

## **Substitute B 821**

Chapter 821: Reaching for Her Little Hand

Sleep...

Did she ever sleep with him?

How does he not know?

Clearly, she hasn't.

Their intimate moments were few; she was unwilling. Every time he touched her, she would tense up, turn pale, feel cold all over, and put on a look as if she had been violated.

He also didn't dare truly touch her. Once a man loses control over his desires, it's quite dangerous. He didn't dare let himself get lost in her.

Once the gates of desire are opened, they can't be shut.

He was smiling, and this smile was so... wicked. Cecilia Pence had already sensitively noticed the unusual vibe between this pair of fake siblings, and she instantly felt surrounded by danger, but she still smiled on the outside, "Justin, Leah is still young. I'm really afraid she'll go down the wrong path. After all, many pretty girls nowadays would seduce men to secure themselves a long-term meal ticket..."

"What are you trying to say?" At this moment, Justin Xavier suddenly interrupted her.

Cecilia turned her head and met his cold black eyes; he was looking at her now.

His expression was calm, his gaze serene, but upon closer inspection, there seemed to be two dangerous and terrifying little abysses in his eyes, ready to swallow one whole if not careful.

"I..."

"Miss Pence, my mother likes you very much, and I'm willing to marry you. As long as you stay quiet and don't stir up trouble, adhere to your duties, you can become Mrs. Xavier. So, in the future, think before you speak, even if you see something, close your eyes. Do you understand?"

"..." Cecilia's heart instantly sank into the abyss. What... what is he implying?

He harbors those kinds of illicit thoughts about his sister, and now that his fiancée caught on, he doesn't try to cover it up but dares to be so blatant!

Justin Xavier calmly retracted his gaze at this moment; a melodious ringtone sounded. It was a call from his secretary.

Justin Xavier pressed the button to answer, "Hello."

The secretary's voice quickly came through, "President, your father has arrived in Aethelgard, and he is going to see... Miss Thorne."

What?

Justin Xavier quickly furrowed his thick brows, a shadow covering his handsome brow line. Without saying a word, he directly hung up the call.

Cecilia also sensed the sudden coldness in his aura and immediately asked with concern, "Justin, what happened?"

The next second, harsh braking sounds rang out. Justin Xavier parked by the roadside, then spat out two indifferent words, "Get out!"

What?

He wants her to get out?

Cecilia glanced around. They were on the highway, and he wanted to leave her at the highway exit!

At that moment, Justin Xavier turned his head, and a sharp, cold gaze casually fell upon her, "What, do you want me to invite you to get out?"

"..." Cecilia's face turned pale, her eyes reddened. She clenched her fists, then opened the car door and got out. "Justin, I..."

Justin Xavier stepped on the gas, and the Aston Martin roared off at rocket speed.

Cecilia was left choking on dust. She was so angry she was about to lose her mind. She was also curious about what could have made the usually calm and self-restrained Justin Xavier's face change so quickly.

...

Serena had visited Leah Thorne for a while before heading back. Leah had taken a milk and rose petal bath and then came out wearing a spaghetti strap nightgown.

At this moment, a "ding-dong" sounded, and her apartment doorbell rang.

Who could that be?

Leah casually grabbed a black coat and put it on, then opened the apartment door to find Justin Xavier's father, Hugh Xavier, outside.

Leah's feelings towards Hugh Xavier were very complex. Back then, her dad and mom both died in a car accident, and her brother went missing overnight. Suddenly, Leah became an orphan, and it was then that Hugh Xavier appeared, bringing her to the Xavier family.

Leah was very grateful to Hugh Xavier. For a long time, this Xavier uncle took on the role of her father, but she soon faced Mrs. Xavier's sharp verbal abuse, saying that she and her mother were vixens and that she would grow up to climb into Hugh Xavier's bed.

Because of this, Leah felt awkward around Hugh Xavier, and as she grew up, she distanced herself from him more and more.

Now, she didn't expect Hugh Xavier to visit her.

"Uncle Xavier, why are you here?"

Hugh Xavier looked at Leah with affection, "Leah, I happened to be in Aethelgard for some business, so I came to see you too. These years, you haven't come back home or reached out to me on your own; I worry about you."

"Uncle Xavier, I'm doing well; you don't have to worry."

Hugh Xavier glanced inside the apartment, "Leah, is there anyone else in your apartment? Let's go inside and talk."

Leah had grown up; regardless of what Hugh Xavier thought of her, being alone together was inappropriate, "Uncle Xavier, my friend is inside. Tonight is not convenient."

Hugh Xavier nodded, "Leah, it's still the same words. Your mom and I were associates from the old days. I brought you home to treat you as my daughter, but my wife..."

As he spoke, Hugh Xavier let out a heavy sigh, "Child, I feel guilty for how you've suffered all these years."

Leah felt a tremor pass through her rows of neatly brushed lashes, "Uncle Xavier, you haven't let me down. I'm very grateful to you."

"Leah, I..." Hugh Xavier hesitated, his face full of sorrow, then slowly extended his hand to grab Leah's small hand.

Before he could, a low laugh suddenly reached his ear, "Dad, why didn't you let me know you were coming to Aethelgard?"

Leah looked up and immediately saw Justin Xavier.

Justin had arrived, now standing tall and imposingly in the dimly lit corner ahead. The light there was sparse, his impeccable handsome face hidden in shadows, giving off an air of mystery.

He had arrived in haste, his broad shoulders draped in cold frost, and though he was smiling, the chill in that smile was bone-deep.

--A daily story snippet by Lucille Willow

The following morning, Jude Crawford arrived at the company. The receptionist quickly approached, "President, these are all the gifts sent by those socialites yesterday; how would you like to handle them?"

Jude took a look at the mountain of gifts, all from international luxury brands, and without expression, started to walk away, "Throw them all out."

"Yes, President."

Then Jude suddenly spotted a delicate tote bag and inexplicably stopped walking.

"President, this gift was sent to you by a girl, and this girl was very beautiful. She waited for you the entire day yesterday and only left late at night," the receptionist said, handing over the tote bag.

Jude took out the gift inside; it was a... star jar.

Inside were colorful stars that she had folded for him with her own hands.

There was also a note. Jude took it out; there was a charming little bell attached to it. The spring breeze outside gently prompted the bell to emit a clear, pleasant chime. The note had a line of tiny, handwritten words: On the seventh of July in the Hall of Longevity, wishing you a happy birthday, eternal happiness~

Isabelle Willow wished the 18-year-old Jude Crawford a happy birthday and eternal happiness~

The light boat in the vast sea, she returns from far away. May this life bring a ten-mile spring breeze to smooth all his past afflictions and let him be happy.

Chapter 822: She's Waiting for Him

Leah Thorne paused, why was he here?

Hadn't he left with Cecilia Pence?

Hugh Xavier was about to take Leah Thorne's small hand, but missed, leaving his hand awkwardly hanging in mid-air. He turned to look at his son, "Justin, why are you here?"

Justin Xavier had one hand casually in his pocket, his eyes dark and inscrutable, "Dad, are you sure you want to talk to me here?"

Hugh Xavier frowned briefly, then turned and followed Justin Xavier.

Leah Thorne stood in place watching the backs of the father and son as they left. She hadn't expected both of them to show up tonight. The relationship between the two had always been poor, and she had no idea what they would discuss now. She gently furrowed her elegant eyebrows.

...

In the dim corridor, Justin Xavier and Hugh Xavier stood together. Hugh Xavier pursed his lips and asked, "Justin, why are you here?"

Justin Xavier's lips curved into a half-smile, "Dad, shouldn't you be asking yourself that?"

"You..." Hugh Xavier looked at his son. His marriage to Justin's mother had been a union of two wealthy families, lacking genuine affection. Plus, his heart had always been preoccupied with his first love, Eleanor Sawyer, who was Leah Thorne's mother, so he never liked Justin as a son.

