

## **Substitute B 931**

Chapter 931: Inviting Her to a Candlelight Dinner

Davina Rowe looked at Director Wright in a panic, "Direc... Director Wright, I... please let me explain..."

Director Wright snorted coldly, "Davina Rowe, you're using such tricks in my crew. I can't keep someone as high and mighty as you here anymore. Get out of my crew now!"

Director Wright directly kicked her out of the crew.

Davina Rowe couldn't utter a single word; she could only look to Justin Xavier for help.

She was brought in by Justin Xavier, and although Director Wright was furious, as long as Justin spoke up to keep her, Director Wright would surely let her stay.

Davina Rowe placed all her hopes on Justin Xavier.

But Justin Xavier showed no reaction, not even intending to speak. Davina just saw his cold black eyes fall on her face, which seemed calm on the surface, but had a few sharp glints of coldness underneath.

Davina shivered for no reason. She suddenly realized how foolish she was. She had drugged Leah Thorne and still dared to hope that Justin Xavier would save her. Not killing her was already the greatest mercy Justin could offer.

"Davina Rowe, pack your things and get out of the crew. I don't want to see you again!" With that, Director Wright flicked his sleeve and left.

Davina still wanted to plead, but everyone in the crew avoided her like the plague. Ever since she got involved with Justin Xavier, she had become so arrogant and disrespectful that everyone couldn't wait for her to leave.

Davina felt like a rat crossing the street, suddenly collapsing to the ground.

Leah Thorne looked down at Davina from above, then turned and walked away. She had warned Davina long ago to not provoke her, lest she end up in trouble.

She's seen plenty of dirty tricks in the entertainment industry. Not to mention that Madame Goldie, with her sharp eyes, had already suspected that clumsy girl. Just one glance at her and Leah knew there was a problem.

She simply turned the tables and swapped the water, making Davina drink the problematic water.

As Leah took a break, Justin Xavier walked over, his tall and graceful figure blocking her path.

Leah ignored him and moved to the left.

Justin Xavier also moved to the left.

Leah moved to the right, and he also moved to the right, blocking her completely.

Leah raised her hand to brush her hair from her cheek, then looked up at him with charming eyes, "So, President Xavier, I just dealt with your new favorite. Are you here to teach me a lesson and defend your new favorite?"

Justin Xavier looked at her with amusement, his thin lips curving into a dotting smile, "Leah, are you sure it's not my new favorite who pissed you off, so now you're giving me the cold shoulder?"

"... President Xavier, you're overthinking it."

Justin Xavier reached out his long fingers to pinch her delicate chin, "Then smile for me. You were smiling so happily on stage just now, weren't you?"

Earlier, she was smiling charmingly on stage, but with him, she turned her face in an instant, not giving him a single good look.

Slap.

Leah directly reached out and slapped his hand away. She raised her willow eyebrows and gave him a teasing look, "President Xavier, so many people are watching. Please be mindful."

Justin Xavier withdrew his hand, "The way you say it, it feels like we're having an affair. Quite thrilling."

Leah ignored him and returned to her dressing table.

Justin Xavier followed her like a puppy, lowering his voice, "Leah, let's have lunch together. I'll have my secretary make a reservation."

"No time."

"Oh, I see. Then I'll ask again tonight." With that, Justin Xavier walked away.

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Leah shot a few more scenes, all single shots. In the evening, Director Wright suddenly said, "Leah, our 'Floating Life' is aiming for awards. Your photo in costume has been released today, and several critics are very interested in our 'Floating Life.' Tonight, accompany me to a dinner to entertain them."

Leah couldn't refuse, so she nodded, "Okay."

The group went straight to a luxury private room in a six-star hotel. In the car, Madame Goldie handed Leah her phone, "Leah, look, your photo in the cheongsam was released 25 minutes ago, and it's already topped the trending list. In just 25 minutes, it has over a billion shares and comments. Leah, I must say, you're the most incredible actress I've ever managed. You're my greatest achievement."

Leah clicked on the trending comments,

"Wow, Leah looks stunning in a cheongsam."

"Just opened Weibo and got a beauty shock, Leah is gorgeous, I'm a fan!"

"Another day being a simp, I'm shallow, just a fan of Leah's looks."

"I'm a fan of Leah's acting, she's enchanting just like Anya."

"Where are the haters who said Leah was just a pretty face? Look at her acting, haters have no heart."

Leah read a few comments and stopped. Sometimes she felt that she and Anya were very similar, laughing at life in the midst of indulgence. She wasn't unaware of the pressure from the outside world at first, but she didn't care. No one cares about the effort and sweat you put in; outstanding people always speak with their results. Clearly, she submitted a perfect answer sheet.

"Leah, several international luxury cheongsam brands and silk companies have already extended olive branches, wanting you to endorse them. Your commercial value has risen again," Madame Goldie said with a smile.

Leah looked at the scenery outside the window, "Take care of these arrangements, Madame Goldie. What happened to Davina Rowe?"

"Leah, there's no wall that doesn't leak. The strip show Davina staged on stage has already gone viral online. PR couldn't keep up. She's now a laughingstock, known as the shortest-serving support actress in history."

"Director Wright isn't bothering with it either, which is good. Davina brought a wave of attention to 'Floating Life' with her biggest folly."

Leah nodded and didn't speak further. Everyone has to pay for what they've done; she was never a pushover.

Just then, a "ding" sounded, and her phone chimed with a new WeChat message.

Justin Xavier asked again if he could invite her to a candlelight dinner that night.

Leah replied with a "No, I'm already booked."

Just then the luxury car stopped at the entrance of the six-star hotel, "Leah, we're here, let's get out."

...

At the six-star hotel, in a luxury private room, Leah sat next to Director Wright, with a highly influential critic in the entertainment circle across from her. Among them was a portly old man whose eyes were fixed on Leah as if they wouldn't move.

Director Wright stood up and poured the old man a drink, "President Stone, I haven't seen you in a long time. I heard you've settled abroad."

"Yes, it's been a while since I've been back, and I didn't expect to find such a rare talent like Miss Thorne in the entertainment circle."

#### Chapter 932: Having Dinner with an Old Man?

This President Stone is nearly sixty years old, truly an old man. However, the Stone family is quite influential, and President Stone is a mogul in the entertainment industry. Typically, the films and dramas he identifies win awards. A few years ago, he retired and settled overseas, and upon returning this time, he took notice of Leah Thorne.

Seeing President Stone's eyes remain fixed on Leah, Director Wright knew this wasn't good. He quickly smiled and said, "President Stone, I forgot to introduce Leah Thorne; she is Justin Xavier's sister."

President Stone was unaware of Leah's background, so Director Wright brought Justin into the picture.

The implication was that Leah belongs to Justin Xavier. Director Wright, you shouldn't entertain any foolish ideas.

"Justin Xavier? You mean Hugh Xavier's son, Justin Xavier?" President Stone was taken aback.

"President Stone, do you have connections with the Xavier family?"

"Of course, twenty years ago, when the Xavier family wasn't yet the most prestigious in Adlerville, Hugh and I were close friends." As he spoke, President Stone's gaze fell upon Leah's delicate and beautiful face. "Leah Thorne, could you be the highborn Thorne family girl from back then?"

Leah showed no expression; she had seen many men like President Stone, but she did not expect President Stone to be an old acquaintance, someone who had witnessed the history between the Thorne and Xavier families.

Over the years, as the Xavier family rose, those old acquaintances had vanished without a trace, making it difficult for her to gather evidence. But now, President Stone had presented himself willingly.

Leah looked at President Stone, curling her red lips, "President Stone, do you know my daddy?"

