

Substitute B 751

Chapter 751: Henceforth the King No Longer Attends Morning Court

Serena Sterling lifted her small palm-sized face to look at him. He was still asleep, the soft bangs on his forehead dispelling his usual sharp and stern look, making him appear handsome and gentle.

Serena felt a small joy in her heart. How wonderful it was to wake up in the arms of the person she loved most in such a morning.

She slowly raised her small hand, the slender white fingertip falling gently on his sword-like eyebrows, brushing softly over his high nose bridge.

Just then, a large hand suddenly reached over and grabbed her soft, boneless hand. Hayden Crawford opened his eyes.

Serena hadn't expected him to suddenly open his eyes and didn't have time to look away. Hayden instantly caught her gaze with his, her eyes full of love for him.

"Mr. Crawford, you're cheating, you must have been awake already?" Serena tried to pull her hand back, feeling a bit embarrassed being caught stealing a glance at him.

Hayden held her with one arm, his heart soft and tender, thinking about how many mornings she hadn't woken up in his arms.

He placed her soft white hand near his lips, giving it a gentle kiss before pulling her tightly into his embrace, "I just woke up, don't move, let me hold you and sleep a little longer."

He closed his eyes again.

Serena curled her red lips, "Mr. Crawford, the sun is already high up, get up quickly, don't be lazy."

Hayden buried his handsome face in her long hair, rubbing gently, "I now understand the lament of Emperor Xuanzong, the night is short, and from now on the emperor no longer attends the morning court."

"Mr. Crawford, you dare to imitate Emperor Xuanzong, but I wouldn't dare to be Yang Guifei, who made all the other beauties in the palace pale in comparison." Serena laughed.

Hayden held her, unwilling to let go, when a melodious phone ring broke the moment, a call was coming in.

"Mr. Crawford, your phone kept ringing throughout the night, now it's starting again in the morning, you're really busy."

Hayden furrowed his sword-like brows and reached out to pick up the phone from the nightstand; it was a call from Corvus.

Corvus was his trusted aide and knew he and Serena came to the hotel last night, so he wouldn't call unless something was wrong.

Just then, Serena reached out and pushed Hayden away, sitting up, "Mr. Crawford, answer the call quickly. If my guess is correct, something must have happened to Lillian, calling you to play the hero to save the beauty, since you were missed last night."

As the fragrant softness in his arms disappeared, the drowsiness in Hayden's eyes also started to fade away. He pressed his lips and answered the call.

"Hello, Master, it's not good, Caroline Sloan is in trouble." Corvus's voice quickly came through.

Since Hayden hadn't hidden anything and turned on the speakerphone, Serena also heard Corvus's words. Her clear eyes glanced over, as if saying, see, I was right, wasn't I?

Hayden, "..."

"Caroline's parents have come over, asking her for money, and they threatened to send her back to Hugo Woods. Caroline refused, so she ran to the rooftop on the ninth floor, threatening to jump. Master, should you come over and take a look?" Corvus asked.

Hayden was silent for a few seconds, "Got it, I'll head over in a moment."

He ended the call.

Serena had already gotten up and entered the bathroom. Hayden followed her inside, Serena handed him the toothbrush with toothpaste on it, "Mr. Crawford, quickly brush your teeth and freshen up. If you're late, Lillian might jump."

Hayden took the toothbrush and said blandly, "Don't worry, without me there, Caroline won't jump."

Serena never doubted Hayden's ability to see through pretense, but she was curious why Hayden kept Caroline around.

"Mr. Crawford, are you really not going to tell me the story between you and Lillian?"

Hayden looked at her clear eyes. Should he tell her, about that girl many years ago in the snowy cold?

Hayden didn't dare, because she was too smart and decisive. If she knew he had a past with another girl, she would definitely be unhappy. She had already said her eyes couldn't tolerate any grains of sand.

She was already cold to him enough; Hayden didn't want to risk losing her affection completely.

"Serena, just give me a little more time, I need to find out something."

Since he didn't want to say, Serena didn't press him, "Alright then, but later let's go to the rooftop together and have a look. Lillian is performing the full act of crying, making a scene, and threatening to jump off."

...

On the ninth floor's rooftop, Hayden held Serena's small hand and walked up, where many people had already gathered, watching the commotion.

Caroline stood on the balcony in a white dress. She already looked frail, and with the strong wind, it seemed like she could be blown off at any moment.

Caroline's parents had come from the countryside, both wearing flashy fur coats, their eyes filled with dirtiness and greed.

Seeing Caroline precariously perching above, her parents were quite anxious; they didn't want to lose their cash cow.

"Lillian, let's talk this over calmly. It's dangerous up there, come down quickly. Your mom and dad love you, this family can't do without you."

"Yeah, your brother found a girlfriend, and her family is asking for tens of thousands in dowry. We came over to ask you for help this time."

"Lillian, it's not mom and dad forcing you, Hugo Woods treats you well, why are you making trouble with him, listen to us and go home quickly, live a good life with him in the future."

Caroline looked at her parents with red eyes, shaking her head frantically in anguish, "I don't want to, I don't want to go back. You don't know how Hugo treats me, did he promise to give you money again?"

"Well..." Her father gave an embarrassed smile, "Lillian, Hugo is our son-in-law. It's right for him to give us some cash."

"Lillian, I heard from Hugo that you met a very wealthy man outside. Is it true? Is this man richer than Hugo?" Her mother's eyes gleamed, already considering switching suitors.

Her father quickly pulled at her mother, "What do you know, all those wealthy men outside are old and have families with children. Lillian can only be... their mistress, and mistresses don't get money, we'll have no money to spend."

Her mother disagreed, "From what I heard, mistresses are the ones with the most money, as long as they serve those men well, they can count money until their hands are tired."

"Really?" After discussing the matter, the couple looked eagerly at Caroline, "Lillian, is that wealthy man good to you? Where is he? You should invite him for a meal, let us get to know him well."

Chapter 752: I'm Sorry, I Was Being Selfish This Time

Caroline Sloan looked at Father and Mother Sloan with extreme disappointment, "Mom, Dad, what do you take me for, a commodity to be sold at a price?"

Compared to the greedy faces of Father and Mother Sloan, Caroline Sloan resembled a delicate flower swaying in the wind, prompting a strong urge in others to protect her immediately.

"Lillian, what you're saying... We raised you, and it's time for you to be filial to us. Besides, didn't you find a wealthy man yourself? What's wrong with us wanting to meet him?"

Caroline Sloan clenched her small fists tightly. As she moved, her heels were already hanging in the air, causing the onlookers to gasp in shock.

But she was unaware of the danger she was in. Her watery eyes revealed deep despair, "I won't let you meet him. He's my big brother. I'd rather die now..."

Caroline made a gesture as if to turn and jump off. The onlookers were just about to stop her when she paused, lifting her gaze quickly to land on Hayden Crawford. She seemed to be overwhelmed with grievances, her nose turned red, and large tear drops fell down as she choked, "Big brother..."

Hayden Crawford had been there with Serena Sterling the whole time but had remained silent. Now, as soon as he was called out, everyone's eyes "shoo" turned to him.

Father and Mother Sloan looked at Hayden Crawford, their mouths agape with shock, incredulously saying, "Li...Lillian, is he the wealthy man you found?"

Father and Mother Sloan, who were extremely greedy and loved money the most, had met several wealthy people, but those people were worlds apart from Hayden Crawford, the head of the world's top financial group.

They scrutinized Hayden Crawford several times from top to bottom. His luxurious custom-made fabric and the expensive steel watch on his solid wrist made his entire attire worth millions – it was all money!

