

Substitute B 691

Chapter 691: Mr. Crawford, I'm Starting to Miss You

"Oh, you want to hear the good news first. The good news is that the baby moved today, and just now the baby even gave me a little kick!"

"But, the bad news is that the fleeting beauty on me isn't doing so well, I'm aging visibly every day, Mr. Crawford, I'm going to get uglier and uglier, will you despise me?"

"Of course not, after all, you can't see it, luckily... you're not here."

Saying this, Serena Sterling lifted her hand to brush aside her long hair at her cheek, and as her delicate white fingers ran through it, a large handful of hair came away with her fingertips.

She had started losing her hair.

Serena paused slightly, quickly hid the large handful of hair so he wouldn't see it, reached out to turn off the video, "Mistake, let's do it again."

In the next video, Serena was more than six months pregnant, appearing on camera, but wearing a hat, and in the blink of an eye, the fine lines on her face had deepened into deep wrinkles, she looked like someone in her fifties.

Serena sat on the rattan chair, looking at the camera, she was trying hard to smile, but the light in her eyes was no longer as bright as before.

"Mr. Crawford, long time no see, today I'm wearing a hat because... I shaved all my hair off, I'm bald now, I'm afraid to scare you, so I used the hat to cover it, I originally wanted to cover this face too, but then I thought never mind, Mr. Crawford, even if I'm very ugly now, you must refrain from speaking out!"

"My belly is very big, the babies are all very healthy, they are growing robustly in my belly, Mommy says the boy on the left is very quiet, should be cool and aloof when born, a spitting image of you, while the pair of twins on the right are very lively, always kicking me, should be a spitting image of me, having the babies accompany me every day, I'm very happy."

Just then, the room door opened, and Seraphina Linden's voice came through, "Serena, it's time to eat, you haven't eaten for many days, although you try hard to eat each time, you always eat and then throw up, throw up and then eat, now you can only rely on nutritional injections, Mommy personally cooked a little millet porridge for you, have a taste."

Seraphina walked over, Serena probably caught the scent, and she immediately bent over and threw up, the video was abruptly cut off.

In the next video, Serena was over seven months pregnant, lying in bed, and Seraphina was giving her an injection.

Her sleeve was pushed up, exposing her arm, and her arm was covered with needle marks, bruised and shocking to see.

At that time, Serena had lost so much weight, she was almost skin and bones, but her belly, more than seven months along, was very large, due to the triplets it looked much bigger than those about to give birth, at that time she had aged so much, like a woman in her sixties.

Serena lay on the bed looking at the camera, she was still smiling, but the light in her eyes was gone, "Mr. Crawford, don't worry, the babies are fine, I can't get out of bed now, I have to stay in bed to nurture the babies, with Mommy here, I can definitely hold on until the day they are born, I will definitely bring them into this world safe and healthy."

Saying this, Serena slowly stretched out her hand, her fingertip landed on the lens, she whispered, "Just Mr. Crawford, I think... I start to miss you."

In the next video, Serena was more than eight months pregnant, the video was shot late at night, the light was dim, her face was not clear.

The video opened with a suffocating silence, followed by her suppressed sobs and cries, she said on that end, "Mr. Crawford, I miss you, I really miss you so much."

At that time, she curled herself up in the blanket, her face buried inside, she spoke many words to herself, disjointed.

"Mr. Crawford, you must still hate me, right? Have you already... forgotten me, perhaps you've even started dating... a new girlfriend..."

"That's great, really great, when I designed to leave you, it was to avoid dragging you down, I didn't want to become your weakness, I was already mentally prepared, the moment I let go of such a great Mr. Crawford, those women would definitely fight over you, they would... take my place."

"At first I could bear it, I thought I could, even without you, me and the babies could also... live well, but... at this moment I regret it, Mr. Crawford, I wish you could be by my side..."

"Actually, I'm very scared, scared every day, I don't dare... to tell anyone, it hurts so much, really hurts a lot... I'm aging every day, from twenty years old to thirty... sixty... eighty, I've grown so old that I don't even recognize myself... I can't sleep every night, pain and fear surround me like demons, devouring me... sometimes I even think I won't be able to hold on the next second, I might just die..."

"Mr. Crawford, I admit I'm selfish, I shouldn't have returned to Alani, I should have stayed by your side, no matter if I'm old, ugly, good, bad, I should have let you be with me, I don't want to care about anything, just want... to let you hold me, I want... to lie in your arms every day, entrust myself, the babies, and the future to you..."

"Even if... even if one day I really die, I want... to die in your arms, and not... like now, being so lonely, helpless..."

She kept crying there, later directly breaking into uncontrollable sobbing, the video ended just like that.

The next video, the last video, showed Serena gave birth prematurely.

Serena lay in the delivery room bed, her forehead was covered in sweat, sweat quickly soaked her clothes, both hands tightly gripping the sheets below her, clutching them so hard the sheets were torn.

Seraphina kept wiping her sweat, "Serena, don't be nervous, one baby's head is already out, come, follow Mommy's rhythm and push, we inhale, exhale, inhale..."

Serena quickly caught the rhythm, she gritted her teeth, and with a loud "waah" cry, eldest son Caden Crawford was born.

"Serena, he's born, this is the brother!" Seraphina quickly wrapped little Caden Crawford in a blanket, bringing him to Serena's side.

At that time, Serena was so thin that only skin and bones were left, she laboriously raised her trembling hand and gently touched little Caden Crawford's small face.

At this time, someone nearby exclaimed, "Blood! Blood! Your Majesty, it's not good, Princess is hemorrhaging!"

A large patch of blood gushed out from under Serena, quickly staining the mattress red.

Seraphina quickly put down little Caden Crawford, "Quickly, stop the bleeding!"

Serena reached out, grabbed Seraphina's hand, slowly shaking her head, "Mommy, it's no use, I know I can't make it."

Chapter 692: The Softest Heart, the Hardest Armor

Seraphina Linden's eyes quickly reddened, "Serena, you can do it. You must hold on at this moment."

Serena Sterling forced a difficult and fragile smile, "Mom, it hurts so much, it really hurts. I want to rest a bit..."

Seraphina Linden nodded, "Okay, Serena, once we have the other two babies, we'll take a good rest. Mommy knows you're exhausted."

"Uh...mom, don't stop the bleeding. I feel... all my strength is being drained away, I'm almost out of... out of strength, no time left. Mom, help me deliver the two babies first, okay? I'm begging you..."

Seraphina Linden looked at her daughter, who was so weak she might collapse in the next second, watching her daughter pleading continuously. She lifted her gaze, forcing back the tears in her eyes. She gently stroked the wrinkles on Serena Sterling's face and then nodded, "Okay, then you just focus on giving birth. Leave everything to mom. Mommy will save you."

Seraphina Linden continued the delivery operation. Maybe there was a bond between mother and child, the second baby, Pip, was born smoothly.

Serena Sterling used her last bit of strength to bring little Mimi and Stella into this world.

The three babies were born safe and healthy.

But Serena Sterling also collapsed, bleeding nonstop, from hemorrhage to a blood flood, the heart monitor emitted an ear-piercing "beep, beep, beep" alarm.

"Your Majesty, the princess... is almost gone!" said the female doctor gravely.

Seraphina Linden, wearing her white coat, her eyes were red, but she remained calm. She walked to Serena Sterling's side, bent down, and softly asked, "Serena, is there anything you want to say to mommy?"

