessing his mother-in-law's growing fame, and all he could do was... give a thumbs up.

Hayden felt grateful for his choice, and from now on, he was even more determined to stand by this formidable mother-in-law's side.

Just then, there was a "ding," and the phone in his pocket rang. It was a text message.

It was from Pip.

Hayden clicked on the message, his pupils quickly contracted. Pip's message was simple: Hello, handsome uncle, just to let you know, your mom is here.

Pip said your mom is here!

Hayden had lost his mother at a very young age, making motherly love a void in his life. Now Pip had simply sent a message to inform him that his mom was here.

Hayden, "..."

At that moment, another "ding" sounded, and yet another message came in, again from Pip.

Hayden quickly opened it; this message said: Oh right, your dad is here too.

Hayden's eyes turned black, and he promptly closed them.

Then another "ding"—another message from Pip.

Inside, Hayden was in denial; he didn't want to open the message anymore. A few seconds later, he reluctantly clicked it open: remember to control your dad so he doesn't scare your mom away.

Hayden, "..."

He really wanted to find Pip and give him a beating; Pip had just placed a ticking time bomb with him, with Julian Rathborne and Seraphina Linden barely finished, and now this pair was starting up.

"Mr. Crawford, are you alright?" Seeing the ever-changing expressions on Hayden's face, his personal secretary Ivan Yarrow quickly stepped forward to ask with concern.

Hayden waved his phone, "Open the door, to welcome... my dad and my mom's grand arrival!"

"...Yes, Mr. Crawford."

...

Outside The Crawford Group's main gate, a luxurious stretched business sedan pulled up slowly. Butler Thorne, seated in the front, glanced into the rearview mirror at the man in the back with respect, "Sir, we've arrived at The Crawford Group."

Jude Crawford lounged lazily in the back seat, not getting out immediately. He held a cigarette between his fingers, and after a few seconds, he lit a blazing red flame, took a drag, and slowly exhaled the smoke. His deep, narrow eyes gazed at his reflection in the mirror before speaking in a low voice, "Butler Thorne, do you think I've aged over these years?"

Butler Thorne looked at the man's still chiselled and handsome face. All these years, his appearance hadn't aged a bit.

Time hadn't etched any marks on him, though the fine lines around his eyes had deepened and lengthened, adding to his mature allure as a man.

Butler Thorne shook his head, "Sir, you haven't aged at all."

This answer seemed to please Jude Crawford, "Heh," a seductive chuckle emitted from his muscular chest, causing ash from his cigarette to fall, "She hasn't aged; how dare I?"

Butler Thorne knew that "she" referred to Mrs. Yara. As arranged by Pip, they were to meet here, and only Mrs. Yara could prompt this business tycoon of a generation to ask, 'Have I aged?'

Jude extinguished the half-burnt cigarette in an ashtray, "Let's go; let's head in."

The last time, in the mall, he only got a fleeting glimpse of her. It had been nearly twenty years; he had searched for her for twenty years, longed for her for twenty years, and finally, she had returned.

...

Seraphina was ready to head back after having her fun, but then she spotted a figure upfront and immediately called out, "Yara, what are you doing here?"

It was Isabelle Willow.

Recently, Isabelle had been handling the funeral affairs of an old maid, followed by a period of mourning. Today, wearing a black qipao, she looked somewhat colder, though still reminiscent of the most celebrated beauty of Aethelgard, Isabelle Willow. Her elegance still as captivating as her reputation, with long black hair cascading down, revealing a stunningly beautiful face.

As Isabelle entered earlier, she had instantly captured attention along her path; everyone was watching her.

Isabelle walked up to Seraphina and gave a gentle smile, "Seraphina, I'm here to meet someone."

"Who?"

"Well... to meet Jude Crawford."

Seraphina frowned immediately, clearly not fond of Jude Crawford, "Why are you meeting him?"

"A few days ago, Pip sought his help. He wants to meet me. I thought we'd have to meet eventually, and I also want to see my son, Hayden." Isabelle's personality was serenely detached, but now, after years, she had gained a calm warmth and tranquility, having moved past many things.

Seraphina said nothing more and looked down into the hall, quickly spotting a stable and tall figure, Jude Crawford.

Jude Crawford had just entered.

Seraphina immediately spoke, "Mr. Crawford, hello."

Downstairs, Jude Crawford was searching for Isabelle Willow, when he suddenly heard Seraphina's voice. He looked up immediately, his deep, narrow eyes sweeping upstairs.

Jude Crawford spotted Seraphina and behind her... Isabelle Willow.

Jude's gaze fell onto Isabelle Willow and could not be pruned away.

Then Seraphina pulled Isabelle before her, pushing her into Jude Crawford's view, "Mr. Crawford, thank you for your help last time, so this time I brought Yara for your appointment to let you both meet."

After their hasty separation last time, Isabelle Willow's exquisite beauty again crashed into Jude Crawford's eyes, and he just looked at her.

As if time had reverted to many years ago, she hadn't changed a bit, still the Willow family's daughter known for both beauty and talent years ago.

Standing upstairs, Isabelle's clear almond eyes also fell upon Jude Crawford's handsome face. Despite not having thought about him all these years, the past she thought forgotten surged back with the force of a tidal wave as he appeared.

Chapter 663: Two Women Unwind at the Clubhouse

Now, Jude Crawford and Isabelle Willow, one above and one below, met each other's gaze, and their minds flashed with the fiercest love and the most piercing pain.

As days and nights alternate, who scattered the youthful days into the sands of time?

At this moment, Seraphina Linden stepped forward, blocking Isabelle Willow behind her, "Mr. Crawford, we've met now, we have other matters, so we'll be leaving first."

Seraphina Linden led Isabelle Willow away directly.

Jude Crawford watched as Isabelle Willow's cold and slender figure disappeared from his sight. He pressed his thin lips together and quickly went upstairs, but those two people were nowhere to be seen.

"Sir." At this moment, Butler Thorne approached.

Jude Crawford's sharply chiseled handsome face was cast in dim light, flickering to and fro, not clearly visible. He said in a deep voice, "Find out, I want to know where they've gone."

"Yes, sir."

...

Seraphina Linden led Isabelle Willow out of the hall of The Crawford Group. Seraphina Linden turned her head to look at Isabelle Willow, "Yara, be honest with me, do you still want to reconcile with that Jude Crawford?"

Isabelle Willow's cold and exquisite face held faint and unemotional waves. She smiled lightly, "Seraphina, if there was even a one in ten thousand chance between him and me, I would not have jumped from Jill's high platform back then. There's no going back for us now."

Seraphina Linden nodded vigorously, "Yara, as long as you understand. That Jude Crawford hurt you so deeply back then, drove you to the brink of despair. He now has Mrs. Crawford, that Zelda Willow, and his sister Iris Crawford, and the entire Crawford family doesn't like you, except for Mrs. Crawford. You've escaped that pit, don't jump back in."