President Stone shook his head, "Beauty Thorne, your father Quinn Thorne was such a figure back then; not anyone could meet him. I only knew your mommy. Back then, Hugh Xavier was utterly infatuated, deeply attached to her. Hugh, he..."

President Stone seemed to remember something suddenly and stopped mid-sentence.

Leah was eager to hear more and asked, "What about Hugh?"

President Stone changed the topic, "Haha, I can't recall the past clearly. I vaguely heard that Hugh adopted a girl from the Thorne family back then. I never expected Beauty Thorne to grow so much."

President Stone displayed a lustful look again, "Director Wright, I must drink the wine, but I'll only drink it if Beauty Thorne pours it."

President Stone wanted Leah to come over and pour wine for him.

Director Wright quickly refused, "President Stone, that's not appropriate. Leah hasn't poured wine before; she's clumsy. President Xavier has never asked Leah to pour wine for anyone."

Director Wright brought Justin Xavier into the picture once more.

President Stone laughed dismissively, "Haha, Director Wright, even if Justin Xavier were here, he would have to call me uncle."

A lazy, cold smile overflowed from Leah's alluring eyes. Justin Xavier's name was well-known, yet President Stone wasn't afraid. It seemed President Stone must have some hold over secrets of the Xavier family from back then, otherwise, he wouldn't be so bold as to demand Justin call him 'uncle.'

The atmosphere stagnated somewhat. Just then, the luxurious suite's door was suddenly pushed open, and the cold air from outside rushed in, accompanied by a deep and warmly amused voice, "I came to see which uncle of mine this could be?"

Leah lifted her gaze; a tall, jade-like figure already stood by the door, it was Justin Xavier.

Justin Xavier entered removing his black overcoat and handed it to his personal secretary. Underneath, he wore a well-fitted, refined black suit. His handsome, scholarly face was adorned with gold-rimmed glasses, exuding a gentle, yet slightly aloof and restrained aura.

Leah recalled their last WhatsApp exchange; she said she had plans, so he came.

"President Xavier, why are you here? Please, have a seat!" Director Wright looked at Justin Xavier as if seeing a savior.

Others might not understand, but Director Wright knew well. In the years since Leah entered the industry, she had never served drinks; those eager men never got near her. If Leah were to serve drinks at his dinner party, Justin Xavier might eliminate him from the director's circle by tomorrow.

The power of capital is terrifying.

President Stone was stunned; he never expected Justin Xavier's arrival. He did have connections with the Xavier family, but precisely because he had connections, he knew how powerful the Xavier family's firstborn heir, Justin Xavier, truly was.

Using the Thorne family's influence, the Xavier family rose quickly back then, but reaching the pinnacle happened under Justin's leadership. Justin had a remarkable talent for business, surpassing any Xavier heir. Under him, the Xavier family's dark and treacherous bloodline became even more emotionless and ruthless.

Over the years, as he observed from abroad, President Stone witnessed Xavier Corp becoming the unrivaled top prestige under Justin's hand. His formidable methods spread through the business world like thunder, commanding respect.

President Stone abruptly stood, looked at Justin Xavier, and extended his hand nervously, "President... President Xavier! Nice to meet you..."

Justin Xavier's handsome face displayed a light and teasing smile as he approached President Stone, extending his hand for a handshake, "President Stone, I heard you wanted me to call you...uncle?"

Justin emphasized the words "uncle" with an arch of his elegant brow.

President Stone immediately gave an awkward laugh, "Haha, President Xavier, I was joking; don't take it seriously."

"That's good; it's easy to call you uncle. However, all my uncles have... turned into corpses." Justin replied with an indifferent smile.

President Stone suddenly felt a cold shiver, instinctively retracting his neck, "President Xavier, you really know how to joke. You're so young and respectable; I wouldn't dare be your uncle."

He tried to withdraw his hand as he spoke.

But Justin didn't release his grip.

President Stone hesitated, realizing Justin's slender fingers suddenly tightened, gripping his hand forcefully.

A sudden jolt of pain hit President Stone; his face turned pale as Justin's iron-like fingers seemed capable of crushing his bones with just a squeeze.

President Stone looked at Justin Xavier, whose handsome face remained lightly smiling throughout, yet behind that gentle façade lay a chilling and spine-tingling menace.

"President Xavier..." President Stone awkwardly chuckled.

This moment, Justin slowly released President Stone, "Have a seat, I happen to be hungry too. President Stone, you don't mind me joining you for dinner, do you?"

Justin Xavier sat down, taking the central seat, only then did President Stone dare to sit beside him, carefully offering an apologetic smile, "President... President Xavier, you have no plans tonight?"

Justin raised his eyes, his gaze landing on Leah across from him, smiling faintly, "Oh, I did have plans, but someone didn't want to accompany me for dinner."

Leah pretended not to understand and looked away. Just then, her phone chimed, a WhatsApp message.

From Justin Xavier: "You have plans, huh? You've arranged a date, then, to have dinner with an old man? Leah, are you lowering your standards?"

Chapter 933: Forcing Her to Drink

Looking at his sharp and sarcastic words, Leah Thorne was speechless; she didn't respond.

President Stone chuckled, "When President Xavier invites someone, that person dares to refuse. It seems that person must be special to President Xavier, or how else would they have the courage to refuse him?"

As he spoke, President Stone took out a cigarette and handed it to Justin Xavier, personally lighting it for him.

The scarlet flame danced as Justin Xavier furrowed his handsome brows and took a drag from the cigarette. When he slowly exhaled the smoke, he glanced at Leah Thorne and said, pulling his lips into a smile, "She actually is my favorite now."

"Haha, President Xavier, I didn't expect you'd fall for a woman's tricks. This woman's methods must be clever, letting you see but not touch, always teasing you, so you pamper her like this." Talking about women, President Stone was skilled, completely unaware of whom Justin Xavier was referring to.

Clever tactics...

Justin Xavier must have thought of something; he casually released a low chuckle from his strong throat, "Now that you mention it, she does have some tricks."

Across from them, Leah Thorne: "..."

President Stone's ignorance could be understood, but what is up with Justin Xavier? He must be doing this on purpose!

Amidst the swirling smoke, his deep, dark eyes remained fixed on her, intense and heated. Despite being in front of so many people, he truly showed no restraint.

Just then, her phone chimed with a new message on WeChat; it was another message from Justin Xavier.

Leah Thorne opened it; it read—accompanying this old lecher, aren't you afraid?

Leah Thorne's pale fingers typed a response: can he be more lecherous than you?

Justin Xavier, that old lecher, must be thinking of stripping you naked.

Leah Thorne: but I feel your gaze has already stripped me—President Xavier, you're eyeing me.

Justin Xavier's tall, straight back was lazily nestled in the chair, cigarette in one hand, phone in the other. He looked at the word "eyeing" twice, then curled his lips into a wicked grin; he didn't deny it.

At that moment, Director Wright approached with the drinks, "Come, President Xavier, President Stone, let me pour you both a drink."

This time, President Stone was intimidated and didn't dare to have Leah Thorne pour the wine; he extended his own glass.

But the next second, Justin Xavier's deep, magnetic voice sounded, "Leah, how can you be so clueless? President Stone just asked you to pour the wine, hurry over."

Justin Xavier personally asked Leah Thorne to come over and pour the wine.

Director Wright and President Stone stiffened; they were unsure of Justin Xavier's intentions.

Leah Thorne's eyelashes fluttered in surprise; she clearly didn't expect him to make such a request. But since he had spoken, Leah Thorne stood up.

"Director Wright, let me do it." Leah Thorne reached out for the wine and walked to President Stone's side.

