

## **Substitute B 961**

Chapter 961: Must Be Home Before 9 PM

Mr. Ford froze, not expecting Leah to suddenly ask and catch him off guard.

Leah's eyes were clear, and her lips carried a smile, "Uncle Ford, you've already sent someone to investigate the relationship between Justin Xavier and me, haven't you? This time, are you here to help me or to use me?"

Mr. Ford looked at Leah, his expression returning to normal, "Leah, you truly are the daughter of the Thorne family. However, rather than saying I'm using you, I'd say we're helping each other. Our goals are aligned—my hatred for the Xavier family is genuine, and helping the Thorne family seek revenge is genuine as well. The only person you can team up with right now is me."

Leah fell silent, only speaking after a while, "I need to think it over."

"Alright, Leah, I'll wait for your news."

At this moment, a clear, sweet voice sounded, "Daddy, I'm back~"

Leah looked up, and it was Mr. Ford's daughter, Simon's sister, Cheryl Ford, who had returned.

Cheryl had just turned 18 this year, a freshman in college. She was pretty and vibrant, with an innocent and lively appearance, very charming.

They say daughters are a father's little comfort, and Mr. Ford immediately smiled benevolently, "Cheryl, it's so cold, why are you still wearing a dress?"

Cheryl ran over and hooked her arm around her father's, pouting her red lips, "Daddy, all my classmates are wearing this, dresses look good, girls love to look pretty~"

Mr. Ford gave a helpless yet dotting smile.

Leah could tell that Mr. Ford was a good father; he protected both of his children, Simon and Cheryl, very well.

Leah's gaze fell on Cheryl, and she suddenly envied her. If her daddy were still around, she might have turned out just like Cheryl.

At this moment, Cheryl saw Leah, her eyes lit up, "Oh my God, look who it is, Leah Thorne, are you really the famous Leah Thorne? I'm one of your little fans. Leah, can I take a photo with you? My classmates will go crazy, they'll envy me to death."

Cheryl bounced over to Leah and looked at her in awe.

Leah had a good feeling about this cute, innocent little sister, maybe because she was living the way Leah wanted to. Leah nodded, "Okay."

Cheryl happily took a photo with Leah and even got her autograph.

At this moment, Simon came out, "Daddy, Leah, Cheryl, dinner is ready. Let's go inside and eat."

...

Leah had dinner at the Ford home. Cheryl was like a cute little sparrow, chattering around her, gossiping about the entertainment industry. Simon had no chance to get close to Leah, and he kept giving the oblivious Cheryl repeated glares. The atmosphere during dinner was very harmonious, giving Leah a long-missed feeling of home.

After dinner, the servant served fruit, and Simon speared a plump, translucent grape and handed it to Leah, "Leah, this grape is very sweet. Try it."

Leah was about to reach out to take it, but just then, the villa's door opened, and the servant outside said, "President Xavier is here."

Justin Xavier was here!

Leah looked up and saw two bright headlights piercing through the darkness outside. A Maybach luxury car sped over and slowly stopped on the lawn outside the villa. The driver's door opened, and Justin Xavier's tall, handsome figure came into view.

Tonight, Justin was dressed in all black, wearing a black trench coat over a high-necked black sweater. He had gold-rimmed glasses on his face, and his features, cloaked in a cold mist, were as perfect as if they had walked out of a comic book, forcefully drawing everyone's gaze and capable of eliciting a chorus of screams.

Justin closed the car door and strode over with long steps.

Mr. Ford immediately went up to greet him, politely saying, "President Xavier, what brings you here? You should have given me a call before coming so I could invite you for a home-cooked meal."

Justin curved a thin smile, polite yet distant, "No need to be so formal, President Ford. I'm here to take Leah home."

With that, Justin looked up towards the silhouetted figure under the vintage palace lantern in the corridor, "Leah, come over. You've played enough, it's time to go home."

Leah looked at Justin, then obediently walked over to his side.

Justin had an overcoat in his hand, which he draped over Leah's shoulders, his long fingers deftly fastening the buttons for her.

Simon was very reluctant for Leah to leave and tried to persuade her to stay, "Uncle Xavier, it's still early. Why not stay a bit longer?"

Justin's handsome face remained expressionless as he looked down at his steel watch, "It's already nine o'clock. Leah must be home before nine."

"Ah?" Simon was taken aback.

Justin extended his large hand to hold Leah's soft, delicate hand, "This is the Xavier family rule. She must be home before nine. Leah's upbringing is quite strict."

After saying this, Justin opened the passenger car door, stuffed Leah into it, then returned to the driver's seat, and the Maybach luxury car sped away.

Justin took Leah and left.

Simon was very unhappy. He'd met Justin twice and always felt Justin controlled Leah too strictly. That kind of possessiveness wasn't like that of a brother towards a sister, but rather quite pathological.

What family rule, Leah was no longer a child who needed to be told to come home before nine.

"This Justin Xavier is simply too domineering, Leah isn't even his real sister!" Simon said discontentedly.

Mr. Ford watched the direction in which the Maybach disappeared. Justin Xavier must have timed his arrival perfectly, with nine being his absolute limit, no later.

"Simon, do you like Leah?" Mr. Ford asked his son.

Simon nodded, "Yes, Daddy, I like Leah, and I want to pursue her."

"No!" Mr. Ford immediately refused.

"Why? Leah is Uncle Thorne's daughter, and she's also my fiancée. Why don't you agree, Daddy?" Simon asked in surprise and confusion.

A cunning glint flashed in Mr. Ford's eyes. Leah was no longer the illustrious daughter of the Thorne family she once was. Now entangled with her supposed brother, how could she be worthy of the Ford family?

"Simon, don't ask any more questions. I have my reasons. There are plenty of reputable girls from good families, take your pick, but Leah is absolutely not an option!" Mr. Ford went upstairs.

Simon looked at his father in perplexity, not understanding why his father opposed his relationship with Leah.

"Brother~" At this time, two fingers tugged at the hem of Simon's clothes; it was Cheryl.

Simon looked at Cheryl, "Cheryl, what's the matter?"

Earlier, no one had noticed Cheryl. Now her fresh and pretty little face was all red. She bit her red lip with her white teeth, shyly glancing in the direction where Justin Xavier had disappeared, and asked softly, "Brother, who was that man just now?"

Chapter 962: Red Roses and Leah Thorne

"Oh, that's Leah's brother, named Justin Xavier," Simon Ford replied.

Justin Xavier...

Cheryl Ford silently repeated the name in her mind. The man who had just emerged from that world-class luxury car, the Maybach, was surrounded by an aura of abstinence. His demeanor was cool and distant, yet he carried himself like an aloof emperor, making her heart skip a beat.

Cheryl prided herself on her beauty. Though she might not match Leah's allure, the boys chasing after her could form a line stretching all the way to Gallia. Yet, Justin Xavier hadn't even glanced at her, not even a fleeting look.

"Brother, you like Sister Leah, huh? I like Sister Leah, too. It's modern times now; Daddy can't control our feelings. Brother, cheer up and go after Sister Leah, and make her my sister-in-law as soon as possible." Cheryl cheered on her brother.

Simon nodded vigorously, "I won't listen to Daddy. A girl like Leah, if I miss her, she's gone forever."

...

Inside the Maybach luxury car.

Justin Xavier sat in the driver's seat, with both hands on the steering wheel. He drove the car without looking away, smoothly making turns, changing lanes, and accelerating.

"Did you have a good time at the Ford house today?" Justin asked.