However, Justin Xavier had been outstanding from a young age, a fitting heir to a wealthy family. As time went on, Hugh discovered that this son grew more composed and profound with age, like now, as those cold

eyes casually landed on him with an insidiously sharp precision, as if penetrating him with X-ray vision, leaving him defenseless.

He was, after all, Justin's father, yet his son used this tone with him!

Hugh Xavier placed both hands behind his back. "Justin, Leah is not a child anymore. She's not your biological sister. You shouldn't seek her out casually to avoid damaging her reputation!"

"Heh," Justin Xavier let out a low laugh, "Dad, I thought you didn't know Leah is your adopted daughter. Aren't you afraid of the gossip for coming to see her here, late at night?"

Struck speechless, Hugh Xavier's expression turned unpleasant. He scolded in a low voice, "Justin, have you let your mother's influence get to you? Your mother is crazy, don't believe a word she says."

"Don't believe what my mother says about you cheating with Leah's mom years ago, or that you brought Leah into the house with ulterior motives, and plan to have her in your bed one day?" Justin's words were spine-chillingly blunt, leaving Hugh ashamed.

"You!" Hugh Xavier's face changed drastically. Without a second thought, he raised his hand to slap Justin hard across his handsome face.

Justin Xavier did not avoid it. With a "smack," his entire handsome face was forced sideways by the slap.

Hugh Xavier was trembling with anger, pointing at Justin, and shouted, "Justin, are your wings fully grown now? Let me tell you, I'm not dead yet, I haven't handed the Xavier family and Xavier Corp over to you yet. I can make you the heir of the Xavier family and the president of Xavier Corp. I can also strip you of these positions and leave you with nothing!"

"For years, your mother has been a lunatic, a fool. Don't follow her ways, or else both of you will be kicked out by me!"

There was no trace of emotion on Justin Xavier's handsome face. He merely used the tip of his tongue to press against his right cheek before slowly turning his face back. Looking at Hugh Xavier, he thought his mother's current state was the result of his father's handiwork.

The Xavier family members are all mad.

Not a single one is normal.

Heh.

Justin Xavier shrugged, his deep voice exuding a hint of a light, mocking laugh, "Since the facade is already torn, there's nothing more to discuss."

With that, he put one hand in his pocket, approached Hugh Xavier, and spoke in a low voice, "Stop playing the nauseating role of the benevolent father. I know better than anyone what your intentions towards Leah Thorne are. Don't mess with her, or else... you'll destroy the entire Xavier family with your own hands."

Hugh Xavier's pupils contracted as he looked at Justin standing in front of him, shocked that his son would dare threaten him.

Only now did Hugh Xavier realize that the son he had never liked had somehow grown into the very thing he feared.

Hugh remembered something from over a decade ago when Leah Thorne was brought into the Xavier family. Day by day, she blossomed. Even before she grew into her current enchanting self, she was like a fresh bud, tempting him to pick.

One night, while Leah was bathing and his wife wasn't home, he had dismissed all the maids to enter Leah's room.

He quietly pushed open the bathroom door, peering inside...

Before seeing anything, he heard a series of firm knocks at the door. Turning back in surprise, he saw Justin standing at the door.

Young Justin stood there, his cold black eyes silently and eerily watching him, seemingly peering into his soul and laying bare his filth and shame.

He left quickly, and Justin never spoke of the incident to anyone. It was as if father and son had turned a page on that day's events.

But Hugh knew a thorn was deeply embedded between him and Justin.

Not long after, Justin took Leah and left the Xavier family, never to return.

Now, hearing Justin's dark and defiant words, Hugh felt the shame of that day he was caught peeping at Leah in the shower.

Hugh wanted to speak, but under Justin's cold and indifferent gaze, he could only snort and leave in a huff.

Hugh Xavier left.

Justin Xavier stood alone in the dim corridor, his facial expression unchanged, shrouded in a pale grayness.

"President." At this time, his personal assistant Coleman approached, offering a clean handkerchief.

Justin Xavier did not take it. He was unbothered by the slap on his face, but he spoke in a deep voice, "Have someone keep an eye on Hugh Xavier."

Coleman nodded in understanding, recalling Hugh Xavier's brazen words that Justin would be left with nothing; he found this notion to be the biggest joke he's ever heard.

"President, I don't think your father will easily let go of Miss Thorne. Perhaps let Miss Thorne know his intentions so she can prepare herself."

Justin Xavier slightly lowered his striking eyes, "No need, I don't want her ears sullied by this."

With that, Justin Xavier turned around.

...

Justin Xavier walked to the veranda and saw Leah Thorne up ahead, waiting for him without going into the apartment.

Chapter 823: So He Also Belittled Her This Way

She lowered her little head, chestnut curls slightly damp hanging on her shoulders, stripped of her usual thorny and striking chill, now she appeared very docile and gentle.

She used to always be so docile and gentle, her smile very sweet, until she changed.

It was probably that night of her 18th birthday when he schemed and took her, destroyed her. That night, she left dragging her suitcase, and when she came back, she had this thorny demeanor.

Justin Xavier slowly stopped his steps. He just stood there, looking at her from afar. He remembered the first time he met her many years ago.

Back then, she was the cherished jewel of the high-status Thorne family. Once, his father Hugh Xavier took him to visit the Thorne family, and Leah Thorne returned with the children from the courtyard after school.

That day, Leah Thorne was wearing a pair of round-toed little black leather shoes, her long hair naturally wavy, her delicate and radiant little face adorned with a bright and dazzling smile.

She was surrounded in the center by those children, all of whom liked her and were eager to talk to her.

One of the children saw him and quickly pointed, "Leah, look quickly, there's another guest at your house, probably asking your daddy for a favor."

Little Leah turned her head and instantly saw him.

She was different from the other children, without a natural sense of superiority or aloofness. She ran over, her big, soft eyes blinking at him, her voice sweetly calling him, "Big brother, hello, I'll give you candy."

She handed over a colorful lollipop from her small hand.

In the many years that followed, Justin Xavier always knew that Leah Thorne and he weren't from the same world, just like the distance between them now, separated by mountains and rivers.

He could only stand on this side, looking at her from afar.

She had grown up in the sunshine, a rose carefully nurtured, while he had grown up in darkness and filth, wanting most to destroy her kind, but at the same time, wanting her the most.

At this moment, Leah Thorne looked up and saw him.

Their eyes met, and Justin Xavier withdrew his thoughts, then set long strides and walked to her side.

Leah Thorne's gaze fell on the right side of his face. Just now Hugh Xavier slapped him without holding back, so his right cheek was red with a faint palm print, "Did Uncle Xavier hit you?"

Justin Xavier curled his lips, "You saw it and still ask?"

"Why did Uncle Xavier hit you, did you have an argument?" Leah Thorne stepped forward, raised her small hand to touch the red mark on his handsome face.

Justin Xavier stretched out his large hand, grabbing her small hand, his thin lips curling into a wicked arc, "My dad doesn't allow me to bother you."

"Serves you right! He should have beaten you to death!" Leah cast him a glance and withdrew her hand directly.

At this moment, Justin Xavier noticed her, a small section of pink neck was exposed from her black coat collar, her skin was too delicate, pale and fragrant, and it seemed like she wore nothing inside.

Justin Xavier's handsome face "brushed" coldly, "Leah, did you really run out without wearing anything inside?"

What do you mean?

Leah stared at him.

Justin Xavier extended his finger, reaching toward her collar.

"Snap," Leah directly slapped his hand away, "Justin Xavier, you'd better behave, don't keep touching here and there. Don't forget, you are engaged now."

Leah turned around, ready to enter the apartment.

But Justin Xavier clasped her glossy, fragrant shoulder, forcibly turning her around, then pushed her against the wall.