Hayden Crawford's deep eyes swept over Father and Mother Sloan and Caroline Sloan lightly. He didn't immediately respond to Caroline but instead squeezed Serena Sterling's soft little hand tenderly with his warm gaze, "It's windy on the rooftop, are you cold?"

Serena Sterling shook her head, "I'm okay."

Hayden Crawford raised his distinctly jointed fingers and took off his coat, draping it over her delicate shoulders.

His coat was so large that it wrapped around her slender body, leaving only a small head out. His skillful fingers fastened the buttons for her, "Stand here and don't move."

"Got it, you go ahead."

Only then did Hayden Crawford stride his long legs forward, walking towards Caroline Sloan. He stood tall and straight, his eyes falling on Caroline's face, "It's dangerous there, come over here."

Caroline Sloan's tears seemed endless, falling down with immense grievance, "Big brother, don't bother with me. I know Sister Serena doesn't like me and might misunderstand. I don't want to put you in a difficult position."

Suddenly being called out, Serena Sterling, "..."

Why does she feel like the big villain here?

Hayden Crawford's gaze didn't waver, his voice was flat without any fluctuation, speaking in a deep tone, "Serena Sterling is my woman, and you, you're nothing, so she won't misunderstand, and I won't be troubled."

Caroline Sloan, "..."

Caroline Sloan was dumbfounded, looking at Hayden Crawford in front of her in shock. Does he... does he even know how to comfort someone? How to talk?

Is he here to save her?

Does he think she's jumping too slowly and wants to give her a push?

Caroline Sloan's hand hanging by her side instantly clenched into a fist. In her watery eyes flashed a hint of malicious darkness, remembering the humiliation Hayden Crawford had subjected her to by calling her outside the hotel room last night.

But did Hayden Crawford stop humiliating her? No!

"Big brother, then I'm relieved. I'm really afraid of implicating you. I come from a bad background, and life's so suffering that living has no meaning. Just let me die." Caroline Sloan acted as if she was about to jump again.

At this moment, Hayden's cold voice came from behind, "My patience is limited. If you insist on jumping, I will respect your decision. I will have someone collect your body."

"..." Caroline Sloan stood frozen on the balcony, chaotic in the wind.

The tear marks on her face were dried by such a big wind. Now she felt extremely awkward, unable to jump or not to jump, not knowing how her absolute dominant situation of staging a jumping scene became so embarrassing.

Serena Sterling observed coldly from the side without speaking.

Caroline Sloan wouldn't jump; that's a mutual understanding between her and Hayden Crawford. Now that Caroline had set the stage for the drama, Hayden refused to follow her script, completely confusing her.

At this moment, Father and Mother Sloan quickly said, "Lillian, come down. Deep love means stern reproach. This gentleman was just too worried about you, that's why he said such words. It's dangerous up there, come down quickly."

"Yes, Lillian, your father and mother understand that you don't want to be with Hugo Woods. That's okay, your father and mother agree. I see this gentleman is quite good. In the future, let him take care of you."

Father and Mother Sloan directly clung onto Hayden Crawford, wishing to push Caroline Sloan onto Hayden's bed.

Caroline Sloan stared pitifully at Hayden Crawford with red, tearful eyes. Then she moved and came down from the balcony.

"Big brother, I'm sorry, it's all my fault. I was being unreasonable this time..." Caroline Sloan walked up to Hayden Crawford and began to apologize, but before she could finish, her eyes closed, and she fainted weakly.

Caroline Sloan's fragile body fell directly toward Hayden Crawford's chest.

Hayden extended his hand, not to catch her but to directly push her over to Corvus.

Corvus caught Caroline Sloan, then carried her horizontally, "Miss Sloan, it's me. I will carry you."

Caroline Sloan, having fainted, twitched at the corner of her forehead, "..."

...

Father and Mother Sloan arrived at Hayden Crawford's villa, gaping like Grandma Liu visiting the Grand View Garden for the first time in awe.

Due to a lack of vocabulary, they exclaimed all the way with "Wow, wow, wow,"

Oh my, this villa is huge and must be worth a fortune.

This vase I saw on TV, it seems like a priceless antique.

This sofa is so soft, I feel like lying here for a nap.

At this moment, a maid in the living room gently reminded them, "Sir doesn't like people moving his things, so..."

"You wretched thing! You're just a lowly servant, and yet you dare to instruct us? Do you know who we are?" Mother Sloan revealed her fierce side, scolding and spitting saliva everywhere.

Chapter 753: His Little Princess

The maid looked at Caroline Sloan, shaking her head in confusion, quite an honest child, "I don't know, you... who are you?"

Caroline Sloan plopped down on the sofa, looking all high and mighty, wishing she could raise her chin to the sky, "You're really blind, just by looking at your inexperienced appearance, let me tell you, we are your sir's future in-laws, the owners of this villa!"

The maid swiftly opened her mouth wide, her face expressing that this joke... was way too outrageous!

Mr. Sloan felt proud, "I never thought my Lillian would achieve so much, landing such a wealthy man, I didn't even dare to dream about this."

If it weren't for the maid's presence, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan would have hugged their heads and laughed for a while; this dream was too beautiful.

Just then, a series of light footsteps sounded; Serena Sterling had arrived.

The maid quickly turned towards Serena Sterling, as if she had suddenly found her backbone, "Miss Serena, look at them..."

The maid couldn't believe it; her sir's father-in-law was Julian Rathborne, the world's richest man, and her sir's mother-in-law was Seraphina Linden, the Queen of Alani. When did her sir's in-laws turn into these bizarre figures, it was terrifying!

Serena Sterling gave the maid a reassuring look, "It's okay, you can go down first."

"Yes, Miss Serena." The maid respectfully retreated quickly; she didn't want to hear any more ghost stories.

Serena Sterling's bright eyes fell on Mr. and Mrs. Sloan, who were also looking at her.

Caroline Sloan took the initiative, "Who are you? I've inquired, Mr. Crawford is not married yet, which means you are not Mrs. Crawford."

Mr. Sloan quickly chimed in, "Since there's no marriage yet, everyone has a chance. Now it's obvious that Mr. Crawford likes my Lillian, cherishes her like a treasure. If you're smart, you'll leave Mr. Crawford at once and not be the home-wrecking mistress!"

Serena Sterling almost wanted to laugh, and indeed, she curled her lips and laughed.

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan froze, Serena was born with an unparalleled elegance, a composed and wise aura that naturally commanded a sense of superiority. Now she remained silent, just smiling lightly, making Mr. and Mrs. Sloan inexplicably feel like clowns.

"You...why are you laughing?" Caroline Sloan put one hand on her hip to bolster herself.

Serena Sterling raised her delicate willow-leaf eyebrows, "Nothing in particular, just laughing casually."

Caroline Sloan felt like her powerful punch landed on cotton.

Just then, Cherie came in, respectfully saying, "Princess, we should leave now."

"Alright, let's go." Serena Sterling didn't spare Mr. and Mrs. Sloan another glance and left with Cherie.

Once Serena left, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan both sighed in relief. Then a steady set of footsteps descended from upstairs, Hayden Crawford was coming down.

Hayden Crawford had arrived.

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan's eyes lit up, seeing Hayden Crawford felt closer than seeing their own son, "Mr. Crawford... how is our Lillian, has she woken up?"

"Our Lillian has had a tough life, marrying that scoundrel Hugo Woods, who frequently assaults her. Mr. Crawford, please help our Lillian divorce Hugo Woods."

"Mr. Crawford, our Lillian is still a chaste girl; she has remained pure for you, you can't let her down."