At that time, Serena Sterling was weak and on the verge of death, her eyes had begun to scatter. She hurt too much, so much that her whole body was numb.

"Mom," Serena Sterling said, "send... send Caden to Hayden Crawford's side, let Caden stay with him... don't tell him anything, I want... him to be well..."

Seraphina Linden nodded, "Alright, mommy promises you, mom will take care of it."

Serena Sterling turned her head with difficulty, her bright eyes finally landing on the three babies. The tenderness of maternal love was mixed with reluctance as she had not yet seen her babies grow up...

A prolonged "beep" sounded, Serena Sterling closed her eyes, and her heart stopped suddenly.

She stopped breathing.

At that time, Serena Sterling was only twenty years old. She left the person she loved most, her youthful beauty faded, and her body withered. She bore three children in her most difficult years, and at the last moment of her life, she sent her eldest son Caden Crawford across the sea to Hayden Crawford, to give him the longest companionship in place of her. She said she wanted him to be well.

All the videos on this USB finished playing, Hayden Crawford watched from beginning to end without blinking. He didn't dare to blink, fearing he'd miss a moment.

These were her three years, Serena Sterling's three years.

Hayden Crawford never knew she spent these years like this. In his imagination, she should have easily cured her youth, and then lived happily together with Seth Sullivan.

But, the reality was not like that, it was even completely different.

It turned out, she had such a hard time.

Hayden Crawford lowered his charming eyes, concealing the blood red beneath them. He didn't know... he didn't know how he could doubt her like that, misunderstand her. At her hardest time, she buried herself in blankets, calling out his name with suppressed sobs over and over again. She kept saying she missed him, she missed him dearly.

He also didn't know... he didn't know why he blamed her for not returning during those three years. It wasn't that she didn't want to come back, but... she couldn't, she closed her eyes and slept for two years.

Hayden Crawford clutched his large hand, the blue veins on his hand throbbed, as if a sharp knife had been thrust into his heart, constantly stirring, making each breath painful.

At that time, he should have been by her and the children's side.

Why wasn't he there?

If only he had been there, how great would that be?

But unfortunately, time couldn't turn back. Now he realized, these three years, not only he was stuck in place, she was too.

She never left.

He was the lover whom even time couldn't take away.

Now, Hayden Crawford's mind was filled with Serena Sterling's beautiful face. He had only one thought, and that was to find her!

He wanted to tell her, next time she can't make her own decisions like this, it's his responsibility to protect her. She is his weakness, his vulnerability, his soft heart, but also his strongest armor.

From now on, he would guard her and the children!

...

Serena Sterling quickly arrived at The Apex Hotel, she pushed open the room door, Melody Ashworth was already waiting for her inside.

"Serena Sterling, you're here, I didn't expect you'd be this quick," Melody Ashworth chuckled cynically.

Serena Sterling's clear gaze coldly landed on Melody Ashworth's face, "Where is my son? I'm here now, let me see my son first."

"Of course, the little Crown Prince is in the room inside, go ahead and look."

Serena Sterling quickly pushed open the door to the inner room, she immediately saw little Caden Crawford. At that moment, little Caden Crawford was tied hand and foot, lying on the bed, looking completely defeated.

"Caden!" Serena Sterling quickly hugged little Caden Crawford and looked coldly at Melody Ashworth, "What did you do to my son?"

"Serena Sterling, you should ask what your son did to us. This little Crown Prince is too difficult to deal with. We sent many people to capture him, but he hurt them all and nearly escaped. I had no choice but to give him some muscle relaxants, otherwise how could he stay here obediently?"

Melody Ashworth disliked little Caden Crawford, speaking with a hint of fear. Little Caden Crawford was too much like Hayden Crawford, with an aura of domineering arrogance, making him intimidating. She was a bit afraid of little Caden Crawford.

"Melody Ashworth, if anything happens to my son, I won't let you off!"

"I know, actually I don't want to hurt the little Crown Prince either, after all, I plan to be his stepmother in the future. But Serena Sterling, if you don't behave, then any accident to the little Crown Prince would be your own fault. After I marry Hayden Crawford, I'm still young, I can surely give him a few more sons. By then, my son will replace your son as the little Crown Prince, so don't blame me." Melody Ashworth laughed.

Serena Sterling didn't want to bother with this woman who liked to daydream. She checked little Caden Crawford's pulse, it was strong and steady, not seeming like he was hurt, which eased her heart.

At this point, little Caden Crawford slowly opened his eyes, looking at Serena Sterling, he called out, "Mommy~"

Chapter 693: Sending Him to Another Woman's Bed

The little Caden Crawford woke up.

"Caden, are you alright? Don't be afraid, Mommy is here, no one can hurt you." Serena Sterling hugged the little one.

The little Caden Crawford nodded, "Yes, I trust Mommy."

At this moment, Melody Ashworth laughed and said, "Serena, do you know where we caught the little Crown Prince? At the children's playground. Back then, the little Crown Prince was sitting on the side, staring at a mother and child pair. That mother was accompanying her son to ride a rocking horse, laughing happily, and the little Crown Prince seemed very envious."

Serena's heart was suddenly pierced. Caden knew his own background and was envious of other kids because she, as his mommy, wasn't there for him since he was small.

Serena held little Caden Crawford's small face, looking into his large, grape-like eyes, and said word by word, "Caden, I'm sorry, Mommy is three years late."

Little Caden Crawford's pale eyes quickly reddened, "Mommy, I really miss you."

"Yes, Mommy knows, Mommy knows everything. Mommy also misses Caden very much, but for the past three years, Mommy was sick and has been treating it, so she couldn't come back."

"Really?" Little Caden Crawford immediately showed a concerned and anxious expression, "Mommy, what illness did you have? Was it cured?"

"Mommy is already better, so Mommy promptly came back to see Caden. Caden must know, Mommy did not abandon you. Mommy loves you all, loves you very much, so much more than her own life."

Little Caden Crawford stretched out his arms to tightly hug Serena, burying his little face in Serena's embrace, inhaling the soft, fragrant scent on Mommy.

Actually, he was afraid, afraid that Mommy only liked Pip and Stella and not him.

But now he knew, Mommy loved him too, loved him very much.

"Serena, that's enough, I've already given you and your son time to be together, now it's time for you to do things for me." Melody Ashworth impatiently urged.

Serena released little Caden Crawford, "Caden, don't be afraid, rest here a bit, Mommy will handle things and then take you home, alright?"

"Yes, Mommy go ahead." Little Caden Crawford nodded obediently.

Serena got up and left the room.

Melody Ashworth closed the room door, and at this moment, she felt a cold gaze fall upon her. Looking up, she saw little Caden Crawford staring at her.

Now, little Caden Crawford sat quietly on the bed, not at all panicked. He looked at Melody Ashworth with a calm, cold gaze that was more mature and sharp than his age.

Melody Ashworth, being looked at this way, felt her scalp tingling. The three-year-old child who was just spoiling for hugs in Serena's arms suddenly seemed like a different person, making her scared.

It is said that the little Crown Prince of the Crawford family is a high-IQ little psycho. Melody Ashworth suddenly had a bad premonition.

...

Serena looked at Melody Ashworth, "Melody Ashworth, speak, what do you want me to do?"

Because of the last annual party incident, Melody Ashworth was very angry. The true and false Serena Sterling did not play out, instead, she felt like she was being played by Hayden Crawford and Serena Sterling.

She didn't want to be passively beaten anymore, now she wanted to take control.

