

Substitute B 881

Chapter 881: How Much to Keep You?

Justin Xavier paused in his steps, then turned around. The door was only slightly ajar, and Leah Thorne stood inside, her alluring eyes locked on him.

She had changed out of her black slip dress and was now in a fuchsia nightgown. Fuchsia is a difficult color for women to pull off and can often look tacky, but Leah wore it perfectly. The pale hue made her skin look even more lustrous, adding a touch of sensuality for no reason. Her curls languidly draped over her shoulders, and she stood barefoot in the doorway looking at him with watery eyes; she was quite the... little enchantress.

Justin Xavier walked over with his tall and handsome frame, and with a smirk on his lips, he chuckled, "I thought you weren't going to open the door for me."

Leah looked at him, "President Xavier, do you need something from me?"

Justin Xavier opened his palm, "For you."

It was a... anklet.

A thin platinum chain encrusted with tiny diamonds that sparkled brilliantly with every movement.

Leah had good eyesight and noticed the diamonds were engraved with the letters L, I, N, G.

Ling, the letters of her name, Leah.

He gave her a diamond anklet engraved with her name.

Leah fluttered her dense lashes like a fan, looking at him, "When did you buy this anklet?"

He must have bought it a while ago; otherwise, he wouldn't have had time to engrave her name on it so quickly.

Justin Xavier gazed deeply at her, his voice husky, "I bought it when you were 18, meant to be a birthday gift for your 18th birthday."

Her 18th birthday, he never got to give the gift, as he had taken her by force, making her his in pain.

Speaking of her 18th, Leah masked all her emotions, merely arching her brows and playfully glaring at him, "You gave me this when I was 18, Justin Xavier, you're such a pervert, aren't you?"

Even though 18 is the age of adulthood, she was still just a girl.

A man giving a girl an anklet came off as... suggestive, as if she were his caged and spoiled pet — truly perverse!

Being scolded, Justin Xavier merely chuckled with a smirk, looking every bit the debonair rogue as he knelt down to clasp the anklet around her delicate ankle.

He had good taste, and she had icy skin and jade-like bones; the anklet on her ankle made her look even more like a siren.

Justin Xavier stood up straight, just in time to hear Leah thank him, "President Xavier, thank you. It's late; I need to take a shower and go to bed. You should also rest early."

With that, Leah moved to close the door.

But it didn't close, as Justin Xavier's large hand pressed against the door. The champagne-hued lights in the hallway were very soft, yet his eyes were blazing, "Leah, since when was I so easy to dismiss in your eyes?"

Leah knew this man was just a businessman; he gave her jewels and diamonds only to ask for something in return.

"Didn't you have a rose petal couple bath with Davina Rowe?" Leah asked.

Justin Xavier, "What?"

Leah guessed that he hadn't been with Davina Rowe yet, and besides, his clothes were neat with no scent of a woman on him.

"Rose petal couple bath? Do you like taking baths? Do you want... me to join you?" Justin Xavier chuckled hoarsely.

"... President Xavier, you've told your dirty jokes, and I've humored you with some flirting. Can I go in and take a shower now?"

Justin Xavier was still blocking the door, his tall and handsome frame in the way, and a wicked curve on his lips, "Leah, I gave you jewels and diamonds, and you just chat with me for a bit. If that counts as flirting, you are quite expensive."

Leah blinked innocently, "President Xavier, you probably don't know my market rate. Someone once paid 20 million just to see me, and someone offered 50 million to have dinner with me. As for these jewels and diamonds, many people want to give them to me; they all beg me to accept them, so I just have to decide whose to accept. So, President Xavier, you've seen me, heard the jokes, and I've taken the jewels and diamonds; don't you think you got a good deal?"

Leah looked at him innocently, meaning she'd already given him a friendly price.

Justin Xavier smirked, his narrow eyes radiating mature charm, "To keep you, how much?"

He said to keep you, how much?

Leah froze, "What?"

Justin Xavier stepped forward, his tall and handsome frame looming over her, and he spoke in a voice only the two of them could hear, "Aren't you talking money with me? Talking money is simple. I want to keep you as my little mistress; how much?"

"..." Leah hadn't expected him to be serious, but then, Justin Xavier, the richest man in Bayside, wasn't short on money now.

Leah raised a hand to tuck the stray hair by her cheek behind her ear, "President Xavier is quite wealthy; while I only wanted to subscribe monthly, you want yearly... oh, a yearly package? President Xavier should be careful; I'm very expensive. I fear you won't be able to enjoy the sweet joys of warm beds and long nights."

The amusement in Justin Xavier's eyes deepened, "Don't worry about my wallet; I will work hard to earn more money."

"But I'm afraid you'll suffer a loss."

"Then I'll work hard to earn money while also doubling... the time with you, enough to break even."

"..." Leah knew she had met her match; when it came to innuendos, President Xavier was quite the veteran.

Leah said nothing, and Justin Xavier's gaze was firmly fixed on her small, charming, and soft face. He had watched this face for over a decade, thinking it looked more beautiful than ever. He raised a hand, letting his long fingers glide onto her soft, fair cheek.

The touch felt like creamy mutton-fat jade, and Justin Xavier couldn't resist caressing it twice before his thumb slowly descended onto her luscious red lips.

He repeatedly traced her red lips, and Leah knew although he wasn't speaking, he wanted to kiss her.

Leah looked at him, slowly parting her lips and gently licking his thumb with her small tongue.

Justin Xavier's firm waist tensed instantly.

Then Leah opened her mouth and suckled on his thumb...

Instantly, Justin Xavier's cold eyes darkened with a trace of crimson, but Leah soon released him, "President Xavier, is this enough to pay for the diamond anklet you gave me?"

His throat felt as though a burning coal rolled through, and Justin Xavier's eyes flickered with fiery magma, intently watching her.

Leah smirked, her smile light and graceful as she softly asked, "President Xavier, between Davina Rowe and me, who's better, who do you prefer?"

Despite asking, Leah had no intention of waiting for Justin Xavier's answer; she reached out and closed the room door.

Justin Xavier once again found himself shut out, left standing outside. He quickly composed his handsome eyes and swallowed hard, tamping down his bodily instincts.

After glancing at the firmly closed door, Justin Xavier stuffed one hand into his pants pocket and turned to leave.

Chapter 882: Don't Cry

At this moment, the personal secretary hurried over, "It's not good, President, Mr. Crawford is in trouble!"

What?

Justin Xavier's expression changed.

...

Serena Sterling's dance also ended, and next it was Seraphina Linden's turn.

Serena stepped down from the stage, intending to look for Leah Thorne, but Cherie came over, "Lady, where is Princess Willow?"

Little Willow Crawford?

Serena quickly entered little Willow Crawford's room and looked around the large room. Little Willow was just sleeping here earlier, how did she suddenly disappear?

Serena's heart skipped a beat, and she quickly ran out, "Little Willow! Little Willow, where are you? Please answer mommy, mommy is so worried looking for you!"

At that moment, a tender childish voice sounded ahead, "Mommy~ Mommy~ I'm here~"

It was little Willow.

Serena ran over and saw little Willow standing on the balcony on the second floor, playing. In front of the balcony was a circle of carved railings.

"Little Willow, you can't play on the balcony, it's very dangerous. Come to mommy now, let mommy hold you~" Serena opened her slender arms.

"Mommy, I'm coming, catch me~"

Little Willow opened her little arms and ran towards mommy, but she didn't know she stepped on something, "Ah", little Willow yelped, the little bundle falling and hitting the carved railing.

At this moment, there was a "creak", and the carved railing actually split open.

Little Willow fell over the balcony from the second floor.

Oh my God!

"Princess Willow!" Cherie screamed.