His actions weren't gentle. Leah's delicate back slammed into it, making her furrow her willow brows in pain, her soft and charming features chilled inch by inch, "Justin Xavier, just say if you want to strip my clothes, is that necessary?"

Justin Xavier's handsome face clouded over; he paid her no heed. He raised his hand and pulled down her coat collar, her glossy shoulder sporting only a thin black spaghetti strap.

"Leah, you really are not wearing anything!" he spat out through gritted teeth.

"..." Is this person crazy? She's wearing a spaghetti strap nightdress! Does a spaghetti strap nightdress not count as clothes in his eyes?

"Justin Xavier, what upset you again? I'll wear what I want, what does it have to do with you? Why are you so angry, did I ask you to streak?"

She had just taken a bath when she heard someone knock at the door, so she threw on a coat and went out, is there a problem?

What era is this? Do women have to wrap themselves up tightly before going out? Wouldn't it be better to spend that time educating men on virtue, to lock up their lower halves?

Justin Xavier felt he wouldn't be so angry even if he were streaking, his two big hands pressing on her shoulders, his strikingly handsome features shrouded in gloom, "Leah, how many times have I told you, don't go out showing off, don't attract other men's gaze, what would it take for you to listen?"

Leah raised her hand, tucked a lock of silky hair behind her ear, her lazy tone hinted at some fatal allure, "Justin Xavier, it's my business to be beautiful, I only handle being beautiful, not dealing with those men. Not every woman needs a man, now get lost."

With that, she forcefully pushed him, trying to pry him away.

They say a woman is at her most beautiful when she doesn't love anyone; these words are indeed true.

Justin Xavier casually rolled his Adam's apple, his eyes fixed on her, "Do these men include my dad?"

What?

Leah suddenly froze, looking up at him.

In her confused gaze, Justin Xavier curled his thin lips cruelly and spoke to her in a voice only the two of them could hear, "Leah, you know what I'm talking about, right? Back then, my dad was obsessed with your mom, you look a lot like your mom, and even more beautiful than her; my dad is also a man. You dress like this at night to see him, what are you trying to do, hmm?"

"Let me think, if I hadn't shown up, would you two now be holding hands, or hugging, or maybe you'd invite him into your apartment, two single people, under the guise of adoption, becoming his real... adopted daughter?"

Justin Xavier emphasized "adopted daughter," with a sharp bitter sarcasm.

Leah's little face suddenly turned pale.

She didn't even know when the term "adopted daughter" became such a dirty word. Her childhood memories were filled with all sorts of nasty insults from Mrs. Xavier, saying she would climb onto Hugh Xavier's bed when she grew up.

All these years, she covered her ears, refusing to hear such voices. Sometimes, turning a deaf ear is a way to protect oneself from getting hurt, but now Justin Xavier said the exact same thing as Mrs. Xavier.

Turns out, he saw her that way too.

Turns out, he also regarded her so cheaply in his heart.

Chapter 824: He Custom-Made a Princess Dress for Her

Smack!

The crisp sound of a slap echoed once more. Leah Thorne raised her hand and delivered a fierce slap to Justin Xavier.

Justin Xavier's handsome face was once again struck askew.

Leah looked at the handprint on his left cheek, harmonizing so well with the one on the right. She curled her red lips into an exceedingly cold and alluring smile, "Indeed, it looks much more pleasing now."

After saying this, she pulled open the apartment door and went inside.

With a boom, the apartment door slammed shut, leaving Justin Xavier outside.

Justin Xavier's large hands hanging by his sides clenched tightly into fists. In truth, he wanted to control himself, to stop saying those hurtful words. He knew very well that these things bothered her.

Her parents and brother were her dearest loves. Becoming an orphan due to family turmoil in her childhood was her greatest pain. She entered the Xavier family overnight, and back then, she was so young, growing up in the midst of his mother's curses. He often saw her huddled in a corner of the bed, staring blankly...

He knew she would hurt.

However, he just couldn't control himself. The self-restraint about which he was so usually calm and composed, completely crumbled the moment he saw her come running out without wearing anything.

He had always known how intensely possessive he was towards her, intensely to a pathological degree.

Justin Xavier punched the wall with force.

...

Since that night, Justin Xavier never contacted Leah Thorne again, nor did he appear before her. However, the wedding date between Justin Xavier and Cecilia Pence was set, just half a month away.

On this day, Leah Thorne was out shopping with Serena and encountered an acquaintance, Cecilia Pence.

Cecilia Pence happily looked at Leah, "Leah, dear sister, what a coincidence to run into you here. I was just trying on wedding dresses. Can you help me see if it looks good?"

Very soon, Cecilia came out wearing a wedding dress, holding up the hem of the dress and twirling twice in front of Leah, "Leah, dear sister, how is it?"

There was a moment's daze in Leah's gaze at the wedding dress. A long time ago, her dream was to marry Justin Xavier in a white wedding dress and become his bride.

He had cherished her for many years. Everyone in the City of Aethelgard knew how much he pampered her. She always thought he was her entire world.

But he single-handedly destroyed her entire world.

Now another woman was going to marry him in a wedding dress.

Before Leah could speak, Cecilia was delighted, "Justin, you're here?"

Leah lifted her eyes and saw Justin Xavier, whom she hadn't seen in days.

Today, Justin Xavier was still in his perfectly fitting black suit, the superior material accentuating his sharp and upright demeanor, his handsome face more aloof and indifferent than ever.

Cecilia quickly came to Justin's side, twirling in her wedding dress again, full of admiration and hope, "Justin, does it look good?"

Justin Xavier stretched out his hand and hugged Cecilia's slender waist, nodding gently, "It looks good."

Cecilia immediately smiled like a blooming flower.

At this moment, Justin finally lifted his eyes, looking at Leah.

Leah curled her lips and generously called out, "Brother."

Justin Xavier nodded, and the two of them looked just like simple siblings, as if that night had never happened.

At this moment, Serena smiled and said, "President Xavier, Miss Pence, Leah and I will not disturb your wedding dress fitting any longer. We'll take our leave now. Bye-bye."

Serena pulled Leah's small hand away.

The two best friends left, and Justin watched Leah's graceful silhouette vanish from his sight, feeling somewhat disenchanted as he withdrew his hand from Cecilia's waist.

Cecilia felt her waist loosen and froze for a moment, but she wisely chose not to point it out, not wishing to relive the embarrassment of being abandoned on the freeway last time.

"Justin, I'll go change out of the wedding dress. Please wait for me." Cecilia walked into the fitting room.

...

A few minutes later, Cecilia came out, but Justin was nowhere to be found. It was unknown where he had gone.

"Miss Pence, were you satisfied with that wedding dress earlier? That dress was custom-made for you by President Xavier from Aurelia. Miss Pence, President Xavier truly pampers you; we are truly envious of you."

Savoring the sales associate's praise, Cecilia's vanity was greatly satisfied, "Yes, I'm very satisfied. The one Justin custom-made for me must be the best."

"Oh, right, Miss Pence, President Xavier also custom-made a princess dress."

What?

A princess dress?

Cecilia wasn't aware of the princess dress. Justin Xavier hadn't mentioned it to her.

"Yes, Miss Pence, look, here is the princess dress." The sales associate reached out and "swish" pulled open the floor-length curtains, and a pink princess dress fiercely entered Cecilia's vision.

This princess dress was intricately crafted with gold threads, exuding utmost luxury, yet the design was lightweight and fashionable, very much a youthful style. This was probably the kind of princess dress every girl dreamed of having in her wardrobe.

"Miss Pence, President Xavier truly is too good to you, a wedding dress and a princess dress."

"..."

Cecilia couldn't speak because she knew the princess dress wasn't for her. If she guessed correctly, the princess dress was for... Leah!