The past seems like a dream. Isabelle Willow stood gracefully at the street corner, the evening breeze fluttering the hem of her cheongsam dress. She softly curled her lips in a faint smile.

Seraphina Linden was very dissatisfied with Jude Crawford. At this moment, she raised her eyes, and a high-end club was right in front of them. She extended her hand, directly embracing Isabelle Willow, "Yara, Jude Crawford is old now, a doddering old man. Let's forget him. Come on, let me take you to have some fun."

"Fun?"

"Yes, last time I wanted to take you for a massage spa, you didn't want to. This time, I'll take you to play with some lads. I've heard that the escorts at this club are fantastic, let's go. Tonight, it's on me. Enjoy to your heart's content, each one with one escort, no, make it two!"

Seraphina Linden is taking Isabelle Willow to a high-end club to find escorts?!

Isabelle Willow glanced sideways at the boldly spirited Seraphina Linden, "Seraphina, isn't this inappropriate? Aren't you afraid Mr. Rathborne will find out?"

Julian Rathborne?

Thinking of that man made Seraphina Linden furrow her brows, "What does me patronizing escorts have to do with him?"

"Have you forgotten the last time he reported you and got you sent to the precinct? If you go see escorts again, I really don't know what he'll do this time."

"...Why is it that, traditionally, men can go out for fun, but we women cannot? Tonight, let's kick those stinking men away and enjoy ourselves thoroughly. Yara, aren't you daring enough?" Seraphina Linden arched her delicate brows, and from her bright and charming little face shined a radiant glow.

Isabelle Willow slightly curved her elegant lips, "Alright, tonight I'll accompany you fearlessly. Let's go."

The two women entered the high-end club together.

...

Inside the most luxurious room of the high-end club.

Seraphina Linden made a phone call, "Hello, ma'am, bring the best escorts over for us to pick, money is no object!"

Seraphina Linden promptly hung up the phone.

The madam in the hall clapped her hands excitedly, in front of her stood a line of escorts, "Sons, you are the best and finest escorts here. Today, you're in luck. Three wealthy women who don't mind spending have arrived in the most luxurious room upstairs and have called for you to be picked. Put forth your utmost effort to delight, amuse, and satisfy them. They have plenty of money for you to earn!"

Escorts, "Understood."

"Come, let's go upstairs now."

The madam led a group of escorts upstairs, still anxious, she reminded them in the corridor, "Keep in mind, these wealthy women are mainly old women whose charm has faded. Don't look at their faces; look at their wallets. These days, women's money is even easier to earn than men's, understood?"

A group of escorts nodded vigorously.

Arriving at the door of the luxurious room, the madam raised her hand to knock, "Knock knock."

Soon, a soft and sweet voice came from inside, "Enter."

The madam pushed the door open and entered, a group of escorts followed behind her, the madam's face full of smiles, "Beautiful young ladies, our finest escorts have arrived, ready for you to choose."

Calling faded charm wealthy women "beautiful young ladies," this madam was unfazed.

But in the next second, the madam froze entirely. Where were the promised faded charm wealthy women???

Seraphina Linden and Isabelle Willow were lying on the room's rattan chairs. They had already bathed and were wearing pink silk nightgowns. The steam had imbued their tender and clear pretty faces with an adorable blush, their soft white skin, their red lips, and long hair had stunned the madam.

Why were these wealthy women, who didn't mind spending, not faded in charm?

They were even more stunning and beautiful than the club's star performers, making it impossible to look away.

The wealthy madam felt a pang of frustration, a severe frustration. She had seen young wealthy women before, but never so very young and beautiful ones like these!

Seraphina Linden patted lotion on her face, then lifted her lively watery eyes to glance at the escorts, "Raise your heads."

Escorts slowly raised their heads.

Wow!

The eyes of the escorts were wide open. They had never seen such beautiful women.

Their girlfriends, campus belles, the entertainment industry's budding actresses... none were as beautiful as these two women.

They were stunning beyond measure.

"Yara, you choose first, pick two," Seraphina Linden generously turned to Isabelle Willow beside her.

Isabelle Willow's cool almond eyes slowly looked over, landing on the escorts.

She scanned the escorts once and then focused her gaze on one, the escort who was handsome and stoic, resembling someone closely.

Seraphina Linden's gaze followed and landed on that escort too.

The chosen escort's heart skipped, joy showing on his handsome face. He was chosen!

The madam burst into laughter, "Ah, beautiful young lady, you truly have an eye for quality. This lad here is a pillar of our establishment. Do you know of a man from thirty years ago, the first commercial noble of Aethelgard, Jude Crawford?"

Chapter 664: Waving Scissors at Him

Speaking of Jude Crawford, the proprietress got a little carried away, "Back then, Jude Crawford, the eldest son of the Crawford family, was born a natural success. He dominated the business world, turning the tides, and countless highborn ladies were captivated by him. Wherever he appeared, those ladies would stop and gaze, fantasizing about becoming Mrs. Crawford one day. Eventually, the coveted title of Mrs. Crawford went to a girl from the prestigious Willow family, creating a legendary tale in Aethelgard, breaking many dreams overnight. The women who came to our club would request this gigolo because he kind of resembles Jude Crawford."

Seraphina Linden looked at the proprietress, guessing she was also a fan of Jude Crawford.

Seraphina Linden spoke, "Proprietress, you're talking too much today."

The proprietress felt aggrieved, "..."

She was just introducing, after all.

Seraphina Linden glanced at Isabelle Willow beside her, "Yara, do you want to pick this guy?"

After a few seconds, Isabelle Willow nodded, "I'll pick him."

The other gigolos: Envious!

...

In the luxurious room, two knocks sounded on the door, and Butler Thorne entered the room to report respectfully, "Sir, we've located Mrs. Yara."

Jude Crawford stood tall and commanding by the window, one hand in his pocket. Upon hearing this, he lifted his handsome eyes and let out a single word, "Speak."

"Sir, Mrs. Yara is currently at the XX high-end club, she went...to seek pleasure."

Jude Crawford's strong eyebrows suddenly furrowed, "What did you say?"

"Sir, you didn't mishear, Mrs. Yara went for pleasure, and even picked two gigolos." Butler Thorne wiped the cold sweat off his forehead as he reported.

Jude Crawford's handsome and deep features frosting over in an instant, and in his ears, the words echoed—she went for pleasure, she actually went for pleasure!

Usually, it's men who seek pleasure; she went running to seek pleasure, ha, alright.

Isabelle Willow, haven't seen you in years, you've really outdone yourself!

"Ha," Jude Crawford forced a chilling laugh from his throat, shooting Butler Thorne a sharp and sinister look, "Did she go alone?"

"No, she went with Miss Linden, it was Miss Linden's treat."

"..."

Seraphina Linden treated.

Treating Isabelle Willow to seek pleasure.

Good!

Really good!

Jude Crawford pulled his phone from his pocket and quickly dialed a number.

On the other end, in a stretched luxury limo, a melodic phone ringtone rang out—it was a call from Jude Crawford.