This happened too suddenly, Serena's pupils shrank. This was at least three or four meters high, and the consequences of little Willow falling from the second floor were unimaginable.

"Willow!"

Serena darted over; in the urgency, she grabbed little Willow's small hand, and the two of them fell together.

The falling speed was very fast. Serena immediately held little Willow tightly in her arms, "Willow, don't be afraid, mommy will protect you. Make sure to hold mommy tightly!"

These three children were her life. As a mommy, she couldn't allow little Willow to get hurt in front of her.

Luckily, she grabbed little Willow, luckily!

Little Willow sensed the danger, obediently burying her little head tightly in mommy's chest.

Serena tightly embraced little Willow and closed her eyes, waiting for the pain from hitting the ground.

Falling three or four meters wouldn't kill her, but if not careful, she could get seriously hurt.

She awaited the intimate contact with the ground.

But the anticipated pain did not arrive. Just as she was about to hit the ground, a large hand suddenly stretched out and caught her and little Willow.

The impact from falling was too great, and they all fell to the ground.

This was the back garden's lawn, the light was dim. Serena felt she and little Willow had fallen into someone's arms, the person cushioning them like a human pillow, protecting them steadily.

Serena didn't feel pain, and little Willow in her arms was also unharmed, with her big, bright eyes open watching.

Her long lashes fluttered. Serena lowered her gaze to look at the big hand on her soft waist, still in that person's embrace.

The world suddenly went silent.

Silent enough for her to clearly hear the heartbeat of the person behind her, strong and reassuring.

But he was breathing slightly, perhaps in pain somewhere.

"Are you... hurt, let me see."

Serena's heart tightened; she immediately wanted to get up holding little Willow.

But the arm around her waist tightened, keeping her cuddled in his arms, preventing her from getting up.

Not letting her look back.

Serena's eyes turned red. She could be certain now, the one on the bus wasn't a dream, it was him.

He had returned once.

She smelled his scent, the clean masculine scent tinged with faint disinfectant. He seemed to have been seriously injured.

Serena reached out her slender white hand, holding the big hand on her slender waist, gently caressing it, "Is it you? Is it... you?"

Hayden Crawford was dressed in black, without a baseball cap. How could he miss her dance on stage, so he had been watching her from the shadows.

Lately, hearing her frantically calling "little Willow", he rushed over.

Hayden Crawford's handsome, delicately chiseled face showed a pale, sickly weakness. The dim light bathed him entirely in darkness, and now both mother and daughter were in his embrace. Serena spoke, but he did not answer.

Serena's bright almond eyes quickly filled with tears, even her voice trembled, "What happened to you, you won't let me see, or speak, I'm so afraid..."

"No matter what kind of setbacks we face, I am not afraid. We can definitely face them together hand in hand, but when you're not by my side, it makes me scared. I don't know how your health is, and I'm more afraid..."

"We've been apart for so long, I miss you, I really really miss you, Hayden..."

Tears streamed down unchecked, instantly moistening Serena's eyes.

Hayden's ears were filled with the sounds of her sad sobbing. He closed his handsome eyes, reaching to hold her soft little hand in his palm.

Hayden leaned over, burying his handsome face in her hair, nestling in the tender crook of her neck, kissing her soft skin with his dry lips, "Don't cry."

He only said two words, don't cry.

His once deep, magnetic voice had become incredibly hoarse.

Serena's eyes brimmed with more and more tears, the sadness and sorrow within her heart magnified infinitely by his "don't cry". He didn't know how much she had missed him during this time.

Sometimes she pessimistically wondered if he wasn't coming back?

Whether she would ever wait for his return?

Thankfully, he returned.

Serena didn't turn back, unable to see Hayden behind her, but little Willow could.

Actually, on the bus, she had seen daddy already, but daddy said shh, don't tell mommy, we want to give mommy a surprise.

--One daily story from Wesley's notebook--

Isabelle Willow's 15th birthday, Jude Crawford came.

Jude Crawford handed over a beautifully packaged gift bag, "Happy Birthday."

Wow~

Everyone cheered.

Isabelle blushed as she accepted the gift bag and blew out the candles.

Then his deep, mellow voice sounded by her ear, "What wish did you make?"

Isabelle turned her head, his handsome unmatched face filling her vision magnified.

Isabelle shyly covered her mouth and laughed, leaning her little face to his ear, whispering, "Jude, I want to... give you a son."

Saying this, she used her slender white finger to scoop a bit of cake, feeding it to his mouth, asking shyly, "Is it sweet?"

Jude Crawford looked at her, "Hmm, very sweet!"

Chapter 883: I Wish I Could Hold You Forever

Little Willow Crawford looked at her daddy with big, bright eyes and smiled sweetly, "Daddy~ Mom and I, and brother, miss you very much~"

Hayden Crawford kissed Serena Sterling's cheek, then lowered his handsome eyelids to look at little Willow Crawford. His exquisite features softened, tender beyond words, "Willow~"

He reached out to gently pat little Willow Crawford's small head, full of affection.

Time stopped at that moment, as the family of three reunited, wrapped in deep emotions amidst the sadness.

"Serena, I wish I could hold you and our daughter like this forever," Hayden Crawford murmured.

Serena Sterling lowered her long eyelashes, she felt the same.

She wished he would hold her like this forever.

"Was it you in Justin Xavier's room earlier? Can I come find you later?" Serena carefully tested.

She didn't know how his health was, but she knew he didn't want her to see him.

But she wanted to see him.

She missed him.

One thousand times, ten thousand times, she missed him, regardless of how he had changed.

Listening to her soft voice, Hayden Crawford kissed her long hair, "Don't come looking for me, go to bed early and be good."

He didn't want her to find him.

Serena Sterling pouted her red lips and nodded sullenly, "Oh, I got it."

Hayden Crawford slowly released her, "Don't look back; I'm leaving first."

He left.

Serena Sterling didn't turn around, but she heard the rustling sounds, his struggle to get up, and then his slow departure.

A bright full moon hung in the sky, casting its glow as she saw his silhouette.

His tall, broad figure was now bent, extremely thin; once so tall and proud, his body now rapidly waning with age and frailty.

Serena Sterling choked, her eyes filling with tears that burned, bringing pain to her eyes.

Painful to the core.

Pain for him.

Pain because of him.

Just then, a small, white, tender hand reached over and wiped her tears, "Mommy, don't cry~ Daddy is back now, and from now on, our family can be together forever, never apart again~"

Serena Sterling lowered her eyes to look at little Willow Crawford in her arms. Little Willow was wiping her tears, sweetly and thoughtfully.

Serena Sterling suddenly smiled through her tears, holding little Willow Crawford tightly. Yes, he was back, and everything was better now.

...

Justin Xavier rushed into the room, his handsome face quite grim, shrouded in a layer of icy gloom as if squeezing it could make it drip water.

Serena Sterling didn't like Justin Xavier as a person, but there was no denying Justin Xavier had always had Hayden Crawford's back, the two having grown up together.

Arriving at the room entrance, Justin Xavier kicked the door open, and a burst of antiseptic smell hit them instantly.

"Is he dead or not?" Justin Xavier grabbed a doctor's collar, "If anything happens to him, you won't even need a coffin, just jump into the ground washed and ready for burial!"

"..." The doctor wiped the cold sweat furiously, "Pre...President Xavier, we just gave the patient an injection and treated his wounds; we've barely stabilized his condition, but... his body really can't take any more of this, please spare us!"

The doctor was on the verge of tears; Hayden Crawford, in such a state, had caught someone falling from the second floor with his bare hands, utterly reckless.

He might not care, but the doctors did.

Justin Xavier's face was dark, "Get out!"

"Yes."

The doctor felt relieved, quickly exiting with the nurses.

At that moment, someone arrived outside the door; it was Serena Sterling.