Leah Thorne nodded, "It was okay."

"What did Mr. Ford say to you?"

He asked directly. Leah turned her head to the side, her enchanting black eyes resting on his handsome face.

Justin focused on driving, his voice low and magnetic, "Actually, I can pretty much guess what it was about. Did Mr. Ford want you to join forces with him to retaliate against the Xavier family?"

Leah's heart gave a slight tremble. She had mentally prepared for it, knowing she couldn't escape Justin's sharp insight, but now having him reveal it in a single sentence still shook her.

Justin turned his head to glance at her, "What do you think of Mr. Ford?"

Leah thought for a moment, "He is a good father..."

Ha.

Justin let out a low laugh.

Leah felt her words were dry and meaningless. That "ha" was clearly a mockery from him.

"I told you last night, Mr. Ford is a sly old fox. Initially, I didn't plan to let you see him, but I was afraid you'd make a fuss, so I allowed you two to meet today."

"Leah, back in the day, the Thorne and the Ford families were indeed close, but then they drifted apart and even became estranged. Do you know why?"

"Did Mr. Ford tell you it was because of the Xavier family? Yes, back then, the Xaviers did play a role in creating tension and spreading discord. However, you're underestimating your father, Quinn Thorne."

"Your father was undeniably one of the most outstanding figures in politics back then. He had an eye for people. At first, the Thorne and Ford families were inseparable, but Mr. Ford's business nature gradually revealed itself, always wanting shortcuts from your father, which your father deeply disliked."

"Later, when Mr. Ford's tax evasion and fraudulent accounting were exposed, it was my father, Hugh Xavier, who revealed it. Mr. Ford immediately sought help from your father, but your father only told him that the long arm of the law is inescapable and did not use his power for personal gain."

"That incident broke the Ford Group's entire financial chain, and due to the huge compensation for evasion, although your father didn't act selfishly, he did utilize all his savings to help Mr. Ford through the crisis and even assisted the Ford family in successfully relocating abroad for a fresh start."

"However, it was no use. Mr. Ford turned out to be an ungrateful wolf. He never had any gratitude towards your father, only grievances. Otherwise, why didn't Mr. Ford even show himself when the Thorne family fell apart back then?"

"Over the years, Mr. Ford has harbored the most resentment towards our Xavier family. His youthful failure was the greatest regret and shame of his life. Just as he quietly emigrated abroad, he wants to return with flair, believing the Xaviers owe him and intending to repay double. So he came back and contacted you."

"Leah, now do you understand?"

Leah listened quietly. She didn't know the past of the Thorne, Ford, and Xavier families. However, during her visit to the Ford house, she had already sensed the calculation and indifference in Mr. Ford's eyes, so learning about this past didn't impact her much.

"Leah, don't you believe me?" Seeing her silence, Justin asked.

Leah slowly shook her head, "No, I believe you. Mr. Ford's words had both truth and lies, but that's not important..."

Justin turned his head, looking at her, clearly waiting for her to continue.

Leah met his gaze directly, "President Xavier, I should really thank you. Thank you for confirming Mr. Ford's true intentions. He genuinely wants to collaborate with me and sincerely aims to bring down the Xavier family."

Justin was silent for a few seconds, then reached out to pinch her soft, charming cheek, "Stop messing around. You won't be able to compete with me."

He spoke with a light-hearted tone, stating a fact in a very casual manner. He was probably the most arrogant and wild man Leah had ever met.

Leah curved her red lips without saying anything.

...

Simon Ford began officially pursuing Leah Thorne. He wanted to give Leah a big surprise, so he went to the mall to buy flowers.

Before long, a group of mall staff wearing blue badges approached. In the center was a tall and handsome figure, Justin Xavier.

This mall was a property under Xavier Corp, and Justin had come to inspect it with senior mall executives.

"Hello, Uncle Xavier," Simon Ford greeted.

Upon hearing "Uncle Xavier," Justin knew it was the sweet but naive Simon. He looked up and indeed saw Simon at the entrance of the flower shop. He walked over, "Young Master Ford, you're buying flowers?"

"Yes, Uncle Xavier, you're just in time. I want to buy flowers for Leah. What kind of flowers does Leah like?" Simon inquired.

Justin raised an eyebrow, his gaze falling on the large, blooming red roses not too far away. Leah loved red roses; only red roses were worthy of her.

"Leah doesn't like flowers, any kind of flowers," Justin said indifferently.

"What?" Simon was taken aback, "No way, Leah doesn't like flowers?"

Justin nodded assuredly, "Leah is also allergic to pollen."

Simon immediately showed a disappointed expression, "So that's it..."

Justin looked at Simon with cold indifference. It was amusing how even a naive young monkey like Simon dared to compete with him for a woman now.

"Got it! Since Leah doesn't like flowers, I'll prepare heart-shaped candles and balloons for her. Uncle Xavier, you're older, so you might not understand; girls love romance these days. I'll get going—bye, Uncle Xavier." Simon left.

Watching Simon's figure disappear from sight, Justin used his tongue to press against his right cheek. The girl he had painstakingly raised wasn't going to be easily stolen by a bit of romance and sweet talk.

## Chapter 963: Watching Her Film a Kiss Scene

This feeling made him quite displeased.

"President." At this moment, the personal secretary stepped forward.

Justin Xavier calmly withdrew his gaze from Simon Ford's back, parted his thin lips, and said, "Book a presidential suite in the seven-star hotel tonight."

The personal secretary was taken aback; he hadn't expected the President to suddenly ask for a hotel reservation while working.

"Yes, President."

...

Leah Thorne was on set filming, and the scene was a kissing scene.

"Ephemeral Life" is a Republican-era drama with a female lead growing to prominence. The male lead plays a minor role, so romantic scenes are few, but they do exist.

Anya becomes the first social butterfly of Shanghai, encountering the military officer Edwin Alden, leading to an ambiguous kiss scene between them.

Edwin Alden is played by the popular young actor Shane Young, who is both handsome and talented, with a significant fan following. It's fitting that he landed the role of Edwin.

Director Wright was briefing Leah Thorne and Shane Young, "Shane, you will sit in the chair, and Leah, you will proactively straddle Shane's lap, wrap your arms around his neck, and kiss him. I want the feeling of a cold and lazy socialite versus a domineering and seductive officer, got it?"

Leah Thorne nodded, "I have no problem with that."

Shane Young also nodded, "OK."

"Alright, lighting crew, camera crew, get ready."

Director Wright stepped back and watched Leah Thorne and Shane Young preparing for the scene through the lens. Shane had changed into a military officer's uniform, looking tall and handsome like a pine tree, with a striking face. Meanwhile, Leah Thorne was dressed in a satin qipao, her hair styled elegantly, sporting retro red lips, cold and alluring like a Republican-era enchantress.

The producer nodded approvingly, "Leah and Shane have such a strong on-screen chemistry. If the acting is great, by the time the film is released, who knows how many people will be shipping this pair."

Director Wright agreed entirely, just about to nod when he felt a chill around his neck. What was happening?

Director Wright turned his head, spotting the door open and... Justin Xavier entering.

Justin Xavier had arrived!

Oh dear, Director Wright slapped his thigh excitedly; this man picked the worst time to come, right when Leah was about to shoot a kissing scene!

Director Wright reasonably suspected that President Xavier did it on purpose, timing it perfectly for the occasion.

Justin Xavier removed his outer coat, wearing a handmade gray suit underneath. Gray is always a reserved and understated color, and on Justin's tall and noble frame, it shimmered with a subtle luster. Coupled with the gold-rimmed glasses perched on his striking face, he epitomized the successful and refined businessman.