"Oh dear, Beauty Thorne with such precious status, how could I trouble you to pour wine, it's too embarrassing." President Stone stood up as well, handing over his glass.

Leah Thorne prepared to pour the wine.

But just then Justin Xavier spoke again in a slow tone, "I remember President Stone can't handle alcohol."

"..." President Stone's hand froze, quickly retracting his glass, "Haha, President Xavier is right, I forgot, I can't drink."

Justin Xavier looked up at Leah Thorne, "Leah, come here and pour me a drink."

He pushed his empty glass towards her.

President Stone finally understood; Justin Xavier wanted Leah Thorne to pour the wine, but not for him—for Justin Xavier himself.

Leah Thorne glared at Justin Xavier but obediently walked over and poured wine into his glass.

"President Xavier, the wine is poured." Leah Thorne prepared to leave.

"Wait." Justin Xavier stopped her.

Leah Thorne felt this man had no end tonight. Of course, she understood; he had been inviting her to dinner all day, but she didn't agree and ended up dining with President Stone, this old lecher. To someone as petty and vengeful as him, he surely wouldn't let her off easily.

He had to do something to punish her, just to feel satisfied.

This was Justin Xavier's way of doing things.

Leah Thorne paused in her steps, looking down at Justin Xavier, "President Xavier, what else do you require?"

Justin Xavier gestured towards the glass with his eyes, "Drink this wine and penalize yourself with a glass."

What?

Why should she... penalize herself with a glass?

"Sorry, President Xavier, I don't drink." Leah Thorne turned to leave.

But suddenly, a well-defined hand reached out, grabbing her slender wrist, and with a forceful pull, her graceful body fell directly onto a strong thigh.

Leah Thorne quickly raised her eyes as Justin Xavier's handsome face magnified within her view.

He actually pulled her to sit on his thigh.

Hiss.

The luxurious private room was filled with gasps, as President Stone was stunned—Justin Xavier and Leah Thorne...

"President Xavier, let go of me...mm."

Leah Thorne tried to push him away, but the next second, Justin Xavier had already raised a glass of red wine, directly pressing it against her lips, pouring it down.

Leah Thorne, unprepared, swallowed a large mouthful, tightening her delicate brows. The red wine she failed to drink had already dripped down her chin, leaving stains on her dress, adding a bit of dishevelment.

Leah Thorne raised her eyes, only to see Justin Xavier had withdrawn all his smiles. He looked down at her, cold and dominating, his black eyes showing unmistakable authority and displeasure.

Clearly, he was upset today.

Her disobedience had obviously provoked him; his expression turned sour.

"Drink this wine before leaving, didn't you understand, or are you disobedient again?" he said in a low voice.

The whole luxurious private room was silent, so quiet that the fall of a pin could be heard perfectly, everyone watched the scene in shock.

At this moment, Justin Xavier forcefully held Leah Thorne in his embrace, harshly teaching her a lesson, almost as if... Leah Thorne was his private possession, exclusively kept.

Leah Thorne furrowed her delicate brows, already sensing the ominous aura emanating from him, realizing she had truly angered him.

He was just a madman; forcing her to drink was light—if she touched his reverse scale more tonight, he'd probably strip her unhesitatingly.

This red wine was quite strong; drinking it all would definitely make her drunk, and she still needed to discuss some matters with President Stone later, so being drunk was not an option.

Leah Thorne tilted her palm-sized, soft and charming face at him, suddenly relenting, "I'll drink."

She drank a mouthful of red wine, meeting his gaze with mesmerizing eyes, her look holding a fragile allure.

However, after drinking it, she stopped, sticking out her tongue, her voice becoming tender, "This wine tastes bad, too spicy."

#### Chapter 934: He's Going on a Date

Her voice, tinged with a mix of faint resentment and a hint of coquettishness, successfully made Justin Xavier pause his action of downing his drink.

Justin Xavier watched her stick her tongue out at him and thought that even the old lecher, President Stone, underestimated her. She was definitely a master at manipulating men. If she didn't want them, they were simply out of her reach.

"Red wine can be spicy?" He curled his thin lips, revealing a hint of a smile.

"Of course it's spicy. Try it." Leah Thorne reached out her small hand to take the glass from his palm, then brought the red wine to his lips.

Justin Xavier looked at her and drank the wine she fed him.

Leah Thorne didn't stop, feeding him the remaining half glass of red wine.

"President Xavier, the red wine is finished. Can I leave now?" Leah blinked her long lashes at him.

Justin Xavier's mouth was filled with the rich aroma of red wine. It wasn't spicy at all, but sweet, very sweet.

In that moment, he suddenly had a strong urge... an urge to taste the red wine in her mouth, to see if it was truly spicy?

Justin Xavier roughly pinched her waist, then let her stand up, "Go ahead."

Leah Thorne turned and left the luxurious private room.

...

Leah Thorne arrived at the presidential suite of the hotel. She took off her high heels and walked to the dressing table, lifting her clothes to check where he had pinched her earlier. He had used quite a bit of strength, leaving a purplish mark on her tender waist.

Leah Thorne had every reason to suspect he was a man prone to sexual violence.

At this moment, the doorbell of her room rang with a "ding".

Leah walked over to open the door, and Madame Goldie was outside.

Madame Goldie walked in and handed her a string of phone numbers, "Leah, why did you suddenly want President Stone's phone number? Could it be, you want to approach President Stone?"

Leah took the number and nodded, "Yes, I want to call President Stone."

Madame Goldie's mouth dropped open, "Leah, let me remind you, President Xavier was already quite upset in the luxury suite earlier. If President Xavier knows you called President Stone, the consequences will be serious, not something that can be smoothed over by feeding him a glass of wine."

Leah didn't respond and directly took out her phone, dialing President Stone's number.

Soon, the call connected, and President Stone's drunken voice came through, "Hello, who... who is this?"

"President Stone, it's me," Leah Thorne spoke up.

"Leah... Beauty Thorne?" President Stone, who had just finished the meal and made his way to his room, leapt from his chair in shock and delight upon hearing Leah Thorne's voice, "Beauty Thorne, why are you calling me?"

"President Stone, it's like this. I want to know about the matters between my mom and Hugh Xavier," Leah went straight to the point.

"Oh, that matter! I do know about it, very clearly, actually. Back then, Hugh and I were good friends. Family arranged for him to marry Laura Xavier, but he didn't like her at all. The one he kept longing for was his goddess in his heart, who had already become the celebrated young wife of the high-standing Thorne family, your mom."

"Every time Hugh and I went out drinking, he'd say he was utterly tired of Laura. Laura was a proper lady, with no enthusiasm in bed. Every time he shared a bed with Laura, he imagined her as your mom."

"Hugh really loved your mom. Those mistresses he sought outside, those women he had on the side, they all resembled your mom, but it wasn't enough. He had to have your mom, so one time he bought some drugs..." President Stone seemed to realize he had slipped, as his voice suddenly stopped.

Leah Thorne coldly laughed in her heart. Laura was a striking beauty in her youth, yet she was discarded like old shoes by Hugh. He even shared their bedroom secrets with friends casually. It was evident that Laura's tragic life was crafted entirely by this despicable man.

Leah Thorne knew President Stone had reached the crux of the matter—the sensational scene that unfolded the day her parents died in that car accident.

Laura rushed to the hotel and caught her mom with Hugh in bed, and later crippled her own legs, harboring hatred for her mom and Leah for so many years.

Justin Xavier also thought all the Xavier family's pain was inflicted by her mom, hence he wanted to ruin her.

But she knew it was Hugh who drugged her mom and took her to the hotel that day.