Earlier on the rooftop, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan had told Caroline to live well with Hugo Woods and praised Hugo as the perfect son-in-law. Now they turned the page faster than flipping a book, turning the 'ideal son-in-law' into a despicable thug.

Hayden Crawford didn't look at Mr. and Mrs. Sloan; his deep eyes fell on the maid, "Where is Miss Serena?"

The maid glanced at Mr. and Mrs. Sloan, then back at Hayden Crawford, "Sir, Miss Serena just left..." and it's because the two you brought back made her leave!

Hayden Crawford pressed his thin lips together; she had left. Earlier, he had told her not to run around, such a disobedient little thing!

Hayden Crawford turned to go upstairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan saw that their long speech was ignored by Hayden Crawford, who treated them like air, and immediately called out, "Mr. Crawford, about Lillian..."

Hayden Crawford stopped his steps, his sharp eyes finally landing on Mr. and Mrs. Sloan. His expression was indifferent, making it hard to discern his thoughts, "Just now, a private doctor came by. Your daughter is fine, she just needs more rest."

In the presence of Hayden Crawford's powerful and noble aura, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan tugged awkwardly at their clothes, "Mr. Crawford, you see we just got here, and we don't even have a place to stay..."

"Yes, Mr. Crawford, your place is quite large, there are many rooms upstairs, and so many servants around. Why not...let us stay here, then Lillian won't have to worry about us and can serve Mr. Crawford better..."

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan openly wanted to stay here. This grand place like a palace offered everything they ever dreamt of.

Hayden Crawford raised an elegant eyebrow, nodding, "Sure, you can stay here."

He agreed?

He agreed!

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan's eyes brightened, and their spines straightened, which was proof of Hayden Crawford's affection for Lillian; they were going to profit!

"Mr. Crawford, thank you, but... we just arrived, didn't bring much, need to buy some stuff, but we're a bit short on cash..." Mr. Sloan cautiously looked at Hayden Crawford, hinting you understand what I mean, right?

Hayden Crawford nodded, with a stylish and generous gesture, pulled out a black card and handed it over, "Take this card, swipe it as you like."

Oh my heavens!

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan knew from the first sight of Hayden Crawford that he wasn't short of money, but this was too generous and extravagant!

On the side, the maid looked like she was about to spit blood; this couple was clearly insatiable, exploiting their daughter's presence here, asking for both a place and money. The worst part was their sir was satisfying all their outrageous demands!

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan exchanged a glance, reassured. They believed their daughter Lillian must have enchanted Hayden Crawford, which is why he was being so accommodating.

Feeling emboldened, they had nothing to fear. If Hayden Crawford didn't meet their demands, they'd just take Lillian back, letting him taste nothing.

"Mr. Crawford, one more thing, my Lillian's 20th birthday is in a few days, could you throw her a grand birthday party, like making her your little princess?"

Chapter 754: He's a Catching-Cheaters Specialist

Caroline's parents took advantage again, and in a few days it would be Caroline's 20th birthday. They wanted Hayden Crawford to throw a sensational birthday party for Caroline.

The maid, "..."

Sir, you definitely shouldn't agree to them anymore, hurry up and give them a good slap in the face.

Hayden Crawford showed no emotional fluctuations. He nodded, "Fine, I'll have my secretary take care of it, ensure it will be a tremendously lively event that day."

The maid, "..."

It's over, her face was slapped by the sir.

Sir, what's happened to you, your wisdom, your brilliance, your prowess?

Wow.

Caroline's parents found themselves already... in love with Hayden Crawford, this man. Is he the legendary fool sweetie pie, is he?

He's really foolishly adorable, they absolutely love him.

"Mr. Crawford, thank you so much, we'll make sure Caroline divorces that damned Hugo Woods sooner and completely cut ties, then Caroline will focus on serving only you," Caroline's mother smiled sycophantically.

Hayden Crawford curled his thin lips into a cryptic smile, said nothing, and left the villa.

In the Rolls-Royce limousine, Hayden Crawford sat in the back, perusing documents, when Corvus in the front spoke, "Master, are you really going to host a birthday party for Caroline?"

Hayden Crawford lowered his handsome eyelid, focusing on the documents without looking up, "Why not? Leave this matter to you, hold the birthday party at the most luxurious hotel."

"...Master, that couple is insatiably greedy, even considering Caroline's life-saving grace, there's no need to indulge them like this."

Hayden Crawford curved his thin lips into a shallow arc, "Don't rush, it's just playing along with them, the real show is yet to come."

...

Consort Willow was confined in a dark little room, unaware of how long she'd been held, when the door creaked open.

Consort Willow looked up as Serena Sterling walked in.

Cherie moved a chair over, and Serena Sterling sat down, then elegantly poured herself a cup of tea, her bright eyes fell on Consort Willow's haggard face, and she smiled, "Consort Willow, speak, who is your master?"

Consort Willow knew Serena Sterling would personally interrogate her, she had mentally prepared, she looked venomously and resentfully at Serena Sterling, "Serena, don't act smart, I have no master, I obey no one, I hate you, hate Hayden Crawford, hate all of you, these things were all done by me alone."

"Oh, really?" Serena Sterling's sleek white fingertip held the delicate white teacup, took a sip, "The Merfolk Clan's power penetrated into City of Aethelgard over thirty years ago, you were the first to reveal Aunt Yara's lineage, on another front you've infiltrated the Westria royal palace, playing tricks, there's no way you could've done all this alone. If I'm not mistaken, your master should be the princess of the Merfolk Clan, descendant of their ancestor."

Consort Willow's pupils shrank, Serena was too ice-cold clever, nothing escaped her eyes.

"Humph." Consort Willow snorted coldly, "This is just your speculation, I won't tell you anything!"

Serena Sterling put down the teacup then stood, she slowly went to Consort Willow's side, squatted down, "I know there's nothing to be learned from you, you'd better pray your master has hidden her tail well, or she'll be dragged out by me!"

Consort Willow's heart tightened, she was truly afraid, afraid of Caroline's exposure.

Serena Sterling came from Alani, first destroyed the Merfolk Clan's long-established foundation in the Westria palace, now interfering with the Crawford family secrets, once Caroline's identity as Merfolk princess is exposed, everything will be over.

"Consort Willow, this time I actually came to borrow something from you..."

"What?"

Serena blinked her long lashes, her bright eyes slowly moved down, falling on the string of red demon bells hanging at Consort Willow's waist.

No way!

Consort Willow's eyes flashed with vigilance, she immediately reached for her red demon bells.

But it was too late, Serena's speed was faster, her small white hand reached out, she snatched the string of red demon bells.

"Give it back! Serena, give me back the demon bells!" Consort Willow was very emotional, she immediately tried to grab the demon bells.

Serena stepped back, swiftly avoiding Consort Willow, she raised the string of red demon bells, her bright eyes glittered with dazzling fragments of light, "Consort Willow, don't be stingy, borrow the demon bells for me to use a while."

Consort Willow's feet were chained heavily, she eagerly lunged at Serena, the next second "thump," she fell flat on her face, utterly clumsy and embarrassed.

Consort Willow clenched her fist tightly, her eyes red with furious glaring at Serena, "What are you trying to do, what do you want with my demon bells?"

Serena calmly stood ahead, her skirt swayed with a radiant arc before falling, she looked down at the fallen Consort Willow, gently remarked, "Simple, the Crawford family's pain stemmed from a string of demon bells, now... let me end it with this string of demon bells."

Consort Willow gasped.

...

Serena Sterling came out, Cherie followed behind, "Princess, where do you say the Merfolk princess is now?"