Justin Xavier actually custom-made a princess dress for Leah!

If you were a woman, which would you choose, a wedding dress or a princess dress?

Cecilia dug her nails into her palms with jealousy.

...

Justin Xavier went looking for Leah, but couldn't find her, instead seeing Serena ahead.

Serena waited there specifically for him. Now her bright eyes rested on his handsome face, smiling gently, "President Xavier, are you looking for Leah? Leah went to the restroom."

Justin Xavier walked over, "I have nothing much, just thought of giving you a ride."

Serena looked at him, "President Xavier truly never tires of being a chauffeur."

--A daily snippet from the Luc-Luc series

After Jude Crawford's 18th birthday, his life became extraordinarily busy. As a new aristocrat in the business world, on this day, Jude Crawford was invited to visit Z University.

Pausing slowly by the Z University showcase window, Jude Crawford was captivated by the jewelry design displayed within.

"Mr. Crawford, haven't you heard? Recently a girl has burst into the scene, stunning the entire jewelry world, and this design sketch is from her hand."

"A girl?" Jude Crawford asked.

The president of Z University nodded, "Yes, a girl. Her name is... Isabelle Willow."

In this life, Isabelle Willow gained fame earlier than in the past, at only 14 years old, she was already dazzling the entire jewelry world.

This was the first time Jude Crawford heard "Isabelle Willow" and the second time he heard was at a banquet.

A rich heir, mysteriously and excitedly told him, "Jude, you haven't been back to the City of Aethelgard in a long time. Let me tell you, the entire city now talks about the Willow family having a daughter, renowned throughout the capital."

Chapter 825: Knocking on His Door

Justin Xavier looked at Serena Sterling, "What do you want to say to me?"

Serena smiled, her bright eyes sparkling, "President Xavier, you are getting married soon, so what do you consider Leah?"

Justin showed no expression, "Sister."

"Sister? This is the first time I've seen a brother like you, who is too attentive, too strong, fulfilling the duties of a boyfriend under the name of being a brother." Serena laughed.

Justin wore a pair of gold-rimmed glasses, adding to his handsome and elegant aura; he looked into the distance, his thin lips pulling into a subtle, sarcastic smile, "I don't see any problem with that."

"President Xavier, you're smart, you should know what I'm saying. Leah doesn't lack a thoughtful and strong boyfriend, the problem is that you are in the way, and no one else can get close." Serena turned to Justin and softly asked, "President Xavier, how does it feel to protect her at all costs while also wanting to destroy her?"

Justin pursed his thin lips, his clear, cold eyes fell on Serena's face, it was often said that Hayden Crawford's woman is wise and exceptional, indeed it's true.

Justin slipped one hand into his pocket, maintaining his clean and gentle demeanor, he slowly raised his thin lips, voice low and indifferent, "Do you think there's a difference between being her brother and being her boyfriend?"

Serena's feathers trembled.

Justin's smile was faint, almost non-existent, "I've always stopped at the line of being a brother, never moving forward one step, this restraint is my greatest kindness to her."

Having said that, Justin turned and left.

Serena stood in place, watching Justin's figure disappear from her view; this time, her conversation with Justin ended without resolution, probably meaning next time don't bother me!

"President Xavier." At this moment, Serena called out to him.

Justin paused his steps.

Serena slowly said, "The person who falls in love first is always the loser, why not consider taking a step back, letting go, and allowing Leah to leave, you and the Xavier family occupied her whole life before, Leah should be grateful for your adoption, but what you've pressured upon Leah also caused a thousand wounds in her heart, you've given her too much pain."

Justin said nothing and simply left.

At this time, Leah Thorne came over, "Serena, shall we go?"

Serena withdrew her thoughts, "Okay."

...

Justin Xavier and Cecilia Pence's wedding date is approaching, tomorrow is the grand wedding party, and Leah, as his sister, must attend the wedding, so she flew back to Bayside.

According to tradition, Leah should return home the night before the wedding, but Leah hasn't been back to the Xavier family for many years, so she didn't go back.

Cecilia Pence stood upstairs at the Xavier's, passing by the study room, she heard arguing coming from inside.

It was Hugh Xavier and Mrs. Xavier, Laura.

Laura sat in a wheelchair, with an unhappy face, looking resentfully at Hugh, mockingly speaking, "What, you seem really disappointed Leah didn't come back tonight, your entire soul seems restless."

Hugh furrowed his brows, "Laura, what madness are you on about, leave, I don't want to see you!"

"Hugh, in what way did I say anything wrong, don't think I don't know of your sordid thoughts, Leah has already charmed you to the point of insanity, I wonder how long you can withstand it!"

"Laura, get out of here!"

Outside the door, Cecilia's mouth was agape in shock, oh my, what did she just hear?

Hugh actually had... those thoughts about Leah?

Cecilia knew the relationship between Justin and Leah was abnormal, but she did not know the relationship between Hugh and Leah was also abnormal; unexpectedly both father and son of the Xavier family are fond of Leah?

This explosive news made Cecilia's heartbeat accelerate, she seemed to have stumbled upon a tremendous secret.

Leah is currently thriving in the entertainment circle as a big star. If she releases this news, tomorrow's entertainment headlines might be overwhelming with Leah caught in the Xavier father and son scandal, morality collapsed, views shattered.

Given Leah's current fame, the snowball effect in media will quickly expand, growing larger and larger.

The higher Leah stands now, the harder she'll fall.

The current policy is very strict, Leah, being known as Xavier's adopted daughter, is now entangled romantically with her adoptive father and brother, such a sensitive topic would surely damn her, she'd soon face a ban.

Her gorgeous little face would turn into a target for everyone, and those eager business tycoons would pounce like wolves, wishing to devour her completely; she would truly become a man's plaything.

After recovering from the shock, Cecilia quickly curled her lips; she already thought of a brilliant plan, she wants Leah buried with no place to rest!

...

On the day of the wedding, Leah returned to Xavier's.

The last time she left Xavier was on her 18th birthday, and she never returned since.

Returning to the familiar place, Leah's heart felt dull, somewhat numbed, but she didn't show anything on her face.

In the bride's makeup room, Cecilia warmly held Leah's little hand, "Leah dear, you finally came back, today I am very nervous, Justin has some urgent matters to handle before he can return, please accompany me well."

Today is the wedding day, Justin is handling some urgent matters, but the distinguished guests have already arrived, the wedding between Bayside's richest man Justin Xavier and the Pence family's daughter Cecilia Pence is quite a spectacle, all media reporters attended, a ten-mile length of red carpet, dazzling.

Leah nodded, "Okay."

"Leah dear, have a seat first."

Leah sat on the sofa, while a makeup artist was doing Cecilia's makeup. Leah, feeling bored, picked up a magazine to read when she suddenly smelled a faint unfamiliar fragrance.

What scent?

Leah's black pupils quickly lost color, becoming dull and mechanical; she stood up, like a puppet, and walked out.

Walking alone down the corridor, she seemed manipulated, arriving at a room door, raising her hand, she pressed the doorbell.

"Who is it?" The door opened; it was the Xavier housekeeper.

The housekeeper was Hugh's confidant.

Seeing Leah, the housekeeper's eyes lit up, because this was Hugh's room, Leah coming to Hugh's room is significant in itself.

As a confidant, the housekeeper was fully aware of master Hugh's intentions, he excitedly said, "Miss, why have you come, please come in."

The housekeeper stepped aside, sycophantically inviting Leah inside.

Leah took small steps, mechanically entered.

"Miss, the master is bathing, he'll be out soon."

Just as the words fell, a 'click' sound came, the bathroom door opened, and Hugh emerged wearing a bathrobe.

Chapter 826: Why Put Up a Chastity Monument?

Hugh Xavier immediately saw Leah Thorne in the room, his eyes brightened, "Leah, why are you here?"