Director Wright quickly moved to greet him, "Mr. Xavier..."

Justin raised his hand to interrupt him.

Director Wright fell silent immediately, watching as the personal secretary brought over a chair, and Justin sat down quietly, his gaze falling on Leah Thorne ahead.

It was clear he didn't want to disturb anyone; he simply wanted to quietly observe and watch the scene.

Director Wright felt pressure mounting and could only boldly shout, "Action!"

The kissing scene began, Leah Thorne and Shane Young professionally slipping into their roles.

Shane sat in the chair as Leah approached in high heels, "Officer Zhao, you linger in my boudoir and won't leave; you'd better watch out, or I'll call someone."

Shane looked Leah up and down, "Call away. My men are outside; even if you scream, it won't matter."

"Officer Zhao, what are you thinking? Alone together, you don't intend to... get involved with me, turning me into your possession, do you?"

With that, Leah swayed her slender waist to stand before Shane, then, following the script, straddled Shane's lap, lifted her delicate hands to embrace his neck, and raised her brows for the kiss.

According to the script, Shane was supposed to reciprocate the kiss, but his state was off, and he missed it, "Sorry..."

Director Wright swiftly called to halt, "Cut!"

Leah got off Shane's lap, and Director Wright approached, "Shane, what's wrong? That previous part was great."

Shane's handsome face was flushed with some embarrassment, "I..."

Then Director Wright with sharp eyes noticed Shane's pants had undergone a physiological change.

This...

Director Wright's heart skipped a beat; he dared not glance at President Xavier's expression outside the scene, unsure if he had noticed. Director Wright quickly took on the role of an assistant, immediately draping a coat over Shane in an attempt to cover it, "Um... Shane, just adjust your state; we'll continue soon."

Then the straightforward producer stepped in, "Shane, it's fine, no need to be shy. At your age, a male actor having a physiological reaction during a kiss or bed scene is perfectly normal. I've seen it before. Moreover, your scene partner is Leah Thorne; not many men can remain unaffected filming kiss scenes with her hahaha."

This producer laughed heartily to himself, but as the laughter subsided, he suddenly felt the air grow silent, and a flock of crows flew overhead...

The producer looked at Director Wright in confusion; Director Wright was on the verge of tears!

Director Wright had intended to smooth over the incident but hadn't expected the producer to interfere; now, he wanted to cry right here on set!

The atmosphere became inexplicably awkward when Leah Thorne approached, "Director Wright, I'll go have a rest now."

Director Wright swiftly changed from looking defeated to smiling brightly, "Alright, Leah, go have a rest, be careful of the steps. Oh, President Xavier is here. You should go have a chat with him, haha."

Leah Thorne hadn't realized Justin Xavier was present; she looked up and indeed spotted him sitting in the dim light.

"I see." Leah headed down.

...

Leah Thorne got to Justin Xavier's side, "President Xavier, it's daytime. Don't you need to be at the company working?"

Justin Xavier's striking face remained indifferent, even curling his thin lips slightly, "I heard you were filming a kissing scene today, so I came here to watch."

Leah Thorne lifted a hand to flip the hair beside her cheek, lazily seductive, "Didn't expect President Xavier to have this kind of quirk, liking to watch his woman kiss other men."

Justin Xavier let out a faint hum, "If I said I didn't like it, would you stop filming kissing scenes?"

"No." Leah promptly rejected without considering, "President Xavier, I'm an actress; kissing scenes are part of my job. I ask you to respect that!"

"Heh." Justin Xavier let out a casual laugh from his throat and softly lifted his eyelids to look ahead, where the popular young actor Shane Young was staring at Leah Thorne, his expression evidently... akin to a young man developing a crush.

Justin Xavier reached out his large hand and grabbed Leah Thorne's slender wrist, pulling her onto his sturdy lap amid Shane's shocked gaze.

Leah Thorne frowned immediately, "Justin Xavier, are you crazy? This is a film set, surrounded by people..."

"Kissing scenes are part of your job, but what about turning the male actor on?"

Chapter 964: Sitting on His Lap

What?

Leah Thorne froze for a moment.

Justin Xavier looked at the soft, charming face in his arms, just as he thought, the woman he liked was also liked by other men. He didn't have to do anything all day; just catching cheating men would keep him busy enough.

He couldn't count how many men she could attract. He had just seen with his own eyes the physiological reaction that the popular young actor had.

But it wasn't the men's fault. She wore high heels, swayed that snake-like waist, and even took the initiative to straddle him. Any man would find it hard to resist.

"What? Don't tell me you don't know." Justin Xavier laughed.

Though he was smiling, there was a layer of sinister frost in his eyes, quite dangerous.

Leah knew it; she had had physical contact with Shane Young earlier, she felt it.

Actually, male actors are also human. It's normal to have a physical reaction when filming intimate scenes. She hadn't taken it to heart, but now that Justin highlighted the point, she needed to handle it carefully.

Leah raised her exquisite willow-like eyebrows, "President Xavier, what a strong smell of jealousy. Have you broken your jar of vinegar again?"

"I still stick to my words; I haven't done anything to wrong you. If you want to get angry, do it at me."

Leah looked as if saying "Don't expect me to comfort you, I'm ready to face the consequences calmly."

Justin Xavier laughed in exasperation, his big hand landed heavily on her snake waist, pinching it hard, "Filming is your job, isn't serving your sponsor also your job? Why such double standards? You put all your passion into filming, but when it comes to taking care of your sponsor, you're so perfunctory that you won't even humor me?"

Leah looked at him, confidently saying, "One's someone I love, the other isn't; of course, there are double standards."

"..." Alright, Justin Xavier found that reason impossible to refute.

Leah placed her small hands on his firm chest, "President Xavier, everyone's gone, can you let go of me?"

"No one's watching."

Leah looked up, seeing that Justin Xavier's sitting area had been cleared, the doors were slowly closing. Director Wright stood outside, smiling appreciatively, waving at her as if to say 'you've worked hard'.

"..." Leah really didn't understand how Director Wright, who was so passionate about film art, could also be so adept at serving capitalism?

Indeed, no one who mixes around here is simple.

"The kissing scene just now seems to need a retake. Well, since I'm free, I'll try the scene with you. Leah, kiss me now."

What?

Leah wanted to refuse, but Justin Xavier grasped her soft waist and easily lifted her, directly adjusting her position to straddle his thighs.

His slender fingers held the back of her head, pressing her charming little face down, "manually" making her kiss him.

This time he kissed gently, gently yet firmly, playing with her red lips, entangling with her.

When he finally let her go, he rewarded her by rubbing her hair, "Good girl~"

"..." She didn't do anything!

"After the kiss, what's next? How does the scene continue?" Justin Xavier asked.

He wants more?

Leah quickly played dumb, "I don't know, seems like...after the kiss, it's over..."

"Is that so?" Justin Xavier picked up a script lying beside him for no reason, leisurely flipping it open.

Leah quickly tried to crawl off his lap, "President Xavier, you read slowly, I'll go first."

But Justin Xavier didn't allow her to leave. One hand held the script, the other trapped her soft waist, his gaze brushed over the script, and he slowly furrowed his eyebrows, "This is called over? Clearly, there's a bed scene after the kiss scene."

"..." Leah quickly explained, "The original novel of 'Life Ephemeral' includes a bed scene, but Director Wright deleted it; it won't be filmed."

Justin Xavier threw the script to her, "Read the bed scene to me."