Long fingers pressed the answer button, and a deep, magnetic voice replied, "Hello."

"Where is your Seraphina Linden?" Jude Crawford's voice came through, direct and to the point, calling Seraphina Linden by name.

Julian Rathborne quickly pursed his thin lips, a bit displeased, "Why are you looking for Seraphina Linden, since when have you two become so close?"

"Your Seraphina Linden took Isabelle Willow to the XX high-end club to seek pleasure."

What?

Julian Rathborne's handsome expression changed instantly, a chill exuding from him, his lips moving as he glanced at Riley Sutton in the driver's seat, "Head to the XX high-end club."

"Yes, sir." Riley Sutton started the car.

The emperor-like stretched luxury limo immediately headed for the XX high-end club.

"Mr. Rathborne, your family's discipline is lacking; you should really manage your woman, Seraphina Linden, and stop her from causing trouble for others," Jude Crawford criticized.

He scoffed.

Julian Rathborne curled his thin lips, a cold, dismissive sound escaping as his phoenix eyes glanced through the polished car window at the neon lights outside, "My woman is a good seedling, why couldn't it have been Isabelle Willow taking her to seek pleasure? I think it's Isabelle Willow corrupting Seraphina Linden."

"Mr. Rathborne, dreams are beautiful, but reality is frail—tonight, Seraphina Linden treated, picking two gigolos for herself alone. Congratulations, your head is a pasture of green."

"As far as I know, Isabelle Willow put the green hat on you over twenty years ago. It seems you haven't taken it off yet. I also heard that before Isabelle Willow left back then, she once wielded scissors against you—are you impotent now?"

With that, Julian Rathborne hung up the phone directly.

Listening to the "beep beep" of the busy signal, Jude Crawford immediately blocked Julian Rathborne.

And thus, the boat of friendship between the two men capsized.

Riley Sutton, in the driver's seat, listened to the whole conversation; the so-called crazy protective behavior of their gentlemen, indeed, Jude Gregory and Mr. Crawford were tied for first.

Their own women were out seeking pleasure, yet their protectiveness led to a spat first.

Truly... adorably childish!

Julian Rathborne lifted his long fingers, undoing two shirt buttons, the handsome face already as dark as a stormy sky, dammit, Seraphina Linden dared to seek pleasure, to find gigolos—is this rebellion?

It seems that last lesson wasn't severe enough!

Up front, Riley Sutton already sensed the cold murderous aura radiating from his master, Miss Linden, you'd better take care of yourself.

...

XX high-end club.

The proprietress hurriedly ran out, as four top-tier Rolls Royces came to a stop.

A team of black-suited bodyguards emerged, charging into the club, surrounding it completely.

The proprietress, not having seen such a scene before, was already trembling with fear.

Who did she offend?

At that moment, Riley Sutton opened the car door, and a handsome, noble figure leaped into view—it was Julian Rathborne.

The proprietress looked at Julian Rathborne, dressed in a tailored white shirt and black trousers, the top-grade fabric pressed without a single crease, defining his high-status presence. He walked out in shoes polished to perfection, each step exuding a steady, dazzling brilliance.

My god, what a handsome man!

That face, that build, like a supermodel walking off a runway.

Far beyond the most handsome and outstanding guys here, a thousand times more alluring.

The proprietress quickly rushed forward, eagerly saying, "Sir, hello, are you here to have fun? I'll immediately call the most beautiful girls to accompany you; you may choose anyone you like."

Julian Rathborne glossed over the proprietress with a faint glance, then spoke quietly, "Smash everything here."

"Yes, sir."

With smashing and crashing, the black-suited bodyguards began destroying the place.

Ah.

Screams filled the air, guests, gigolos, and girls fled in terror, chaos erupting on scene.

The proprietress gasped, quickly trying to stop them, "Don't smash it, why are you smashing my club, stop, all of you stop!"

A black-suited bodyguard directly pushed the proprietress to the ground.

The proprietress, heart aching, beat her chest and stomped her feet—why, what exactly did she do wrong?

Julian Rathborne's steps did not halt; he sharply turned a corner, walking into the hallway, as if the noise behind him had nothing to do with him.

"Sir, it's this room," Riley Sutton pointed to a door.

Julian Rathborne looked at the tightly closed door in front of him, the most luxurious room in this club. He'd heard she'd picked the best two guys, ha, no money to pay his debt, but enough to indulge herself.

Chapter 665: Tonight I'll Stay With You

Riley Sutton took out the room card and swiped it to open the door.

The door was pushed open, and Julian Rathborne strode in, but he only stood at the entrance without going further.

However, from where he stood, he could clearly see everything in the room.

Inside the room, Seraphina Linden was holding a wine glass, playing a drinking game with two guys.

Her drinking tolerance wasn't great, and she was already a bit tipsy.

"Come on, let's play another round."

Seraphina Linden was unwilling to admit defeat and wanted to play again, but luck wasn't on her side tonight, and she lost again.

"No, I can't drink anymore. How about this, you can ask a question, and I'll answer." A flush of red appeared on Seraphina Linden's dazzling face, and her voice was gentle and silky.

One guy asked, "How many boyfriends have you had?"

Seraphina Linden, drunk, wavered a little. She thought for a moment in a daze and then held out her fingers, "One, two, three, four... N, oh, too many, I can't count them all."

Riley Sutton, standing outside the door, twitched at his temple, cautiously glancing at Mr. Rathborne's face.

Julian Rathborne's face was so dark it seemed like water could drip from it. Actually, he was also quite curious about that question.

After him, did she have any other men?

Now he got the answer. Yes, and there were N.

Julian Rathborne's thin, cold lips curved slightly, a sinister smile like a cat catching a mouse.

The three people inside the room were completely unaware.

The two guys looked at Seraphina Linden, who was slightly inebriated, truly enchanting.

One of them jokingly asked, "Of all these boyfriends, who do you like the least?"

"Of course, it's... it's that man called Julian Rathborne, yeah, him!" Seraphina Linden muttered, "I really don't like him, no, I hate him, and I hate him very much, what's so great about him, isn't he just a little better-looking, a bit better-built, a bit wealthier?"

"Seraphina!" Just then, someone burst in, Isabelle Willow had arrived.

Isabelle Willow had been listening to the commotion from the adjacent room. Hearing that someone might demolish the club, she had just opened the door to see the corridor lined with bodyguards in black, while Julian Rathborne stood in the room, exuding an aura like a death god from hell.

Isabelle Willow raised her hand to her forehead, Seraphina, you've been caught red-handed, take care of yourself.

"Mr. Rathborne, Seraphina is drunk, please take the trouble to send her home, I'll be leaving first." Isabelle Willow smiled gracefully and turned to leave.

An awakened Seraphina Linden, ...

"Yara, why are you leaving, don't go..." Seeing Isabelle Willow leaving, Seraphina Linden stood up and dashed to chase after her.

Because she was drunk, her steps were a bit unsteady, and without watching her path, she suddenly hit a wall with a "thump".