After dropping little Willow back, Serena Sterling hurried over, even though Hayden Crawford forbade her to come, she still came.

Serena Sterling peered inside with her bright eyes and saw Hayden Crawford.

Though she'd seen him twice already, once on the bus and just now downstairs, she hadn't looked straight at him.

This was her first real look at him.

Hayden Crawford lay on the bed, his handsome face still striking, but he had lost so much weight.

His complexion was ghostly pale, devoid of any color, his whole being seemingly drained of life by his illness; his body no longer tall, stately, or robust but seriously emaciated.

He used to be the top aristocrat in Aethelgard's business world, the world's leading mogul, a born emperor.

Now he was a sickly person maintained by Western medicine, sheltered from sunlight all day.

Even though Serena Sterling was mentally prepared to see him like this, the sight still churned her heart like a knife, leaving her raw and wounded.

She hadn't expected him to be this bad.

He was Hayden Crawford, but now...

Serena Sterling's gaze fixed on Hayden Crawford on the bed, unable to shift away, wanting to rush in and hold him tightly, never letting go.

But she didn't dare.

She didn't know if his body could handle her strong embrace.

And she knew he didn't want her to see him like this.

Justin Xavier's handsome features were clouded with anger; he pointed with slender fingers to Hayden Crawford on the bed, "Look at you, clinging to life by a thread, yet you still run around stirring trouble, do you have a death wish?"

Justin Xavier was extremely upset, suppressing the fury in his chest.

Hayden Crawford's handsome face remained expressionless, merely pulling his pale lips into a slight smile, "Justin Xavier, why do I feel like you're... looking frustrated?"

"..." Was he that obvious?

Justin Xavier snorted, "Just so you know! Do this a couple of more times, and you'll scare me right into impotence!"

"Enough, don't take an inch just because you're given a foot, if you're capable, go find Leah Thorne to relieve yourself, not fire at your brother."

"..."

As the two men exchanged barbs, the room fell quiet.

Then Hayden Crawford turned his head and saw Serena Sterling standing at the door.

Their eyes met, and Serena Sterling froze.

She hadn't managed to retract her teary gaze, instead staring at him entranced.

He saw her.

Though Hayden Crawford was unwell, his deep, narrow eyes still held small whirlpools, seemingly able to draw one's soul in.

He hadn't lost any of his presence.

At that moment, Justin Xavier turned, his cold gaze falling on Serena Sterling's face, pursing his thin lips and speaking in a low voice, "You."

Who was Justin Xavier calling?

Serena Sterling lifted her small head to look at Justin Xavier.

Justin Xavier was also staring at her, "I'm talking to you! Get out now!"

Get out.

Justin Xavier told her to get out.

"..."

Serena Sterling's temper flared; she already disliked Justin Xavier, and now he was high-handedly telling her to get out.

Before Serena Sterling could speak, Hayden Crawford's cold, displeased voice reached her ears, "Watch your tone; you scared her!"

Chapter 884: Bold Enough to Steal a Kiss from Me?

Justin Xavier scoffed lightly, "I get annoyed just seeing her."

Hayden Crawford curled his thin lips, "I'm annoyed seeing you right now too, get lost first."

"..."

Justin Xavier glared at Hayden Crawford, then kicked his bed, "Fine, I'm not allowed to say anything now, is it? Brothers are clothes, women are life, go ahead and protect her!"

Justin Xavier left the room in a huff.

...

Serena Sterling stood outside for quite a while, waiting for the room to fall silent, before gently pushing open the door and walking inside.

Hayden Crawford lay on the bed with his eyes closed, seemingly asleep.

Serena Sterling entered the bathroom, filled a basin with hot water, and used a warm, damp towel to carefully wipe his handsome face.

She wiped with great tenderness, afraid to hurt him, feeling his shallow breaths, Serena Sterling lowered her eyelashes and gently kissed his forehead.

This kind of kiss was not enough; Serena's soft red lips moved down, kissing his eyes, his high nose bridge, and finally landing on his pale thin lips, silently conveying the tidal wave of longing and affection she had for him during this time.

Serena Sterling gently kissed his thin lips.

At this moment, Hayden Crawford slowly opened his eyes, his deep narrow eyes twinkled with gentle amusement, reflecting her clear eyes, "Getting bolder, huh? I told you not to come but you still did, and you dare to steal a kiss?"

Serena Sterling was startled; he wasn't actually asleep.

He was pretending.

Serena felt a bit embarrassed, since their intimate gestures had always been initiated by him, it was her first time taking the initiative to kiss him.

Hayden Crawford's handsome brows overflowed with a pleasant smile, looking at her with an indulgent expression.

Serena Sterling grew bolder, she didn't dare to lie on his chest, so she put her small head on his pillow, her face next to his handsome one, and muttered softly, "I'll steal a kiss!"

Listening to her willful voice and smelling her sweet fragrance, Hayden Crawford angled his thin lips, though he told her not to come, she still did.

But it wasn't a surprise, she was bound to come.

Serena Sterling lay quietly beside him, biting her red lips lightly, "Can I...kiss you again?"

Hayden Crawford turned his face to hers, so close that when her long eyelashes blinked, they seemed to brush against his.

"Go ahead, kiss me again."

"Oh."

Serena Sterling leaned closer again, planting a kiss on his handsome cheek.

In the next instant, Hayden Crawford raised his hand to hold the back of her head, gently kissing her soft red lips.

Their lips touched, Serena Sterling quickly held her breath, not daring to move.

She remembered that on the bus, he had also kissed her, but after just a few seconds of deep kissing, he ran out of breath.

Sensing her tension and concern, Hayden Crawford's large palm slid down, gently pinching her soft waist, "Don't worry, it's okay."

In his palm, Serena Sterling's body softened.

She had just taken a bath, her hair and body were fragrantly fresh, a head of pure long hair scattered on his pillow, her bright eyes watery and alluring.

Hayden Crawford kissed her red lips, gently rubbing them.

The sensation of their lips together was too divine, Hayden Crawford swallowed twice, his Adam's apple moving up and down.

Breathing heavily, he slowly stopped the kiss to regain composure.

Soon, he kissed her red lips again.

The kiss was intermittent, they stopped multiple times when he felt unwell, Serena was very obedient, after not seeing each other for a long time, this kiss naturally held a flavor of sweet reunion.

Hayden Crawford kissed her again, his tongue nudging against her teeth.

Serena Sterling's eyelashes trembled, she parted her red lips slightly.

Hayden Crawford hooked her tongue tip, kissing for quite a while.

The sound of their wet lips meeting always made cheeks flush.

When it ended, Hayden Crawford pressed his nose against her smooth cheek, breathing heavily with furrowed brows.

Serena Sterling's fresh and bright little face was rosy, the purity overflowed with a womanly charm. Seeing his knitted brows, she reached out her small hand to hold his large hand, softly asking, "Is it very uncomfortable?"

Hayden Crawford rubbed her cheek, his hoarse voice helplessly sexy, "You knew I'd be uncomfortable, yet you still teased me?"

"..."

Serena spent a few seconds before understanding his meaning. His "discomfort" wasn't her "discomfort", she immediately closed her eyes, unable to hide her shyness, "Mr. Crawford, be serious!"

"Heh."

A man's low, pleasant laugh sounded above her head.

"What are you laughing at? Hayden Crawford, you're not allowed to laugh!" Only now did Serena feel a sense of reality, her Mr. Crawford was truly back.

"Serena, does my current state, this body, bother you at all?"

Earlier during the kiss, he watched her, saw her cheeks flush from being kissed, her face transfixed and dazed.

Inside, he knew she wasn't bothered at all; she genuinely liked him, every little intimate gesture made her blush, her heart pounding like a deer.

However, his body now...