What?

Leah wished she could throw the script at his annoying handsome face, "President Xavier, are you a freak? I'm not a voice actor."

"Unwilling? Fine, how about we perform a bed scene right here?" Justin Xavier raised an inquisitive eyebrow.

Leah was dumbfounded, though the area was cleared, it was still a film set. Did he really want to act like a rogue here?

"I'll read!" Leah gave him a look of "You win," then picked up the script.

Opening the script, Leah started to read aloud, "Anya sat on Edwin Alden's lap, the two passionately kissing, and soon Edwin felt...a burning desire. His big hand slid down Anya's waist, landing on her...smooth thigh, and then slowly...slipped from the edge of the cheongsam..."

Leah's charming little face quickly turned red. The script she got was edited by the screenwriter, but Justin Xavier's was the original. She felt like she was reading an erotic novel.

She didn't read the next part, as it was a large-scale bed scene.

"Why did you stop? Isn't the next part like this?" Justin Xavier's big hand landed on the slit of her cheongsam.

When his calloused palm covered it, Leah immediately stretched out her small hand to hold him back, "President Xavier, now isn't suitable. I have to film later, don't ruin my cheongsam."

He's a carnivorous animal, hasty and rough in his actions, often ruining her clothes. Being with him was quite costly in terms of clothing.

Justin Xavier looked at her pleading look, his eyes deepening.

Leah proactively tried to please him, wrapping her little hands around his neck, her soft voice coquettish, "Okay, okay, tonight I'll return to the room early, and let you do whatever you want~"

Since the last time at the villa where he forced her, Justin Xavier hadn't touched her again, afraid she'd vomit, afraid of causing her intense aversion and disgust.

Now hearing her bring up the topic proactively, Justin Xavier admitted he was pleased. He retracted his hand, placing his big palm on her soft waist again, his low, rich voice hoarse with a hint of huskiness, "Tonight, I've asked the secretary to book a room, come to the hotel and find me."

"Hmm? Is President Xavier no longer satisfied with the room here and now seeks the thrill of hotel rooms?" Leah asked.

Justin Xavier pulled her closer, pinching her soft waist to press her into his embrace, "Just go if I tell you to, why so much nonsense?"

"..." Such a domineering president!

Leah wanted to get down, struggling a bit, when Justin Xavier's warm breath fell on her ear, "How was it sitting in the lap of that popular young actor just now?"

What?

Leah raised her eyes to look at him.

Justin Xavier slowly narrowed those black eyes, his thin lips curving with an ambiguous smile, "Don't play dumb, Leah, you know what I'm asking, with such an obvious thing in his pants, did you not feel it?"

Chapter 965: They Kissed on the Street

Leah Thorne's pupils contracted, and she looked at him in utter shock. How could he... have such thoughts? Is his mind filled with... indecency?

"What are you looking at? Did I say something wrong? It's not that you just brushed up, but rather... rubbing back and forth?" Justin Xavier rephrased.

Leah quickly raised her small hand and covered his mouth, forbidding him to speak nonsense any further.

She was a professional actress; when she sat on Shane Young's lap earlier, nothing happened. She only heard about it from the producer afterward. It was normal, and she didn't think much of it. How did it become so degrading in his mouth?

This man, Justin Xavier, really is unhealthy.

Justin kissed her soft hand, letting her off the hook. After all, he didn't like discussing other men with her. "Go on, remember to meet me at the hotel tonight."

"Got it." Leah descended quickly and left.

Justin watched Leah's disappearing figure. Initially, he had agreed to her entering the entertainment industry, but gradually he realized it was the worst decision he had ever made. He increasingly disliked her current career.

Her beauty was too flamboyant, attracting too much attention. She was only suited to be his gilded bird in a cage.

She belonged to him.

Just then, with a "ding," a WeChat notification sounded.

Justin looked down and realized Leah had left her phone behind.

Her phone rang; a WeChat message had arrived.

Justin reached out, picked up the phone, and unlocked it, but it was password-protected.

What was her password?

After thinking for a moment, Justin entered a six-digit code.

The password was correct, and the phone unlocked.

Her phone's password was... his birthday.

Just like, all these years, all his passwords had been her birthday.

It seemed to be a habit engraved in the bones.

Habits are the most terrifying things.

Justin faintly curled his thin lips, feeling quite pleased. He opened WeChat; it was a message from Simon Ford, "Leah, do you have time to meet tonight?"

Justin's slender fingers typed a reply: "Sure, I'll be waiting outside the XX seven-star hotel for you."

He tossed the phone aside. At this moment, his personal secretary approached. "President."

Justin pursed his thin lips, "Tell Director Wright to come over, there's something I need to discuss with him."

...

Leah returned to the set to continue filming. Shane Young sat across from her. She looked up at him, then nodded politely.

Shane nodded back, a hint of regret in his eyes.

As a popular rising star, Shane had long heard of Leah Thorne, the most dazzling rose of the entertainment industry. Seeing her in person, such a captivating beauty could not help but move the heart.

However, Shane had just witnessed Justin pulling Leah to sit on his lap. Who was Justin? The richest man in Bayside, a business magnate, a capital lord, the so-called benefactor.

Shane understood the rules of the entertainment industry; he just didn't expect Leah to also have a benefactor.

At this moment, Director Wright approached. "Leah, Shane, there's something to tell you. This kissing scene is canceled, no need to shoot it."

Leah looked up, "Why?"

Director Wright: ...Why else, just now Justin already came forward!

Shane immediately thought of Justin, looking up, but Justin's tall and noble figure was already gone from the dim light, and the chair was empty; he had left.

...

After filming, Leah set off for the seven-star hotel to meet Justin.

Madame Goldie parked the nanny car outside the hotel, and Leah got out, walking toward the hotel.

What she didn't know was that someone was already waiting across the street, it was Simon Ford.

Justin had sent a message to Simon, and he had arrived early, waiting there for two hours.

The night was cold; Simon's hands were red from the cold, but the icy night could not dampen his enthusiasm. Just the thought of meeting Leah later made him want to jump for joy.

At this moment, Simon turned around and immediately saw Leah ascending the steps. His heart leaped with joy, and he was about to rush forward, "Leah..."

This call of "Leah" hadn't yet left his lips when suddenly a car horn sounded beside his ear. Simon froze, watching as a luxury Maybach raced over.

That was... Justin's car.

Justin had arrived.

Simon was a bit taken aback, not knowing why this Uncle Xavier came?

Simon didn't like this Uncle Xavier because he had a twisted control over Leah that made him deeply displeased.

At this moment, the driver's door of the Maybach opened, and Justin, wearing a black thin wool coat, appeared in view.

Simon wanted to go over and say hello, but as Justin stepped out, he looked at Leah on the steps and spread his arms, "Leah, come here, hug."

Simon suddenly stiffened.

Leah, unaware of Simon's presence, only saw Justin demanding a hug.

Leah descended the steps in her high heels and threw herself into his arms. "Catch your little angel!"

Justin rubbed her soft hair with his lips, holding the delicate body in his arms tightly, he chuckled softly, "So obedient."

"Yes, serving the benefactor, I'm serious~"

"Then give me a kiss."

"Okay." Leah stood on tiptoe and planted a firm kiss on his handsome cheek.

Justin, in a good mood, raised an eyebrow.

"President Xavier, is that enough? Let's go inside. I'm a big star; you probably don't want to be on the entertainment headlines with me tomorrow, do you?" Leah playfully blinked her wings.