Ouch, her forehead really hurt.

Seraphina Linden rubbed her forehead and looked up with dazed eyes, seeing Julian Rathborne's handsome, sharp features magnified in her vision.

She had just bumped into him, and the man's broad chest felt as hard as a wall.

"Whoa, you are... are..." Seraphina Linden felt the man looked familiar, pointing a finger at him.

On the side, Riley Sutton secretly broke into a sweat, relieved that Miss Linden was still somewhat lucid and recognized the sir.

Miss Linden, quickly admit your mistake!

Drunkenly, Seraphina Linden looked at the tall, long-legged, god-like handsome man in front of her and slurred, "Are you... the new gigolo? Wow, that physique, that face, tut-tut, you're the star attraction, right, a premium gigolo?"

Riley Sutton, ...

Miss Linden, you should be mindful, you're doomed!

"Too outrageous, that madam didn't even bring you over!" Saying this, Seraphina Linden playfully blinked her lashes, her small finger hooking Julian Rathborne's firm jaw, "Heh heh, you're not that madam's private property, right? Otherwise, why wouldn't that madam bring you over?"

Julian Rathborne's expression didn't change; it was the first time in his life he was mistaken for a premium gigolo and even someone's 'private property.' His well-defined hand suddenly clenched into a fist, making a chilling "crack" sound.

But soon he curved his thin lips, "What, want me to serve you tonight?"

His voice sounded so good, deep and magnetic... so familiar...

Like she'd heard it somewhere!

Seraphina Linden sharply inhaled, her clean black-and-white pupils dilating in shock as she looked at the man in front of her, "You... you..."

Julian Rathborne?

He's Julian Rathborne!

The drunkenness left Seraphina Linden almost entirely, Julian Rathborne had actually found her.

Good, she recognized him now.

Julian Rathborne strode forward, approaching her step by step, unleashing his cold and stern aura completely, his thin lips curving into a mocking arc, "I heard tonight there's a rich woman here who doesn't lack money, asking for the best gigolo here. Why not book me tonight, I'll surely serve you well to your satisfaction."

He approached her, and Seraphina Linden shrank back in fear, unsure why, but she felt a deep-seated dread of this man.

He stared deeply at her, his phoenix-like eyes resembling two dangerous whirlpools, ready to swallow her.

Just then, her knees hit the bed edge, and Seraphina Linden fell back onto the soft, large bed.

Her vision darkened, and his hands were braced beside her, his noble and refined figure towering over her.

His handsome face was so close, yet even at such close range, he was flawlessly perfect.

A charmer he was, Seraphina Linden felt herself being seduced.

She swallowed, her hands quickly pushing against his broad chest, "Are you saying... you want to serve me tonight?"

"You don't like it?"

The man's deep voice was too soft, soft enough to melt one's bones, but Seraphina Linden inexplicably shivered, feeling disaster was imminent.

The way he got her into trouble with the authorities and demanded 10.1 billion all flashed vividly before her eyes.

"Emmm..." Seraphina Linden's mind raced, "But I heard you're expensive, I ran out of money."

Seraphina Linden turned out her pockets, finding them empty.

"Heh," Julian Rathborne let out a chilling laugh from his throat, "What, did those two gigolos empty your wallet?"

"..."

Such a sharp tongue!

"I want to go to the bathroom!" Seraphina Linden pleaded, looking at him.

"Is that so?"

"Of course it's true, I can't hold it any longer!"

Seraphina Linden shoved him away, dashing out of the room.

There was a bathroom in the room, but she didn't go there, she ran out instead, she was escaping!

Julian Rathborne leisurely curved his thin lips.

Seraphina Linden ran out of the room, sprinting hard, scared Julian Rathborne might catch up from behind.

But as she ran, she encountered a pitfall, because the corridor was lined with bodyguards in black, all neatly in two rows, stretching to the end.

"Miss Linden, the boss invites you to return."

Chapter 666: She Asked Him, Do You Like It?

At this moment, the bodyguards bowed and spoke from their diaphragms.

"..."

Seraphina Linden didn't originally intend to urinate, but she was so frightened by this grand spectacle that she almost did.

The bodyguards blocked her path; with no other option, she lowered her head and walked into the restroom.

Outside the door came a series of steady footsteps. Julian Rathborne arrived, his voice deep and magnetic as he asked, "Where is she?"

"Sir, she's in the restroom."

Julian Rathborne turned and headed for the restroom.

Oh no, he's here!

Seraphina Linden felt a jolt in her heart; she couldn't let him find her. She had to hide, but where?

This restroom was only so big.

Got it, there was a big trash can in the restroom, brand new, probably just brought here. She quickly ran over, opened the lid of the trash can, squatted inside, and then closed the lid over herself.

Just then, "click", the restroom door opened.

A few bodyguards in black walked in, starting to search the restroom. Julian Rathborne followed, one hand casually tucked in his pocket as he took out a cigarette, placing it between his thin lips. He bent his tall and handsome frame slightly and with a "snap" lit the cigarette.

He began to puff away at it.

Inside the trash can, Seraphina Linden could clearly see the situation outside through the opening.

The bodyguards in black seriously searched the restroom but found no one. "Sir, we can't find Miss Linden."

If they can't find her, they should just leave!

Seraphina Linden sneakily glanced at Julian Rathborne not too far away. The bodyguards had all retreated behind him. He leisurely smoked his cigarette, his demeanor authoritative, like an aloof emperor.

Blue smoke wrapped softly around his handsome face, his right hand holding a flaming cigarette butt. His deep eyes penetrated the smoke, indifferently and sharply scanning the restroom before landing on the trash can.

Seraphina Linden curled up in fear, hugging herself. Had he discovered her?

This man's eyes were like a hawk's circling in the dark, cold and sharp.

"All of you go out first, I need to take a piss." Julian Rathborne, always elegant and noble, now exuded a hint of playful wickedness.

"Yes, Sir." Everyone exited.

Hidden inside the trash can, Seraphina Linden breathed a huge sigh of relief; he hadn't found her. He just needed to take a piss.

Then a steady rhythm of footsteps approached her from afar.

What did this mean?

Wasn't he going to take a piss? Why was he coming over here?

Seraphina Linden raised her captivating eyes, seeing the man approaching. Her line of sight was filled with his taut, slender waist, black belt, and the zipper of his trousers...

The man put the cigarette between his thin lips, his well-defined hand resting on his black belt. With a "swish", he pulled it open and also lowered the zipper, looking as if he was going to take a piss.

Was he going to... pee in the trash can?!

A rush of heat surged directly to Seraphina Linden's head; her face grew flushed red as if it could drip blood. Of all places to pee, he came here?

Doesn't he have any public decency?

Was he doing it on purpose?

Now he was standing right in front of the trash can, and she could see his every move clearly. He really was unzipping.

"Ah," Seraphina Linden screamed and stood up abruptly from the trash can.

Pointing a trembling finger at him, "Julian... Rathborne, you pervert!"