"It's very simple, I can let you take the little Crown Prince away safely, but you have to send Hayden Crawford to my bed. Tonight, I want to be his woman!" Melody Ashworth proposed her demand.

Serena's long eyelashes trembled a bit, she had pretty much guessed it.

"What, Serena Sterling, are you reluctant?" Melody Ashworth raised an eyebrow.

Serena's bright eyes fell on Melody Ashworth's face, "Alright, I agree with you."

Melody Ashworth didn't expect Serena to agree so readily, she was herself stunned, suspiciously looking at Serena, "Serena Sterling, you wouldn't be up to some trick again, trying to play games with me, would you?"

Serena curled her red lips, "Melody Ashworth, trust those you use, do not doubt those you do not. Since you graciously invited me to join your game, I have no choice but to obey. But now you are doubting again, are you unable to play?"

"Who says I can't play? Serena Sterling, once I get Hayden Crawford into bed and become his woman, just wait to cry!"

...

The Apex Hotel, Presidential Suite.

Serena took out her phone and sent a text message, "Tonight, come to my room, 8806."

8806, her room number.

Message sent successfully, Serena stood at the window, her long eyelashes like butterfly wings quietly lay down...

Half an hour later, the sound of "knock knock knock" came at the door. The rhythm was strong and carried a characteristic composure.

Serena walked over and opened the room door.

Standing outside the door was a tall, handsome figure, Hayden Crawford had arrived.

He wore a handcrafted black shirt and black pants, exuding a clean, slightly indifferent aura, carrying a high-class nobility and disdain.

The warm yellow light at the door etched onto his attractive, sculpted visage, captivating and impossible to look away from.

Hayden Crawford lowered his long eyelids and looked at her, deeply gazing.

Serena just felt his gaze was odd, beneath his seemingly calm gaze there seemed to be brewing intense emotions, ready to melt her.

Last night he was so ruthless, saying there was no going back for them, now what was he up to?

"You should come in first." Serena said.

Hayden Crawford's gaze slowly moved down from her stunning face. She had bathed, wearing a white nightgown, which reached her knees, exposing her two tight, fair legs. She walked barefoot, her feet bare against the carpet.

Noticing his gaze, she curled her ten toes like shells slightly, showing a hint of pink.

She cleared the way.

Hayden Crawford walked in, turning back to close the room door.

"Would you like something to drink?" Serena walked ahead.

However, Hayden Crawford's big hand reached out, directly grabbing her soft waist, pushing her back against the wall.

Serena looked up, surprised, "You, what are you doing?"

Hayden Crawford pinched her soft waist, his handsome face leaning on her long hair, inhaling the clean scent from her hair, "You invited me to your room late at night, and now you ask me what I want to do?"

He hooked his thin lips, his deep, magnetic voice carrying a hint of amusement.

"..."

Serena placed her small hands against his firm chest, attempting to push him away.

Hayden Crawford reached around the back, releasing the hair tie from her hair.

The next second, her long, dark hair came undone and fell down.

Her pure, dark hair scattered around her shoulders, her small, palm-sized face with rosy lips and teeth. Her eyes were the most captivating, glancing around like a wash of jade, a pretty maiden's appearance.

Chapter 694: Serena, It Hurts

Hayden Crawford looked at her at this moment, his mind constantly replaying those videos of her quickly living out her life; she had even cut her own hair.

Not ugly.

She wasn't ugly at all.

In his eyes and heart, she was the most beautiful.

During the two years she slept, she slowly recovered, becoming a whole new person, reborn, Hayden Crawford raised his large hand, his slender fingers weaving through her long hair, affectionately caressing her small face with his rough fingertips, he almost, almost lost her.

Now that she was still standing well in front of him, Hayden Crawford felt this was a gift from heaven, he cherished it greatly.

Hayden Crawford lowered his gaze, his thin lips pressing a gentle kiss on her forehead.

Serena Sterling's heart skipped a beat, what was wrong with him today?

"Hayden Crawford, what's wrong, has something happened?"

"No..." Hayden Crawford left her forehead, his thin lips landed on her long hair, kissing it thoroughly.

Serena Sterling tried to step back, but her slender and beautiful back was already against the wall, with nowhere to retreat.

The clean and refreshing masculine scent from him overwhelmed her.

Serena Sterling felt a bit dizzy, her delicate white fingers grasping at the wall, she knew how much he loved her long hair, back then in Alani when her hair was falling out and even starting to bald, she couldn't keep the long hair he loved most.

Back then, the pain in her heart was immense.

Serena Sterling's bright eyes quickly filled with a layer of crystalline mist, she began to struggle, "Hayden Crawford, let me go, I've taken a shower, why don't you take one too."

"A shower?" Hayden Crawford looked down at her, a faintly playful and sultry smile on his lips, "Why should I take a shower, Serena Sterling, why did you ask me here tonight?"

Serena Sterling, "..."

Though she didn't say it directly, she refused to believe he couldn't hear the meaning behind her words, he was so mischievous, with all sorts of unhealthy thoughts.

Now he pretended not to understand, clearly teasing her, Serena Sterling's exquisite face instantly blushed a suspicious shade of red.

She bit her lip, standing on tiptoe, she quickly kissed his thin lips.

When she tried to retreat, her nape was already held, Hayden Crawford took the initiative, pressing forcefully on her red lips.

Serena Sterling's slender body quickly stiffened.

Hayden Crawford naturally noticed the change in her body, until today, he always thought she didn't like him anymore, that's why she resisted being intimate with him, relying on medication, relying on drunkenness.

Now he knew, when she was having those three kids, she had a near-death experience, gaining psychological shadows, plus she just woke up, her body hadn't recovered.

Hayden Crawford regretted the times he was rough and forceful with her, he had even hurt her.

"Serena," he called her name softly, "Don't be afraid, leave it all to me, I love you."

He said, don't be afraid, leave it all to me.

He also said, I love you.

Serena Sterling's long fluttering lashes trembled in confusion, she couldn't comprehend the meaning in his words, did he know something?

Hayden Crawford kissed her, gentle yet assertive, lingering on her soft red lips, then invading, drawing her to dance with him.

His kiss was affectionate and tender, Serena Sterling didn't close her eyes, just watched him, he focused his handsome gaze immersed in this kiss, every bit revealing his obsession and care for her.

Men are visual creatures, women are emotional creatures, with just a few sweet words and a warm yet forceful kiss, he quickly melted her tense body, softening into his embrace.

Hayden Crawford curled his thin lips, he tightly hooked her soft-as-bone body into his arms, merging her into his veins, "Serena, let's take a shower together."

Serena Sterling's small face was red enough to bleed, "No, you go alone, I'll wait for you in the room."

"Ha," Hayden Crawford let out a low laugh, his deep gaze fixed on her eyes, half-smiling, "I said, take a shower together."

His words were concise and commanding, leaving no room for rebuttal.

Serena Sterling's palm-sized face was a mix of red and white, her watery eyes glared at him with shame and annoyance.

Melody Ashworth was now hiding in the closet, just waiting for her to turn off the light, then she'd switch places.

But Hayden Crawford seemed to know something, refusing to cooperate, giving no chance for Melody Ashworth to step in.

Hayden Crawford raised his hand, his large palm running through her dark hair, gently holding it.

To others, it seemed like he was just being intimate with her, but Serena Sterling was startled because she knew he had pressed the listening device in her hair.

That tiny listening device was hard to see with the naked eye, his casual gesture held it directly in his palm.