Justin wrapped his arm around her slender waist, "Alright, let's go in."

Justin and Leah disappeared into the hotel.

Simon stood frozen on the spot, shocked and bewildered, watching the direction in which the two disappeared. He couldn't believe what he had just seen.

Just now, Leah and Justin kissed on the street.

Now, Leah and Justin went into the hotel together.

Simon's mind exploded with a "boom"; he shook his head, shaking it repeatedly. How could it be? Justin was Leah's nominal brother; how could this be?

No.

This isn't real.

Simon rushed into the hotel, his eyes red, asking the front desk, "Where did those two go? Did they come to eat or to... sleep?"

The front desk politely said, "Hello, just now those two VIPs booked a presidential suite here, planning to stay the night."

A presidential suite...

They were there to sleep...

Simon's hands, hanging by his sides, quickly clenched into fists. He had never imagined that Leah and Justin had such a clandestine relationship. He watched as the girl he liked went to a hotel room with another man!

"What's their room number? I need to find them!" Simon asked excitedly.

Chapter 966: Leah Is Taking a Bath Now

The front desk shook her head apologetically, "I'm sorry, sir. It's the guest's privacy, we can't tell you that."

Simon Ford's eyes were red, "Then I'll find her myself!"

After speaking, he turned and entered the elevator.

"Hey, sir!" The front desk quickly called out, but after Simon Ford left, the front desk immediately picked up the phone and dialed a number.

Soon, the call was answered on the other end, and a low, magnetic voice came through, "Hello."

It was Justin Xavier.

...

In the presidential suite.

Justin Xavier stood tall and handsome in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows, one hand in his pants pocket, the other holding the phone to his ear. After hearing the report from the front desk, he casually lifted his thin lips, "Got it."

He hung up the phone.

At this moment, Leah Thorne's charming and lovely face peeked out from behind, her seductive black eyes looking at him, "President Xavier, whose call was that?"

Justin Xavier glanced at her, "The mistress called, want me to check on you?"

He handed the phone over.

In fact, Leah had her doubts; Justin was acting strange today, asking her to the hotel with something suspicious going on.

However, his act of handing over the phone so openly dispelled her doubts, and Leah curled her red lips, "President Xavier, what are you saying, what's this about a mistress?"

Justin lowered his head, his thin lips landing on her smooth face, her youthful beauty was something he adored, "With you here, what else should I call the ones outside if not mistresses?"

Leah raised her delicate eyebrows, her lazy demeanor like a little seductress, "President Xavier, you must be mistaken. I'm the one you've put a stamp on but can never make your wife, so I'm the mistress, and no one can take that from me."

Saying this, Leah pushed away his handsome face that was nuzzling hers, "The ones outside should be called the fourth and fifth, you don't have to check on me anymore, that's not the job of us mistresses. Once you have fourth and fifth mistresses, they'll all be our sisters, and we'll definitely serve you well together."

Leah said generously.

Justin laughed, remembering her grudges from last time.

He reached out and pinched her petite chin, forcing her to lift her head and look him in the eye, "Leah, do you really want to marry me and become my Mrs. Xavier?"

Leah met his gaze, "Being your mistress only allows me to use your money when you give it to me, and who knows, one day you might get tired of me and let me go. But being your legitimate wife, your money would be mine, and I could spend it as I please, with national protection. Of course, I want to become official and rise in status."

Justin studied her half-serious expression in silence for a few seconds; he had no intention of marrying her, nor anyone else.

With her looks, he felt uneasy about bringing her home as a wife might always mean courting trouble, so keeping her as a mistress seemed more fitting.

Justin curved his thin lips into a mischievous grin, "Leah, don't provoke me. My Mrs. Xavier truly has to serve her man, not be like you, making a fuss after using just a hand or a mouth. I won't marry a useless woman to keep around."

"..." Leah felt a headache coming on, sensing a communication barrier with this man.

With a "slap" sound, Leah brushed off his large hand and gave him a coquettish glare, "President Xavier, I'm going to take a bath first."

"Let's bathe together." Justin eagerly followed her.

But when they reached the bathroom door, with a "slam," Leah closed the door directly and locked it as if guarding against a pervert.

Justin, left outside, "...?"

With her like this, she still thought he would marry her?

...

Inside the bathroom came the sound of water streaming down, while Justin sat by the bedside, tugging at his necktie with a wild, rogue manner.

Soon, Simon Ford's voice came from outside, "Leah! Leah, where are you? Come out now!"

Simon Ford had come looking; all the presidential suites in the hotel were on one floor, easy to find, so he started knocking from room to room, calling loudly.

Justin scoffed coldly, finding it particularly amusing. Simon should thank Leah, or else he wouldn't even bother dealing with someone so naive.

Justin had been dealing with all the rotten suitors around Leah in different ways, taking his time.

The old lecher President Stone cherished money the most, so he crushed his company.

As for Simon Ford, a young man in his prime sincerely fancied Leah, so he had someone invite him out, making him wait expectedly on the street for two hours, only to watch the girl he liked hook up with another man, driving him to pain, madness, and rage.

This was quite entertaining.

At this moment, the noise outside grew louder, with Simon banging on doors and alarming many guests. The hotel security staff was called out.

"Leah! Leah, where are you?"

Justin rose imperiously and walked to open the room door.

Many security personnel were in the corridor; Simon stood at a presidential suite doorway looking in, "Leah! Leah!"

"Ah!" A female guest shrieked inside, "Who is this guy? Get him out of here!"

The security reached out to restrain Simon, "Sir, please leave immediately, or we'll call the police!"

Restrained, Simon struggled like a trapped beast, his face flushed with agitation, "Let me go! Let me go, I need to find Leah!"

Simon was like an ant on a hot pan, his mind consumed with finding Leah.

Just then, hearing the security call out respectfully, "President Xavier."

President Xavier...

Simon snapped his head up, seeing Justin Xavier's tall, refined figure down the hall.

Justin had shed his outerwear, now in just a white shirt and black pants, the tie loosely draped around his neck. He stood elegantly by the door, devoid of daytime's courteous demeanor, exuding a nocturnal charm with every lazy, alluring motion that would stir any woman's heart.

Now Justin stood quietly, his usual superior stance, silently observing Simon's current state of embarrassed unawareness.

Simon felt deeply humiliated, clenching his teeth audibly.

Then Justin waved a leisurely hand, "Dismissed."

"Yes, President Xavier." The security staff withdrew.

Simon immediately rushed forward, "Justin Xavier, where's Leah?"

Justin reached out, closing the room door behind him, "Young Master Ford, are you looking for Leah? Leah's taking a bath right now."

Chapter 967: I Love Justin Xavier

Leah is showering now.

Justin Xavier's casual remark was already clear enough, full of aggression.

Simon Ford looked at the tightly closed door behind Justin Xavier, "I want to see Leah, I want to see her now!"

Justin moved slightly, one hand casually in his pocket, his firm shoulder blocking Simon Ford's covetous gaze, "Young Master Ford, Leah doesn't want to see you, save some face and dignity for yourself."

Simon's eyes were bloodshot, Justin Xavier was a terrifyingly strong opponent; he knew exactly how to humiliate and torment a person.

"Justin Xavier, Leah is your sister, I even call you Uncle Xavier, and yet you've developed this kind of relationship with her. Don't you find it disgusting?"

Justin's cold, dark eyes landed on Simon's face, a thin and icy smile appearing, "Young Master Ford, you finally realized how disgusting it is for you to call me Uncle Xavier?"