Hearing someone speak, Leah Thorne's hollow clear eyes blankly turned to look at Hugh Xavier.

The butler quickly smiled, "Sir, you and Miss Thorne can chat slowly, I'll take my leave now."

The silent room was left with only Leah Thorne and Hugh Xavier, Leah was still in a daze, with no spirit at all.

Hugh Xavier approached, "Leah, did you come looking for me for something, or did someone bully you?"

Leah Thorne was not spirited now, yet her natural beauty added an air of pitiful fragility as she dumbly looked at Hugh Xavier.

Hugh Xavier felt a pang of sympathy; this was his room, Leah coming here to find him was already giving him some sort of hint.

Hugh Xavier came to Leah's side, then slowly reached out, tentatively touching Leah's small hand.

Leah did not resist, giving Hugh Xavier great encouragement, he immediately grasped Leah's small hand tightly in his palm.

"Leah, just tell me what you have to say, rest assured, I will definitely stand up for you."

Leah remained dazed, not moving.

Hugh Xavier felt that the small hand in his palm was both tender and smooth, the sensation was like silk, and the evil thoughts in his heart ignited with a "whoosh", this feeling was forbidden and thrilling, more so than his feelings for Leah's mom, Eleanor Sawyer, back then.

When Leah was very young, he had peeped at her bathing, although he hadn't succeeded.

Now that Leah had come to him willingly, how could Hugh Xavier hold back?

With a strong pull, Leah fell into the soft bed.

The sudden sensation of weightlessness startled Leah, her muddled senses abruptly cleared, her black pupils regained focus, and she looked at Hugh Xavier in shock.

How did Hugh Xavier come here?

Or rather, how did she get here?

"Uncle Hugh, what's happening to me?" Leah hurriedly tried to get up from the bed.

This was Hugh Xavier's room, and she was lying on Hugh Xavier's bed, making tiny pink particles rise on her skin, her whole being electrified to get up.

She didn't have time to think about what had happened, her whole brain was in chaos, and she had a very bad feeling.

"Leah, you've come, where else do you want to go?" At this time, Hugh Xavier eagerly pounced forward.

Leah's pupils shrank, looking at Hugh Xavier pouncing towards her with unparalleled shock, she dodged nimbly, avoiding Hugh Xavier.

Hugh Xavier lunged into the air, feeling a bit displeased, "Leah, what do you mean by this, could it be that I misunderstood your intentions?"

Leah paused for a moment, gently furrowing her brows; although still unsure what happened, the Hugh Xavier in front of her was no longer the Uncle Hugh she knew.

Leah calmly said, "Uncle Hugh, what do you think I mean?"

"Leah, are you still calling me Uncle Hugh? I don't want to be your Uncle Hugh, I want to be your man!" Hugh Xavier said.

Leah's breath hitched, just staring at Hugh Xavier before her, she felt a buzzing in her ears, unsure of what she had just heard.

He was the one who brought her to the Xavier family.

She had always been grateful and respectful to him.

Although Hugh Xavier could not compare to her dad, at least in Leah's mind, Hugh Xavier was akin to a father figure, but now he was telling her he wants to be her man!

"Uncle Hugh, you..."

"Leah," Hugh Xavier gazed obsessively at Leah's small face, "you are becoming more and more like your mum. Every time I watch you grow up, my fondness for you increases a bit. Back then when I brought you to the Xavier family, it wasn't to raise you as a daughter, I was always waiting for you to grow up."

"Leah, maybe you think I'm a bit old, but older men know how to be tender. As long as you agree to be with me, I'll immediately divorce that crazy woman Laura Xavier, I've had enough of her. Leah, I love you, the one I've always loved is you."

Hearing these words, Leah felt her stomach churn violently, she just wanted to vomit.

These words were definitely the most disgusting she had ever heard, no comparison needed.

So Hugh Xavier had hidden such vile and filthy thoughts under the guise of a kind father all these years, Leah thought of herself foolishly calling him "Uncle Hugh, Uncle Hugh" all these years and felt herself laughably foolish.

"Leah, just agree to be with me, I can't wait any longer." At this moment, Hugh Xavier came over to grab her small hand.

Leah quickly struggled, not letting him touch her, and her soft, charming face turned cold, "Hugh Xavier, you are truly... revolting!"

After saying this, Leah turned and left.

Hugh Xavier's face changed, revealing a trace of ferocity, he immediately blocked Leah's way, "Leah, do you still like my son Justin?"

Leah halted her steps.

The matter between Justin Xavier and Leah Thorne was a hurdle Hugh Xavier couldn't overcome. Back then, when he was caught peeping at Leah's bath by Justin, and the precious child he had painstakingly brought

over from the Thorne family just grew up and was snatched away by Justin, it was Hugh Xavier's unresolved resentment.

"Am I wrong, Leah, you've already slept with my son, and wherever there's a whore, why bother with chastity, what's another man to sleep with?"

"Moreover, if it weren't for me back then, you would have starved to death on the streets. I've raised you all these years, so consider it a debt, you should also sleep with me once!"

Leah felt icy cold all over, looking at the grotesquely transformed Hugh Xavier before her, she cursed under her breath, "Beast!"

She wanted to leave.

But Hugh Xavier grabbed her and then pushed her onto the bed, impatiently pressing down on her.

"Let go of me! Hugh Xavier, even if I had starved to death back then, it would have been better than this!" Leah's eyes reddened, she would rather have never come to this Xavier family in this life.

Because the woman below struggled madly, Hugh Xavier wasn't getting any advantage, with a "slap" sound, he raised his hand and slapped Leah.

Leah's small face turned to the side from the hit, blood oozed at the corner of her mouth, she felt dizzy.

But taking this chance, Leah wrestled free from Hugh Xavier and fled.

Just as she ran out, a blinding media spotlight flashed over, a swarm of reporters appeared.

...

In the room.

Leah sat disheveled on her bed, her face pale as paper, devoid of any blood.

It was chaotic outside, all the bodyguards were mobilized, barely holding back the crazed reporters at the door, assistant Madame Goldie placed a laptop in front of her, her expression grim, "Leah, this is bad, there's trouble, you ran out of Hugh Xavier's room disheveled and were caught by reporters, I suspect all the newspapers and magazines are working overtime now, brewing a storm."

Chapter 827: As You Wish, This Wedding Is Over

"Leah, this topic is far too sensitive. You are already the reigning queen of media buzz. Even a minor issue can become a hot topic, with shares and comments easily surpassing the million mark. If this matter breaks, your rivals in the entertainment circle, envious of your fame, will surely seize the opportunity to take you down. The entertainment industry is a place where the strong prey on the weak."

"Society's tolerance for women is very low, and coupled with your background, getting entangled with the Xavier family father and son has set off a monumental scandal. This topic will spread like wildfire to every corner, and in an instant, your image will plummet to the bottom."

"Leah, from now on, it will be hard for you to recover."

Leah Thorne felt icy cold in her hands and feet. She still couldn't remember how she managed to walk away from the crowd. Today was the wedding of Justin Xavier and Cecilia Pence, with distinguished guests gathered, reporters swarming, and the sound of cameras clicking everywhere.

Leah had been in the entertainment industry for several years. Even under the dazzling spotlight of numerous media outlets, she never felt nervous or stage-frightened, but earlier, she was gripped by a fear.

Those people looked at her and whispered,

"OMG, Leah Thorne and Hugh Xavier?"

"Don't get it wrong, folks! Leah Thorne came out of Hugh Xavier's room disheveled in the middle of the night just to discuss a script."

"Wow, superstar Leah Thorne, what kind of show is this? Hugh Xavier is practically her foster father. Even the most melodramatic soap opera wouldn't dare portray such a storyline."