The person listening on the other end should now hear some static.

"Serena, from now on, you don't need to worry about anything, you just need... to accompany me in the shower."

He cornered her against the wall, speaking lowly.

Serena Sterling's bright eyes suddenly shrank, even her pushing stopped, he really knew everything.

Serena wanted to speak, but Hayden Crawford had already released her, the next moment everything spun, she was already lifted horizontally.

The two entered the bathroom.

In the bathroom, Serena Sterling was placed under the shower, not prepared mentally yet, she wanted to run.

But Hayden Crawford's slender fingers suddenly pressed on her radiant shoulder, pushing her back.

She was pinned against the wall and his firm chest, Hayden Crawford looked down at her, a cold and evil aura of aggression spilling from his long brows, "Undo my belt."

What?

"..."

Serena lifted her foot, kicking him.

Hayden Crawford quickly furrowed his heroic brows, lowly saying, "Serena, it hurts."

He actually said it hurt.

Hayden Crawford was the pride of heaven, a domineering CEO, who wouldn't shed blood or tears, but after a few kicks from her, he actually said it hurt.

Perhaps a bit of a spoiled tone.

Serena was so mad she bit his firm shoulder.

Hayden Crawford let her bite, and then pulled her into his embrace, it hurt, hurt too much, never had anyone made him feel such pain.

Serena bit enough, then reached out to unbuckle his belt.

But she rarely unbuckled a man's belt, and her action was too rushed, she couldn't unbuckle it, "You do it yourself."

Hayden Crawford looked at her, her skin creamy white like a newly bloomed rose, slender neck delicate, bone frame slender, just looking at her could arouse a man's desire to conquer and ravage.

His deep eyes tinged with red, "Little greedy one, in such a hurry, I'll give it to you now!"

"Swish" he forcefully pulled his belt open.

...

It was late at night.

Melody Ashworth was still hiding in the closet, waiting for Hayden Crawford to shower, and then she'd replace Serena Sterling, but she waited and waited and no one came out!

Chapter 695: Hayden Crawford's Stamina Is Off the Charts

Melody waited from evening till late night, uncertain about the hours passing by, as Hayden Crawford and Serena Sterling stayed inside the bathroom without coming out.

Melody was seething with rage, almost spitting blood, as the man she loved the most was frolicking with another woman just a door away.

In her heart, Hayden Crawford was born a king, carrying an imperial gaze within his domineering aura. His ascetic demeanor held such restraint that even with a face identical to Serena's, Melody felt he was indifferent to her sexually, thinking he might be frigid.

But she was wrong.

Terribly wrong.

He enjoyed the matters between men and women, greatly enjoyed them.

At this moment, sounds came from outside as Hayden Crawford carried Serena out from the bathroom.

His low, alluring voice reached her ears, "Serena, rest for a while, I'll go take a shower."

Hayden Crawford went back inside the bathroom.

Finally, everything stopped, and it was her turn to act.

Melody's limbs were numb; the hours hiding in the closet felt like a slow torture, as her heart burned every second with twisted jealousy and hatred.

She gently opened the closet door.

Serena Sterling was already up, dressed, with her long black hair damp and wrapped around her small face and delicate neck. Her soft skin glistened with a thin layer of sweat, radiant and translucent. Her fresh brows and eyes emitted a weakened charm and nourished allure, extraordinarily captivating.

Melody glared at her maliciously, whispering, "Serena Sterling, you're too much. Tonight, we agreed I'd be Hayden's woman, but you got there first."

Serena was weak all over, even her voice lazily seductive, "Tonight, we agreed you'd be Hayden's woman, so here's your chance."

"You...!" Melody clenched her fists tightly, "Hayden played with you so crazily, staying for hours. What if he's too exhausted later?"

Melody was truly angry; no matter how strong a man's stamina is, there's a limit. Hayden seemed to have spent all his energy on Serena this evening; what would he have left for her?

"I really can't help you with that." Serena turned to leave.

Watching her delicate back, Melody snapped harshly, "What are you pretending? Didn't Hayden handle you submissively? I heard you scream several times!"

...

Serena went to another presidential suite, standing before the vanity, she reached out to undo her outer clothing, revealing the slip and tender skin underneath.

Now her pretty white skin was covered with kiss marks.

Those kiss marks descended from her delicate pink neck, stretching down until they disappeared beneath the slip, enough to turn faces red.

Standing alone at the vanity in the bathroom, Serena gazed at her reflection, her delicate face flushed with charming allure, full of springtime vibes.

She took off the slip, then entered the bathtub.

The warm milky rose petal water enveloped her body, washing away all the stickiness and discomfort, and her trembling legs and sore, powerless body slowly felt relief.

Serena slowly extended her slender arms to hug herself; Hayden was truly terrible, always finding ways to deal with someone.

Due to childbirth, her stiff and dull body softened like water; the few scoldings from Melody earlier she had to endure.

Now, what was he doing with Melody in that room?

Serena chose to trust him; since he said not to worry, she obediently did nothing, believing he had his plan.

Melody and Consort Willow had been prancing around too long; it was time to take them down together.

...

The next morning.

Serena had just stepped out of her room when she encountered a familiar person in the corridor, Melody.

Melody wore a pink dress, soft and charming; after not seeing her for a night, she seemed like a peach soaked in honey, flushed with tempting allure.

"Serena Sterling, what a coincidence." Seeing Serena, Melody quickly showed a smug smile.

Serena halted her steps.

Melody walked over, laughing softly, "Serena, thank you so much. Last night, I spent a passionate time with Hayden, I'm already his woman."

Serena's expression showed no fluctuation as she looked over Melody.

Melody appeared charming like a blossom, evidently pampered by a man.

Did Hayden truly spend the night with her?

Serena softly curled her lips, "Melody, then let me congratulate you."

"Serena Sterling, you don't believe me, do you? Hayden's stamina was off the charts. I initially thought he'd be too tired, but surprisingly, last night he was passionate and did it with me twice, then held me till dawn."

As she spoke, Melody handed over a USB stick to Serena, "Here, you can see for yourself."

Melody twisted her waist triumphantly and left.

...

Inside the room.

Serena looked at the USB stick in her hand; Melody hadn't explicitly stated what it was, but she guessed it was likely a video of Hayden and Melody in bed last night.

Melody did it deliberately, intentionally showing it to her.

Though Melody had held back for so long, finally proving herself was understandable.

Should she watch it?

Serena inserted the USB stick into the laptop, and soon a video popped up.

On the room's big bed, Hayden and Melody were entwined together.

The room's lights weren't turned off, clearly showcasing Hayden's handsome, sculpted features.

It was him.

Serena's bright eyes suddenly contracted; initially, she considered many possibilities, perhaps he'd use a stand-in...

But it wasn't.

In the video, Hayden pressed on Melody, with her clinging to his neck, kissing and excitedly calling, "Hayden, I'm so delighted by you."

Hayden lowered his head, kissing Melody.

Serena fast-forwarded, indeed as Melody claimed, they did it twice, then Hayden cuddled with Melody till dawn.

Did he really choose Melody?

Serena remained seated on the sofa, delicate fingers pressing buttons, re-watching the video...

...

This time Melody got her wish, so she released little Caden Crawford.

Little Caden Crawford's identity was extraordinary; Melody dared not harm him, not even touch a hair. Otherwise, his grandparents and maternal family would storm in, causing a colossal uproar.