"..." Simon was so angry he couldn't catch his breath.

Justin stepped forward, coming close to Simon, lowering his indifferent voice a bit, "Compared to your romance, Leah chose to come to my presidential suite, I'm sure you understand what that means." You can say I'm Leah's brother, after all, I raised her. I've seen boys like you before, using a bit of sincerity and sweet words to woo a girl. The flower I've nurtured, no one can think of stealing it from me."

"Young Master Ford, how old are you, huh? Probably haven't even fully grown yet, so stay away from Leah, I don't like seeing any men other than myself around her. Usually, such eyesores disappear."

Simon was shaking all over; he had always been well-protected as the Ford family's young master, and now, Justin Xavier was showing him the dark side of human nature for the first time.

"Justin Xavier, are you threatening me?"

Justin raised an eyebrow, "Is my threat not clear enough?"

"You!"

"Want to fight me, are you sure?" Justin raised his hand, giving Simon's shoulder a firm pat, "Get in shape first, make yourself stronger before you come back."

Saying this, Justin turned and entered the presidential suite.

The door of the presidential suite closed once again in front of Simon, and he felt the shoulder that Justin patted burning with pain, his pride and dignity shattered tonight.

Simon came to the door, thinking about knocking, but his hand froze mid-air.

What could he bring to Leah?

In front of Justin Xavier, he was utterly powerless.

...

Justin returned to the room, loosening his tie and throwing it onto the sofa, suddenly halting his steps as Leah emerged from her shower, her inviting dark eyes fixed on him, "Where did you go?"

Justin walked over nonchalantly, picking up a towel to cover her wet long hair, gently drying the droplets, "I met someone."

"Who? Simon Ford?"

Justin looked up at Leah.

Leah unlocked her phone, handed her WeChat backup in front of him, "President Xavier, next time you delete WeChat, make sure it's thorough, don't leave traces."

Justin showed no signs of nervousness or guilt from being caught; he simply furrowed his handsome brow slightly, "Are you angry? Why are you angry, just because I used your phone to text Simon Ford? What else could I be texting him for, if not to warn him to stay away from you? Are you so angry because you want to do something behind my back with him?"

"..." Leah wanted to applaud the man in front of her, marveling at how he could so swiftly turn the tables even after being caught.

"Justin Xavier, can you not mess with my phone, give me some freedom and personal privacy, I'm suffocating!" Leah turned to leave.

Justin quickly grabbed her slender wrist, "Where are you going?"

"Is Simon Ford still outside, I'm going to see him."

Justin immediately frowned, he had just chased Simon away, and she wanted to see him?

"No!" he refused instantly.

Leah didn't want to argue with him, she extended her other hand, prying his tight fingers off one by one.

"Leah, I won't let you see Simon Ford, and if you walk out that door, don't come back!" Justin said darkly.

Leah broke free from him, directly opening the door and walking out.

Damn it!

Justin kicked a chair beside him, a loud crash resounding in the suite.

Hands on his hips, he paced back and forth in the room, his tongue against his right cheek, feeling both angry and amused at how this disobedient little thing constantly defied him and made him mad.

He said don't come back if she leaves, yet she left without looking back.

What can he do?

What else can he do?

Justin grabbed his coat and chased after her, truly afraid she wouldn't return!

...

Simon left the hotel, wandering aimlessly on the streets, overwhelmed by tonight's blow, feeling utterly defeated.

Suddenly, a soft call came from behind, "Simon Ford!"

Simon stiffened, quickly turning around to see Leah chasing after him.

Leah had just showered, wearing a cardigan over her nightdress, the evening breeze tousling her wet long hair, her soft, alluring face glowing beautifully.

"Leah!" Simon immediately ran over, looking at Leah with excitement and surprise, "Leah, you came out, I knew you would. What's going on between you and Justin Xavier, tell me, did he force you?"

Simon had thought that for these years Leah, being adopted by the Xavier family, couldn't escape Justin's sordid intentions.

Simon only hated himself for not coming back sooner, "Leah, you don't need to fear, no one can hurt you now, I will protect you, you should leave Justin Xavier and the Xavier family, I will help you!"

Leah looked at the sincere boy in front of her, gently shaking her head, "Simon Ford, I love Justin Xavier."

She said, Simon Ford, I love Justin Xavier.

Simon was frozen.

"Simon Ford, I came out just to tell you, I love Justin Xavier, I'm with him now, whatever happens, it's between him and me, I don't want you involved."

"And Simon Ford, I'm really happy to see you this time, I see you as a friend, so don't like me. If you see anything unpleasant about me, please immediately turn around and leave, pretend you didn't see it. You're the most beautiful part of my memories, please stay beautiful forever."

Chapter 968: Aren't You Just Spending My Money to Keep Me?

Looking into Leah Thorne's clean and bright eyes, Simon Ford felt both pain and tenderness in his heart, thinking that he was ultimately too late.

In love, being one step too late is a lifetime.

Over the years, she had grown up by Justin Xavier's side. During her loneliest and most helpless times, Justin was her only lifeline. Justin gave her warmth and companionship that others could never provide, and also unforgettable love and pain. Justin has already become irreplaceable in her life.

Simon Ford conceded, nodding, "Alright, Leah, I'll listen to you."

Leah curved her red lips and waved her little hand, "Simon Ford, I'm leaving, bye bye."

Leah turned to leave.

As soon as she turned, she saw Justin Xavier who had chased after her, looking right at her.

Leah walked over, placing her slightly cool little hand into his palm, "Let's go back."

Justin Xavier draped his coat over her shoulders and then, holding her little hand, entered the hotel.

...

In the hotel corridor, Justin Xavier still didn't look very pleased as he pursed his lips and asked, "What did you say to Simon Ford just now?"

"I said... you forced me to be with you," Leah replied.

Justin remained calm, "Oh, so do you want Simon Ford to be your hero riding on a rainbow cloud to save you?"

Leah heard the disdain in his words; he didn't see Simon Ford as a worthy opponent at all, "President Xavier, don't underestimate the poor youth. In a few years, when Simon Ford reaches your age, he might not be any worse than you!"

Justin Xavier glanced at her indifferently and said nothing, clearly unwilling to engage further.

The two returned to the presidential suite, and Leah curiously asked, "President Xavier, who was the one telling me not to come back if I left? Why then did you come to find me? It seems President Xavier truly enjoys contradicting himself."

Justin Xavier looked at her proud expression, like a little peacock spreading its feathers, and stepped forward, "You can be proud all you want."

His large hand fell on her soft waist and he lifted her up onto his shoulder, "Join me for a bath."

Join him for a bath?

"No! Justin Xavier, I've already washed, put me down!" Leah struggled hard, now suspended in the air, her soft abdomen pressed painfully against his solid shoulder.

Justin Xavier kicked open the shower door and set her down inside, "Shower together or bathe together, choose one."

"Neither!" Leah refused.

"Fine, then a shower," Justin Xavier held her soft waist, half-pushed and half-carried her into the frosted glass door, then reached up to turn on the shower.

The warm water poured down from above, turning Leah into a drenched kitten; she still wanted to run.

But Justin Xavier grabbed her, turned her around, pressing her against the wall, and slapped her on the rear.

Hiss.

The pain brought tears to Leah's eyes, and her delicate face flushed with humiliation, "Justin Xavier, why do you like hitting my butt? I'm not a child. Are you a pervert or into SM?"

Every time she was alone with Justin, Leah felt he was terrifying. Even something like spanking was one thing, but to make her bend over was a very shameful posture.