Serena Sterling opened her clear eyes to look at him, "I don't even know what 'bothered' means, I only know I want to be with you, seeing you like this makes me ache. I still like you, even more than before, I wish you'd never leave me, always stay by my side."

Hayden Crawford looked at her soft and delicate demeanor, she was pampering him, confessing to him. He always knew his Serena was this endearing and delightful, fearing he'd feel insecure, she took the lead.

Hayden Crawford gently kissed her forehead, then held her soft little hand, interlocking their fingers tightly.

--A little daily story from Jude and Isabelle--

Jude Crawford never liked sweets, believing his life lacked sugar, but since meeting Isabelle Willow, every day became sweet.

Now the girl looked at him, her brow arched and eyes smiling, these eyes had a familiar, nostalgic quality.

As if before they met, he'd seen her...in his dreams.

Upon first seeing her at the temple, a voice persistently urged him to leave! Leave quickly! Don't see her!

But she called out to him, clung to him, so he resisted while simultaneously being attracted to her.

His gaze would always wander amidst countless people, searching for her; her smiling gaze lingering by his side always sparked a secret joy; fleeting sights, like passing clouds, the weighty heart of 20-year-old Jude Crawford felt fulfilled by her.

She filled his heart to the brim.

Jude, I want to bear you a son.

Jude Crawford stiffened, then lowered his gaze, as if he hadn't heard her words, but his earlobes turned red.

Chapter 885: Jealous?

"Hayden Crawford." Serena Sterling called his name.

"Hm?" Hayden Crawford furrowed his handsome brows, his large hand rubbing her silky hair.

"The water's already cold. I'll change the basin with hot water and wipe your body."

"Alright."

Serena Sterling went into the bathroom, changing the already cooled water into hot, using a warm towel to wipe his body.

He wore dark blue silk pajamas and pants. She reached out her petite hand and unbuttoned his pajamas one by one, revealing his chest.

He was truly so slender, and the degree of physical deterioration had worsened. Serena's soft fingertips gently caressed him, "Mr. Crawford, still in pain?"

Hayden Crawford shook his head, "No pain."

How could it not hurt?

Serena felt heartache, lowered her little head, and kissed his thin bones.

Hayden reached out to touch her delicate face, "Don't kiss me, it makes me uncomfortable. Take off my pants and help me wipe."

"..." Serena was purely heartbroken for him, very simply kissing him, but she forgot Hayden is a normal man. Even though his health is poor now, it's been a while since they've been intimate, and it's inevitable that things might go sideways.

Serena quickly stood up, but in the next second, she stiffened. What did he say?

Take off his pants and wipe down there?

Serena was dumbfounded; she'd never done anything like this before.

Hayden lifted his handsome eyelids to look at her, her clear eyes were shocked and silly, her crimson lips slightly parted, looking so pure and charming that it made one want to do bad things.

Hayden curled his thin lips, amused, "Given my current physical state, don't think crooked thoughts."

"But...but..." Serena stammered, her exquisite little face blushing, "Today, you didn't shower, wash down there?"

It's a very healthy question. Serena knew he had a cleanliness addiction. He should shower every day, right? So why ask her to wipe...

"These days, how have you been managing? Don't tell me you haven't washed down there...right?"

Hayden gave her a look, meaning you think?

"I have caretakers." He replied.

Serena's fingers curled, "Male caretakers or female caretakers?"

If Hayden were alone, Serena would be completely at ease, but Hayden's with Justin Xavier. With Justin, beauties are everywhere, not to mention the young and beautiful maids. She was very afraid Justin would lead Hayden astray, and during this period, Hayden would follow suit.

Hayden, "You're very interested in this question?"

Serena chuckled, "Of course, when you were lying in bed unable to take care of yourself, did a caretaker wipe your body? Was that caretaker a young and pretty girl, and did they help you wipe...there?"

Concerning this question...

Hayden raised a slender brow, exuding some mature man's charm, "Jealous?"

Serena performed calmly and generously, shaking her head, batting her fluttering lashes, "I'm not jealous, just curious."

"Then if I tell you, you mustn't be mad."

Serena already knew the answer.

She promised not to get mad or jealous, but it couldn't be helped. His body couldn't care for itself, but thinking about how he was seen by other girls still made Serena uncomfortable.

She threw the towel from her hand onto his handsome face, "I'm not wiping you; you do it yourself."

"Haha," Hayden's amused laughter spilled out as he reached to take the towel off his handsome face, "Serena, what do you want me to do? I can't leave it unwashed, waiting for it to get moldy. Or do you wish the caretaker were a man?"

"..."

Serena simply couldn't imagine these two scenarios; his words were so... cutting?

"I'm not talking to you." Serena turned around to leave.

"Serena," Hayden grabbed her slender wrist, his voice tender with a smile, "I'm kidding you. I'm not at the stage where I can't take care of myself. I shower every day, by myself."

Serena pretended to leave, but now she couldn't bear to go, so when he pulled her, she just stopped.

Her bright eyes fell on his lean, handsome face, she asked, "Are you telling the truth?"

"It's true. I've already showered today, but when I kissed you earlier, it felt a bit uncomfortable, so help me wipe."

Serena's blushing little face resembled blooming roses; she was embarrassed to do it, but thinking about his health, she couldn't refuse.

This is a very normal thing, Serena, don't think too much.

She had no choice but to reach out her petite hand to take off his pants...

Hayden felt her like a kitten, her actions light and gentle, somewhat evasive, his prominent Adam's apple rolling twice.

At this time, Serena lifted her little face, those clear eyes looked at him, wet with emotion.

Hayden embraced her smooth shoulders, letting her lie on his chest, "Really embarrassed, should we call it off?"

"No, I just wanted to ask..." Serena bit her luscious red lower lip quickly, saying the words before burrowing into his embrace, "Do you want to change into new underwear?"

Hearing this, Hayden pressed his thin lips onto her hair, laughing aloud, "Sure."

...

When finished, Serena came out of the bathroom, "Mr. Crawford..."

In the next second, her steps halted because Hayden, originally lying on the bed, had already gotten up, sitting in the wheelchair by the floor-to-ceiling window.

He sat quietly alone, outside the window the sky was filled with stars; one, two, three... especially radiant. She didn't know what he was looking at, enveloping himself in a faint layer of melancholy.

Serena took a coat and went over to drape it over his shoulders, then squatted down, looking up with her palm-sized exquisite face at him, "Mr. Crawford, what are you looking at?"

Hayden spoke softly, "I heard every departed loved one turns into a star in the sky, Serena, is that right?"

"Mr. Crawford, are you thinking of your parents?"

Hayden's gaze fell on Serena's face, "I'm thinking... Zane..."

Zane Crawford...

Since Serena returned to Alani, she ordered never to hear news related to Zane Crawford again, so now suddenly hearing the name "Zane Crawford," Serena felt dazed for a moment.

"Mr. Crawford, you just came back; let's not talk about unpleasant topics. I don't want to talk about Zane Crawford; the harm he caused you, I will never forgive him."

"Mr. Crawford, extend your hand; I'll check your pulse. Trust me, I will surely save you."

Seeing Serena's brows and eyes rejecting and cold towards the name "Zane Crawford," Hayden wasn't eager to speak. He smiled faintly, silently, slowly extending his hand, "Sure."

Chapter 886: He Truly, Deeply Loves You

Serena took Hayden Crawford's pulse.

Actually, seeing Hayden's current physical frailty, Serena already guessed it was the consequence of pulling out the Sky Sword. Currently, heart failure remains a significant unsolved problem in medicine, with no cure available.

Hayden's pulse was extremely weak and chaotic, just as she expected, but very soon, her slender white fingers paused, revealing a look of shock and astonishment.

Serena suddenly looked up at Hayden, "Mr. Crawford, did you perhaps take some kind of strong medication?"