Serena brought little Caden Crawford out of the hotel, when he said, "Mommy, look, Daddy's here~"

Chapter 696: Wipe My Pants Clean

Serena Sterling raised her gaze and saw two people walking ahead, Hayden Crawford and Melody Ashworth.

Hayden Crawford was dressed in a tailored black suit, tall and striking. His inherent aura of authority made him stand out and dazzle even amidst a sea of people.

Melody Ashworth wore a long dress, holding onto his strong arm as they walked out of the hotel together.

"Caden, Mommy has some things to take care of, so can you head home first? Once Mommy's done, I'll play with you," Serena stroked little Caden Crawford's small head.

Little Caden Crawford nodded obediently, "Okay, Mommy, I'll head home first then."

The Crawford family's car had arrived, and little Caden Crawford climbed into the car, departing.

Watching little Caden Crawford leave safely, Serena felt a heavy burden lift from her heart.

She reverted back to Cherie's appearance, after all, Melody Ashworth was still parading around with her face.

The charade of the real and fake Serena Sterling was finally coming to an end. Serena stood gracefully in the autumn wind, her bright eyes calmly fixed on Melody Ashworth.

Melody Ashworth felt the gaze from afar, she looked up and met Serena's clear eyes, which were both discerning and drifting. Serena was looking at her with composure, the breeze ruffling her dress. Even without her stunning looks, Serena now was like a gem touched by dust, still effortless and ethereal.

It's said that women aren't frightening, except for beautiful women, and even more, those who are both beautiful and have presence. Serena was one of these.

Melody Ashworth deeply knew the difference between her and Serena, but recalling her night with Hayden Crawford, she proudly greeted, "Little maid, morning."

"Morning," Serena grinned lightly and then looked at Hayden Crawford.

Hayden Crawford glanced at her, his gaze indifferent and distant, as if looking at a stranger.

After a night apart, Hayden Crawford seemed to have changed.

Hayden Crawford left with Melody Ashworth, while Serena pondered as she watched Hayden's retreating figure.

At that moment, she felt a deep gaze fall on her face.

Serena turned towards the gaze and saw Corvus, with a subordinate following behind him.

The subordinate raised his head slightly, looking at her.

Serena noticed a strange face, yet... a pair of very familiar deep eyes.

As she tried to look closer, Corvus had already walked away with the subordinate, "Hurry up, Nate."

The subordinate's name was Nate.

Serena pondered over this, just as Melody Ashworth impatiently prodded, "Little maid, what are you daydreaming about? Get in the car; are we supposed to wait for you?"

A stretched Rolls-Royce luxury car had pulled up; Hayden Crawford and Melody Ashworth got in. Serena quickly stepped in to follow and got into the car as well.

...

Inside the luxury car.

Hayden Crawford and Melody Ashworth sat together. Melody Ashworth couldn't help but cling to Hayden Crawford, whispering intimately with him.

Hayden Crawford's demeanor was calm, and he never exchanged glances with Serena.

Serena also remained silent, seated in the back, but she felt a deep gaze lingering on her.

"Little maid, get me a bottle of water," Melody Ashworth instructed from the front.

This luxury car was quite opulent, with several rows of seats at the back. Serena glanced around and saw several bottles of water on the last row.

Serena got up, grabbed a bottle of water, and turned back.

On her way back, the car suddenly swerved. Serena lost her balance, her slender body leaning directly onto a man's lap.

"Sorry..."

Serena attempted to rise, but the bottle in her hand cracked, and the water quickly spilled out.

It splashed onto the man's pants, leaving a wet patch.

Serena raised her eyes and saw it was Nate, Corvus's subordinate.

Nate wore a baseball cap, dressed in ordinary black attire, seated at the back of the luxury car, very low-key.

Now Serena had fallen onto his firm lap, and the posture was suggestive.

"Sorry, I'll clean it up when we get off," Serena said as she got up.

But a large hand reached over, gripping her slender waist, and a deep voice sounded in her ear, "Wipe my pants clean."

Just a few simple words, yet carrying inherent assertiveness.

Serena's long lashes trembled slightly, confirming some of her suspicions.

"Even if I wipe it clean, they can't be worn anymore. I'll buy you a new pair after we get off the car, and you can change then."

"I don't want new pants; I just want you to wipe them clean. Didn't you understand?"

"..."

Serena lowered her gaze to the water stain on his pants, the stain was quite sensitive; he must have done it on purpose.

Serena took out several napkins, wiping over his pants.

Out of the corner of her eyes, she saw Nate's adam's apple move up and down twice, and then a distinct outline appeared on his pants.

Serena's snow-white earlobe quickly turned a light shade of red, and she threw the napkin at his face.

Nate didn't dodge, only chuckled softly, "Why did you throw this at me?"

Serena curled her lips upward, her bright eyes sparkling, "Seems I've seen an old friend."

"What old friend?"

"Just... an old friend who's rich and well-endowed."

Nate's deep eyes hidden beneath the baseball cap suddenly narrowed, a wicked charm spilling from his long brows, "Miss that old friend?"

At this moment, Melody Ashworth came over and happened upon this scene, Serena sitting on a subordinate's lap, their posture suggestive, the air heated.

Melody Ashworth immediately mocked, "Little maid, now Hayden Crawford likes me, doesn't even spare you a glance and you actually come over to flirt with a lowly subordinate?"

Serena truly felt that Melody Ashworth's intelligence needed improvement.

But Melody Ashworth's timing was perfect. If she hadn't come, the man wouldn't know how long he would entangle her.

Serena quickly stood up straight and looked at Melody Ashworth, "I did choose to spend time with this lowly subordinate of yours, even if he's a bit lowly..."

Serena stepped forward and whispered in Melody Ashworth's ear, "He has impressive assets."

This words were quite suggestive, filled with innuendo. Melody Ashworth immediately looked down at Nate's trousers.

His pants were damp, in a sensitive area. Melody Ashworth glanced and her face flushed red.

"How about it? Isn't he more impressive than Mr. Crawford?" Serena smiled brightly.

Melody Ashworth's heart skipped a beat; she had already spent a night with Hayden Crawford, feeling rather satisfied.

Yet, Hayden didn't quite measure up to this subordinate...

Chapter 697: Wedding Attire

Oh my, what was she thinking?

Melody Ashworth quickly snapped out of it, realizing that Serena Sterling had skewed her thoughts.

Melody looked away, gazing at Serena, "I didn't expect you to be so... underneath that pure and adorable exterior."

"So what? I didn't say anything earlier, are you going to blame your unhealthy thoughts on someone else?"

"You!" Melody was at a loss for words.

Having subdued Melody, Serena glanced at Nate again.

Nate was also looking at her, noticing the cleverness and mischief dancing in the girl's bright eyes, as well as the playful malice that teased him. Her gaze was captivating, making hearts itch.

There are countless girls in this world, but interesting souls are one in ten thousand.

She was very charming.

Serena turned with a smile and walked away.

Nate watched her retreating figure, his deep, narrow eyes under the cap roamed freely over her graceful and delicate figure. He licked his dry lips with the tip of his tongue, chuckling softly.

This scene was fully observed by Melody. She noted Nate's gaze wandering over Serena—it was the look of a man flirting with a woman, quite improper.

Melody clenched her fists, seething with jealousy.

Just then, Nate got up to grab some tissues.

Melody watched his tall and upright figure. Even in a simple black shirt and pants, he had a presence of high-end custom-tailoring and the appeal of an international runway model.