"If I'm not mistaken, this Merfolk princess should be right by our side, she came much earlier than we expected," Serena softly replied.

Cherie was puzzled, "Then who is this Merfolk princess?"

Serena looked up at the blue sky and white clouds, "Should be... soon, we'll know very soon, let's go."

"Princess, where are we going?"

"To the hospital, to see Aunt Iris."

...

In the hospital.

Serena was walking in the corridor when she saw several familiar figures ahead, Jude Crawford had arrived, alongside Isabelle Willow and Dylan Gardner.

The three stood together, Jude Crawford's large hand tightly gripping Isabelle Willow's arm, his deep charming face was gloomy, his hand vigorously holding Isabelle Willow showed visible intense veins, he forcibly kept Isabelle Willow close.

Isabelle Willow furrowed her brows, her face was pale, struggling to free Jude Crawford's grip, she softly explained, "Jude Crawford, you've misunderstood, I came to the hospital to see Iris, just accidentally met Dylan in the ward, we didn't say anything before you arrived."

Serena understood, she helplessly sighed, Jude Crawford seemed to be a catching-adulterer expert finding this sight too.

He's such an old man, yet still so hot-tempered, and jealous!

Chapter 755: Auction

Dylan Gardner has been taking care of Iris Crawford in the hospital room for the past few days. Iris is still in a coma and hasn't woken up yet.

Just now, Isabelle Willow came to see Iris Crawford. As soon as she opened the hospital room door, she met face to face with another person, and the next second, Jude Crawford arrived, creating a tense situation among the three of them.

It's clear that Jude Crawford doesn't believe this explanation. His deep-set eyes fell on Isabelle's face, "Why do such coincidental things always happen to you, Isabelle Willow? Are you really here to visit Iris or to meet your old flame?"

Isabelle's face flushed with anger, "Jude Crawford, you are simply unreasonable!"

"Isabelle Willow, who's being reasonable here? Make yourself clear!"

Dylan Gardner looked at the two of them, "I say, you two..."

Jude Crawford interrupted, "Shut up!"

Isabelle Willow added, "Don't say anything!"

Dylan, yelled at by both, was dumbfounded, "..."

Serena raised her red lips in a smile. This is probably the love between Jude Crawford and Isabelle Willow—no matter what pains, pessimism, or sadness they carry, it belongs to just the two of them, and no third party can intervene.

Once the foremost noble in the City of Aethelgard's business world and the first cold and talented woman, such a wonderful couple; yet, they wasted the best years of their lives in the conspiracies. Serena's bright eyes captured this scene; Jude tightly held Isabelle's hand, while Isabelle looked up with eyes full of him. What a fortunate scene, frozen forever, as if it were Jude and Isabelle's entire life.

Serena stepped forward, her voice clear and pleasant, "Aunt Isabelle, why are you here?"

Isabelle raised her head and quickly saw Serena. She immediately tried to pull her arm back with force.

But Jude wouldn't let go.

With a thin skin, Isabelle blushed and tucked a strand of hair by her cheek, speaking in a low voice to Jude, "Let go. The kids are here!"

Neither of them was young anymore and they didn't want to argue in front of the kids.

Seeing her discomfort, Jude relaxed his grip and let go.

"Serena, I came to see Iris."

Serena walked over and affectionately linked her arm with Isabelle's, "Aunt Isabelle, I also came to see Aunt Iris."

"Serena, Iris has been in a coma for a long time. When will she wake up?" Isabelle asked worriedly.

"A heart condition needs a heart cure. I plan to take Aunt Iris back to the City of Aethelgard to treat her heart illness."

Back to the City of Aethelgard.

As these words fell, the atmosphere among the people instantly dropped to freezing point. The City of Aethelgard is full of past events and memories, and no one wished to touch the scars deep in their hearts again.

At this moment, Serena's bright eyes landed on Jude Crawford's face, "Uncle Jude, this trip to the City of Aethelgard is not just for me, but also Aunt Isabelle, Aunt Iris, Uncle Garner, and you; you have to come back with us to the City of Aethelgard."

Jude's expression didn't look good. He glanced at Serena, "What are you planning to do by bringing everyone back to the City of Aethelgard?"

Jude was like a cunning, wily old fox, and deceiving him was impossible.

Serena smiled, "Uncle Jude, you'll know once you go back."

Jude pressed his lips together, pouring cold water over her expectations without hesitation, "I'm not going back. You all go have fun."

After saying that, Jude turned and left with no room for negotiation.

Isabelle held onto Serena, whispering, "Serena, I'm sure you have your reasons for every decision. I can go back to the City of Aethelgard with you, but Jude's decisions never change; he won't go back."

Serena's bright eyes blinked playfully and wisely, "This time, I must take Uncle Jude back. Every rule has its exceptions, and Uncle Jude is no different."

Curious, Isabelle asked, "What's the exception in Jude's life?"

Serena smiled faintly without speaking, because the exception in Jude's life is... you, Aunt Isabelle!

...

Serena took Isabelle out of the hospital together. Since they were going back, they were bound to see Old Madam Crawford, so Serena and Isabelle went to the auction house to find some antiques to gift her. After all, Old Madam Crawford had high standards and plenty of ordinary things.

As soon as they arrived at the auction house, Serena saw two familiar faces—it was Mr. and Mrs. Shen.

In these past two days, Mr. and Mrs. Shen felt like they had ascended from the slums to heaven. Today, they were wearing the fur coats typical of the nouveau riche, with their bodies covered in gold and silver. A thick gold chain hung around their necks like a dog's leash, and large golden rings adorned their five fingers, practically blinding anyone who looked at them.

Hayden Crawford had given them a bank card with unlimited funds, and Mr. and Mrs. Shen had been out and about, trying to figure out how to spend it. They got a taste of what it was like to throw money around.

They had bought enough clothes and jewelry. Upon hearing that wealthy people usually visited auction houses, they eagerly came to the largest one to make a show of themselves.

Their faces read three big words: I have money!

Mr. and Mrs. Shen went to a luxurious private room, where the servers brought them exquisite snacks and tea. Mr. Shen shouted, "Hey, I'm talking to you. Who's the owner of this auction house? Call him out. We have money, let him show us the interesting items here for us to buy."

Mrs. Shen ate a piece of the snack. She found the auction house's standards incredibly high, fitting its status as top-tier; even the snacks were so delicious. She quickly grabbed another piece to stuff into her mouth, "Exactly, we have money. What's the most expensive thing here? We'll buy it!"

This auction house was frequented by elite and successful people, so the server was seeing people like the Shens for the first time. They discreetly avoided the crumbs sprayed from Mrs. Shen's mouth, politely saying, "Sir, Madam, our boss doesn't meet guests, regardless of how much money you have."

"What?" Mr. Shen was quite dissatisfied, "Your boss is pretty impressive, huh? We have plenty of money." Mr. Shen patted the bank card in his pocket.

The server smiled, "Sorry, our boss doesn't lack money either."

Mr. Shen was at a loss, "...". He was really curious now about who the owner of this auction house was, someone who didn't lack money!

The server continued, "Sir, Madam, please rest for a moment. The auction will begin shortly. When you see something you like, you can raise your card to bid. The highest bidder wins."

With that, the server left.

The Shens muttered unhappily. At that moment, when they looked up, they saw Serena and Isabelle.

Chapter 756: So Many Vixens Today!

Now seeing Serena Sterling, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan's eyes lit up, "Oh, who is this? Isn't this Mr. Crawford's old flame, the recently abandoned 'divorced woman'?"