If she reveals the truth from those years ago, she wondered how Justin Xavier and Laura would cope?

This President Stone still maintained a tight lip, even drunk, guarding this secret.

"President Stone, what happened next? Why did you stop talking?" Leah Thorne smiled.

"Oh, the events afterward I don't quite remember, I don't quite remember..."

Leah Thorne's charming eyes filled with a hint of cold laughter, "Is that so? How about... I come over to your room now and have a heart-to-heart, and see if President Stone can recall those past events."

Leah Thorne was going to President Stone's room.

On the other end, President Stone was taken aback, as if a gigantic prize had suddenly landed on his lap, overjoyed, "Beauty Thorne, you really want to come to my room?"

"Yes, President Stone, wait for me." Leah Thorne hung up the call.

Beside her, Madame Goldie couldn't help but jump up, shocked as she looked at Leah Thorne, "Leah, you... are you really going to President Stone's room? Have you lost your mind? President Stone travels with many bodyguards; once you're in, you won't be able to get out!"

"Moreover... what if President Xavier finds out about this? You going to President Stone's room at night, President Xavier will eat you alive!"

Leah Thorne draped a coat over her shoulders. She knew, when she dined with President Stone, Justin Xavier already forced wine on her. If Justin knew she went to President Stone's room, the consequences would be unimaginable.

Leah Thorne raised her hand to tuck a strand of hair behind her ear lazily, then picked up her phone, opening up WeChat.

"Leah, who are you messaging on WeChat?"

"Justin Xavier."

Leah indeed messaged Justin Xavier, President, would you like to meet me in my room tonight?

With a "ding", Justin Xavier replied almost instantly really?

Leah replied come if you want, don't if you don't.

Justin Xavier replied, wait for me.

After sending the WeChat message, Leah tucked her phone into her coat pocket and left the room to find President Stone.

Madame Goldie watched Leah Thorne's figure retreat and shivered inexplicably. Leah, this time you've played it big; President Xavier will take it seriously!

...

Justin Xavier finished handling some urgent documents and then told his personal secretary, "You can head back now."

"Yes, President."

Justin Xavier stood in front of the mirror, looking at his handsome face resembling jade, then ran his hand through his hair and unbuttoned two buttons of his shirt, revealing the exquisite collarbones of a man.

"President, are you going... on a date or something?"

Chapter 935: Leah Thorne, Sleep With Me

Justin Xavier's fingers paused, "What?"

The personal secretary chuckled, "President, you look like you're about to go on a date with a girl you like."

Justin immediately pressed his thin lips together, realizing his inappropriate behavior. He was actually standing in front of the mirror preening, something he'd never done before.

Justin found it amusing; for so many years, his character had been calm and composed. Why did he now seem like an excited young man?

Could it be that a message from Leah Thorne had such a powerful effect?

She had never invited him to her room before; this was the first time.

The taste of the wine she fed him still lingered in his mouth, and he slowly curved his lips into a smile.

Justin went out to find Leah Thorne.

Standing at Leah's door, he raised his hand and pressed the doorbell.

Ding-dong.

No one answered inside.

What's going on?

Is she not in?

Justin pressed the doorbell again, but still, no one answered.

Where did she go?

Justin pushed the door open.

The door wasn't locked, and it easily swung open. Justin walked in, finding the room empty, with no sign of Leah.

She's not here.

She's really not here.

Justin stood tall and handsome in the room, with one hand in his pocket, almost bursting into laughter from anger. She invited him over, he came, and she's not here? What does this mean? Standing him up, messing with him?

Justin took out his phone and dialed his personal secretary, "I need to know where Leah Thorne is now, immediately!"

Soon, the secretary replied, "President, I just checked, Miss Thorne is... in President Stone's room."

"What did you say?" Justin's handsome face turned cold, his brows covered in a layer of frosty chill.

She actually went to that old pervert's room???

Without a change in expression, Justin hung up the phone, and he let out a low, chilling laugh from his throat.

Ha.

...

Leah had already arrived at President Stone's room. He hadn't expected Leah to actually come. Earlier in the luxury suite, he had sensed there was something between Justin and Leah. He wouldn't dare touch Justin's woman, but Leah was just so damn beautiful, a seductive enchantress. President Stone couldn't help but feel his heart itch.

"Beauty Thorne, you really came?" President Stone, reeking of alcohol, attempted to pounce on her.

Leah swiftly stepped aside, letting President Stone grasp at thin air, "President Stone, don't be hasty. Let's talk first."

"Talk about what?"

Leah looked at President Stone, "Let's talk about the time when my mom and Hugh Xavier had their so-called scandal. In truth, it was Hugh's wishful thinking and a conspiracy. Hugh drugged my mom, didn't he?"

President Stone already knew about Leah's background, and this was the most valuable information he held. Of course, he wouldn't easily divulge it to Leah.

Now, seeing her face-to-face, combined with the effect of the alcohol, President Stone was mesmerized by Leah's rose-like face. He could faintly smell her fragrance, like flowers, exceptionally pleasant.

"Leah, I could tell you everything I know, but what's in it for me?" President Stone looked at Leah, lecherously.

Leah raised an eyebrow, "President Stone, what do you want?"

"Spend a night with me," President Stone stated bluntly.

Leah was not new to such "spend the night" requests, so she showed no emotional turmoil. She simply and calmly curved her red lips, "President Stone, you should know about my relationship with Justin Xavier, right? If Justin finds out you slept with his woman, then you're... doomed."

Leah elongated the words "you're doomed," without sounding threatening, but it was enough to be threatening.

"Beauty Thorne, as long as you don't tell, and I don't tell, how would Justin Xavier ever find out?"

Leah nodded, "Alright, I agree."

She agreed so readily that President Stone got excited and rubbed his hands together, "Beauty Thorne, what are we waiting for? Let's begin."

"Hold on, President Stone. How do I know you won't just leave after we sleep together? You need to give me some valuable information first so we can have a pleasant cooperation."

Faced with such beauty, President Stone hesitated for just a moment before taking out a pen and writing down a phone number, "Beauty Thorne, take this."

"What is this number?"

"Beauty Thorne, this is all I can give you. Just take it with confidence," President Stone refused to reveal more.

Leah felt that this phone number was exceedingly important, so she carefully put it away.

"Beauty Thorne, let's begin," President Stone tried to pounce again.

"Wait a minute, President Stone."

Being rejected yet again, President Stone's face turned cold, clearly losing patience, "Leah, what do you mean by this?"

"President Stone, don't be mad. I mean, you don't have to take off my clothes; I'll do it myself." Saying this, Leah slowly lifted her fair fingers and removed her coat.

President Stone's breath caught. He stared dizzily at Leah at that moment; with the coat removed, she wore a slip dress with thin straps, the silk fabric perfectly outlining her voluptuous S-shaped curves.

Leah Thorne's cheongsam promotional photos for "Floating Lives" had already been released, and now she was the hot topic of discussion among men at drinking parties, her figure a wonder to behold. If it weren't for the strong backing of Justin Xavier, she would have already been preyed upon by those powerful men.

Beautiful.

So beautiful.

"President Stone, I'll take a shower first and come out fragrant. Wait for me, okay?" While President Stone was entranced, Leah turned and entered the bathroom, locking the door behind her.

"Beauty Thorne, why shower now? Let's shower later, or better yet, together." Denied entry, President Stone was restless and impatient.

Inside, Leah did not respond.

President Stone could only wait, feeling as though he was being consumed by a burning fire, each minute of waiting almost unbearable. Quickly, he picked up the coat from the carpet and deeply inhaled its scent. Wow, so fragrant.