A man's aura is more important than his handsome appearance, for aura is an amalgamation of power, money, and status.

Though Nate's face was plain and his status was humble, Melody inexplicably found him to have a powerful and understated presence that was utterly captivating.

Melody recalled the forbidden scene she witnessed earlier, feeling weak all over.

...

Melody returned to her seat, and suddenly Hayden Crawford grasped her hand, "Serena, let's get married."

What?

Melody's heart skipped a beat, her eyes filled with delight as she looked at Hayden, "Marriage? You mean... really?"

Melody never expected Hayden would propose to her. She managed to succeed so unexpectedly.

"Yes, let's get married. I'll give you a grand wedding so you'll marry me in front of everyone and become my Mrs. Crawford."

Melody was overjoyed, almost ecstatic, and she immediately hugged Hayden beside her, nodding eagerly, "Yes, okay, I'll marry! I do! I've been waiting for this day for so long!"

Behind them, Serena frowned slightly at the scene of Hayden proposing such a grand wedding to Melody.

Serena turned her head to look at Nate behind her.

Nate was lowering his gaze, saying something to Corvus, who was looking respectful.

Realizing her gaze, Nate looked up, his familiar narrow eyes landing on her face.

Corvus stepped back, trying to make himself inconspicuous.

Nate looked into her bright eyes and raised his dashing eyebrows slightly.

Serena suddenly felt her face flush, immediately looked away, and sat upright.

She discovered that man's eyes could electrify!

Just then, Melody's voice came from the front, "Where are we going now?"

Beside her, Hayden replied softly, "Since we're getting married, we must custom-make your wedding dress. We're heading to the Tassel House now."

Tassel House?

Hearing these three words, Melody inhaled sharply. The Tassel House was the premier palace for custom-made wedding attire, every gown hand-stitched by countless embroiderers, exquisite and stunning. Every girl dreams of getting married in a Tassel House gown to her most beloved groom.

Melody, once the most noble princess in Westria, was familiar with the Tassel House. On her 18th birthday, she had wanted to wear a custom-made princess gown from the Tassel House, but the reservations are limited globally, and she never got a spot.

Now, since Hayden wanted to custom make a wedding gown for her at the Tassel House, Melody pinched herself twice, realizing this wasn't a dream!

How wonderful!

...

Tassel House.

The extended Rolls-Royce limo came to a slow stop on the lawn, and the Tassel House's attendant respectfully opened the rear door.

Hayden graced this royal private facility, and Master Mani quickly came out to greet him, "Mr. Crawford, hello, who will be custom-making a wedding dress?"

"It's me," Melody said proudly and smugly.

Master Mani looked at Melody, then said, "Alright, please follow me to the inner chamber where you will be measured. I will personally design the wedding dress for you."

Melody once again performed her signature act, flaunting like a peacock, and walked up to Serena. Speaking in a low voice, she said, "Serena, are you dying of envy now? You never thought Hayden would love me this much. I recall you didn't even wear a Tassel House wedding dress when you got engaged to the King of Nine Peaks, but I'll be wearing one to marry Hayden at a grand wedding!"

Serena remained silent, essentially signaling that as long as she was happy. She turned to leave.

But the next second, Serena's steps halted because she suddenly saw a design sketch displayed in the shop window.

On that design sketch was a red wedding gown, blazing like fire, intensely stunning.

"Serena, what do you mean, you..." Melody was about to argue with Serena but quickly saw the design sketch as well, gasping in astonishment.

A fiery red wedding gown with a phoenix coronet and embroidered wedding robe, dazzling to the eyes, with layers and layers like waves of yarn below it, intense yet romantic.

"Master Mani, what is that?" Melody quickly inquired.

Master Mani walked over, "The wedding gown on this design sketch was custom-designed with a phoenix coronet and embroidered wedding robe for the ancestor of Westria to marry the ancestor of Alani. Unfortunately, that union never came to fruition. This gown has since been passed down and is a treasured piece in our Tassel House. After so many years, this wedding gown remains fiery and intense. Everyone who sees it can't help but stop and admire it in awe."

Melody thought the gown was too beautiful. If she could wear this ancient wedding gown at the grand wedding to marry Hayden, how shocking and sensational it would be!

Melody immediately said, "Master Mani, I want this wedding dress. Start making it for me!"

Master Mani quickly shook his head, "I'm sorry, this wedding gown is a prized one-of-a-kind piece. We once mobilized the entire Tassel House workforce, gathering every embroiderer to work day and night to recreate this gown but were unsuccessful."

Chapter 698: The First Lipstick He Gave Her

What, this ancient wedding dress can't be made? Melody Ashworth is really disappointed.

"Alright, I'll go and get my measurements taken." Melody walked into the inner room.

Serena Sterling stood in place, her bright eyes fell on the fiery red wedding dress. So this was the phoenix coronet and embroidered robe prepared by the ancestors of Westria for the ancestors of Alani. It was indeed beautiful. It was definitely the most beautiful wedding dress Serena had ever seen, bar none. Any woman who looked at it would be moved.

At this moment, someone stood quietly behind Serena, and that was Nate.

Nate watched Serena Sterling look longingly at the fiery red wedding dress. He curved his thin lips.

...

Master Mani returned to his office, took paper and pen to design a wedding dress for Melody Ashworth. As he walked through the corridor, someone was already waiting for him ahead.

It was Nate.

Nate, dressed all in black, stood tall and handsome in the dim light. His hands were in his pockets, and the expression on his face was unclear. But his deep and restrained aura was chilling.

Master Mani stopped his steps, "Excuse me, do you have business here?"

Nate's deep eyes faintly fell on Master Mani, and he spoke in a low voice, "I want to order that fiery red wedding dress."

Master Mani hesitated for a moment before quickly refusing, "Impossible, we can't make that fiery red wedding dress..."

Before the words were finished, Nate directly interrupted him, "Get ready, today all the world's top embroiderers will gather here to rush the production of this fiery red wedding dress. You once couldn't complete it even with the entire force of the Lace Pavilion. Now I will marshal the entire globe's resources to make this ancient wedding dress."

Hiss.

Master Mani stiffened, looking at the man before him with shock. He seemed to remember that this man was an assistant, yet his tone was so arrogant, claiming to bring together all top embroiderers worldwide to produce the ancient wedding dress?

"Are... are you kidding me?" Master Mani asked stammeringly.

Nate curved his thin lips into a shallow arc without answering the question. Instead, he said, "Master Mani, if you still can't produce this fiery red wedding dress, then the Lace Pavilion is merely a facade. There's no need to continue. At that time, you'll know whether I'm kidding."

"..."

Nate turned around and left directly.

Master Mani broke out in a cold sweat. Shocked and fearful, he watched the man's departing figure. Who was he, what kind of person was this?

Insane, simply insane, can't provoke, mustn't provoke!

...

Master Mani designed Melody Ashworth's wedding dress; Hayden Crawford was also inside with her.

Serena Sterling stood outside, feeling very bored, looking around.

At this moment, a large hand, with well-defined knuckles, suddenly reached out and handed something to her.

Serena lowered her eyes for a look—it was actually a... lipstick.

Her long eyelashes trembled slightly. She raised her head, and Nate's deep eyes enlarged infinitely in her view.

Nate came and even gifted her a lipstick.

Serena accepted the gift. She had received only-love, unique rings, roses, and such, but had never received lipstick.

"Where did this come from?" Serena asked.

Nate looked at her and curved his lips, "Just bought it, it's for you."