"If you ask me, what's the big deal? Leah Thorne, with her stunning beauty, is tangled with Hugh Xavier, and we all know President Xavier dotes on her as well. The Xavier father and son are both utterly captivated by her."

"Leah Thorne, could you do just one thing and let go of my President Xavier? You're practically sullyng my idol."...

Leah closed her eyes, like a tightly combed feather fan, forcing herself out of those voices, "Madame Goldie, I'm very tired. Let's talk tomorrow. I'm going to take a bath first."

Leah went into the bathroom.

...

Filling the bathtub with hot water, Leah removed her clothes and threw them into the trash bin, then swung her long, fair legs over the bathtub's edge and submerged her entire body into the hot water.

Even though Hugh Xavier hadn't touched her, she scrubbed her body vigorously. She felt dirty and repulsed.

She hugged herself tightly, staring blankly with empty eyes. She knew that outside, the storm was raging.

Online bullying battered her like a snowball growing ever larger.

The union of the Xaviers and the Pencas was always going to be a center of attention, but nobody expected such a scandal.

Leah's mind was filled with the grotesque image of Hugh Xavier's face, and the verbal abuse from her youth by Mrs. Xavier, Laura, echoed back—a little tramp who would one day crawl into her foster father's bed.

...

There was chaos outside as a stretch limousine cut through the scene, arriving like a sovereign and halting calmly.

Private secretary Coleman opened the rear door respectfully, and a pair of polished black shoes settled on the lawn—Justin Xavier had returned.

The maid swung open the villa door, and Justin entered with steady footsteps. The cold wind ruffled his black wool coat, bringing an air of cold severity.

Justin quickly ascended the stairs, his tall, handsome figure under the golden crystal chandelier making it impossible to look away; he was noble and unattainable.

Soon, he disappeared into the corridor.

Amidst the storm, Justin Xavier returned.

Covered in the weariness of his travels.

...

Leah had been soaking in the bathtub for a long, long time before dragging her exhausted body to bed. She didn't want to think about anything right now; she just wanted to sleep.

With the curtains drawn, the atmosphere was intensely serene, yet it exuded a sense of oppression. Her sleep was restless, her delicate brows tightly knitted, as if she heard some sounds.

Madame Goldie was speaking, "President Xavier, you're back!"

With a soft "click," the door was pushed open.

Leah's eyes abruptly opened, as though she had sensed it. She sat up in bed and directed her clear, sleep-tinged eyes towards the door.

The door was open, and Justin Xavier stood at the threshold.

The man was dressed in a black wool coat, with a matching black suit underneath and sharply tailored black trousers. He stood against the light, returning amidst the storm and wind.

Justin Xavier had come back.

He had finally come back.

Leah's gaze collided with the man's deep, narrow eyes as he removed the black leather gloves from his hands and handed them to Coleman outside, then strode into the room. With a "click," he closed the door behind him.

Inside the room, outside the room—two worlds.

In this world, there was only him and her.

Justin looked at the woman dazed on the bed, walked over, and raised his well-defined hand to remove his black wool coat, followed by the suit. Underneath, he wore a clean, crisp white shirt, over which was a blue plaid business vest.

The business vest wrapped around his strong chest, the pocket adorned with a golden pin that gleamed with a cold, precious quality.

"Why are you staring at me like a fool, don't you recognize me, hmm?" He faintly curled his thin lips.

Leah's lashes trembled slightly like a tightly combed feather fan, and she suddenly didn't know what to say.

Her voice was dry.

Justin stepped up to the edge of the bed, his tall, robust figure instantly enveloping Leah in his shadow. Lowering his handsome eyes, he looked at her, then extended his well-defined large hand and touched her small face.

Her small, delicate face fit right in his palm as he lovingly stroked her with his rough fingertips. His thin, cool lips curved into a tender, lingering smile, "Leah, is this your wedding gift to me? Well, as you wished, this wedding is over."

-- A small story from the daily life of Jude and Yara --

In a luxurious private box, Jude Crawford heard the name "Isabelle Willow" once again. The Willow family had a girl who had taken the capital by storm.

"Jude, let me show you a photo of the Willow family's young daughter. She's truly a beauty of national renown."

The wealthy heir showed him a photo, and Jude glanced at it—it was her.

At that time, Isabelle Willow was accelerating her life's progress, jumping grades at 14 to enter T University in Aethelgard to study jewelry design. She wore a white dress, books hugged to her chest, half of her profile bathed in sunlight, exuding a cold and exquisite elegance.

"Jude, in the latest rankings, this young lady from the Willow family KO'd all the socialites, directly rising to become Aethelgard's number one beauty. Many wealthy sons have pursued her in sports cars, but this talented lady is very aloof, doesn't talk to anyone, and doesn't smile."

Oh, really?

In Jude Crawford's mind arose the image of her actively asking to exchange contacts, and her gentle brows and eyes were glistening, smiling at him with a light as brilliant as shattered diamonds.

In this lifetime, all her smiles were for him.

Only him.

Chapter 828: Father and Son Turn Against Each Other Over a Woman

His deep, resonant voice filled her ears, and Leah Thorne lifted her gaze to look at him.

Her eyes met with his, and her reflection was firmly etched in his profound eyes, unwavering and composed.

"Brother, did I... cause trouble?"

Justin Xavier touched her small face and then curled his thin lips lightly, "You call me 'Brother' when there's trouble, and just 'Justin Xavier' when there's none. You're quite practical, aren't you?"

"..."

Justin Xavier looked at the slap mark on her face; her skin was delicate. Earlier, Madame Goldie had already pressed ice on her face, but it was still red and swollen. He lowered his voice, "Someone hit you."

Leah Thorne turned her face away and said nothing.

Justin Xavier withdrew his hand, "I'll go take a shower first."

He pushed open the bathroom door, and soon, the sound of running water filled the room.

He was already taking a shower.

Leah Thorne sat still for a while, then slipped out of bed, hanging his black coat and suit jacket on the hanger. The clothes carried his scent—a healthy, clean masculine aroma.

With a few slender fingers, she clutched the cold, hard fabric of the suit, bringing it to her nose to sniff lightly. This mature and familiar male scent inexplicably gave her a sense of peace and fascination.

Wherever he was, it felt safe even if the mountain crumbled—this was the unique allure he exuded.

Leah Thorne knew that after all these years of his protection, certain things had sunk into her bones.

Even if she were to carve out her flesh and heart, she couldn't erase the traces he left on her. Suddenly, her eyes turned red.

At this moment, the bathroom door was pushed open, ushering in a refreshing chill. Justin Xavier came out, standing behind her, "What are you thinking?"

In that instant, he saw her hugging his clothes, dazed.

Leah Thorne suppressed the tears in her eyes, "Brother, I want to leave here, leave the Xavier family. I don't want to come back anymore."

The last time she left, she had just gotten out of Justin Xavier's bed, and upon returning, she mistakenly ended up in Hugh Xavier's bed.

She felt disgusted.

So disgusted.

"Leah..." Justin Xavier reached out his strong arms to hug her slender waist.

But the moment he touched her, Leah's soft, boneless body turned rigid like ice. She knitted her brows, pressing her small hand against her chest, looking uncomfortable.

"What's wrong?" Justin Xavier asked.

The next second, Leah Thorne pushed him away and dashed into the bathroom. She leaned over the toilet, starting to vomit.

She hadn't eaten anything; this bout of vomiting was intense, expelling even the bitter bile from her stomach.

Justin Xavier stood at the door, watching her; her complexion was pale as paper, like a broken doll, devoid of any vitality.

His gaze was obscure and uncertain. He knew she was sexually indifferent; what he didn't know was that she now so resisted being touched by men that even a simple hug was too much.

Forcing herself to stop vomiting, Leah Thorne's body was like a kite with its string cut, on the verge of collapsing.