Julian Rathborne, with a cigarette in his mouth, furrowed his brows and took a drag, then exhaled the smoke slowly towards her small face, a sinister curl on his thin lips. "Not hiding anymore? Come out now?"

The smoke stung her nose and mouth, causing Seraphina Linden to frown slightly. "You knew I was in here, yet you still... tried to pee on me!"

How could he have the face to do such a thing?

Pervert!

Julian Rathborne arched a well-shaped eyebrow, "Taking a piss is my business. If you want me to pee on you, that's yours."

"..."

Nani?

Inside, a thousand alpacas galloped across Seraphina Linden's mind. This... this cultured scoundrel!

How had she not realized how awful he was before?

"Buckle your belt for me!" Julian Rathborne removed the cigarette from his lips, glanced casually at her, and commanded strongly.

Seraphina Linden glanced down at his belt, which was already undone.

Exhibitionist!

Seraphina Linden quickly jumped out of the trash can, "You have hands; buckle it yourself. I'm leaving!"

She turned to walk away.

But just as she lifted her foot, a well-defined hand gripped her slender wrist and pulled forcefully, causing her to fall into his broad, cold chest.

The man grabbed her soft, boneless hand and placed it on his waist belt, "Hurry up and buckle it for me!"

Seraphina Linden barely steadied herself, trying to pull back her hand but unable to break his grip.

Seraphina Linden trembled with anger but had no choice against him. "Fine, I'll buckle it now!"

She reached out her small hand to zip his trousers.

At that moment, Julian Rathborne's eyes narrowed sharply, and his defined hand pressed down on her fragrant shoulder, pushing her directly against the sink counter.

Seraphina Linden hadn't yet stabilized. Suddenly, everything turned dark as the man pressed against her, pinning her into his embrace.

With a powerful arm wrapped around her slender waist, Julian Rathborne stared at her with dark eyes.

Seraphina Linden regained control, slowly curling her red lips, her voice soft and tender. "Mr. Rathborne, what's wrong? I'm trying to buckle your belt."

Her fingers subtly brushed against his waist.

Although Julian Rathborne hadn't been around women in years, he knew what she was doing — provoking him intentionally, "What do you want to do?"

"Mr. Rathborne, you're the one clinging to me. I should be asking what you want to do?"

Suddenly, Seraphina Linden thought of something, blinking her dewy eyes at him, "Mr. Rathborne, I heard you've stayed away from women all these years. Couldn't it be that you've only been with one woman — just once, that one time with me?"

At that, Julian Rathborne pursed his thin lips as he discerned the hint of mockery on her face.

She was mocking him.

Indeed, at his age, he had only one night of romance.

Seraphina Linden had her answer, flashing a bright smile. Then, she stood on tiptoe and gave Julian Rathborne a kiss on his thin lips.

Julian Rathborne stiffened immediately at the unexpected kiss.

Her lips were soft and sweet, the familiar smooth, silky feeling instantly awakening memories of that night over twenty years ago. The desires within him sprouted, growing wildly.

Then Seraphina Linden retreated, looking at him, "Did you like it?"

She asked, asking if he liked it.

This enchantress.

Meggie Sawyer was right; she was a vixen.

Julian Rathborne squeezed her slender waist with a big hand, sealing her red lips again.

Chapter 667: He Said, "Sorry..."

Seraphina Linden's eyes narrowed; she hadn't expected such a big reaction from him just because she flirted lightly with him.

It turned out he's like a desperate ghost who hasn't touched a woman in years. Seraphina's eyes shone with some cleverness, making it much easier to handle.

Julian Rathborne didn't close his eyes; he just looked at her, watching as she fluttered her enchanting eyes at him, both dark and moist, gazing with a hint of surprise and some adorable naivety, quite alluring.

Julian slowly closed his handsome eyes. Seeing she had no resistance, he then pressed against her teeth barrier.

Hiss.

Seraphina let out a soft cry of pain because his teeth bumped against her lips.

Julian quickly released her, with his large hand braced against the wall beside her, his voice low as he said, "Sorry..."

He had no experience.

The only experience was that night.

That night, both had clear intentions, and being unfamiliar, there wasn't this kind of tension. Now Julian seemed a bit clumsy, his gentle lowered eyes carrying an air of elegance, the ambiance of an aristocrat was very clean, with a bit of embarrassment, he muttered a sorry.

Seraphina thought his "sorry" sounded so nice it could make one's ears pregnant. She wrapped her arms around his neck, teasing in a soft voice, "Mr. Rathborne, do you even know how?"

Julian pursed his thin lips, not speaking.

Seraphina drew closer, "Then, let me teach you."

This time, she initiated the kiss.

Julian embraced her soft waist, holding her in his arms, then closed his eyes.

The two kissed for quite a while, their ears filled with the sound of water, making them blushinglly embarrassed.

Seraphina pulled away, burying her face in his chest, "Mr. Rathborne, I haven't showered yet, I want to take a shower first."

Julian opened his eyes, his clear phoenix eyes tinged with a fiery sentiment, his Adam's apple rolling up and down as he suppressed the urge to continue kissing. All adults, they could probably understand that showering was the first step of a happy event.

Julian let her go, his voice hoarse, "Go ahead."

Seraphina looked at him reluctantly, "Or, shall we shower together?"

Julian's eyes darkened, and he reached out to grab her.

Ah!

Seraphina laughed and jumped back a step, running her hand through her dark chestnut hair by her cheek, with a charming smile, "Mr. Rathborne, you can't even take a joke, I tricked you, I'll shower mine, and you do yours, wait for me, okay?"

With that, Seraphina went into the shower.

Watching her slender figure disappear from his sight, Julian felt his throat like hot coals had rolled over it. He also vaguely sensed something wasn't right; tonight, he had said he would teach her a lesson, yet now he seemed to be led on by her?

In his mind was still the kiss from just now, making him feel like he needed a cold shower, so he headed into the shower next door.

...

A few minutes later, Julian came out, having showered, he strode into the room.

The room was very quiet, but the soft large bed was covered with a duvet, and under the duvet was a bulge that looked like a slender figure.

He immediately furrowed his appealing sword-like eyebrows, wouldn't she suffocate this way?

However, she was already lying on the bed waiting for him.

Julian had also reflected on himself earlier; over the years, many socialites and daughters of wealthy families surrounded him, yet none moved him. Why then was he seemingly bewitched by Seraphina Linden?

Perhaps because he adhered strictly to etiquette since childhood, he mostly encountered well-bred ladies, while Seraphina was lively and playful, bold and vivid, immediately capturing his attention.

A smirk tugged at Julian's thin lips as he approached the bed, reached out his hand, and lifted the duvet, "Seraphina..."

His words abruptly stopped because underneath the duvet wasn't a person, but two pillows.

The two pillows were placed together, forming the shape of a person. The key point was, even with a note on one, the note bore dainty lively handwriting, Mr. Rathborne, your inflatable doll, I hope you have fun.