Hayden slowly curved his thin lips, "Yes."

"This strong medication once had a life-saving effect on your heart failure, but obviously, the treatment was interrupted midway, which accelerated your deterioration."

Hayden nodded, "That's right, there was once a person who gave me a dose of strong medication, but due to unforeseen circumstances, the treatment was interrupted. Later, I was saved by Justin, and those medical professors only managed to dissect a few elements from the strong medication to make a placebo to keep me alive, but the ultimate formula of that strong medication, no one has been able to decipher it to this day."

Serena's eyes brightened, "Who is that person? Mr. Crawford, who is the person who gave you that strong medication? As long as... as long as we find him, you have hope!"

"Moreover, heart failure remains a great unsolved mystery, who on earth is this person, who could have such a brilliant and enchanting grasp on this mystery!"

Hayden looked at Serena, she was a healer, and now her clear eyes were shining like dazzling gems, full of light.

Hayden gently shook his head, "Serena, that person... is no longer with us, he passed away months ago."

What?

Serena was stunned.

Hayden slowly took out something and handed it over, "Serena, this is for you."

What's this?

Serena, being a healer, looked down and quickly realized it was a... medical manual.

This medical manual seemed to have been used for a long time, but the cover was clean and tidy, its owner must have been a person of elegance and rigor.

For some reason, Serena suddenly felt this medical manual was very... familiar, as if she had seen it somewhere before, even... she seemed to know its owner.

Serena's face turned pale, she looked at Hayden, "Who... who is he?"

"Serena, this medical manual is for you, once you read it, you will know who he is." Hayden softly said.

Now the room was very quiet, so quiet that Serena could hear her own breathing, which seemed to be starting to tremble.

"Serena, why aren't you taking this medical manual, are you afraid?" Hayden knew she already had an inkling, his Serena was exceptionally smart and unmatched, otherwise how could she make the men of the Crawford family fall head over heels for her their whole lives?

Serena looked at the medical manual, she slowly shook her head, her hands retreating slightly, "I'm not feeling well, I should go..."

She got up to leave.

But Hayden's large hand reached out, grabbing her slender wrist.

Serena immediately struggled, wanting to break free from his hold, "Mr. Crawford, let me go! I don't want to see, I don't want to see anything!"

Hayden looked at her, her clear bright eyes were slowly turning red, a layer of crystalline mist swelling within them.

She pleaded at him, not wanting to see.

"Serena, I think... this was left to you by him, so you must look." Hayden placed her cold little hand onto the medical manual.

Serena couldn't escape, she could only reach out and tremulously turn the first page of the medical manual with her fingertips.

Soon, she saw that familiar handwriting.

Just as the handwriting is as the person, Zane Crawford's writing was clear and elegant, imitated by none.

With a snap, Serena heavily closed the medical manual, she no longer had the courage to continue reading.

Her long eyelashes drooped, trembling anxiously, she didn't know why her eyes burned hot, as if flints were scorching them, it hurt.

The crystalline tears fell in the next second, like a string of beads breaking, tumbling down wildly.

Serena went soft all over and collapsed onto the soft wool carpet, Zane Crawford... so it was Zane Crawford!

She had already guessed just now.

The person capable of overcoming a medical challenge like heart failure must have been brilliant and dazzling, who could compare to the second son of the Crawford family, Zane Crawford?

But...

But it shouldn't have been like this...

Hayden sat in the wheelchair, looking at the weeping Serena, he softly said, "Serena, you're so smart, you already guessed it was Zane, didn't you?"

Serena raised her head, her face full of tears, blurred with emotion, "Why... why was it him?"

"Serena, who do you think... was it that pulled out the Sky Sword for you?"

Serena froze, her pupils constricting, "Was it... Zane Crawford? Impossible, it can't be, Zane couldn't be of child blood, only those with child blood can pull out the Sky Sword!"

"Yes, Zane and I are brothers by blood, so Zane forced the heavens to change fate for you, becoming of child blood, it was he who replaced me to pull out the Sky Sword for you."

Serena's breath stopped, she never imagined, could he have gone mad? He actually... made himself become... child blood?

"Serena, all of this was part of Zane's plan, he deliberately stabbed me once, the knife grazed my heart, making me seem dead, he also developed the strong medication for heart failure to keep me safe, he defied heaven and changed fate for you, taking my destiny in your place."

"Serena, that last call between Zane and I, he once said, he wanted to trade half a lifetime of radiance for your carefree years, to never part, nor sorrow, he achieved it, he always loved what you loved, he always gave his everything to love you, Serena, he really, really... loved you very much."

-- A daily story by the Crawford family

First time holding hands

Jude Crawford and Isabelle Willow wandered the streets like a regular couple, back then, the nights in Argentis were adorned with stars, the gentle breeze was refreshing.

Jude took his hand out from his pocket, let it hang by his side, his fingertips wiggled, wanting to hold the small hand of the girl beside him.

Yet, 19-year-old Jude had no dating experience, the two had just confirmed their relationship, it always felt too abrupt.

Just then, the girl beside him suddenly stopped.

Jude paused, asking softly, "What's wrong?"

Isabelle pitifully extended her cold little hands to him, "My hands are so cold, Jude, warm them for me."

It's early summer, how could her hands be cold?

In the girl's eyes full of stars, Jude held her two little hands, her hands were... so soft and warm.

Chapter 887: He Walked to the End of Time

Serena Sterling refused to hear the name "Zane Crawford" for a long time, for she couldn't forgive what he had done once.

However, just now Hayden Crawford told her that the man was no longer around, that he had passed away several months ago... Her heart suddenly skipped a beat.

She didn't even understand why her heart skipped a beat, as if suddenly feeling a sense of panic at that moment. Her sixth sense had always been sharp, and when Hayden took out that pristine medical manual, she guessed immediately.

But...

But she really couldn't accept it.

He defied fate for her and became the crimson blood.

He pulled out the Sky Sword for her and revived Alani.

He was only... 27, yet he was gone.

All the harm was false; beneath every conspiracy was his gentle and deep watchful affection. Serena Sterling never wanted to owe anyone in this lifetime, repaying a drip of kindness with a spring, but what life fears most is failure. Zane Crawford became her greatest regret, her deepest pain.

Serena stretched out her trembling little hand, covering her face. In that moment, she broke into heart-wrenching sobs, with scalding tears threading through her fingers.

Hayden's eyes were red. He reached out and embraced Serena. Tonight, the moonlight was faint and sorrow engulfed them like waves.

...

Hayden and Serena set off immediately, returning to Westria. Zane was alone when he left, but now they returned to see him.

Zane was born in Aethelgard, the second son of the Crawford family, but he wasn't buried in Aethelgard nor moved into the Crawford family cemetery. He was just buried by the Lo River.

Serena stood quietly in front of the tombstone in a black coat. At this time, Westria had entered its coldest season. On the tombstone is a photo of Zane, his cool and charming demeanor etched into eternity here.

Hayden sat in a wheelchair, and the secretary beside him whispered, "Boss, the old madam already knows about young master Zane's tragic news, she turned white overnight, thankfully Aunt Iris is by her side. But...

young master Zane is after all the descendant and blood of the Crawford family, his roots are in Aethelgard. The old madam has spoken; should we... bring young master Zane back home?"

Hayden looked at Serena by the riverside. All the way back, she hadn't spoken again; now she stood quietly beside Zane. He didn't approach or disturb, for he knew this was her and Zane's time.

Hayden parted his thin lips slightly, "Who handled Zane's funeral?"

"It was young master Caden."

Hayden's lips curled lightly, then he muttered, "That's it, Caden's wish is Zane's wish. Back home, to which home?"

Aethelgard, that wasn't Zane's home.

Zane left home young and wandered everywhere early on, taking care of himself as he grew up.