It was Leah's faint cold aroma.

President Stone couldn't take it any longer; he removed his trousers...

Soon, with a "click," the room door opened, and Justin Xavier walked in.

Justin entered the room, spotting President Stone at once, without his trousers, holding Leah's white coat, performing an extremely lewd act.

Chapter 936: Justin Xavier Is Taken Away

This President Stone is almost sixty years old, having been engrossed in women for years. His body is fat and flabby, combined with his lewd actions, it's simply unbearable to look at.

Justin Xavier recognized Leah Thorne's white coat at a glance, and his cold black eyes suddenly turned colder. He strode forward, kicking out with one foot.

Ah!

President Stone was in high spirits and didn't notice someone had come in. Now Justin put a solid kick into his lower back, and President Stone felt a fierce chill's assault. The next second, a sharp pain came, and he screamed miserably, with his entire fat body lunging forward and hitting the wall.

Thud.

President Stone indeed crashed into it, tasting a mouthful of blood, realizing he had knocked out two front teeth, and he collapsed onto the carpet.

Pain.

Such pain.

President Stone touched his mouth, finding it full of blood. He looked up, and Justin Xavier's handsome face loomed large before his eyes.

Now Justin stood tall and long-legged in front of him, dressed in a white shirt and black trousers, one hand in his pocket, an expensive black belt accentuating his slim waist, presenting a striking figure with long legs, cold and stylish.

"President Xavier, w-why are you here?" President Stone, missing two front teeth, could hardly speak.

Justin's handsome features showed little expression as he stepped forward, approaching President Stone step by step, coldly lifting his lips, "Where's Leah Thorne?"

President Stone kept retreating until he was backed into the corner of the wall, shrinking himself down. To him, Justin was a devil ready to devour him, "Don't come any closer, don't come closer!"

"Leah... Leah is in the shower... President Xavier, please don't be angry or misunderstand, nothing happened between Leah and me. She... she was the one who seduced me!" President Stone was completely sober now, having sobered up the moment Justin kicked him. He knew today wouldn't end well, so he pushed all the blame onto Leah Thorne.

Justin lifted his gaze and looked at the tightly closed bathroom door. She was inside, as the sound of running water echoed from within.

Justin stopped in front of President Stone, tugged at his trousers, then knelt on one knee, his thin lips curling into an amusing, mocking smile, "What did you just say? You said Leah Thorne seduced you? Tsk tsk, that's a terrible joke. I'll give you a chance to tell another one."

"President Xavier, I'm not lying. Leah Thorne did seduce me; you can have someone investigate."

"Leah was the one who called me, saying she wanted to come to my room. Look, she voluntarily took off this coat and went in for a shower. She even said she'd make herself smell nice and asked me to wait for her."

Justin listened quietly to these words, then after a few seconds of silence, he lowered his voice, laced with a chilling smile, making one's scalp tingle, "Then you deserve to die even more."

President Stone's eyes widened, "W-what?"

Justin looked at him, his eyes impassive and careless, though a crimson rage seeped into the depths of his gaze, revealing his true feelings, as he seemed to speak to himself, "Do you not see what Leah Thorne is to me? She has been with me since she was 18; she's my woman."

President Stone inhaled sharply.

"Do you know how hard I've had it all these years? I have to suppress my desires to care for her and cut off her suitors. What do I have to do to stop you from coveting her?"

With that, Justin stood up slowly, looking coldly and pitifully at President Stone, "You shouldn't have touched her. To be honest, I don't know what I'll do next."

President Stone felt cold in both his hands and feet, as if he had been plunged into an abyss, with Justin being like a devil from hell, "W-what do you want?"

"Justin Xavier, I must tell you, I have a good relationship with your grandfather. If you dare lay a hand on me, this won't end well. I didn't even touch Leah Thorne, don't ruin the relationship between our families over a woman, and don't harm yourself!"

Justin looked at President Stone, tilting his head, showing a slight obsessive madness, "But you dirtied her clothes, so it's better for this ugly thing on you to be wasted."

With that, Justin lifted his leg, slowly yet forcefully stepping on President Stone's vital area.

Ah!

President Stone's piercing scream instantly echoed throughout the entire six-star hotel.

Justin Xavier's private secretary didn't return to the company; he had sensed something was wrong. The only person who could drive the president out of control was Leah Thorne.

The president had entered President Stone's room, so he had been waiting outside.

Hearing President Stone's piercing scream, the private secretary felt a jolt of foreboding, and it proved to be correct. He immediately pushed the door open.

The room was filled with a bloody scent.

The private secretary was stunned; he had never seen such a scene before. President Stone had collapsed on the carpet, where large patches of blood were spreading, forming a small stream.

Justin Xavier had personally crippled President Stone!

The whole atmosphere hung in silence for a few seconds, then President Stone's bodyguards and the hotel's security personnel rushed in, "Oh my, quickly call the police! Call for an ambulance!"

Justin Xavier personally hurt someone, and soon the police arrived, ready to take him in for questioning.

President Stone was carried onto a stretcher, almost passing out from the pain, but he gritted his teeth, watching Justin with resentment, "Justin Xavier, this isn't over; I'll sue you and make sure you rot in prison!"

"I wonder what will happen to Xavier Corp with its CEO embroiled in a lawsuit. I guess Xavier's stocks will plummet tomorrow, with successive limit downs. When the company's market value drops several hundred million overnight, shareholders will demand accountability; with company turmoil, I want to see how you handle it then?"

"Justin Xavier, you're crazy over a woman!"

President Stone's cursing voice gradually faded away.

Justin Xavier stood still, his expression showing neither alarm nor agitation from start to finish.

"Mr. Xavier, please come with us," the police said.

Justin calmly lifted his head, "Give me a minute; I have something to say."

Say what?

The private secretary watched as Justin walked to the bathroom door, knocked rhythmically with his slender fingers against the door panel, "Leah."

So he was going to speak with Leah Thorne.

No sound came from inside.

The tightly closed bathroom door had never opened.

"Leah, I'll be back soon," Justin said.

Chapter 937: Slapped Leah Thorne Across the Face

Justin Xavier was taken away.

Leah Thorne returned to her room in the filming set, took out her phone, and immediately dialed the number given by President Stone. However, the "dududu" tone rang over and over again, and no one ever picked up.

No one answered the phone.

Leah's life went on as usual, as if Justin being taken away had no impact on her at all. She never left the presidential suite that day, nor did she later ask about Justin Xavier's whereabouts.

The filming of "Floating Life" continued. As Leah was holding the script and memorizing lines, she overheard a few actresses nearby excitedly gossiping,

"Did you hear? The president of Xavier Corp, Justin Xavier, has been taken away!"

"I heard about it early on. A magazine got first-hand news yesterday and even ran it as the entertainment headline. But unfortunately, before it even went on sale, a powerful capital force erased all the sensitive mentions about President Xavier."

"Although public opinion has been completely suppressed, the news has still spread. Xavier Corp's stock has hit the limit down several times over these days, and it's said that fifty billion has evaporated from its market cap just like that."

The actresses were all shocked at such a number and deliberately lowered their voices, fearing that their words might cause trouble.

"What do you think happened that Justin was taken away?"

"I don't know either."

"I heard Old Master Xavier has made a move, and he's very angry. The Xavier board is in turmoil. President Xavier really set off a chain reaction."

"Leah! Leah!" a voice called out beside her, and Leah looked up.

Madame Goldie had arrived, looking at her with concern. "Leah, what are you thinking about? I called you several times just now, and you seemed so distracted."

Leah remained expressionless. She put down her script and stood up. "Madame Goldie, I'm going to the restroom."