"..."

Julian's handsome face suddenly darkened; she had tricked him!

All her advances, the kiss from before was fake, she just wanted to escape.

She played the honey trap quite well!

The note had more writing, several lines down, at the very bottom saying, just teasing you, don't take it seriously, Mr. Rathborne, this is your real treat.

Below the note was a small card, featuring a scantily clad woman offering in-room service at the hotel, 200 yuan for a night, full-service to ensure your satisfaction.

"..."

Julian's handsome temple twitched, he reached out a fair clean hand to crumple the note and the small card into a ball and tossed them into the trash can, that woman!

One hand on his hip, the other unbuttoning his shirt collar in anger; this woman was not to be underestimated!

Soon, he fished out his phone from his pocket, "Find out where she is and bring her back!"

...

An hour later.

The whole club was smashed, the gigolos crouched in the corners holding their heads, and the madam lay on the floor trembling.

At this time, a steady sound of footsteps approached, someone had arrived.

The madam quickly looked up, seeing Julian Rathborne emerge, striding forcefully away, and all the dark-suited bodyguards had left.

Outside, four Rolls-Royce luxury cars sped away.

Finally, the devil left!

The madam breathed a huge sigh of relief, it didn't matter, her club was still standing, she could remodel it again tomorrow.

At this moment, the club's door pushed open again, a chill swept in.

Could it be that devil returned?

The madam turned quickly, but in the next second, she relaxed; only three people had entered, without the grandiose scene before.

Jude Crawford was here, accompanied by Butler Thorne and a personal assistant.

The madam looked at Jude Crawford, the man donned in a black coat, exuding a deep, restrained aura with his eagle-like narrow eyes sweeping through the room, full of authority and fierce resolve from years of mingling in the business world.

The madam's eyes lit up; this man was just as handsome as the devil before, quite a match, both far surpassing all the gigolos here, but maybe this man was a bit kinder than the savage devil from before.

"Sir, hello, there was a little accident here, but no worries, please come upstairs, I will call out my prettiest girls," the madam eagerly reopened for business.

Jude Crawford glanced at the madam, then subtly curved his thin lips, "Alright, I'll be upstairs waiting, bring the prettiest girls you have."

Jude Crawford went upstairs with Butler Thorne and the personal assistant, entering a luxurious room.

...

Isabelle Willow was still in the club; it was simple, she hadn't managed to escape earlier.

Chapter 668: Running Into Him Out Looking for Pleasure

Julian Rathborne's men had the place sealed tight, not even a mosquito could get out.

Isabelle Willow returned to her room. She was still worried about Seraphina Linden, so she took out her phone and sent a message to Hayden Crawford.

As soon as she sent it, she heard the voice of that young man by her ear, "Hi, beautiful."

Isabelle Willow turned her head and saw the young man wearing cat ears and shaking his hips in front of her.

"..."

Looking at the young man's face, which was strikingly similar to Jude Crawford's, Isabelle Willow felt as if she was watching Jude Crawford wearing cat ears and shaking his hips in front of her. The scene was simply... unbearable to watch.

Jude Crawford would never do such a thing. A deep, noble titan of the business world like him, this kind of thing was beneath him.

Isabelle Willow suddenly remembered the first time she met Jude Crawford many years ago.

At that time, she was still studying. One day, the school was buzzing, and all the students were rushing to the auditorium, talking excitedly,

"Hurry up, Jude Crawford is here!"

"Today Jude Crawford is invited to give a lecture at our school. I finally have the chance to see the first business elite of Aethelgard!"

"I've heard he's so handsome, it's infuriating."

Isabelle Willow, by nature cold and indifferent, wasn't intending to join the commotion. She wanted to leave, but a good friend pulled her along, "Yara, let's go and take a look. It's Jude Crawford!"

Isabelle Willow was thus dragged there. That day, it was a sea of people. She stood amidst the crowd, raised her head, and saw Jude Crawford on the podium in one glance.

The young Jude Crawford was in his prime back then. As the eldest grandson of the Crawford family's noble lineage in Aethelgard, he was born a prodigy. He perfectly inherited all the business talents of the Crawford

family, and at 18, he took his first company public in Silicon Valley, his personal wealth rising to the Forbes rich list, and was hailed as Aethelgard's premier business aristocrat.

On that day, Jude Crawford wore a perfectly fitting black suit. He stood tall like jade on the podium, his deep, narrow eyes scanning the room, like an emperor's presence, unparalleled in grace, astonishing all, worthy of reverence.

Isabelle Willow quickly composed herself and dismissed the initial encounter from her mind. She had no interest in the young man, so she left the room.

The young man still didn't know what happened, "Hey, beauty, why did you leave?"

The young man couldn't figure out why he had fallen out of favor.

...

When Isabelle Willow went out, Julian Rathborne had already left with his men, so she could also leave.

Walking along the corridor, a group of girls ran over, "Let's go quickly, the boss is calling for us."

The girls were very excited, "I heard a rich guy wants the prettiest girl in the luxury suite."

"The prettiest girl must be me. Is my lipstick smudged?"

The girls were tugging their skimpy dresses down, showing their curves, clearly all hoping to be chosen.

Isabelle Willow didn't pause her steps. She wasn't surprised by such things; nowadays, many wealthy men enjoyed buying pleasure.

Then the boss lady came, leading the girls to the door of the luxury suite, and knocked, "Sir, the prettiest girls here have arrived."

A few seconds later, a deep, magnetic voice sounded from inside, "Enter."

Isabelle Willow suddenly froze, her steps gradually coming to a halt.

She turned, her cool apricot eyes falling on that luxury suite.

Enter.

Though it was a simple word, the voice was incredibly familiar, so deeply familiar she wouldn't mistake it.

This should be... Jude Crawford!

Why was he here?

Could it be he was the one wanting the prettiest girl here?

The boss lady opened the door of the luxury suite, "Girls, quickly come in."

They all went in, and Isabelle Willow, standing outside, saw the scene inside.

In the luxury suite, the girls stood in a line, under dim lighting, and on the burgundy sofa sat a man, Jude Crawford.

Jude Crawford had taken off his jacket, revealing an inner dark gray shirt and black trousers. He leaned his tall and imposing frame lazily against the sofa, his two long legs elegantly crossed, exuding an aura of superiority and the profound mystery a man of his age should possess.

His personal assistant stood respectfully behind him, while Butler Thorne, wearing white gloves, poured some Gallia vintage red wine into a goblet and handed it to Jude Crawford, "Sir."

Jude Crawford extended his hand to take it, placing one long arm casually over the back of the sofa as he sipped the wine.

Then his deep, narrow eyes glanced at the girls, with a faint look.

Isabelle Willow's pupils shrank; could it really be... him?

Was he here to buy company?

Isabelle Willow wasn't aware of his recent emotional state, but Seraphina Linden mentioned that his current wife is Zelda Willow, and Isabelle knew that Zelda had given him a son. The day that son was born was the day she mourned the loss of her daughter.