Mrs. Sloan looked jealously at Serena's exquisite and lovely face, which was much prettier than her daughter Caroline's. How wonderful it would be if her daughter were as beautiful!

Mrs. Sloan quickly spoke cynically, "Why did you come to this auction house? Do you have money in your pocket? The money you have must be from Mr. Crawford before. Now that Mr. Crawford has abandoned you, naturally your income is cut off. See what this is, my daughter is now Mr. Crawford's new love, taking very good care of him. Mr. Crawford gave us a credit card and told us to use it freely."

"Bang," with a sound, Mrs. Sloan slapped the credit card on the coffee table in front of Serena.

Isabelle Willow watched Mr. and Mrs. Sloan with a furrowed brow, "Serena, who are they, what are they talking about? I don't understand."

Her son has a new love, how could she, the mother, not know?

If her son has a new love, she's going to go home and break his legs!

Serena winked playfully at Isabelle and whispered, "Aunt Yara, don't mind them, they're a couple of lunatics, talking nonsense."

At this moment, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan looked at Isabelle with hostility, "Who is she? From her appearance, she's probably another vixen."

"..." Serena silently said sorry in her heart, this couple speaks too quickly, without giving her time to introduce, oh boy, they've offended this vixen 'mother-in-law'!

At this moment, a charming voice sounded in their ears, "Yara, Serena, why are you here too?"

Serena turned around, it was Seraphina Linden.

"Mommy~" Serena quickly called out sweetly.

"Seraphina, what are you doing at the auction? Are you here to buy something?" Isabelle asked curiously.

She hadn't seen Seraphina recently, as Seraphina was busy with her own business, opening a "Beauty Pavilion" and playing the role of an old madam herself.

"Shh." Seraphina quickly placed her finger on her red lips, gesturing for silence, then mysteriously whispered, "I've been looking for a... Jianghu manual lately, I've heard it was at this auction, I'm here to buy it. Let's keep quiet, so others don't compete with me."

"Jianghu manual? What Jianghu manual?" Isabelle asked curiously.

"It's... it's that kind of manual..." Seraphina kept blinking, leaving Isabelle to only understand but not articulate.

Isabelle didn't understand.

Serena raised a hand to rub her forehead, because she had roughly guessed that this Jianghu manual wasn't anything decent. Her mommy's mind was always filled with quirky ideas, if her daddy knew her mommy wanted to play the old madam, he'd probably want to strangle her.

"Mommy, stop it, don't lead Aunt Yara astray." Serena called out to stop.

Seraphina blinked her charming eyes, chuckling, "Leading Yara astray isn't me, it's that old fox Jude Crawford."

"..."

At this moment, a commotion sounded, someone shouted, "Look over there!"

Serena, Seraphina, and Isabelle looked up, only to see the auction house's door suddenly pushed open, the cold wind outside blew in, accompanied by a handsome and noble figure, Julian Rathborne had arrived.

Today, Julian Rathborne wore a black wool coat, with a black suit, business vest, and white shirt inside, formal and classic attire, highlighting his exceptional elegance. He had just come from a high-level business meeting, the nobility and strong presence flowing from his blood attracted all eyes in the room like a magnet.

Julian Rathborne was followed by his personal secretary and private butler, his footsteps didn't stop, nor did he notice this side, instead, he strided swiftly, disappearing from everyone's sight.

Why did Julian Rathborne come?

Since the last meeting at the club, Seraphina hadn't seen Julian Rathborne for a few days, didn't expect this unexpected encounter today.

"Serena, why did your dad come, is he here to buy something?" Seraphina asked Serena.

Serena's bright eyes fell over there, seeing the auction house's manager already hurrying over, nodding and bowing behind Julian Rathborne.

She feared her daddy wasn't here to buy anything, her daddy should be this auction house's... owner.

Serena saw through everything but glanced at her daddy and then her mommy, emmm...

"Mommy, I also don't know why daddy is here." Serena fibbed slightly.

Seraphina didn't mind much, "Forget it, ignore him, as long as he doesn't sabotage my plan, it's fine. Serena, Yara, let's sit in that suite."

Seraphina pointed to the luxury suite next to Mr. and Mrs. Sloan.

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan also caught sight of Julian Rathborne, after all, a man making such a grand entrance was dazzling, unless someone was blind, they couldn't ignore it.

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan's eyes lit up, over the years Julian Rathborne, as the son of Aethelgard, always had an unmatched aura of nobility. After meeting Hayden Crawford here firstly, now witnessing Julian Rathborne, they were truly shaken.

This man should be quite wealthy, right?

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan regretted so much, their intestines turned green with regret, they should have had more daughters!

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan looked toward Seraphina beside Serena, sarcastically jesting, "Oh, another vixen has arrived, there are plenty of vixens today."

Hmm?

Who is calling her a vixen?

Seraphina glanced sideways at Mr. and Mrs. Sloan, then gracefully smiled, thanking them for the compliment!

Mr. and Mrs. Sloan, "..."

"Serena, is that couple Caroline's parents?" Seraphina quietly asked Serena.

Serena wasn't surprised mommy knew, given that little Pip often stayed with grandma, surely sharing worldly matters with grandma.

"Yes." Serena nodded.

Seraphina revealed a radiant smile, "That sounds interesting, let's tease them for a bit later."

"..." Serena silently mourned for Mr. and Mrs. Sloan for two seconds internally, her mommy enjoyed pranking others.

...

The auction officially started, the host stood on stage beginning the auction, Serena and Isabelle spotted an agate stone, thinking it quite suitable for Old Mrs. Crawford.

Serena bid two million.

Next door, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan's bold voice quickly followed, competing with Serena for the agate stone at three million.

...

Chapter 757: He Wants to Settle the Score with Her

Now, Caroline Sloan's parents were quite arrogant, with an attitude of "with one card, the world is mine." In truth, they didn't know what to buy, but whatever Serena bid on, they would compete for, determined to outshine her.

Caroline's father said, "That Serena is just Mr. Crawford's old flame. She definitely doesn't have more money than us."

Caroline's mother chimed in, "Exactly, let's crush her with money, embarrass her, make her furious!"

In the adjacent luxury box, Serena watched them bid and said to Yara, "Aunt Isabelle, forget it, let's give this piece of agate to the people next door. I just thought it matched the old lady's temperament and could be brought back for carving, so I bid two million, but I think two million is already too much, I can't bid any higher."

Yara, with her cool demeanor, nodded, "Okay."

It was then that Seraphina Linden spoke, "Wait, give me the card, let me have some fun."

"Mommy, what are you trying to do?" Serena obediently handed the card to Seraphina Linden.

Seraphina blinked mischievously and then raised the card, "Four million."

Four million?

Four million for an agate stone? That's such a loss!

Serena quickly tugged on Seraphina's sleeve, shaking her head painfully.

Next door, Caroline's parents heard the increase and quickly raised their card, "Five million."

Seraphina pushed Serena aside, "Eight million."

Eight million?

The entire auction was stunned, everyone's eyes snapped toward them, trying to see which over-the-top spender would buy an agate stone for eight million.

Next door, Caroline's parents hesitated at eight million. After all, their lifestyle had leaped from eight hundred to eight million, making them feel dizzy. They looked around and saw the agate stone was just a red rock, and mountains were full of stones.

"Should we increase the bid?" Caroline's mother asked secretly.

Caroline's father, his face flushed with excitement, was pushed to the limit at eight million. If he didn't bid, wouldn't he lose face?

Caroline's father immediately raised the card, shouting, "Ten million."

Wow.

The whole room was in an uproar.

On the second floor of the auction hall, Julian Rathborne stood tall and noble near the carved railing, glancing at Caroline's parents.