He actually went to buy lipstick.

Serena's face blushed, turning around to leave, "I don't want it; give it to someone else."

But after two steps, Nate chased after her from behind, grabbed her slender arm, and pushed her against the wall.

He handed the lipstick to her, "Don't know what color you like. Try it, let me see if it looks good."

"..." This man!

Is he giving her lipstick, or wanting her to put it on for him?

Serena refused again, "I don't want it!"

Nate's tall and upright figure cast a shadow over her. Then he directly reached out to open the lipstick, one hand pinching her small face, personally applying the lipstick to her.

Manipulated, Serena immediately furrowed her delicate brows, calling out his name lowly, "Hayden Crawford!"

Nate is indeed Hayden Crawford!

The Hayden Crawford currently accompanying Melody Ashworth is a fake!

Nate held her tightly, directly pushing her into the dark corner. He curved his lips faintly, and his deep voice overflowed with indulgence, "Recognize me now?"

Serena looked at him. Even without that handsome face, he still made her heart race.

He's truly mesmerizing.

Serena's lips were red and teeth white as she smiled, teasing him, "Mr. Crawford, you really opened my eyes. Without looks or identity, you can still use your wealth to attract women easily. Melody Ashworth seems interested in you now."

Nate lowered his eyelids, focused on helping her apply lipstick. His tall and upright body pressed down, trapping her between his chest and the wall. He raised an elegant brow and laughed lowly, "Whether I've charmed her interests me not. I only want to know if I've charmed you, hm?"

Serena's face reddened further because last night's intimate scene with him flashed in her mind.

Wondering if she was overthinking—she just felt he slept with her last night, so today he's gifting her lipstick.

Hm, men!

"Mr. Crawford, do you want to hear the truth? The truth is no!"

"Heh." Nate released a deep, enticing laugh from his strong chest, "Did Melody Ashworth give you a USB drive?"

"..."

He knows about that?

Indeed, everything happening now is under his control, planned by him.

"Yes."

"The Hayden Crawford in the USB drive looks exactly like me. Serena, how did you recognize that was not me?"

This...

Serena promptly raised a hand to push him, "I'm not telling you!"

Nate curved his lips, his voice lowered so that only the two of them could hear, "Serena, did you recognize me because of my wealth?"

"..."

Indeed... shameless, narcissist!

Serena lifted her head to look at him, "Don't keep staring at me, or I won't recognize you."

His deep and heated gaze always chased her, impossible to ignore.

Nate's husky voice mingled with laughter, "I just love watching you act prim outside, while your mind screams—strip off her clothes, strip off her clothes!"

Serena quickly covered his thin lips, glaring at him angrily.

Her face fully blushed, like a tender, blooming red rose. Saying that, how could she face others in the future?

Nate decided to stop teasing her. He put away the lipstick, pleased with his handiwork, "Really beautiful."

He's a straightforward man, so the first lipstick he bought was a man-killer color.

Serena's petal-like lips were delicate and pure, well-suited for this charming pink color. Wearing the lipstick made her very alluring, impossible to resist an intimate encounter.

Chapter 699: Stolen Kiss

Watching his satisfied expression and listening to his praise, Serena Sterling felt her cheeks inexplicably burning. He'd been acting weird since yesterday. Could it be he had already forgiven her?

Serena reached out her small hand to press against Hayden Crawford's strong chest, "Hayden, let go first. Melody Ashworth will be out in a moment."

She was bashful, dodging, and weaving, in his embrace, both welcoming and resisting. Nate's eyes deepened as he lowered his head, aiming to kiss her red lips.

Serena dodged everywhere in fright, "Hayden, I have lipstick on my mouth... mmm!"

Nate had already captured her lips.

This time, he consumed all the lipstick on her lips.

"Isn't the lipstick on a woman's lips meant to be eaten by a man?" he asked in a raspy voice.

Serena, "..."

When Melody Ashworth came out, she saw this scene—a tall and upright Nate holding the shy Serena in his arms, kissing her. She immediately fumed, "Handmaiden, Nate, what are you two doing?"

Serena pushed Nate away immediately.

This time Nate didn't force her and just let her go smoothly.

Melody was furious again. She thought after marrying Hayden Crawford, Serena would be in tears, making a fuss, and looking miserable. But who knew Serena had such charm, finding joy so quickly.

Melody also sharply noticed the lipstick, presumably a gift from Nate to Serena.

They say when a man gives a woman lipstick, it means he wants... a kiss.

Nate was just a subordinate, likely without much money. The lipstick probably cost him quite a bit of his salary.

"Well, you two, a subordinate and a handmaiden, dare get close in broad daylight behind your master's back. Do you not know the meaning of propriety and decency?"

Serena's face was bright red, but she didn't look at Melody; instead, she glanced at Nate beside her, "Look, she's scolding you."

After speaking, she left.

Serena just walked away like that.

Melody prepared to chase after her, but then she felt a chilling gaze fall upon her. Looking up, she saw Nate with one hand in his pocket, those deep, narrow eyes quietly watching her.

His gaze was calm and steady, but within lay two small abysses, making her feel that a mere look would draw her soul in, perilously.

Melody felt a shiver run up her spine and dared not move.

At this, Nate retracted his gaze lightly and was about to leave.

Melody didn't know what was wrong with her, being frightened by a lowly subordinate. Now she looked at Nate with resentment; this Nate was so indifferent and cold to her but passionate as fire towards Serena.

How was she any less than Serena?

Just a subordinate; if she put her pride aside, she didn't believe she couldn't win him over!

Melody quickly stepped forward, raising her hand to her forehead, pretending to be unwell, "Oh, my head feels so dizzy, Nate, help me quickly."

Melody's body directly slanted toward Nate's embrace.

With beauty falling into his arms, she initiated the embrace. Surely Nate wouldn't resist?

Melody, while pretending to fall, curled her lips in a smile, thinking that Nate, with a body like an international supermodel, must be rather comfortable to lean into, hehe~

Melody waited for Nate to catch her, but soon, with a "thud," she got a close encounter with the ground.

She fell directly onto the ground.

A sharp pain struck fiercely, bringing tears to her eyes, leaving her utterly embarrassed.

What was going on?

Melody looked up at Nate; when she had fallen, Nate had stepped aside so she didn't even touch a corner of his clothes.

Outrageous!

Melody felt she had fallen from heaven to hell, looking at Nate with embarrassment and anger, "Nate, you!"

Nate glanced down at her and then turned to leave.

"..."

Melody was so angry she almost spat blood, finding this Nate to be incredibly arrogant.

A mere subordinate, yet his attitude was loftier than the master's!

...

Leaving the Liu Su Pavilion, Hayden and Melody sat in a luxury car and drove off, while Serena and Nate sat in the car behind.

Nate lowered his eyes, focused on the file in his hand, while Serena, feeling bored and having not slept well the previous night, closed her eyes and fell asleep.

Nate looked up to find her little head nodding off like a pecking chick.

At that moment, the luxury car swerved tightly on a curve, and her delicate body, due to inertia, leaned directly against him.

Nate quickly discarded the file, opened his arms, and caught her falling body.

Unlike the artificial fragrance from Melody, Serena's body emitted a clean and sweet maiden scent.

Her body was soft, almost bonelessly so, and Nate embraced her, seating her beside him.

Serena didn't wake at all; her rosy lips parted as she murmured something before drifting back into sleep.

Like a little pig.

Nate picked up the file, gazing downward.