Both she and Zelda had been pregnant back then. She was supposed to have a daughter, and Hayden a sister, but...

He wasn't young anymore, over fifty now. Isabelle Willow looked at his chiseled handsome face. Time had given him a richer life experience; his eyes bore fine lines but showed no sign of age, instead exuding an indescribable male charm.

Isabelle Willow hadn't expected to encounter him here, finding him out to buy pleasure.

Did his wife Zelda Willow know about his purchase of pleasure?

"Sir, the prettiest girls are all here; which ones would you like to keep?" The boss lady smiled at Jude Crawford, wondering why this man looked somewhat familiar.

The boss lady hadn't had the chance to meet a man like Jude Crawford before, and if one day she knew that the real Jude Crawford had stood before her, she would be overwhelmed with emotion.

Jude Crawford dispassionately swirled the wine in his hand, watching the red, rich liquid dance in glistening arcs within the translucent glass, "What are your specialties? Tell me about them."

The girls were all dazed by Jude Crawford. A man in his fifties had an aura unparalleled by men in their twenties or thirties, whom they would willingly spend a night with.

"I have a large chest!"

"I have long legs!"

"I have the prettiest face!"...

Isabelle Willow stood outside watching these women vying with each other. They were very excited, looking at Jude Crawford with admiration and anticipation.

And Jude Crawford sat elegantly on the sofa, much like an emperor selecting which concubine to favor for the night.

Isabelle Willow lightly curved her red lips, then turned to leave.

Chapter 669: Abandoning a City for One Person

Isabelle Willow turned around, ready to leave, but at that moment, a familiar deep voice suddenly reached her ears, "Who's outside?"

Isabelle Willow, "..."

Quickly, someone walked out; it was Butler Thorne.

Butler Thorne seemed unaware that Isabelle Willow was outside. As soon as he saw her, he was startled and loudly said, "Madam Yara, why is it you?"

Isabelle Willow, who wanted to leave quietly, "..."

At this moment, steady footsteps approached, and Jude Crawford emerged.

Isabelle Willow lifted her cool almond-shaped eyes and immediately met Jude Crawford's deep, narrow eyes. He was looking right at her.

In an instant, their eyes met, and their gazes exchanged looks.

The atmosphere grew heavy and oppressive.

It was then that Isabelle Willow was the first to break the silence. She gave a faint, gentle smile and greeted, "Hi, Mr. Crawford, long time no see."

Jude Crawford looked at her. So many years had passed - twenty years, in fact. She seemed unchanged but also different somehow.

Those passionate and toxic loves and hates from back then... before she jumped from Jill's balcony, she had cut open her belly with a knife and taken out her child. That night she left, she snuck into his room with a pair of scissors while he was asleep, intending to render him useless.

Now, there were no traces of those days in her elegant features. Time had only added a serene grace and gentleness to her.

Jude Crawford looked at her, his chiseled face as calm as ever, merely moving his thin lips, "You're not dead yet? I thought you had died long ago."

Butler Thorne looked at his master in surprise. His master had searched for Madam Yara for so many years, yet this was the greeting—"You're not dead yet?"

Butler Thorne, "..."

Isabelle Willow actually felt relieved in her heart. She preferred it this way, the cold, distant approach, as if she were a stranger to him.

Isabelle Willow had long stopped thinking about their past. She no longer wished to cross swords with Jude Crawford, mainly because of their son, Hayden.

"Survived by sheer luck, I'm afraid I'll disappoint you, Mr. Crawford."

"Since you're not dead, why didn't you come back?" Jude Crawford's eyes were dark, so dark that they seemed to reflect no light, deep enough to be frightening.

What did he mean by this?

Isabelle Willow looked at him.

"After all, you are Hayden's mother. Over the years, Hayden has missed you a lot." Jude Crawford spoke with a casual tone, as if explaining away his earlier question of why she didn't come back.

Mentioning Hayden Crawford, Isabelle Willow's clear almond eyes quickly became wet with tears. After Serena returned to Alani, the two women had many intimate conversations. Serena would tell her everything, piece by piece, about Hayden over the years.

When Isabelle found out that Hayden had sleep disorders and nearly died from dissociative identity disorder, her heart shattered.

Why didn't she come back?

That was because... she really didn't want to return.

Aethelgard, that place, Jude Crawford, this man, was an ache she could never reach in her life.

Here, she simply couldn't breathe.

Jude Crawford watched her eyes redden, already knowing the answer.

Because he was here, she didn't want to return.

Because of one person, she abandoned a whole city.

Jude Crawford pursed his thin lips, "Where are you going? I'll take you."

He grabbed the car keys.

Isabelle Willow quickly gathered her emotions. She looked at the lavish private room with the lavishly dressed women, then looked back at him, "No need. You can go about your business."

Wasn't he here to indulge? Why suddenly offer to take her home?

It was then that Jude Crawford's thin lips curved into a shallow, mocking smile, "Do you think with my current health I can still be busy? Isabelle Willow, you can't have forgotten the good deed you did to me twenty years ago, right?"

Isabelle Willow's heart skipped a beat. Of course, she hadn't forgotten how she once brandished scissors at him.

At the time, he bled a lot.

But, she didn't know... whether or not he was capable anymore. Listening to his tone now, he seemed to... be incapable.

"Let's go." Jude Crawford strode ahead.

Isabelle Willow watched his domineering figure that allowed no dissent and could only follow along.

...

Isabelle Willow got into the luxury car. Jude Crawford was driving personally, his hand clad in an exquisite watch resting on the steering wheel, movements fluid and natural.

The two remained silent throughout the journey, the atmosphere heavy.

When the luxury car finally stopped, Isabelle Willow was surprised. She had forgotten to say where to go, and he hadn't asked.

Now, faced with the villa in front of her, Isabelle Willow didn't know where he had brought her.

"Mr. Crawford, where is this?" Isabelle Willow asked.

Jude Crawford got out of the car, "My villa."

"... I won't go in, I want to go back..."

"Come in. Hayden should be back soon. He really wants to see you." Without waiting for Isabelle Willow's response, Jude Crawford went straight into the villa.

Isabelle Willow, "..."

When it comes to domineering CEOs, no one can surpass Jude Crawford!

...

Isabelle Willow entered the villa. Jude Crawford was already seated on the sofa, reading a full-English business and financial newspaper. His nonchalant attitude was strangely comforting, avoiding the awkwardness between them.

Isabelle Willow put down her bag, and at that moment, Jude Crawford's deep, magnetic voice came to her ears, "Can you still cook?"

Isabelle Willow turned back to look at Jude Crawford.

Jude Crawford, lowering his handsome eyelids, was focused on his newspaper, without even raising his head, "Hayden's coming back soon. It's late; he must be hungry."

"Yes, I'll cook now." Isabelle Willow immediately went into the kitchen to make dinner for Hayden Crawford.