"Boss, that couple are Caroline Sloan's parents, who just appeared beside Mr. Crawford as the new delicate flower," the private secretary whispered.

Julian wordlessly kept one hand in his pocket.

"Boss, should we teach that couple a little lesson?" the private secretary asked.

The private secretary thought that Caroline's parents were asking for it, bullying the daughter of the world's wealthiest man's heir and even barging onto their turf. Now that Serena's dad was here, wouldn't he give them a lesson?

"No need, didn't you see someone already teaching them a lesson?" Julian's deep voice rang out.

Who?

Who was teaching that couple a lesson?

Julian's gaze slowly fell on Seraphina Linden in the nearby box. He had been busy with work and hadn't settled the score with her yet.

The last time at the club, she played with him like that, and he needed to settle that score properly.

Caroline's parents had bid ten million, which left Serena shocked. Who gave them such confidence to bid sky-high prices?

"That's enough, Mommy, don't bid anymore, I don't have the money," Serena reminded Seraphina.

Seraphina flicked her hair along her cheek and tossed the card back to Serena, "Alright, I'm done playing, let them have the ten-million agate stone."

"..."

Serena realized it was intentional, her mommy deliberately raised the price to ten million to trap the mother from next door, indeed too wicked.

Next door, Caroline's parents awaited another bid, but after long anticipation, they only heard the auctioneer's decisive gavel, "Ten million, any higher bids? Ten million once, ten million twice, ten million three times, sold to the gentleman and lady!"

The auctioneer had worked at the auction house for many years and had never seen anyone buy an agate stone for ten million before. They looked at Caroline's parents, smiling, as if looking at two... big fools.

Caroline's parents, "..."

They were utterly dumbfounded. The thrill of bidding had now turned into bewilderment, did they really spend ten million on a red stone?

Just then, a staff member approached, "Sir, please make your payment here."

Caroline's father, incredibly anxious, took out the card. It was given by Hayden Crawford, and they had already spent a lot, but they didn't know the exact amount in the card.

Ten million was an enormous sum, what if the card didn't have ten million?

Caroline's father, like a duck forced ashore, closed his eyes and ran the card.

With a "ding," the card was charged successfully.

"Sir, the ten million has been credited, here's your agate stone, please keep it safe," the staff member said as they left.

Oh my.

The card really had ten million!

Caroline's parents felt like they had flown from heaven into the outer edges of the universe. It seemed that the card had more than ten million, perhaps twenty million, thirty million...

They were loaded.

This card was enough for a lifetime of lavish spending.

Caroline's parents returned to their seats, loudly bragging, "What's a mere ten million, my future son-in-law's filial card has plenty of money. Some people shouldn't try to put on airs if they don't have money, better go home, wash up, and get some sleep."

In the next box, Serena naturally heard these comments, she raised an elegant eyebrow but said nothing.

Seraphina looked at her daughter, "Serena, you're really good at staying calm, they're spending Hayden's money, which is technically yours."

Serena smiled, "Mommy, don't worry~"

The auctioneer continued, "Dear guests, next we are auctioning a sily, sily was born in the sixties of Gallia..."

The auctioneer flattered the sily quite a bit.

Seraphina quickly said, "Serena, the card, quickly raise the card, this sily is extraordinary, starting bid is five hundred thousand!"

Next door, Caroline's parents were also eager, having tasted victory earlier, they hurriedly raised their card, "Six hundred thousand!"

As soon as "six hundred thousand" were out, the room erupted in laughter.

The auctioneer quickly struck down the gavel, "Six hundred thousand once, six hundred thousand twice, six hundred thousand thrice, sold to the gentleman and lady!"

Caroline's parents didn't understand English, so they didn't know what a sily was; they only bid six hundred thousand hearing Seraphina's excited bidding.

Chapter 758: She's Pregnant

Who would have guessed that Seraphina Linden next door didn't even bid; they snagged that "Sily" for six million just like that.

"Ladies and gentlemen, congratulations! Now please enjoy this piece, Sily." The staff warmly smiled and said.

What exactly is Sily?

Mr. and Mrs. Shen spent six million and were still very curious about what exactly Sily was that they had bought.

At this moment, many people carrying musical instruments approached, and a conductor with a baton vigorously waved it, letting the melodious music fill the air.

Mr. and Mrs. Shen were stunned, "..."

Who would have thought that Sily was actually a composition!

They spent six million on a song!

Mr. and Mrs. Shen had no musical talent, nor did they know how to appreciate it. This piece was like a lullaby, making them drowsy.

At this point, they felt the gaze of everyone in the hall fixed on them, pointing and laughing, mocking and sympathizing all at once, ridiculing their stupidity, which had made everyone sympathetic.

Mr. and Mrs. Shen were on pins and needles; the phrase "pretending to be someone you're not and getting humiliated" certainly boomeranged back at them.

After a long time, this Sily piece finally ended, and Seraphina Linden laughed, "Sily translates to 'fool'. This couple next door spent six million to listen to a song called 'Fool'; they truly are the song's confidants. Let's give them a round of applause."

Clap clap clap, Seraphina Linden set the example, starting to clap, and everyone quickly followed. A wave of applause filled the hall, along with loud laughter.

Mr. and Mrs. Shen's faces turned red again, this time from humiliation, feeling like clowns who had paid for others' entertainment.

Sixteen million was gone, just for a broken stone and a song. Mr. and Mrs. Shen regretted it so much.

"This auction is pointless. Let's go!"

"Exactly, even if we're rich, we won't spend anything here again!"

Mr. and Mrs. Shen got up abruptly, speaking the toughest words, but with their bodies honestly succumbing to the pressure from the crowd, they fled in disgrace.

Fleeing in panic.

The Shens left, and the auction quieted down. Serena Sterling looked at Seraphina Linden, "Mom, you were amazing."

Seraphina Linden smiled, "Who dares bully my daughter? Of course, I have to teach them a small lesson."

At this moment, Serena noticed Isabelle Willow was looking unwell because Isabelle had her hand pressed against her heart, her brows knit, seeming like she was about to vomit.

"Aunt Isabelle, what's wrong?" Serena asked with concern.

Isabelle quickly stood up, "Serena, I need to use the bathroom."

Isabelle left.

"Isabelle, are you not feeling well, wait for me..." Seraphina wanted to follow.

Serena looked thoughtfully at Isabelle's departing figure for a moment, then reached out to pull Seraphina, "Mom, you stay here; I'll go check on Aunt Isabelle."

"But..." Seraphina was worried.

"Mom, don't you want to bid on that martial arts manual?"

Mentioning the "martial arts manual" swayed Seraphina, and by then, Serena had already stood up and left, "Mom, with me here, don't worry."

...

Serena arrived at the restroom and saw Isabelle bent over, vomiting, her face very pale.

"Aunt Isabelle, what's wrong?" Serena asked.

Isabelle stopped vomiting, "Serena, I don't know what's wrong. My appetite hasn't been good lately, and I often feel like vomiting."

"Aunt Isabelle, extend your hand; I'll check your pulse."

Isabelle extended her hand.

Serena placed her slender, white fingers on it to feel her pulse. Soon, a light furrow formed on her delicate brow.

"Serena, what's wrong with me? Am I sick?"

Serena withdrew her hand and slowly smiled, "Aunt Isabelle, there's nothing much wrong with your body. Maybe it's the recent weather cooling down, causing chills at night, leading to a lack of appetite and restless sleep. I'll prescribe some medication to help adjust your condition."

"That's good to hear."