Justin Xavier hugged her from behind, his thin lips landing on her long hair, kissing it forcefully, "So you can show off, go flaunt outside, no matter how much those men like you, aren't you still in my room, with your clothes off, being kissed and pressed by me, spending my money, sleeping in my bed, supported by me?"

"..." Leah realized he was in a bad mood, and that's why he was angry at her.

This man really was narrow-minded, vindictive; every time he caught her with another man, he'd first deal with them, then turn back to punish her severely.

At this moment, the chill touched her skin as he stripped her of her nightgown.

Leah's eyelashes fluttered, she dared not confront him head-on at this time, fearing it would be like the last time with President Stone, she softened her voice, twisting her snake-like waist, "President Xavier, let go of me first, I've already entered your room, I'll definitely listen to you. What method do you want this time..."

Before she finished, Justin Xavier pinched her soft waist, preventing her from moving, his heavy breaths washing over her ear, he spoke hoarsely, "No method needed, just stay like this, I'll do it myself..."

Leah realized what he intended to do and quickly clamped down on his large hand, "No, it hurts."

"I know my limits."

"Then at least... prepare some contraceptives, don't do it inside!"

Justin Xavier chuckled lowly, "Playing with me? You can't conceive, what do I need contraceptives for?"

Leah froze, then fiercely struggled a few seconds later, "No, Justin Xavier, you must use contraceptives, even if you don't, I'll take a pill afterwards, contraceptive pills are very harmful to the body."

Justin Xavier slightly furrowed his brows, his long arm restraining the restless woman in his arms, "Leah Thorne, do you have a problem in your head, why take contraceptives when you can't conceive, don't ruin my mood at this point, okay?"

Leah's pupils contracted and expanded, unable to break free from the man, she lowered her head, and bit down hard on Justin Xavier's arm.

Justin Xavier winced in pain, her bite was fierce, even drawing blood.

His handsome face clouded over; he was always assertive in these matters, needing to fully enjoy himself, and her behavior only angered him further.

Justin Xavier grabbed her small face, forcing her to let go, revealing a deep, exquisite bite mark on his arm, with blood seeping out.

Justin was infuriated; although he disliked children and had no plans for them, every time he touched her, she'd start fussing about contraceptives and pills, seemingly terrified of conceiving his child, which filled his chest with a gloomy anger.

"Leah Thorne, you brought this on yourself, let's see if I can't leave my mark in you today!" Justin growled through gritted teeth.

...

The water in the bathroom flowed with a 'swoosh', soon the atmosphere within turned decadent.

Justin Xavier's throat moved up and down as he waited for that intense feeling to pass, then reached out and pulled Leah into his arms, kissing her pale face, "Alright, stop fussing, I'll bathe you."

That's how he was, only offering tenderness after satisfying himself.

Justin Xavier applied shower gel on Leah's body, his gaze lowering as he noticed the milky white fluid flowing down between her legs.

Justin Xavier lifted his head to look at Leah, his eyes darkening. Though he said nothing, his intentions were clear for more.

Just then, Leah raised her hand and forcefully slapped across his handsome face.

Chapter 969: Wife! Wife! Wife!

Slap.

Justin Xavier was mercilessly slapped, and his handsome face was knocked aside.

The air became stagnant, leaving only the sound of running water.

At this moment, Leah Thorne reached out and opened the frosted glass door, stepping out directly.

Justin Xavier didn't move, standing in place, his tongue pushing against his slapped right cheek, he let out a "ha" and surprisingly laughed. Damn, this little wildcat had quite a taste and was fierce!

The only one daring to slap him like this was her!

...

Justin Xavier took a quick shower and came out, wearing a black silk pajama top, his short cropped hair was wet, making him look young and handsome.

Just then, the doorbell rang with a "ding," someone was outside the room.

Leah Thorne walked over to open the door, outside were hotel staff, "Hello, guest, here's what you ordered."

"Alright, thank you." Leah Thorne took the small bag and closed the door.

Justin Xavier glanced at the small bag in her hand, "What's in the bag?"

Leah Thorne's little face was cold and pale, she sat on the sofa, opened the bag, and took out its contents, "Contraceptive pills."

Justin Xavier's handsome face turned entirely black, he strode over, grabbed the box and threw it directly into the trash can, "Not allowed!"

"Give it back!" Leah Thorne quickly ran to the trash can, reaching inside to search.

Justin Xavier's heroic sword-like eyebrows furrowed, he grabbed her delicate wrist, "Leah Thorne, what are you doing, can you really reach into the trash can?"

He held one of her hands, Leah Thorne immediately stretched her other hand into the trash can and picked up the box of contraceptive pills.

Justin Xavier let go of her hand.

Leah Thorne opened the box, peeled out two contraceptive pills and put them in her mouth, swallowing them dry, without water.

Justin Xavier watched her, knowing she was a delicate little princess, afraid of pain and bitter tastes, a single pill could take her half a day to swallow. Yet she didn't even blink as she took two contraceptive pills.

Justin Xavier's cold black eyes, thick and dangerous like spilled ink, curved his thin lips into a sarcastic arc. He spoke, "Leah Thorne, contraceptive pills are for people who can get pregnant, why do you, someone who can't conceive, like taking them so much? Do you have a special fondness for them or something?"

Leah Thorne pushed him aside, "President Xavier, I know I can't get pregnant, so there's no need to keep reminding me. I've done everything that needs to be done, you're satisfied, so why does my taking medicine matter to you? From a benefactor's perspective, isn't it safer if your mistress takes contraceptive pills after the deed? Is there any mistress more worry-free than me for you?"

Justin Xavier was infuriated, he let out a cold laugh, "You're right, it's not like you're a woman meant for marriage, eat whatever pills you want, but..."

Justin Xavier extended his distinct fingers and pinched her small face forcefully, "Look in the mirror and see if you resemble a mentally ill neurotic. I don't like playing with a lunatic!"

After saying that, Justin Xavier pushed her away and walked out of the presidential suite, slamming the door shut with a loud "bang."

Justin Xavier left.

He finally walked out.

Leah Thorne collapsed in exhaustion onto the sofa, her eyes vacant, and she spaced out for a while.

Soon, she picked up her phone and dialed the number President Stone had given her last time, again.

She had never abandoned this number, calling it every night, but it was never answered.

She dialed again, the "beep beep" sounds transmitted over, still no answer.

Disappointment flickered across Leah Thorne's face, she wanted to hang up.

But just as her fingertips touched the button, the call suddenly got answered...

...

Late at night, Justin Xavier drove back to the company, arriving at the CEO's office.

He threw his overcoat onto the sofa heavily, his hands on his waist as he took deep breaths.

The private secretary hurried over and saw this scene upon entering, his boss still in pajamas, wearing hotel slippers, standing there in great anger, looking fierce yet somehow... adorable, like a husband who had fought with his wife and stormed out.

"CEO, why did you come back to the office so late, was it that... Miss Thorne kicked you out of the room..."

Before the secretary could finish speaking, Justin Xavier turned sideways, with a cold, displeased look directed at him.

Terrified, the private secretary stiffened his neck and quickly fell silent.

Justin Xavier walked to his office chair and sat down, indifferently parted his thin lips, "Help me dial a psychologist's number, I need to consult about something."

The private secretary froze, "CEO, are you dialing... Mrs. Crawford's number? Now Mrs. Crawford is a top global medical professor, after all you're acquaintances..."

Mrs. Crawford, Serena Sterling, aren't they acquaintances?