Hayden looked up towards the Lo River's edge. Back when Westria's Alani fought merfolk, Alani's ancestor's blood dyed half the Lo River red. Later that night, Zane drew the Sky Sword, and red clouds filled the sky. From then, the waters of the Lo River were cleansed.

Now the entire Lo River is crystal clear, shimmering, with the sound of flowing water in the ears, a row of evergreen trees along the river; it's the beauty of peaceful times and tranquil years.

"Look," Hayden murmured softly.

What?

The secretary followed Hayden's gaze.

"Look, Alani stands across the Lo River; because Serena is there, Zane is here. Zane, born for her, died as an evergreen stone, rests by her side. What is Zane's home, Aethelgard isn't, nor is Crawford family. Where she is, there is home."

A chance encounter on the streets of Aethelgard ignited the most splendid fireworks in Zane's cold life. He too experienced love, hate, desire, love yet unattainable. At only 27, though his life ended briefly, his life was complete.

Deep love does not last; Jude Crawford was, Zane was too.

...

Hayden and Serena returned to Westria's royal court, and Hayden soon collapsed. With his current condition, accompanying Serena along the way had reached his maximum limit.

The doctor put an oxygen mask on Hayden, and Serena stood by the bed with red eyes, watching Hayden breathe with difficulty, inhale, exhale, each time a layer of white mist enveloped the oxygen mask.

Serena held Hayden's hand, tears blurring her eyes, yet not uttering a single word.

Hayden knew the grief within her. She was still wearing that black outfit, a small white flower tucked by her ear, just returning from Zane's grave, her hands were cold, devoid of warmth.

"Serena... Serena..." he called her name laboriously.

Serena nodded, nodding hard, "Yes... Mr. Crawford, I'm here..."

Hayden slowly raised his hand, wanting to wipe her tears.

But now he had no strength, his hand reached halfway into the air, and it was about to fall.

Serena quickly grabbed his hand, placing it on her tear-streaked cheek. She lowered her wet, long lashes, placing her face in his palm, gently and dependently rubbing against it.

She couldn't lose him anymore.

This period, she had lost many, many people.

"Miss Sterling," at this moment the attending physician came over, speaking softly, "This is Mr. Crawford's critical condition notice. During this period, Mr. Crawford relied on Western medicine and immense willpower to come this far, but may no longer accompany you further. We must unlock the final ultimate equation left by Prof. Crawford immediately. If successfully unlocked, Mr. Crawford may be saved."

"But Prof. Crawford's lifelong medical talent and expertise truly are unattainable; we have deployed a top global elite team through three months of intensive dissection, yet failed to unravel this ultimate equation, hence it can only be entrusted to Miss Sterling."

"Miss Sterling, your time is limited, only 48 hours. Within these 48 hours, we will exhaust all efforts to save Mr. Crawford. Once past 48 hours, Mr. Crawford... will come to an end."

"Miss Sterling, you're now all of Mr. Crawford's hope."

Serena's tears flowed incessantly, choking without a word.

"Serena, don't... don't fear, I believe... believe in you..." Hayden voiced hoarse.

Serena lifted her head amidst her tears, shaking it continuously, those clear eyes so bewildered, "Mr. Crawford, I'm... sorry, I feel... I can't do it..."

Having just heard Zane's tragic news, her heart unbearably grieved, yet she had no chance to truly mourn, for now had come the moment to bid farewell to Hayden.

Since returning from the countryside at 19, Serena journeyed forward bravely, never losing courage.

But faced with the hurdle of life and death, she suddenly halted, because... these are her loved ones.

Because of love, she feared.

Chapter 888: Peach Blossoms Bloom Along the Path, She Slowly Returns

"Serena..." Hayden Crawford struggled to wipe the tears from her face with his thumb, even though the more he wiped, the more tears there were. "It's okay, I entrust myself to you..."

"Miss Sterling, Mr. Crawford must now enter the sterile room. We await your good news." At that moment, the doctor and nurse wheeled Hayden Crawford away.

...

Serena Sterling's emotions were difficult to calm, but she forced herself to get into the subject; she slowly sat in the chair and took out the medical journal left by Zane Crawford.

She opened the first page, which was full of his talents, knowledge, and accomplishments in medicine. Serena Sterling turned page after page...

Her eyes felt dry, as if no more tears could fall. Yet, they were also stinging, perhaps pierced by his words, a pain so deep.

Serena Sterling reached the last page, the ultimate equation. She knew that only by unlocking this ultimate equation could Hayden Crawford be saved; the countless people suffering from heart failure could be saved.

She picked up a pen, the tip falling upon clean white paper, yet she could write nothing.

She simply could not unlock it.

Quickly, 24 hours had passed. Hayden Crawford's life had only 24 hours left.

At night, when Cherie entered the room, Serena Sterling was still sitting on that chair, quietly alone. Throughout these past 24 hours, Serena Sterling maintained this posture, her long lashes lowered, repeatedly scrutinizing Zane Crawford's medical journal.

"Lady," Cherie walked over, offering a bowl of bird's nest soup, "You haven't eaten anything today, not even taken a sip of water. Not eating and drinking like this surely won't do."

Serena Sterling didn't look up; she just murmured, "Cherie, here it records his process of injecting blood from the young twice, defying natural genetics, forcibly changing fate against heaven. How could there be someone so foolish in this world?"

Cherie didn't know how to respond.

Serena Sterling flipped through two more pages; she lightly hooked her red lips, "The one who pulls the Sky Sword will have their heart and veins severed, dying from pain. This medical journal seems like the path he

walked; I now look back at the road he's traveled, suddenly realizing the suffering he endured, the unbearable pain he went through."

Cherie was silent for a long time before softly speaking, "Lady..."

"Cherie, you may leave. I'm tired and want to rest."

Cherie glanced at that clean white paper; there was still no writing, 24 hours were counting down, but Serena Sterling was utterly exhausted.

Cherie wondered whether Zane Crawford knew he could make the lady hurt and ache like this.

Cherie withdrew.

Serena Sterling didn't lie down on the bed to rest; instead, she fell asleep at the desk, and she started dreaming.

She dreamed of the night of her wedding with Zane Crawford. He lifted her red veil with a joy scale, and in the flickering candlelight, she looked up at him. The most handsome boy in a white shirt and black suit had changed into a red robe, his handsome face like jade.

He looked at her softly, with brilliant light in his clear, black eyes.

At that time, she didn't know it was his last glance.

Serena Sterling thought of that encounter on the streets of Aethelgard many years ago when he seemed just to have turned 18, at the peak of youth, while she was still a student at T University. Youthful boys and girls, with a fleeting glance, laid the groundwork for deep and prosperous affection later.

In her eyes, he was always a boy, the cleanest boy.

But she didn't know, he had already grown into a man, he had given her all his love.

In the end... it was disappointed.

Suddenly, Serena Sterling felt very cold; she slowly opened her eyes, realizing the window had been opened without her knowing, letting in the cold wind.

She dazedly sat in the chair, raising her slender arms to hug herself, trying to give herself some warmth.

At that moment, a sudden warmth cloaked her shoulders; it was a black coat.

Serena Sterling's lashes trembled, then slowly raised her head, seeing a familiar figure, that cool and brilliant presence she knew so well.

Zane Crawford.

Zane Crawford had returned.

Clad in a white shirt and black trousers, the shirt's buttons covered his clean and delicate wrists, just as she remembered him.

Zane... Crawford...

Serena Sterling stared at him in a daze.

Zane Crawford placed a coat on her shoulders, then gently raised his hand to close the window, halting the cold wind from outside, his thin lips curving in a soft, lingering smile at her.

Zane...

Serena Sterling's long lashes trembled; she genuinely opened her eyes, waking from her dream.

It was just a dream.