"Aunt Isabelle, how about we leave this auction house now and take the private jet to the City of Aethelgard?" Serena suddenly suggested.

Isabelle was taken aback, "Serena, why the sudden change of plans to fly to the City of Aethelgard? What about Jude Crawford...?"

Serena linked arms with Isabelle and smiled, "Aunt Isabelle, don't worry about Jude Crawford; I'll call him right now. He will come to the City of Aethelgard and meet us there."

Isabelle looked at Serena half-believingly; she knew Jude Crawford too well. If Jude said he wouldn't return to the City of Aethelgard, he wouldn't. What could Serena do to make Jude rush over right away?

Now Serena's bright eyes twinkled, shining with wisdom and composure, clearly confident.

Rescuing Iris Crawford, uncovering the Crawford family's mystery, was urgent.

Isabelle sensed Serena had some plan, not knowing who it was meant to ensnare, "Alright then, Serena, I'll listen to you."

...

Serena came to the corridor. Cherie whispered, "Princess, the private jet is ready, and Iris Crawford and Dylan Gardner are on the plane."

Serena nodded, "I'll call Jude Crawford. Get the car ready; Aunt Isabelle and I will go shortly."

"Yes, Princess." Cherie stepped back.

Serena took out her phone and dialed Jude Crawford's number.

The melodious ringtone of the phone rang once, then was slowly picked up. Jude Crawford's deep voice came over, "Hello."

"Uncle Jude, Aunt Isabelle and I are flying to the City of Aethelgard on the private jet now. Hurry over; we're waiting for you."

On the other side, Jude Crawford pressed his thin lips, "I won't go..."

"Uncle Jude, Aunt Isabelle is pregnant." Serena directly interrupted him.

"What did you say?" Jude Crawford's calm pupils suddenly shrank.

Serena smiled, "What do you think I said? Uncle Jude should know better than anyone, shouldn't you?"

At this moment, Jude Crawford was in the study wearing a casual gray shirt and black pants, exuding the maturity and gravity of a fifty-year-old man. He was reviewing documents when he heard Isabelle was pregnant, and his firm fingers holding the pen suddenly stopped.

After Isabelle came back, she stayed over for two nights. He had used some medicine to make her sleep and took advantage of her.

He didn't take any contraceptive measures; both of them weren't young anymore, and he thought Isabelle was past the age of easily getting pregnant.

Isabelle still didn't know about this, thinking she had a spring dream. He looked at her shy and evasive demeanor like a cat that had stolen a fish.

He never thought she would get pregnant again, after all, their son was grown, and they already had a bunch of grandchildren.

Chapter 759: Pure Yet Tempting

No one knew about this, and unexpectedly, the first person to find out was Serena Sterling.

Jude Crawford put down the pen in his hand, stood up, and went to the floor-to-ceiling window, "When did you find out?"

He knew Isabelle Willow's character very well; she would never dare to disclose things like dreams of spring or the secret soreness she felt to anyone.

"Jude, the last time, I took Aunt Yara's pulse. Aunt Yara is very weak. I didn't think much of it at the time, but today I finally confirmed it."

In recent years, Isabelle Willow's emotional life was a blank slate, without a single man around her. After returning, she was fiercely taken by him twice, without restraint, leaving her body immediately weak.

"Where is Yara now? I'll go find her." Jude Crawford said.

"Alright, I told you already, Aunt Yara and I flew to the City of Aethelgard. Jude, we're waiting for you in Aethelgard." With that, Serena Sterling hung up the phone.

Listening to the "beep beep" on the other end, Jude Crawford, "..."

This Serena Sterling was bold enough to dare to threaten him. She deliberately took Yara away, demanding he fly to the City of Aethelgard.

Jude Crawford chuckled angrily and called out, "Butler Thorne, prepare the private jet, we're flying to Aethelgard."

...

Serena Sterling hung up the phone. She had always said, she knows how to deal with Jude Crawford because Isabelle Willow is Jude Crawford's exception in life.

Serena Sterling packed away her phone, ready to set off.

Just then, a charming voice came to her ears, "Serena, how is Yara?"

Seraphina Linden had come over.

Seeing her own mom, Serena Sterling felt a little headache. She dared not take her mom on this trip to Aethelgard. They say girlfriends can't stand each other's men, and if her mom went, things would become chaotic between Jude and Aunt Yara.

"Mom, Aunt Yara is fine."

"Really?" Seraphina Linden gave Serena Sterling a suspicious look, "Serena, your Aunt Yara isn't being bullied by that old fox Jude, is she? I can tell Jude has been hungry for too long. We can't let Yara fall into his hands again."

"...I know, Mom~"

"Alright, I'm going to check on Yara now." Seraphina Linden was still uneasy about Isabelle Willow.

Serena Sterling quickly blocked Seraphina Linden's path, "Mom~"

Seraphina Linden stopped in her tracks, gave Serena a good look, then blinked, "Serena, honestly, is there something you're hiding from me? What's really going on with Yara?"

Who was Seraphina Linden, if not Serena's mom? When it comes to wicked schemes, Seraphina was a pioneer.

Serena realized she couldn't hide it, her little head quickly spinning with ideas, then she said quietly, "Mom, let me tell you something, but you mustn't tell anyone, because I'm not yet sure. Just now, when I took Aunt Yara's pulse, it seemed like she might be... pregnant."

Seraphina Linden gasped, "What, pregnant?"

Seraphina Linden immediately rolled up her sleeves, turning to leave, looking like she was about to fight someone.

"Mom, where are you going?"

"I'm going to find Jude Crawford! That old fox, silently getting Yara pregnant!"

"...Mom, calm down, because Aunt Yara's pulse reading isn't very clear yet, and we don't have conclusive evidence. How about this, you go to the pharmacy outside and buy a pregnancy test and we'll check Aunt Yara."

Seraphina looked at Serena, "If it turns out positive, we'll throw the pregnancy test right in Jude Crawford's face, that shameless old man!"

The "shameless old man" Jude Crawford, "..."

Serena Sterling's forehead twitched. Only her mom dared to mess with the Tiger; she wouldn't dare, "Yes, throw it in his face!"

Seraphina reluctantly agreed, "Alright then, I'll go buy a pregnancy test, you and Yara wait for me here."

"Okay, Mom~"

Seraphina Linden left.

Seeing her mom leave, Serena Sterling let out a big sigh of relief, immediately turned and ran, "Cherie, start the car, head to Aethelgard!"

...

Seraphina Linden still didn't know she had been left behind, walking through the corridor to go buy a pregnancy test.

Just then, her slender wrist was suddenly grasped tightly, a strong force pulling her into the men's restroom.

She quickly stabilized herself, and in sight was... Julian Rathborne's handsome face.

Julian Rathborne!

Long time, no see!

"Mr. Rathborne, what are you pulling me into the men's restroom for, to watch you pee?" Seraphina Linden curled her red lips.

Julian Rathborne frowned slightly, his whole aura a bit gloomy. The last time in the club she left him a yellow card and ran away, and now she still had the audacity to speak so shamelessly upon seeing him.

"Seraphina Linden, you actually let the words 'pee' come out of your mouth. Where is your refinement?"

Seraphina Linden found it amusing, "Mr. Rathborne, then tell me, what elegant word would you use for peeing?"

"Mr. Rathborne" Julian Rathborne, "..."

"Don't shift the topic!" Julian Rathborne took out the yellow card, "What is this, Seraphina Linden, who gave you the courage?"

Seraphina Linden glanced at it. The yellow card looked quite familiar, depicting a scantily-clad woman offering hotel services for 200 a night, complete service, satisfaction guaranteed.

Seraphina Linden recognized it; this was what she had left him.