Only then did Jude Crawford look up, his deep narrow eyes peering through the kitchen's glass cupboards at Isabelle Willow. She had donned a small, floral apron and tied her dark, long hair into a low ponytail as she began washing hands to cook soup.

He watched her profile, and under the warm, dim light, her exquisite profile exuded a serene beauty and homeliness. Jude Crawford couldn't tear his eyes away.

Butler Thorne watched his master, thinking his master was far too scheming. He hadn't even called the young master; how was the young master supposed to come home?

The young master had a company year-end party today and wouldn't be back for dinner.

Butler Thorne also glanced at the newspaper in his master's hands, oh dear, the newspaper was upside down!

After a while, a melodious phone ringtone echoed; it was an incoming call.

It was Isabelle Willow's phone ringing, left in her bag on the sofa.

Jude Crawford set down the financial newspaper, stood up, opened the bag, and took out Isabelle Willow's phone.

Now, a call flashed on the phone screen, the name was Chase Sullivan.

Jude Crawford would never forget the name Chase Sullivan. Chase Sullivan was Isabelle Willow's... first love.

Chapter 670: He Is the One Who Took by Force

Chase Sullivan is a name from the distant past, but for Jude Crawford, it remains vividly in his memory.

Back then, Isabelle Willow was the belle of the city, with countless suitors, but she had long been promised to someone, and that boy was Chase Sullivan.

It was said that Chase and she were childhood sweethearts. Chase excelled at painting, she loved design, and though both their circumstances were bleak, they supported each other through storms, growing together with deep bonds.

If it weren't for that accident, Isabelle Willow would have married Chase Sullivan and become Mrs. Sullivan.

Unfortunately, the Willow family faced an economic crisis, their financial chain broke overnight. On that snowy day, Isabelle kneeled at the Crawford family's door, and Jude Crawford stepped forward in black boots, looking down at her—I could save the Willow family, but you have to marry me, become my Mrs. Crawford.

The lives and destinies of three people thus reversed, and Isabelle married him, becoming his Mrs. Crawford.

Jude Crawford always knew he was the one who took by force.

He also always knew that Isabelle did not like him.

Sure enough, on the big wedding day, the person who entered his bridal chamber was the swapped Zelda Willow, while she eloped with Chase Sullivan. When he rushed to the dock with his men, she was in Chase's arms.

Jude Crawford narrowed his handsome eyes, waking from distant memories, and looked at the dancing words "Chase Sullivan" on the screen, his thin lips curving in a not-quite-smile.

She had just returned from Alani, and already connected with Chase Sullivan so quickly.

Jude Crawford held the phone and walked toward the kitchen.

Isabelle Willow was in the kitchen preparing dinner, when she heard a familiar ringtone—it seemed to be her phone ringing.

Isabelle swiftly turned her head and immediately saw the steady and tall figure at the door, Jude Crawford leisurely leaning against the door frame, one hand in his pocket, holding her phone and watching her.

How was her phone in his hand?

She remembered her phone should have been in her bag, how could he casually mess with her things?

"Your phone rang, there was a call, so I checked it for you. It's Chase Sullivan calling." Jude Crawford extended his hand and handed the phone to her.

Chase Sullivan.

Isabelle Willow quickly looked up at Jude Crawford, wanting to see any change in his emotions when hearing Chase's name again.

That night of the big wedding, he captured her back and took half of Chase's life.

Unfortunately, now Jude's chiseled handsome face showed no emotional fluctuation. His deep eyes quietly watched her, calm and undisturbed.

Isabelle's heart skipped a beat; twenty years had polished Jude's sharp edges. At this age, Jude could perfectly conceal everything, as long as he wished, no one could decipher his thoughts.

But Isabelle knew that under his calm appearance was a storm brewing, a terrifying force capable of destroying everything.

"Give it to me." Isabelle moved forward to take the phone.

But she didn't get it, because Jude suddenly lifted his hand, holding the phone high.

What was he doing?

"Give me the phone." Isabelle stood on tiptoe to reach.

As she leaned closer, Jude unexpectedly lowered his head, getting right in front of her, bringing them sharply closer.

Isabelle was taken aback, not expecting him to act this way. Now, his handsome face was inches away, magnifying in her view.

His warm breath cascaded onto her skin, their breaths mingled, intimate and ambiguous.

Isabelle wanted to move back, and then she heard the man's lowered voice, with a hint of cold laughter, "You've rekindled with Chase Sullivan? To what extent—kissed, hugged, or... been to bed?"

Isabelle's pupils shrank—how could he say that?

This Jude Crawford made her feel a bit dazed and familiar, as if time had reverted to many years ago when he also in this frivolous and gentle stance reached the pinnacle of condescending humiliation towards her.

Isabelle quickly stepped back two steps, her fair face flush red, but her brows remained calm as she faced him, "Mr. Crawford, this is my private matter and inconvenient to disclose. For our son Hayden, we can try to coexist peacefully, but if you continue like this, I'll leave at once."

Jude Crawford glanced at her without saying anything else, handing her the phone.

Isabelle pressed the button, "Hello, Chase Sullivan."

Chase's gentle voice quickly transmitted over, "Isabelle, where are you now, are you free tonight? Let's have dinner together."

Since Jude hadn't left, still leisurely leaning against the doorframe, with a clear intention of listening closely to their conversation, Isabelle walked to the front, turning away and spoke softly, "Chase, I'm not available right now."

Chase quickly detected the anomaly in her voice, "Isabelle, what's wrong, who are you with now? I'll come get you."

"I..."

Isabelle wanted to speak but then heard Jude's deep magnetic voice, "You can let Chase come fetch you, but don't think of seeing our son."

Isabelle glanced back at Jude, only to see him coldly staring at her for a moment before turning around and heading upstairs.

"Isabelle, where exactly are you now? I seem to hear... Jude Crawford's voice?" All these years, Chase hadn't forgotten Jude for even a day.

Isabelle knew Jude had a resolute nature. She didn't want to argue with him, nor let him meet Chase again, "Chase, I'm a bit busy now. Let me talk to you later."

"Isabelle, how could you still be with Jude? He's a demon, have you forgotten? You're very dangerous right now, I'm coming for you."

"Chase, you really don't need to come. That's it, I'll hang up for now." Isabelle ended the call.

After hanging up, Isabelle cooked a few delicious homemade dishes. It's late, but Hayden Crawford hadn't returned yet.

Isabelle removed her apron, then walked out.

Butler Thorne approached, "Madam Isabelle, are you leaving?"

Isabelle nodded, "Yes, Butler Thorne, please inform Mr. Crawford—it's too late, I'll go first, and when there's a chance, I'll meet with Hayden."

Saying that, Isabelle left.

...

Upstairs, in the study.

Butler Thorne reported quietly, "Sir, Madam Isabelle has left."

Jude Crawford sat in the office chair, holding a cigarette between his long fingers, smoke swirling, blurring his handsome face. After a few seconds, he discreetly took out his phone and dialed a number.

He spoke distinctly, "Heavy rain across the city, the heavier the better."