Serena Sterling was still lying at the desk, immobile, but her dry, stinging eyes suddenly moistened, hot tears falling once more.

She knew Zane Crawford had returned.

He had returned in her dreams.

At this moment, a "ding-a-ling" sound rang crisply in her ears; Serena Sterling stood up, opened her room door, and walked out.

She followed the clear sound to the backyard and saw the entire garden of... red beans of longing.

Zane Crawford had been gone for several months, yet here the red beans of longing bloomed without wilting; each one fully ripe and vibrantly spreading.

Serena Sterling stepped forward, walking the path Zane Crawford had last traveled, arriving at the cluster of red beans of longing.

Though the weather was the coldest, Serena Sterling only felt a gentle breeze against her face. The hem of her skirt brushed against the red beans, trailing along the ground. Strangely, the beans dropped off as she walked, falling into the soil.

Zane Crawford planted a garden full of red beans for her, which fell at her return.

The red beans fell into the soil, transforming into spring earth.

Serena Sterling thus walked along the path, past the garden of red beans, and arrived at the door of Zane Crawford's bedroom. She reached out, pushing the door open.

Zane Crawford's bedroom remained as he had left it, clean and tidy, untouched by dust. Serena Sterling walked in slowly, approaching the desk.

On the desk was something, a single red bean.

The red bean quietly lay there, as if waiting for its owner.

Serena Sterling extended a hand, picking up that red bean, placing it in her palm, just like Zane Crawford did before death, never letting go.

A night breeze came, peach blossoms bloomed on the path, she had slowly returned.

Serena Sterling curled her slender, white fingers, clutching the red bean tightly, then slowly closed her eyes, feeling hot tears crossing her eyes, this time, she smiled in her flickering tear-light.

He gave her a grand era.

She accompanied him through a display of fireworks.

Later, Serena Sterling successfully unlocked Zane Crawford's last ultimate equation in the final 24 hours, shocking the entire medical community.

Henceforth, the major mystery of heart failure in the medical field was successfully overcome, and the potent medication for heart failure was quickly put into clinical trials, saving countless people from dire circumstances.

When everyone took photos of Serena Sterling during interviews, Serena Sterling openly shared Zane Crawford's last medical notes, saying in my view, Prof. Crawford has never left; he's always been with us. I'll walk the path ahead in his stead.

People with sharp eyes noticed a red string around Serena Sterling's neck, with a red bean of longing strung on it.

Later, the potent medication was named X in Zane Crawford's honor.

(Babies, we'll pause the Lu Liu story starting today. Zane's part ends perfectly; though Zane's story is a tragedy, each character under Snow's pen is vivid and has their fulfillment. Tomorrow will have more on Lu Liu.)

Chapter 889: We're Married!

Hayden Crawford's body is recovering quickly. In his early thirties, he is in the prime of his life, so he is healing fast.

Today, Serena Sterling checked his pulse and nodded repeatedly, "Mr. Crawford, your recovery speed really exceeds my expectations."

Hayden suddenly reached out and pressed his chest, "Serena, it hurts here."

"Chest pain? It shouldn't be. Let me take a look." Serena reached out her delicate hand.

The next second, Hayden directly pulled her, gently tugged, and Serena's slender body fell into his robust and warm chest instantly. He held her soft hand, placing it over his heart, "My heart is beating very fast, feel it."

Serena shivered slightly, realizing she was tricked, "Mr. Crawford, you're cheating!"

"I'm not, my heart really is beating fast," Hayden replied.

Now her palm was against his heart, "thump, thump, thump," his strong and powerful heartbeat pulsed in her palm, making her hand tingle.

The healthy Mr. Crawford is truly back~

Serena felt it; his heart indeed seemed to be beating very fast...

Serena blinked her bright eyes at him, "Mr. Crawford, did you... do something bad? Quickly confess, be honest for leniency, resist for severity!"

Hayden pinched her soft hand, "Serena, look, my body has nearly recovered. Shouldn't we schedule some matters too?"

"What matters?"

Hayden slowly curved his thin lips, "Serena, we should get married!"

Serena was stunned, and after a few seconds, she smiled with arched brows; indeed, she and he had come this far, yes... getting married!

...

Marriage Record.

The two discussed it and decided to go to the civil affairs bureau to get their marriage certificate first, then hold the wedding.

Before dawn, Hayden took Serena to the civil affairs bureau. Serena was so sleepy she couldn't open her eyes, murmuring, "Mr. Crawford, why are we here so early?"

In contrast to Serena, Hayden was energetic, "Queue up, today we have to be the first to get the certificate!"

Serena felt sweetness in her heart, and her whole body collapsed into his arms, acting coquettishly, "But, I'm still so sleepy."

Hayden sat by the civil affairs bureau door and then stretched out his hand to hold her on his lap, protecting her in his arms, "You continue to sleep. I'll call you when it's time."

"Mm-hmm, okay." Serena snuggled into his embrace, sweetly falling into a dream.

Hayden kissed her forehead and began waiting, but they had come too early, and she was so fragrant, soft as jade, and he accidentally fell asleep.

In a daze, voices reached his ear, someone was calling him, "Sir... sir, wake up!"

Hayden snapped awake, quickly shaking Serena in his arms, "Serena, wake up, the door is open, we can get the certificate!"

Serena opened her sleepy eyes.

They were about to get up, only to hear the person in front say, "Sir, miss, you might be mistaken, today is the weekend, the civil affairs bureau is closed."

Hayden froze, looking up to see that the person wasn't a civil affairs bureau staff but a helpful cleaning lady.

Hayden and Serena looked at each other, speechless, "..."

...

Photography Record.

Hayden and Serena found another auspicious day to go early to queue at the civil affairs bureau. This time, everything went smoothly, and they finally received their two little red books, officially getting their certificate.

The photographer at the civil affairs bureau smiled, "New couple, look over here, one, two, three, smile."

Serena faced the camera and smiled gently. At that moment, Hayden suddenly leaned over and kissed her cheek hard.

Pfft~

Everyone burst into laughter.

Photographer, "Groom-to-be, you're naughty, restrain yourself, bear it even if you can't hold it!"

Serena's face turned bright red. She stole a glance at the man beside her, and Hayden also looked at her, smiling tenderly and fondly.

Such affection aroused envy, someone said, "Bride and groom, you haven't known each other long, have you? It looks like you're still in the honeymoon phase."

Hayden held Serena's small hand, "No, we've known each other for six years."

Serena's heart stirred, and Hayden whispered in her ear, murmuring, "Every day with you feels like we're dating."

Serena opened the red book, the photo inside was the moment he stole a kiss, she sweetly thought to herself, silly Mr. Crawford, we've known each other more than six years, from the day I was born, you've been by my side.

...

Wedding Record.

After receiving their marriage certificate, next came the wedding. Serena didn't want to hold a wedding anymore, as the previous time basically counted as one.

But Hayden disagreed, insisting on giving her a grand wedding, so Serena agreed.

They returned to the City of Aethelgard together to visit the elderly Mrs. Crawford.

Having gone through the loss of Jude Crawford, Isabelle Willow, and Zane Crawford, Mrs. Crawford's hair had turned white. Serena and Iris Crawford were busy in the kitchen preparing dinner, while Mrs. Crawford and Hayden were chatting in the living room.

When Serena came out, Mrs. Crawford had already returned to her room, and Hayden was nowhere in sight.

Serena looked around and quickly found Hayden's tall and upright figure in the corridor of the Crawford family mansion. As night fell, he stood there alone, nighttime frost settling on his distinguished shoulders, silently standing like a pine tree, guarding the century-old family legacy of the Crawford family, yet his figure appeared so lonely.

Serena walked over, slowly reached out her small hand, and held his big hand.