Justin Xavier scooped her up sideways, placing her on the soft bed, covering her with a blanket. He spoke softly, "Leah, sleep for a while. I need to handle some things. Once it's done, I'll take you away from here."

Leah Thorne buried her pale little face in the soft pillow. She knew he was going to handle those messes, and outside, it was probably chaotic beyond belief now. She closed her eyes, exhausted, wanting only to sleep.

In her darkened vision, Justin Xavier bent down, kissing her forehead lightly, "Sleep well, goodnight."

Leah Thorne closed her eyes, quickly falling asleep.

Justin Xavier looked down, observing her small sleeping face in the sparse light. He slowly squinted his cold black eyes, a chilling, sinister anger emanating from his gaze...

...

The next morning.

Leah Thorne was awakened by a melodious phone ringtone, slowly opening her sleepy eyes. The space beside her was empty; Justin Xavier was gone.

She had woken too late; it was already eight o'clock in the morning. The morning sun seeped through layers of sheer curtains, filling the room with warmth.

She was no longer at the Xavier family.

While she was sleeping, Justin Xavier had carried her away, and now she was resting in her apartment's bed.

Stretching out her slender hand to retrieve the phone from the bedside, she pressed the button to answer, "Hello, Madame Goldie."

It was a call from her assistant, Madame Goldie.

"Leah, how was your rest? If you're all rested, let's leave Bayside. You have many scheduled events to attend."

Leaving Bayside?

Yesterday, such a huge incident happened at the wedding banquet; Madame Goldie also said her star path was coming to an end. How did the storm suddenly calm overnight, turning into a sunny day?

"Was it Justin Xavier?"

"Yes, Leah. President Xavier has taken care of everything for you. Last night, President Xavier silenced the eight major entertainment newspapers with vast influence in Bayside. Something happened up top, and reporters fled. Also, on Weibo, all topics about you were suppressed—videos and recordings disappeared before they were even exposed. President Xavier used thunderous means to cleanse the entire city, and now, regarding you, it's become a taboo topic."

Justin Xavier cleansed the entire Adlerville.

This handsome and gentlemanly Bayside tycoon, Justin Xavier, rarely does anyone get to see him in action, but when he does, it's with destructive thunderous force.

Regarding this monumental scandal, he had no comment; he simply sheltered the city under his hand, keeping her safe under his wing, protecting her from all storms.

Leah Thorne's heart slowly curled up; last night, he returned amid a tempest, outwardly unchanged.

Yet outside, he wielded thunderous power.

"Leah, when are we leaving?"

Leah Thorne could hear the urgency in Madame Goldie's words; Madame Goldie had never been like this before. Madame Goldie seemed eager for her to leave immediately.

"Wait a bit; I want to see Justin Xavier before deciding." After speaking, Leah hung up the phone.

...

At the Xavier family.

Hugh Xavier sat furiously in the living room, angrily smashing a teacup on the floor, "Where is Justin Xavier? Call him now, have him come over. What does he mean by not letting me out? Does he want to keep me imprisoned here?"

The servants stood trembling in the corners, not daring to make a sound, fearing Hugh Xavier would unleash his fury on them.

Even the Xavier family's butler broke out in a cold sweat; last night when Leah Thorne came knocking, it was supposed to be a good thing. But who knew it would stir such a massive storm? Before he could handle it, a group of black suit bodyguards stormed in, detaining Hugh Xavier and him within this villa, guarding the entrance, not letting them out.

This was clearly imprisonment!

The Xavier family was in chaos, the son imprisoning the father for a woman.

Chapter 829: So You Still Know She's My Woman

The Xavier family steward understood deeply that over the years, Hugh Xavier was living a life of indulgence like an aloof emperor, while the true power in the Xavier family lay in Justin Xavier—Justin Xavier seemed poised to upend everything.

At that moment, the villa's front door was pulled open, and a chill swept in. Justin Xavier, dressed in black, tall and upright, appeared at the entrance.

Justin Xavier had arrived.

He strode in with long, steady steps, taking off his black cashmere coat and handing it to his secretary, Coleman, who respectfully stepped aside. Justin Xavier sat down on the sofa opposite Hugh Xavier and curled his thin lips slightly, "Dad, why such a big temper?"

Hugh Xavier looked at Justin across from him. The man was dressed in a tailored white shirt and black trousers, exuding a cold, elegant demeanor. Years of struggles in the business world had endowed him with a mature, sharp aura, distant and imperial, much like a king.

This son, since his birth, had never been properly seen by Hugh.

Taking a look now, he appeared so unfamiliar.

"Justin Xavier, you're here just in time. I was about to find you. What do you mean by imprisoning me here? You have some nerve. I'm your father, and you dare to defy me like this," Hugh said with a gloomy face.

Justin's expression remained unfazed, not even a frown disturbing his features, "Dad, it's tumultuous outside right now. Please rest here for the time being. Once the storm has passed, I'll arrange a private jet to send you abroad for some relaxation."

"What?" Hugh nearly jumped, glaring at Justin while trembling, "Send me abroad, what do you mean by that?"

The Xavier family steward was sweating all over. He sneaked a glance at the man opposite him. Ever since entering the room, Justin had shown no superfluous expression, yet the cold, noble aura emanating from him was daunting.

Quickly, he brewed a cup of tea, approached enthusiastically, "Master, Young Master, let's calm down first. After all, it's just about a woman."

"Young Master, I can vouch that last night, Miss Leah herself knocked on the master's door. Whatever happened inside, it was Miss Leah's doing, and to sum it up, you are father and son, whereas Miss Leah is merely an outsider."

"Young Master, have you forgotten? On the day Miss Leah turned 18, she took the initiative to climb into your bed to seduce you. Since she could seduce the Young Master, naturally, she could also seduce the Master. Don't be deceived by Miss Leah's pure and innocent appearance and fall out with your own father!" The Xavier family steward smeared all the dirt onto Leah Thorne.

Justin lifted his eyelids and glanced lightly at the steward, then curled his lips into a smile.

Justin suddenly laughed.

His laughter revealed bright white teeth, like a tiger's sharp fangs, gleaming with a chilling, lethal glint.

The steward's scalp tingled; he stammered, "Young Master, you...you should have some tea first."

Justin looked at him twice, then extended a distinctly jointed hand to take the cup from him.

The steward's expression relaxed; the fact that Justin was willing to drink his tea suggested that his persuasion was successful.

He handed the teacup to the man.

As it was about to be received, Justin suddenly let go, "Crash," the teacup shattered on the carpet.

Clearly, Justin did it on purpose, but the steward was so frightened that he rapidly knelt on the ground, prostrating himself at the feet of those proud long legs of the man, "Young Master, I didn't do it on purpose."

Justin gazed down at the servant by his legs, then shoved the shoes stained with tea leaves towards the man, indifferent lips parting, "Clean it up for me."

"Yes, Young Master." The steward took a handkerchief from his pocket and began wiping Justin's gleaming shoes.

The next moment, Justin slowly lifted his foot, pressing the steward's hand beneath his shoe.

Like trampling on rubbish, he pressed down hard, grinding as he curled his lips into an elegant smile, "What did you say just now? I didn't catch that, say it again."

"Ah," the steward let out a shrill cry, feeling as though his hand was about to be snapped by Justin.

"Young Master, spare me, I was wrong, I don't dare anymore."

The steward pleaded incessantly for mercy. Looking up along the man's trouser line sharp as a knife's edge, he saw a light yet careless smile on the handsome face, chilling enough to make one shudder.

"You were wrong, how so? Over the years, how many mistresses have you found for my dad? I turned a blind eye to that, but you dared set your sights on Leah, bullying her, huh? Who gave you the guts, hmm?"

"Young Master, I..."