"Leah, let me go with you."

The two walked out together, and Madame Goldie whispered, "Leah, about President Xavier..."

"Madame Goldie," Leah interrupted, her voice cold. "I'm not interested in his matters. No need to tell me."

Madame Goldie immediately shut her mouth.

As they turned a corner, suddenly a figure appeared ahead. That person raised a hand and slapped Leah across the face.

Smack.

A crisp sound echoed, and Leah's face turned from the slap.

Oh my God.

Madame Goldie gasped. The person acted so fast she hadn't reacted. Who would dare slap Leah?

"Leah, are you alright?" Madame Goldie quickly checked Leah's reddened cheek. Leah's skin was so delicate, but the person used great force; her cheek was already swollen, and a glaring slap mark was vividly visible.

Madame Goldie angrily looked at that woman. "Madam, who are you? How can you hit someone just like that? Do you want me to call the police?"

The person was Mrs. Xavier, Laura Xavier.

Laura had just slapped Leah hard.

Laura's makeup was exquisite, her hair neatly done, her appearance well-maintained and dignified. Behind her, a servant pushed a wheelchair, and two bodyguards helped her on either side so she could slap Leah.

Now Laura looked at Leah icily and condescendingly, then glanced at Madame Goldie. "Who do you think you are? When your master hasn't spoken, why are you yapping here?"

Madame Goldie was livid. "You!"

That's when Leah calmly said, "Madame Goldie, stand down. This is President Xavier's mother, Mrs. Xavier."

What?

Madame Goldie stared at Laura in shock. How could President Xavier have such a vicious and sharp-tongued mother?

Madame Goldie stepped back.

Leah stepped forward, raising her lazy yet indifferent eyes to Laura. "Mrs. Xavier, is there something you need from me?"

"Leah Thorne, I'm here to slap you. I'd tear apart that vixen face of yours if I could!" Laura's gritted expression showed a bit of menace.

Leah slowly curled her red lips into a smile. "Mrs. Xavier, you need bodyguards to hold you just to slap me. How do you plan to tear me apart? Living like this, don't you find it pathetic?"

Laura froze. Her legs had long been crippled; she couldn't stand. She specially called two bodyguards today just to hit Leah.

A once prestigious lady from the Winslow family had become this hysterical. Leah's few words exposed all her embarrassment and shame.

In these years, who hasn't been bruised?

Laura took a deep breath and ordered, "Put me back."

The two bodyguards placed her back in the wheelchair, the maid covering her lap with a blanket. Laura looked up at Leah. "Leah Thorne, we both know why my son was taken. He's suffering inside, but here you are, eating, sleeping, still in the mood for your work. Let me ask you, have you visited my son?"

Leah tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. "Would visiting him help? I'm not a lawyer."

Laura laughed bitterly, "Leah, President Stone is still in the hospital, just out of critical condition. He's truly finished. Even with Old Master Xavier visiting in person, he's unyielding, insisting on pressing charges to keep Justin inside."

"With Justin in, chaos reigns outside—complete turmoil, and Xavier Corp is a mess. Old Master Xavier is furious, and all of this is because of you!"

Laura looked Leah over with utter disdain. "You, an actress, with a vixen's face, skilled in seduction. You're born to sleep with men. Sleeping with President Stone is nothing. Why drag my Justin into this?"

Madame Goldie wrinkled her brow upon hearing these harsh words. This Mrs. Xavier had such an unpleasant tongue, yet Leah had grown up under such insults.

Leah was used to it. She looked at Laura and lazily smiled, "Mrs. Xavier, you keep calling me a vixen. Have you ever thought that your son Justin Xavier actually likes this type?"

Laura's expression changed dramatically. "You!"

Leah adjusted her dress. "Mrs. Xavier, if there's nothing more, I'll be leaving. I have filming to do."

With that, Leah turned and walked away.

Laura watched Leah's retreating figure with hatred, shouting, "Leah Thorne, you're so cold-blooded. You have no heart!"

Leah didn't stop, quickly disappearing down the hallway.

...

Leah returned to the dressing room. With that slap mark, she couldn't film. Madame Goldie pressed ice to her swollen cheek. "Leah, does it hurt? That Mrs. Xavier is as fierce as a shrew."

"Madame Goldie," Leah softly said, "do you also think I'm cold-blooded, heartless?"

Chapter 938: I'm Going to See My Husband

Madame Goldie paused for a moment. Justin Xavier had already been inside for two days, but Leah Thorne showed no reaction, seemingly indifferent, which was why Mrs. Xavier called her heartless.

Madame Goldie sighed and looked at Leah with a complicated expression, "Leah, I hope you're truly heartless. Otherwise, if this knife wounds him, wouldn't you feel the pain as well?"

Leah lowered her thick, comb-like eyelashes. "That's enough, no need to apply anymore. Get the makeup artist to handle my face, I need to go out and film."

...

Today's scene for Leah was a breakup scene. Anya used to be the daughter of a wealthy family with an outstanding fiancé, Noah Burke. However, during the war, Anya's family fell apart, and the Burke family looked down on her. Mrs. Burke even personally delivered a letter of cancellation of the engagement.

But Noah, who was deeply in love with Anya, didn't know. In a heavy rain, he came to Anya's door.

"Leah, this scene is a bit difficult. I see you're not in great shape today, your face is pale. Are you ready, or should we film it tomorrow?" Director Wright knew what had happened between Justin Xavier and Leah, so he tentatively asked her.

Leah shook her head, "No need, Director Wright, I'm ready."

"Alright, let's start filming."

The artificial rain began, and the actor playing Noah was already on stage. Leah also took her place.

Leah came to the second-floor window. She wore a clean blue and white school uniform, her long black hair hung obediently and purely over her shoulders. Perhaps feeling the slight chill from outside, she wrapped her slender arms around herself, her frail shoulders eliciting sympathy.

Director Wright watched Leah through the camera and couldn't help but praise to Madame Goldie beside him, "Every time Leah steps into the frame, I feel she's become Anya."

Madame Goldie nodded, "From the first time I saw Leah, I knew she was born for the camera."

Director Wright agreed, and officially called, "Action!"

The scene officially began, Noah stood in the rain, shouting loudly toward the second floor, "Anya, I know you're in there, come out and see me!"

"Why did you break off our engagement? You must give me a reason! I'll wait here for you, I believe you're not a cold-hearted girl!"

Leah stood at the window on the second floor, quietly hugging herself in the bleak autumn rain, watching Noah below.

Soon, Noah, unable to hold on, fainted.

The Burke family's private car arrived, and Mrs. Burke took Noah away.

"Anya," a female classmate came over, "Why didn't you go down to see Noah? Being so heartless will truly hurt him."

Leah watched the direction in which Noah disappeared, remaining silent for a long time. The rain outside pounded on the window sill, making a pitter-patter sound. Just as everyone thought she wouldn't speak, she

said softly, "He has many people who love him; he won't miss me. But I have lost everything. All that's left is myself, so I must keep my heart tightly guarded, not allowing myself to lose... utterly."

Director Wright once again jumped up at her performance, marvelous, simply marvelous!

"Cut." Director Wright called for a stop.

Leah walked over after finishing the scene, and Director Wright praised again, "Leah, you were fantastic, thank you for your hard work today, get some rest."

...

Leah returned to her room, and Madame Goldie handed her a cup of hot milk, "Leah, drink the milk, and go to bed early."

"Alright." Leah took the milk and obediently drank it down.

Madame Goldie felt that since Justin Xavier went inside, Leah had become very obedient, mostly compliant and quiet. She didn't seem to talk much anymore.