At this point, his broad shoulder softened as her small head leaned upon it.

Her breath, sweet and fragrant, puffed against his neck.

The words on the file faded from his view, her lingering scent engulfing his nostrils, so Nate simply put down the file.

He looked down at the small face resting on his shoulder.

Her long, delicate lashes lay quietly like little fans, her rosy mouth slightly ajar, revealing her pearly teeth.

The memories of last night slowly resurfaced, igniting the blood within him with a "whoosh."

The world wasn't short of women, but he favored only her.

Nate lowered his head, gently capturing her rosy lips.

Serena was dreaming.

She dreamt she was eating cotton candy, sweet and soft, delicious and delightful.

She greedily extended her little tongue to lick it.

Nate gasped, and what started as a light peck, she suddenly engaged in actively.

She ran her tongue over his sexy, full lips as if nibbling her favorite cotton candy.

They had known each other for a long time, and when it came to kissing, she was always passive, but this time she took the initiative for the first time.

The file on his lap fell onto the carpet as Nate held her small face in his large hand, gently responding to her.

He kissed her with great tenderness.

At the front, Corvus was driving. Through the rearview mirror, he caught sight of the classified documents lying discarded on the carpet and his master cradling the sleeping Serena, locked in a kiss.

Corvus instantly flicked his gaze back, not daring to look anymore.

When Serena got out of the car, she stretched, thinking she had slept wonderfully, yet her small mouth was swollen and numb.

"Eh, was my mouth stung by a bee?" Serena muttered to herself in confusion.

Corvus' eyes darted away. How could he tell Serena it wasn't a bee sting but... her master stealing a kiss?

Chapter 700: Hayden Crawford and Serena Sterling's Grand Wedding

As the wedding day drew closer, Melody Ashworth grew more complacent, calling Consort Willow, "Mother Consort, everything is going smoothly now. I'm going to marry Hayden Crawford, and when I expose his true identity, I'll be the queen, respected by all."

Melody Ashworth never forgot her mission; she was destined to be a queen.

Consort Willow paused briefly and cautiously said, "Melody, I feel like everything is going too smoothly, which makes me uneasy. How has Hayden been treating you lately? You must tell Mother Consort honestly."

Melody blushed slightly, responding shyly, "Mother Consort, Hayden has been treating me very well lately."

"Really?"

"Of course, we're practically living together. Several times I've even woken up in his arms."

Melody's implication was clear; she and Hayden had shared intimate moments numerous times—such things couldn't be faked.

Consort Willow quickly smiled, "Melody, that puts my mind at ease."

"Mother Consort, we still have Cherie under control. I've tightly gripped Hayden's heart. After the wedding, we'll get rid of Serena Sterling and Cherie together, eliminating any future threats!" Melody's eyes glinted with a malicious resolve.

Consort Willow nodded, "I think the same. Melody, just focus on becoming Hayden Crawford's bride!"

...

In a blink of an eye, the wedding day arrived.

This grand wedding was held at The Louis Estate, with signs for the groom and bride hung in the banquet hall—Groom: Hayden Crawford, Bride: Serena Sterling.

Melody was momentarily stunned upon seeing these signs; today was supposed to be her wedding with Hayden Crawford, yet the bride's sign bore Serena Sterling's name.

Everyone knew today was Hayden Crawford and Serena Sterling's wedding!

Serena Sterling was about to become Mrs. Crawford!

It was only then that Melody realized she had always been a shadow of Serena Sterling, a deeply unsettling realization, like she was merely attending their grand wedding.

Melody quickly dismissed these odd thoughts; she had just awoken in Hayden's arms this morning—his tenderness couldn't be a lie.

Someone like Hayden Crawford wouldn't be intimate with a woman he didn't like.

Melody entered the bride's dressing room and donned the bespoke wedding dress from the Fringed Palace.

The wedding dress was adorned with flowers and diamonds. The makeup artist exclaimed, "Wow, Miss Sterling, you look absolutely stunning, the most beautiful bride in the world tonight."

Melody twirled in front of the mirror, holding up her dress, and the flower-and-diamond-embellished gown made her look as noble and beautiful as a blooming peony—truly breathtaking.

Today was the day of her grand wedding with Hayden Crawford; she was going to marry him and become Mrs. Crawford!

Melody smiled triumphantly, finally getting her way.

She was the one who smiled last.

She had won.

Serena Sterling was defeated by her.

Ha.

Haha.

Just then, the makeup artist exclaimed excitedly, "Miss Sterling, look, Mr. Crawford is here, the groom has arrived!"

Melody stood at the window, slyly lifting the curtain with her finger. Outside was a sea of flowers, and Hayden Crawford's tall, handsome figure immediately came into view.

Today, Hayden wore a handmade black suit, perfectly pressed without a crease, with his neatly cut hair styled upward in a side part, revealing his sharply defined features—he was breathtakingly handsome.

A few executives were speaking with him, but with one hand in his pocket, he listened with an aloof elegance and an air of cold and untouchable nobility.

Melody's eyes were filled with deep admiration for this cold, aloof, noble, and overwhelmingly powerful man; she had fallen for him at first sight.

Today, she finally walked by his side.

She became the woman of the king.

Melody sighed with relief just as Hayden lifted his gaze, those deep, narrow eyes looking over at her.

When their eyes met, Melody felt shy, while Hayden seemed cold and indifferent.

Melody's heart skipped a beat; why was Hayden looking at her so coldly when he was so tender this morning?

In the blink of an eye, Hayden seemed like a different person.

Was it just her imagination?

Then someone entered, "Bride, the auspicious time has arrived, you can go now."

Melody dismissed her doubts, feeling she was overthinking.

Hayden was treating her well now, and Cherie was still under their control, and Serena wouldn't dare cause trouble. Everything was proceeding smoothly according to plan. Today, she just needed to beautifully marry Hayden, making all women in the world envious.

Besides, Hayden was naturally so cold and heartless; it was perfectly normal.

Melody smiled perfectly, "Alright, I'm coming."

She walked out.

Just then, a melodious ringtone sounded; Melody had received a call.

Unfortunately, she had already left, leaving her phone behind.

On the phone's screen, the word "Consort" flashed—Consort Willow was calling.

With no answer, Consort Willow called a second, third time... It must've been something very important and urgent she needed to convey to Melody.

However, Melody was destined not to receive this call, and the melodious ringtone echoed in the empty dressing room again and again.

...

Melody arrived at the wedding, surrounded immediately by socialites and noblewomen who nearly sang her praises to the heavens,

"The bride looks truly beautiful today."

"The bride is now a woman of great fortune, marrying into the world's top financial family, becoming the first lady. The bride must lift us up in the future."

Melody smiled, feeling she owned the world at that moment. Just then, she spotted Hayden and quickly approached, "Hayden..."

She tried to take Hayden's strong arm.

But Hayden avoided her, not allowing any contact.

Melody's hand froze awkwardly in mid-air, infinitely embarrassed.

This scene was noticed by all the socialites and noblewomen, whose expressions changed as they whispered to each other,

"What's going on, Mr. Crawford wouldn't let the bride touch him?"

"I noticed Mr. Crawford isn't smiling at all today; he seems unhappy."

Melody was utterly bewildered, clueless about what Hayden was doing. With everyone watching, he had caused her to lose face and be unable to recover.

"Hayden," Melody quickly forced out an awkward smile, "I think the time is right, the wedding can start."

Melody had a vague sense of foreboding and was urging the wedding on.