Hayden suddenly turned his head, immediately meeting Serena's bright eyes. Her eyes sparkled with fragments of light, filled with her most enduring love and tenderness for him. Her gaze was also so calm and resolute, gently conveying warmth and strength to him.

Hayden knew that in the future, even far in the future, for many years, she would always stand by his side as the master mistress of the Crawford family, sharing rain and shine, protecting this home.

She once said that despite the passing years and fleeting time, she would accompany him with laughter through three thousand rounds!

Hayden firmly held her soft small hand, his lips curling, Serena, meeting you has been my little happy moment!

At this moment, Iris Crawford supported the elderly Mrs. Crawford standing on the balcony, watching the tightly holding couple below. Iris smiled, "Mom, you can rest assured now."

Having stood by the Crawford family for so many years and personally farewelling three generations, the elderly Mrs. Crawford stood at the gate of the Crawford family where morning bells and evening drums paused, gently nodding with a smile. There's no more perfect love in the world than being evenly matched. Go, children, stride forward, the Crawford family is yours now!

Chapter 890: Sweet Epilogue

The Most Beautiful Groom's Note.

The wedding date for Hayden Crawford and Serena Sterling has been set, and the invitations have been sent out.

On this day, after showering, Hayden Crawford looked at himself in the bathroom mirror and suddenly noticed a white hair.

He's only 34 years old, and he already has a white hair.

"Mr. Crawford, are you done with your shower?" At that moment, the bathroom door was pushed open, and Serena's beautiful little face peeked in.

Looking at the blooming Serena, in her prime, like a flower in full bloom, Hayden felt a deep sense of crisis, the middle-aged man's crisis.

"Almost done, Serena, you go out first." Hayden closed the door, then parted his hair and plucked the white hair, secretly disposing of it.

He still wasn't reassured. He checked his hair in and out in the mirror, and only when he was sure there was no white hair did he feel at ease.

Serena found Hayden very mysterious today, not sure what he was up to. She went out and came back and was shocked to find Hayden sitting at her dressing table... putting on a face mask!

The overbearing president Hayden actually applied a face mask!

"Mr... Mr. Crawford, you... what happened?" Serena was startled, so she asked timidly.

Hayden glanced back at her, "Serena, our wedding is near, and I want to be the most beautiful groom."

Serena, "..."

...

The Cute Kid's Note.

Caden Crawford and little Willow both received their mommy and daddy's wedding invitation, and of course, our little Pip received one too.

Little Pip officially changed his name, given by his master, to Gael Crawford.

Yes, Gael's master is the wandering monk Master Zayne, who has accepted Gael as his closed-door disciple, the heir of the eighth generation.

Little Gael grew up in the temple with a group of young monks.

This day, little Gael received the wedding invitation and let out a heavy sigh.

"Junior Brother, what's wrong?" A group of young monks asked with concern.

Little Gael, "Ah, when the sky wants to rain, the mother wants to remarry, and the old dad wants to take a young wife, so I have to go down the mountain."

Little Gael got up and walked away in big steps, still looking like a powder-carved little dumpling, his broad cassock loosely hanging off one shoulder, soft and cute.

The group of young monks sympathetically looked at little Gael, realizing... the junior brother Gael was born in a divorced family, and now the parents are marrying separately, it's really pitiful, so pitiful, we must treat the junior brother better in the future!

Faraway Hayden Crawford and Serena, "..."

Opposite the monk temple is a nunnery. When little Gael was on his way down the mountain, he saw a group of young nuns coming up ahead, each one youthful and lively.

Little Gael directly stretched out his hand, picked a small wildflower by the roadside, and ran over happily, "Little Sisters, this flower is for you."

The young nuns cried out and ran away directly.

"Hey, Little Sisters..." Just as little Gael opened his mouth, two heavy coughs came from behind, Master Zayne had arrived.

"Master." Little Gael immediately called out obediently.

Master Zayne looked at little Gael with a displeased face, "Gael, people of the cloth should be beyond worldly concerns, especially avoiding women. How come you're acting lasciviously at such a young age?"

Little Gael, "Master, what do you say those little sisters are?"

Master Zayne, "Women, of course."

Little Gael shook his head, "Not so. In Master's eyes, those little sisters are women, but in my eyes, they are all sentient beings."

With that said, little Gael turned and left, his light and carefree steps carrying an ethereal grace.

"..." Master Zayne had lived for so many years and felt like he had finally met his match in little Gael. Little Gael's... little con-artist-like mouth, in another ten years, might become a charlatan.

Hayden and Serena's three children; the eldest son Caden Crawford is the son of The Dragon Scion, born a king. The little daughter Willow is a princess of this world, her destiny beyond measure.

...

Passionate Love Chapter.

With the wedding approaching, Serena became exceptionally busy. She wore the acacia bean Zane left and his medical notes, becoming a real practitioner of medicine.

She took over Zane's medical team and rapidly expanded it, which Hayden didn't mind. Zane was not only her love but also his. What Hayden did mind was... the many young, talented, handsome guys in this medical elite team!

These days, Hayden kept grooming himself, looking in the mirror at his handsome and noble face, finally restoring his confidence.

Taking out his phone, he checked his social media.

The first post was something Serena had posted.

There were several pictures, one of which showed Serena sitting on a sofa with a glass of champagne in her hand, surrounded by a group of good-looking young men as stars around the moon. She posed happily for the camera with a V sign.

Hayden's previously joyful mood plummeted. This scene stabbed painfully at his eyes.

A surge of jealousy brewed in his chest, like an overturned vinegar jar. He grabbed his phone with a big hand and ran directly to open the door, shouting downstairs, "Auntie! Auntie!"

"Sir, I'm here. What's the matter?"

Auntie hurriedly ran upstairs, looking at Hayden.

Hayden pursed his thin lips and instructed in a deep voice, "Call the missus and tell her my heart hurts, have her come back immediately."

"Ah?" Auntie was momentarily stunned, looking confused at the very healthy Hayden.

Hayden's handsome face became more stern, "Didn't you understand?"

"Oh." Auntie turned and ran, "I'll go make the call right away!" Deeply resentful husbands are pretty scary.

In the room, Hayden could hear Serena rushing back, "Auntie, where's Mr. Crawford? Is he okay, did you call a doctor?"

"Madam, I... I... um, sir..." Auntie had never lied in her life, speaking in a stutter.

"Auntie, why can't you speak? Never mind, I'll go upstairs to check on Mr. Crawford!"

"Oh dear madam, slow down, you lost a high heel!" Auntie called from behind.

Hearing the footsteps, Hayden quickly got into bed, lying down, eyes closed.

Then, with a "click," the door was pushed open. Serena rushed in, "Mr. Crawford, what's wrong?"

Serena sat by the bed, her bright eyes filled with worry, looking at Hayden.

Hayden weakly opened his eyes, one hand pressing against his heart, "Serena, it hurts here a bit."

Serena quickly checked Hayden's pulse, but his pulse was... strong and vigorous...

She understood. He was lying.

"Mr. Crawford, your heart hurts, I'll kiss it better." Serena buried her little face in his chest, then playfully sniffed around like a kitten, squeezing into his black silk pajamas, kissing his heart.

Hayden initially had no intentions, but her dark little head stirred the fire, and he immediately wanted to get up.

"Mr. Crawford, doesn't it hurt anymore?"

Mr. Crawford immediately closed his eyes and lay back, "Hiss, it hurts again."

"What should I do? Should I kiss it again?"

"Mm... well, okay..." Hayden reluctantly agreed.

Serena found that the older Hayden got, the more childlike he became, needing to be coaxed. She wiggled tenderly and softly under the covers like a little kitten, kissing her way down...

"Mr. Crawford, I don't know if I'm kissing the right way..."

"Hiss." Hayden let out a sexy, tantalizing grunt.