Madame Goldie looked at Leah's small, delicate face, still soft and charming, but indeed pallid. After removing her makeup, the handprint on her cheek became clear, adding a touch of fragility to her softness.

Madame Goldie couldn't pinpoint exactly what had changed in Leah over these days. She seemed unchanged, yet it felt like she had changed a lot.

"I've finished." Leah handed the cup back to Madame Goldie and then got up to leave.

Madame Goldie asked curiously, "Leah, where are you going?"

"To shoot the scene, the rain breakup scene later, let's hurry, so we won't be late." Leah walked to the door, her small hand resting on the doorknob.

Madame Goldie's mind went blank, "Leah, what are you talking about? We just shot the rain breakup scene, have you forgotten?"

Leah's hand suddenly froze.

Her thick, comb-like eyelashes fluttered twice, and she turned with a slight smile, "Madame Goldie, I was just joking with you, you should go back to your room, I need to rest."

Madame Goldie's nervousness finally relaxed, she patted her heart with a sigh of relief, "Leah, that's not funny at all. I thought you had amnesia, scared me to death. Rest well, I'm leaving."

Madame Goldie left.

The room was left with Leah alone. She stood quietly, with her long eyelashes casting shadows beneath her beautiful eyelids.

She knew she wasn't well.

Actually, she had never been well.

At 18, both her body and mind suffered a heavy blow, and she lost a child, she developed a mental illness.

Now it was getting worse, and she had started to forget things earlier.

Gradually, she would forget many people and many things.

Maybe someday, she would forget the man named Justin Xavier.

Maybe someday, she'd forget the first half of her life as Leah Thorne, forget herself.

Leah stood quietly in the room for a while. Then she moved, grabbed her coat, and walked out.

Madame Goldie came back because she wanted to give Leah the script for tomorrow, expecting her to prepare in advance. She intended to ring the doorbell, but found that Leah's room door wasn't even closed.

"Leah, why didn't you close your room door? That's so dangerous... Leah! Leah!"

Madame Goldie found the room was empty, Leah was gone.

Leah was just here, where did she go?

Madame Goldie suddenly thought of someone, could Leah have gone to find...

Madame Goldie sighed, thinking of Leah's earlier monologue, the words were too fitting, not sure if it was about Anya or Leah.

Having lost everything, only oneself remains, so wasn't it agreed to tightly guard one's heart to avoid losing completely?

Then don't give away your heart.

...

Leah left the set and hailed a taxi on the street.

"Driver, to XX police station."

The driver cast a glance at Leah in the rearview mirror, his eyes brightened, "Beautiful lady, what are you going to the police station for so late?"

Leah looked at the driver coldly and indifferently, "I'm going to see my husband."

Chapter 939: Justin Xavier, I Miss You

The driver noticed Leah Thorne walking alone, and with such beauty, he inevitably had some indecent thoughts. "Miss, your husband is locked up in jail. It's uncertain whether he'll get out. You're so young and beautiful; you shouldn't wait for him. There are many good men out there."

Leah Thorne showed little expression, merely curling her red lips indifferently, "I wouldn't dare. A few days ago, a man tried to flirt with me. My husband directly crippled him; he's a murderer. Are you afraid?"

Leah Thorne's lazy yet beautiful eyes stared straight at the driver, carrying a cold, sarcastic edge.

The driver felt his scalp tingle, and the lustful thoughts he had earlier were scared away by Leah Thorne. He quickly diverted his gaze, not daring to look at her again.

Half an hour later, the taxi stopped; they had reached the destination, and Leah Thorne got out.

Leah Thorne stood outside the police station for a while. As she lifted her foot to enter, suddenly a long business car sped over.

The rear door of the business car was opened by two bodyguards dressed in black, and someone stepped out.

It was Old Master Xavier and Laura Xavier.

They were here.

Leah Thorne didn't want to see these two people, so she hid in a dimly lit area.

At that moment, she heard Laura Xavier's delighted voice, "Justin, are you out?"

Leah Thorne's heart skipped a beat, and she quickly looked up. She saw the front door of the police station slowly opening, from which several people emerged. Surrounded at the forefront was Justin Xavier's tall and handsome physique.

Justin Xavier was out!

Leah Thorne's gaze fell on Justin Xavier. He looked much the same as before despite being away for days. However, after being inside, he cut his hair; the stylishly layered curls he used to have were trimmed into a crew cut, and he wasn't wearing gold-rimmed glasses. He wore a simple black T-shirt under a long black leather coat. In the dense night, his refined and handsome features exuded a hint of wildness and boldness.

Such a Justin Xavier seemed to be his true self, shedding all manners of pretentiousness.

Behind him, his personal secretary and lawyer had already completed all the handovers. Justin Xavier stepped out, his hands in his pants pockets, standing tall on the steps.

Old Master Xavier and Laura Xavier quickly gathered around him. Laura's eyes were red with excitement, "Justin, you're finally out. Your mom has been worried sick these past days."

Old Master Xavier had a slightly stern expression. He spoke, "It's good you're out, Justin. We'll talk more when we get back."

Justin Xavier didn't move; those clear, cold black eyes looked around as if searching for someone.

"Justin, who are you looking for?" Laura Xavier asked.

Justin Xavier pursed his thin lips and spoke his first words after coming out, "Where is Leah Thorne?"

He asked about Leah Thorne as soon as he came out.

Laura Xavier immediately said angrily, "Justin, wake up. At this point, you're still asking about Leah Thorne? Has she even visited you these past days? No! She's been filming with the crew, living happily as usual. I never realized before that Leah Thorne could be so ruthless. She got you into this mess, yet she acts as if nothing has happened."

Justin Xavier didn't find the person he was looking for, so he quietly withdrew his gaze, his beautiful eyelids dropping, leaving others guessing what he was thinking.

"Justin, let's go back," Old Master Xavier spoke.

This time Justin Xavier didn't refuse; he walked away.

Leah Thorne stood in the dark corner watching them leave until the silhouette of the business car disappeared from her view.

She stood dazed for a while, not calling for a taxi but walking home on her own.

She rushed out of the room too quickly earlier; she didn't bring a coat. Now the night wind attacked relentlessly, and Leah Thorne felt a shiver run through her.

She didn't even know why she came.

Just wanted to see him.

She was sick, and it got worse. Suddenly, she was scared she might forget him someday.

Leah Thorne let out a faint, self-deprecating smile. Through the years, Justin Xavier had deeply imprinted himself on her, in her soul. Despite years of trying to extract him, leaving her battered and bruised, she couldn't remove him.

At this moment, she despised herself. On one hand, she carried the lines, "I have nothing left but myself, so I must diligently guard my heart," yet on the other hand, time and again she handed her heart over, losing utterly.

She had let down so many people.

Her father.

Her mother.

Her brother.

Also, Beryl, who died before her eyes.

She really hated herself.

She didn't like herself at all now.

Then Leah Thorne suddenly halted. She lowered her eyes; the diamond anklet she always wore on her ankle was missing.

It was a gift from Justin Xavier.

She had always worn it.

But now it's gone.

How could it disappear?

Where's her anklet?

Leah Thorne quickly turned around, running back the way she came; it must've dropped on the road.

She carefully searched along the road, but didn't find it.

Leah Thorne felt a coldness enveloping her; she seemed to have forgotten how to breathe. Why did the anklet disappear?

No, she must find it.

She returned repeatedly between the police station and here, running back and forth several times.

The night was especially cold, and the gaze of the passersby suddenly focused on her because they saw an extremely beautiful girl, devoid of any brash, flamboyant beauty, pretty like a soft, harmless porcelain doll, running back and forth on the road.