Justin Xavier paused, then took out his phone himself, and dialed the number of his good brother Hayden Crawford's phone.

The melodic ringtone on the other end played once and was answered leisurely, Hayden Crawford's familiar low voice gradually transmitted over, "President Xavier, why are you calling me so late?"

"What's the matter, Mr. Crawford, am I interrupting your and Mrs. Crawford's nightlife?"

"Tsk ts, your tone is so sarcastic, full of jealousy, you're jealous of me, a married man with a wife!"

For some reason, Justin Xavier found the word "wife" coming out of Hayden Crawford's mouth incredibly gloating, he scoffed, "Where's your wife then?"

"President Xavier, you're overdoing it, calling late at night to show concern for my wife?"

"Instead of caring for your wife, don't you think my concern for you is more dangerous?"

"..." Hayden Crawford was silent for two seconds, then to avoid rumors of "boy love" spreading outside, he said, "Alright, I'll go get my wife."

Justin Xavier leaned his straight back lazily against the chair, his ear was then filled with Hayden Crawford's sweet calls, "Honey! Honey! Honey!"

Already finding the word "wife" annoying, Justin Xavier, "..."

At this moment, Serena Sterling's delicate voice was heard from the phone, "Honey, I'm here~"

Not quite recovered from the "wife" sound, Justin Xavier was struck again by the sound of "husband," "..."

"Wife, it's Justin Xavier calling, he's really annoying, quickly dismiss him, we should get to sleep~"

"Alright honey, you go ahead to bed, I'll find you soon, mwah~"

"Okay, I'll go warm up the bed~"

Listening to the couple's conversation on the other end, Justin Xavier was so irked he wanted to smash his phone, "..."

His mood was already bad, and now he had been fed a bowl of dog food!

"Hey, President Xavier, you were looking for me?"

Chapter 970: His Unexplainable Panic and Unease

Serena picked up the phone.

Justin Xavier tightened his grip on the phone, swallowing his words, "Mrs. Crawford, regarding Leah Thorne, there's something I want to ask you."

"Leah? President Xavier, please go ahead."

"Did you know that Leah Thorne can't get pregnant?"

"I knew."

Indeed, Serena, this good friend, knew everything.

"Why can't Leah Thorne get pregnant? Is it congenital or acquired?" Justin asked.

On the other end, Serena was silent for a few seconds, "President Xavier, why don't you ask Leah directly?"

"Don't want to say? It's okay, I'll ask differently then. Leah Thorne can't get pregnant, but she's also very afraid of getting pregnant. Initially, I didn't notice anything unusual, but now I feel something is very wrong."

Every time I'm with her, she always insists on using contraceptives or birth control pills. That's not a concern for someone who can't conceive naturally, unless... this infertility is acquired, meaning it's man-made."

Serena was not surprised that a man as astute and perceptive as Justin Xavier would eventually become suspicious, though it happened a bit sooner than she had imagined.

"From a medical perspective, it's very possible that Leah experienced some kind of trauma in the past, which hasn't healed yet, forming a post-traumatic stress reaction," Serena said.

Justin Xavier showed no expression, his voice devoid of any emotion, "Then Mrs. Crawford, you definitely won't specify what kind of trauma that is, right?"

"President Xavier, it's not that I don't want to say, I just don't have the right to. If Leah wants to tell you, she'll naturally say it." With that, Serena hung up the phone.

Listening to the "beep beep" on the other end, Justin Xavier tossed the phone onto the desk, his handsome brow covered with a layer of gloom.

The private secretary cautiously spoke up, "Pre... President..."

Justin didn't lift his head, irritated, "Alright, you can disappear now."

"So, President, are you planning to sleep... in the office tonight?"

The private secretary immediately looked at him with an expression suggesting that the President was being kicked out of the room by Miss Thorne—in a pitiful manner.

Justin angrily picked up a document and threw it at the private secretary, "If you don't want to get lost, then stay and work overtime."

The private secretary darted out like an arrow.

The office became completely silent. Justin sat in his chair, feeling inexplicably chaotic and extremely... uneasy.

He didn't know where this unease came from. With his current status and power, there was nothing to fear.

Leah was not acting normal, at least in his view. Every time the topic of pregnancy came up, she reacted like a porcupine, putting up all her quills as if to hurt him while cautiously protecting herself, as if... secretly licking an unknown wound.

Serena was also hiding things from him.

Justin collected his thoughts, feeling a storm brewing in his heart. Actually, he could think of many scenarios, such as...

Such as what?

The image of her at 18 leaving him flashed in Justin's mind, blood mixed with white fluid streaming down her leg...

Justin quickly shut his eyes, breaking off his train of thought. He didn't dare think further, as it seemed to lead to a vast abyss, filling him with fear and unease, as if he would be devoured.

...

Leah returned to the set, appearing as usual except for a somewhat pale complexion.

Just then, there was a "ding" sound, and her phone pinged on WeChat; it was a message from Serena saying Justin had become suspicious.

Leah knew what he was suspicious of.

Then came a second message from Serena: overnight there had been no movement from Justin, which wasn't his usual style. Typically, he would have launched an all-out investigation, not staying quiet. There was only one possibility—Justin was scared.

Leah quietly read the message as Madame Goldie approached, softly saying, "Leah, Davina Rowe is here, she's at the set packing her things."

Leah hadn't heard the name Davina Rowe for a long time. Since the last incident, Davina had become obsolete—Old Master Xavier had long discarded her, leaving Davina to fend for herself.

After being removed from the cast of "Ephemeral Life," Davina kept a low profile for a while and now sheepishly returned to the set to pack her things.

Leah caught Davina from the corner of her eye; Davina was staring at her resentfully and walking over.

Leah pretended not to see her, turning to Madame Goldie, "Madame Goldie, Justin is already suspicious of my past, so you must keep it to yourself, not a word should be leaked."

Madame Goldie was taken aback, unsure of Leah's meaning, "Leah, which incident are you referring to?"

"About my pregnancy and miscarriage at 18 that led to infertility."

Davina was unwilling, compelled to walk over and throw sarcastic remarks. But right behind Leah, she overheard the explosive news.

Davina's mind went blank with a "buzz" as it hit her, freezing in place; what had she just heard?

Leah had been pregnant and had a miscarriage at 18?

Davina forgot to breathe, afraid of being discovered, and turned to run.

Just then, Madame Goldie noticed Davina fleeing, her expression changing, "Davina! Not good, Leah, Davina just overheard what you said! She's going to spread it around, I must stop her and shut her mouth!"

"Let her go, Madame Goldie!" Leah held Madame Goldie back.

Madame Goldie was puzzled, "Leah, are you out of your mind? Davina knows about your pregnancy and miscarriage, you're a big star. If she spreads it, it'll be a scandal, and the consequences would be severe!"

Leah nodded, "Madame Goldie, I'm not out of my mind, I know."

"Leah, you didn't... intentionally let Davina hear it, did you?" Madame Goldie sensed something amiss.

Leah gave a faint smile, "Yes."

Madame Goldie drew a sharp breath, looking at Leah in awe, "Leah, this time you're playing too big!"

...

Davina ran out, gasping for air with her hand on her chest.

Her heart pounded heavily now, flooded with the shocking secret she had discovered about Leah.

To think Leah had been pregnant and miscarried at 18. Any female star linked to such rumors would see their career end.

And let alone it being the entertainment industry's red rose, Leah!

Davina quickly pulled out her phone, "Hello, is this Entertainment Weekly? I have explosive news to sell to you, regarding Leah Thorne!"