Justin leaned down slightly, "Since you know she climbed into my bed when she turned 18, you should know she is my woman. Is my woman someone you this dog of a servant can humiliate?"

The steward was howling in pain like a ghost, swiftly pleading Hugh for help, "Master, save me, I beg you!"

Hugh's face turned hideous to the extreme, for the saying goes, you should respect the dog's owner before beating it. Justin's action towards the steward in front of him was clearly aimed at him.

What he said was also intended for him.

Because he coveted his woman!

"Bastard!" Hugh picked up an ashtray from the coffee table and threw it fiercely at Justin's head.

Justin didn't dodge; given his abilities, he certainly could have, yet the ashtray hit his forehead with a dull thud, falling to the carpet, and a rush of hot blood gushed out.

"President!" Coleman exclaimed and rushed forward, taking out a first aid kit to treat Justin's wound.

The steward had already fainted, with five fingers of his right hand forcibly crushed; that hand was crippled.

Two bodyguards came forward and dragged the steward away.

The atmosphere in the living room turned oppressive and suffocating, and after Coleman briefly treated the wound, he was waved away by Justin.

Justin lounged lazily on the sofa, took out a cigarette, frowned as he lit it, inhaled, then exhaled, starting to blow smoke rings nonchalantly.

Hugh, having injured his own son, felt no distress or guilt, merely issuing a cold snort, "Justin Xavier, your wings have truly hardened, even ignoring your father. For the sake of Leah Thorne, you dare act against your old man?"

"Old man?" Justin exhaled a cloud of smoke and chuckled lowly, "When you touched Leah Thorne, did you consider that woman was your son's woman, Dad? Why did you touch her? I warned you about her just days ago. Did I not make myself clear, or are you deaf?"

Hugh's face darkened, but he quickly regained his composure, "You are my son, everything you own now is given to you by the Xavier family, including Leah Thorne!"

#### Chapter 830: I Want Her Always by My Side

"Everything you and Leah Thorne own was bestowed by me. In front of me, what right do you have to say no?" Hugh Xavier said angrily.

Justin Xavier nonchalantly smoked a cigarette, "Dad, you brought Leah home to raise, but I beat you to it. Isn't that unfair to you?"

Saying this, Justin elegantly crossed his long legs, "Actually, all these years, you could play around outside as much as you wanted; I never cared. I remember when I was little, I went to your office, and when I pushed open the door, I heard you and your secretary panting. You were having a great time on the couch."

"That's just your nature, nothing much to say. But Leah, you can't touch her. How many times do I have to tell you before you understand?"

Justin Xavier grew up in such a distorted and pathological family environment, living in shadows. So, back then, when he saw the bright and beautiful Leah Thorne, that one glance burned into his memory forever.

Hugh didn't expect that Justin not only caught him peeping at Leah showering but also witnessed his escapade with the secretary. His face immediately turned ugly, "Justin Xavier, I still say the same thing. If you dare to touch me, I'll kick you out of the Xavier family. I'll leave you with nothing!"

Kick out of the Xavier family.

Leave you with nothing.

Justin Xavier's handsome and stern features blurred in the smoke, and he jabbed his chest with the hand holding the cigarette, laughing, "Dad, you've got it wrong. All these years, you've been living so freely outside because I've been working for the Xavier family. The money to support your mistresses, I earned it for you!"

"Spending the money I earned and still wanting to sleep with my woman, dad, can you not be so naive? To leave me with nothing, you don't have the capability."

"You!" Hugh felt a metallic taste in his mouth, almost spitting blood in anger at his son.

Justin Xavier finished his cigarette leisurely, crushing the stub into the ashtray, then stood up and brushed the ash off his suit pants with a hand.

With one hand in his pocket, he was about to leave when he suddenly paused. His deep, narrow eyes fell on Hugh's livid face, suddenly wearing a smile, "Oh right, dad, did you slap Leah?"

Hugh trembled, then anger surged, "Yes, I slapped Leah. What can you do about it? Are you going to hit me back?"

"Ha," Justin forced a cold laugh from his throat, then sidled near, cornering Hugh step by step, taking his hand out of his pocket with an elegant smile, "Dad, I'm your son, so when you smashed me with the ashtray just now, I didn't dodge. But trust me, that was definitely the last time. I've sent you abroad, don't come back."

"Also, I'm Leah's man; protecting her is what I should do. You hit my woman, so I have to settle this account with you."

With that, Justin grabbed Hugh by the collar and delivered a solid punch.

...

Five minutes later.

The villa's door opened, a familiar figure appeared, and Laura Xavier rushed in.

Laura looked at Justin Xavier, then towards the inside of the villa, finding Hugh lying on the ground, groaning in pain.

Laura's face changed dramatically, looking at Justin in disbelief, "Justin, have you gone mad? You hit your dad? He is your father!"

Laura shouted, "Someone! Quickly! Help the master up!"

The maids in the villa glanced at one another, not daring to step forward, very afraid of Justin.

Justin had blood on his hands because he had punched Hugh hard enough to make him bleed. He casually accepted a towel from Coleman to wipe his hands, his impressive chest heaving with rage, but he looked warmly at Laura, "Mom, let's get divorced."

Divorce?

Laura was completely shocked.

"Mom, isn't it enough, all these years? Let it go. You are already unrecognizable; don't make yourself grotesque anymore. I'll take responsibility for your remaining years."

I'll take responsibility.

Those words quickly turned Laura's eyes red. Her son was much taller than her now and could protect her, yet she only felt heartache.

She had actually considered divorce before, too painful, even thought of suicide. But back then, little Justin would come over and gently hug her.

Laura shook her head, "No, I don't want a divorce."

She had endured the hardest times, and now she lived for hatred; she didn't wish for relief anymore.

Justin already knew the answer, "Alright then, mom, however you want it, I'll accompany you, comply with you, but as for Leah, don't seek her out again."

Hearing this, Laura quickly looked up at Justin, "Justin, you hit your father for Leah, and now you want to lecture your mother?"

There was a trace of weariness in Justin's lowered voice, "Mom, I'm almost thirty, in a few years I won't be young anymore. I will listen to you, marry, live a normal life, but I need Leah by my side. If she is well in my little world, only then I am well, understand?"

"Mom, this is the last time I'm saying these words to you. If you still need me as your son, stay far away from Leah from now on."

With that, Justin turned and left.

"Justin," Laura called to Justin's upright back, "Old Master has already flown to Bayside!"

Old Master Xavier was coming, the true power in the shadows, ruthless and unforgiving.

"Justin, you've lost your mind over Leah, antagonizing your father. Old Master will not let the Xavier family be in disarray. You are his most exceptional heir, and he will not tolerate Leah!"

-- A Daily Story from Crawford and Willow Families --

After parting with a second-generation rich kid, Jude Crawford soon attended a top-notch academic exchange conference.

"Mr. Crawford, please have a seat."

Jude Crawford sat in the first seat on the right, the main position of the venue. The brilliant light from above painted his handsome face with a golden glow.

The audience turned to look, realizing this was the famed Crawford youth, truly dazzling.

The conference began, and by the end, a staff member approached, respectfully whispering, "Mr. Crawford, it was just learned that a talented young lady has been specially invited to speak at this academic exchange."

Jude Crawford's heart stirred, and he looked ahead.

On the stage walked a cold and stunningly beautiful figure, Isabelle Willow had arrived.

Isabelle Willow's sudden appearance struck straight into his vision.

Jude Crawford didn't catch much of what she said; he only knew that when the crowd erupted with applause, someone asked, "Miss from the Willow family, may I ask what motivates you in life?"

Isabelle stood gracefully on stage, her compelling almond eyes gradually focused on Jude Crawford's handsome face. She curled her red lips and said with a smile, word by word, "Even though life stretches long ahead, I think I can't wait. I want to stand amidst a sea of lights and people so he can see me at once."