She didn't know what she was searching for, but her appearance was attentive yet anxious, as if she would keep running until she found what she was looking for.

She wore only scant clothes, just a black dress, her lost and desolate figure resembling a kite teetering in the sky.

Ah!

At that moment, Leah Thorne cried out as she fell to the ground.

It turns out she ran too hastily, wearing high heels, she accidentally twisted her ankle.

Hiss.

It hurt.

The delicate, pale ankle was already swollen red, Leah Thorne could barely bear the pain, her eyes turning red immediately.

Yet she couldn't care about the pain at the moment, struggling to stand, she had to find the anklet.

Just then, a hand reached out, in the person's palm lay her anklet quietly.

Her anklet!

Leah Thorne's eyes immediately lit up, like shimmering stars, she took the anklet, clutching it tightly in her palm.

The joy of recovering something lost washed over her, her heart suffusing with a hint of... grievance.

Justin Xavier...

Leah Thorne was sitting on the ground, curling her legs up, feeling a burning sensation in her eyes as tears wildly sprang forth; she buried her damp face in her knees, softly whimpering, "Justin Xavier, I... I miss you, I really, really miss you..."

Chapter 940: Always Loved, Loved So Very Much

The person who arrived was Madame Goldie.

Madame Goldie found the room empty and immediately guessed that Leah Thorne had gone to find Justin Xavier. Worried, she drove over to catch up.

Now, Leah was sitting on the ground, holding herself as she quietly sobbed. Her trembling, delicate shoulders exuded a soft helplessness. Madame Goldie recalled the first time she met Leah a few years ago, when Justin Xavier had found her and asked her to help debut the then 18-year-old Leah.

As a top agent, Madame Goldie didn't agree immediately; she wanted to meet Leah in person before giving her answer.

So, she met Leah.

It was overseas, in a foreign land. The 18-year-old Leah was sitting in a small rented room. There was a window in the room. She was hugging her knees, sitting by the window, raising her little face to look at the sunlight outside. At that moment, Madame Goldie was stunned. She didn't know how to describe Leah; this 18-year-old girl was like... a mandrake blooming at the edge of a cliff, desperate yet enchanting.

That day, she brought Leah back to the country. That night, as they walked down the street,

Leah suddenly stopped in her tracks, staring blankly at a street performer.

"Leah, do you want to go up and sing a song?"

"Can I?" she asked softly.

"Of course, you can."

Madame Goldie approached and exchanged a few words with the performer, then took out a few bills from her bag, and the performer handed the guitar to her.

Madame Goldie handed the guitar to Leah, "Leah, play a song. After you return to the country, you'll be a new person, bidding farewell to the past as you embark on your journey. Sing the song you most want to sing before you leave."

Leah sat on a high chair, placed the guitar in front of her, and her jade-like hand started to play.

The song she most wanted to sing before leaving?

Perhaps she didn't even know what she wanted to sing, so she just played and sang casually.

Put out the cigarette,

It'll be better for your health,

Even though it's hard to get through the nights when I miss you;

I can't bear the photos of our embrace,

Yet I don't want to see them myself,

So I hide them behind the picture frame;

Open the window,

It'll be better for your mood,

That way I can still smile while saying goodbye to you;

This is my favorite record,

You say it's just a piece of music,

But it'll make me miss you in the future...

Leah might not know what she was singing, but Madame Goldie, and everyone present, all recognized it. It was the classic hit from the 80s, Old Wolf's "Escape from the Tiger's Mouth."

The bustling city street suddenly quieted down for some reason, and everyone turned to look at this girl.

The girl was wearing a simple light blue pleated skirt, radiant like a red rose about to bloom. At 18, she was youthful and beautiful, carefree and untroubled.

But she chose to sing such a melancholic and mournful song.

The crowd didn't understand why she would choose this song at 18?

The crowd didn't understand why her clear voice singing this song made people... want to cry?

The girl continued to play and sing

Speaking vows to sacrifice life,

Looking back at this bustling world,

Every moment of loving you was like a speeding subway;

Tears that were promised not to fall,

Now are boiling in my eyes;

Tiger's mouth of loving you,

I've escaped from danger...

She repeatedly sang those last two lines, loving you through the tiger's mouth, I've escaped from danger...

Even though she said tears wouldn't fall, now they were boiling in her eyes.

Back when Leah was 18, all that flashed through her mind was... these ten years, every moment of loving him.

Tiger's mouth of loving you,

When will I truly escape danger?

At that time, Madame Goldie knew that Leah loved Justin Xavier.

Now, as Madame Goldie looked at Leah sobbing helplessly on the street, she realized again, Leah still deeply loved Justin Xavier, always has, very much so.

Madame Goldie draped a coat over Leah's shoulders, "Leah, cry it out, and then we'll go back."

Leah buried her head and sobbed for a while, then lifted her head. Her eyes were red and swollen, her face pale, like a child who had done something wrong, she whispered in a trembling voice, "Madame Goldie, I... twisted my ankle..."

Madame Goldie squatted down, unsure of what Justin Xavier would do if he were here. She raised her hand and gently patted Leah's head, "It's alright, it's not your fault. I'll take care of it once we get back."

"Okay." Leah nodded absentmindedly.

Madame Goldie noticed the diamond anklet Leah was holding tightly in her hand, "Leah, were you looking for the anklet on the street earlier? During the shoot today, Director Wright asked you to remove the anklet, and I've been keeping it. Did you forget?"

"Oh, I really forgot." Leah muttered, hiding her eyes under her lashes.

Madame Goldie didn't think much of it. Since the incident with Justin Xavier, Leah had been out of sorts; forgetfulness was quite normal, "Leah, let's head back."

Madame Goldie carefully helped Leah up, feeling as if she was guiding a lost kitten home.

This poor little kitten; if Justin Xavier knew, his heart would be torn apart.

...

The Xavier family mansion.

The luxury car sped towards the Xavier family mansion where the servants had already prepared a sumptuous dinner. Laura Xavier had even prepared a ritual for her son to ward off bad luck by jumping over a fire basin.

The family was sitting in the dining room eating dinner, and Old Master Xavier said, "Justin, even though you are out now, there's still a lot of mess to clean up. President Stone hasn't budged yet, and the company's stock price still needs stabilizing. It's all very tricky."

Justin Xavier elegantly used his knife and fork to cut his steak, with little emotion. He replied blandly, "Got it, I'll take care of it."

The atmosphere between Old Master Xavier and Justin Xavier became tense. This time, Justin got himself into trouble because of Leah, which infuriated Old Master Xavier. Yet he kept his temper in check, as Justin was his most excellent successor.

But Justin's attitude was too indifferent. Coming out without an apology, let alone his casual and arrogant demeanor, the only thing he proactively asked about was Leah.

Laura Xavier quickly intervened as she saw Old Master Xavier about to lose his temper, "Old Master, Justin, let's not dwell on those unpleasant matters now. Let's eat first. Chelsea, pour some red wine for the young master."

Chelsea was Laura's newly adopted goddaughter, and Laura was quite enthusiastic about adopting goddaughters recently.

This Chelsea was quite lovely, just 18 years old, with some resemblance to Leah at 18 in her brows and eyes. She snuck a glance at Justin, her pretty face blushing.

"Young master, I'll pour you some wine." Chelsea went over to Justin's side to pour wine.

Justin didn't look at Chelsea, but neither did he refuse.

Laura chuckled, "Justin, that's more like it. Look how wonderful Chelsea is. In the future, let's not bother with that little vixen Leah..."

Just as "little vixen" hasn't finished echoing, "crash"—a loud noise erupted.