"Oh, Mr. Rathborne, your face looks so sour, didn't the service on this satisfy you?" As she spoke, Seraphina Linden brought her alluringly charming face closer to Julian Rathborne, slowly nearing him, observing his gentle and abstinent handsome face.

As the two of them got closer, Julian Rathborne caught the scent on her, like poppies, addictive with just a sniff.

His mind recalled the last time at the club, the kiss pressing down on her...

Julian Rathborne's Adam's apple rolled, "I don't want this card, take it back!"

Seeing he seemed a bit angry, as if her card had tainted his reputation, this man, despite his age, still carried the demeanor of a noble young master, a pure-hearted boy.

Seraphina Linden found teasing him so amusing, she immediately held out her hand to him, "Alright, then return me something else too."

"What thing?"

"The inflatable doll I gave you." Seraphina's large, captivating eyes blinked innocently at him, pure and tempting, "Mr. Rathborne, you haven't already... enjoyed it, have you?"

"..."

This woman, how many shameless words would she utter? Julian Rathborne's charming eyes darkened further.

"Whatever, whatever, enjoying it isn't something embarrassing anyway. Rest assured, I won't tell anyone, Mr. Rathborne, I have things to do, I'm off." Seraphina Linden lifted her foot to leave.

Today Seraphina was wearing a coat, and underneath was a white dress with a slit, a rather high slit, and with each step, her long, slender legs became faintly visible.

Chapter 760: The 100 Yuan Tip for Him

Julian Rathborne's pupils constricted in response to her provocation.

He swiftly grabbed her slender wrist again, his voice heavy with a sardonic chuckle, "Seraphina Linden, what kind of dress are you wearing out?"

Seraphina Linden was about to leave but was held back by him again, her patience worn thin, and her radiant face turned cold, "Mr. Rathborne, what exactly are you trying to achieve by being so unreasonable?"

Julian Rathborne flung his hand, directly thrusting her onto the sink counter.

Her delicate back collided with the sink, and her face grew even colder as she steadied herself, with the man's six-foot-two frame looming over her. One of his large hands imperatively locked her willow-like waist, while the other dropped to the hem of her slit dress.

"Seraphina Linden, do you really have no sense of propriety? Wearing something so flashy and still considering yourself a young girl?" Julian Rathborne locked onto her with a dark gaze.

Seraphina raised her eyebrows, knowing a woman's age was a taboo topic. What business of his was it whether she was a young girl or not?

"Mr. Rathborne, are you sure you want to discuss my dress? Your mindset is too conservative. Women dress like this nowadays—what's wrong with showing a bit of leg?"

Julian Rathborne released her waist, his lowered gaze taking in her exposed legs—remarkably straight, toned, and graceful.

He didn't pay attention to how other women dressed; it didn't concern him. He only knew that she shouldn't dress this way!

Other men might see!

"Come with me and change the dress."

"I'm not going. The dress is beautiful; why should I change? Why do you get to tell me what to do?" Seraphina was truly frustrated.

Julian Rathborne gave her a lingering look, "I don't want my daughter's mommy flaunting herself outside like this."

Flaunting what?

Seraphina was so vexed she laughed sarcastically, her charming eyes fixating on him, "Mr. Rathborne, I understand now. Are you being unreasonable because I didn't satisfy you last time at the club? Are you... frustrated?"

Saying this, Seraphina slightly pushed him away, propping herself on the sink. She lifted her high heel, slowly trailing up his black slacks, "Mr. Rathborne, just say what you're thinking. How else am I supposed to know what you want? Being so repressed isn't good."

Repressed?

Since birth, Julian Rathborne had been a distinguished figure, raised with the finest heir education, gradually numbing him to emotions and desires. Once the prince of Aethelgard, his demeanor was austere, never letting women close. Now, in front of her, he was suddenly "repressed"?

Yet, his handsome temple throbbed, his throat like burning coals, as his entire focus landed on her high heel, sparks igniting wherever she stepped.

She smiled at him, her smile the most captivating—innocent yet alluring, making his heart itch.

Julian Rathborne was baffled about how he fell for this enchantress while high society ladies held no charm. Yet, he was drawn to her.

Julian Rathborne stretched out a large hand, trying to grasp her delicate ankle.

But Seraphina quickly withdrew her ankle from his grasp, tucking a loose strand of hair behind her ear with a radiant smile, "Mr. Rathborne, what do you want to do?"

With a "smack," Julian Rathborne placed one palm against the wall by her head and the other on the sink, trapping her delicate body in his embrace. His thin lips curled into a sinister smile, "Seraphina Linden, it seems your memory is poor. When are you going to pay back the money you owe me?"

Money?

Seraphina was instantly caught off guard, blinking her long lashes at him, her aura half diminished, "Money, what... what money?"

"The 10.1 billion you owe me."

"..." Seraphina swiftly frowned, "Ouch, my ear hurts, oh no, I can't hear you anymore. What did you say, Mr. Rathborne? Speak louder!"

Seeing her instantly turn into a diva playing tricks, Julian Rathborne's mood improved slightly. He seemed to have found her weak spot: she didn't have money.

As for money, that, he had plenty of.

Julian Rathborne lowered his eyebrows, concealing all emotions in his eyes, and lightly curled his lips with a smile, "Seraphina Linden, we need to settle this 10.1 billion account."

Settle what?

Seraphina looked at him dumbfounded.

"I recall my lawyer sent you a letter long ago, demanding compensation of 10.1 billion, which took effect immediately. Yet, so many days have passed, and you haven't been able to repay it. You need to compensate me with high interest. I calculated it, and with the interest, you now owe me 10.2 billion."

Seraphina's jaw dropped in shock, staring at the man, "Mr. Rathborne, you just casually added another hundred million—are you going to rob a bank next?"

Julian Rathborne raised his well-defined eyebrows, "I have banks under my name; no need to rob."

"... Damned capitalist!"

Seraphina pushed the man aside and straightened her skirt, "I'll find a way to repay this debt. Right now, I need to raise money, so could you please step aside?"

With that, she opened the door and left.

Julian Rathborne watched her silhouette, confident she didn't have the money. For her, 10.2 billion was an astronomical figure; he intended to use this sum to force her to bow down.

After all, she was showing off like a peacock with a high tail; he had to put her in her place!

Julian Rathborne was just waiting for her to come to him on her own.

...

Seraphina left the auction house and went to the pharmacy to buy a pregnancy test.

She took out her phone and dialed a number.

Soon, a childlike voice came from the other end, "Hello, Granny~"

It was little Pip.

Seraphina clutched her phone, "Pip, tell me the truth, is Granny nice to you?"

"Yes, she is."

"Well, Granny is in trouble now, will you help?"

"Of course."

"Pip, your grandpa is demanding 10.2 billion from me, but Granny doesn't have the money, boohoo."

Little Pip on the other end, "...Granny, I don't have that kind of money either."

Seraphina quickly stopped pretending to cry as she came up with a good idea, then said mysteriously, "Pip, 10.2 billion is just an astronomical figure. You just need to move your little fingers and add this astronomical number to your grandpa's account. He won't notice for a while."

"Huh?" Little Pip thought of himself as mischievous enough, but in front of Granny, he admitted defeat every time.

This idea could only come from Granny.

"Pip, Granny only needs one word from you. Will you help or not?"

Pip, could he say no?

Seraphina couldn't.

"...Alright, 10.2, right?" Little Pip nodded helplessly under Seraphina's persuasion.

"Yes, that's right. Just send him 10 billion and a hundred as well, note that, and say the hundred is my tip for him that night."