

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 125[551 words]

That one word, "Nicholas," finally drew the attention of the Lancaster family away from Serena.

All eyes turned to the doorway.

"That Blackwood kid?" Old Mr. Lancaster said, surprised, before waving him over warmly. "What are you doing here? Come, come, sit down. You're just in time for Serena's celebration."

The Lancaster and Blackwood families had always been on good terms. In particular, Old Mr. Lancaster and Old Mr. Blackwood shared a life-and-death bond from their younger days, which had led to the childhood betrothal agreement between their families.

Moreover, Old Mr. Lancaster had always admired Nicholas.

He beckoned Nicholas over, then remembered that he hadn't held a formal party to introduce Serena to society yet, so no one in their circle knew the Lancasters had found their long-lost treasure.

He eagerly started to make the introduction.

"Come, this is my..."

"I know, Old Mr. Lancaster. Serena. Serena Lancaster, your granddaughter," Nicholas Blackwood said, smiling politely as he greeted everyone in turn.

He walked calmly over to Old Mr. Lancaster's side. "I heard the Lancasters were having a family dinner here, so I decided to come uninvited. I hope you don't mind, Old Mr. Lancaster."

"I'm thrilled you could come to my granddaughter's celebration. Why would I mind?" Old Mr. Lancaster replied, then asked casually, "So you already know Serena, Nicholas?"

Nicholas hummed in agreement. His narrow, captivating eyes flickered toward Serena, and the curve of his lips deepened. "You could say I'm practically half a Lancaster. I couldn't miss a Lancaster family dinner."

"Half a Lancaster?" Old Mr. Lancaster's welcoming gesture froze. The smile vanished from his face, and his eyes sharpened.

He narrowed his eyes. "What do you mean by that, Blackwood kid?"

The other Lancasters instantly shot wary glares at Nicholas.

The warm atmosphere vanished in an instant.

What did he mean, half a Lancaster?

What was this damn kid up to?!

Was he after their precious granddaughter/daughter/sister?!

How dare he?

No matter how outstanding Nicholas Blackwood was, he wasn't going to steal their treasure!

The family members exchanged a look, their understanding instantaneous and perfect.

This was why Nicholas had crashed their dinner!

He wanted to bring up the past—the childhood betrothal that the Blackwood and

Lancaster families had arranged years ago!

Their glares were like daggers.

But Nicholas just smiled, a

devastatingly charming look on his face, and said with perfect composure, "Now that both parties are present, I believe the childhood engagement my grandfather and, you arranged for our families..... should now be put on the table." .net "What engagement? There's no engagement Old Mr. Lancaster was the first to slam the table, his eyes wide with indignation. "What century are we in? We don't do that kind of arranged marriage nonsense anymore! A childhood betrothal? Are you even more old-fashioned than this old fossil?"

"Exactly!" Catherine quickly took her daughter's hand. "The Lancaster and Blackwood families don't need to rely on their children's marriage to secure anything!"

Edward cleared his throat. "Nicholas, you must be joking. Our Serena just came home. She hasn't even had a chance to enjoy being with her family. A joke between the older generation shouldn't be taken seriously."

Julian pushed up his gold-rimmed glasses. His smile was gentle, but his voice was sharp. "Mr.

Blackwood, our only wish for our

Serena is for her to be happy. As for her future, we will only respect her wishes. We will never interfere, much less bind her with any kind of engagement."

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Their precious girl had just come back. Anyone who wanted to take her from them was an enemy!

The family was in perfect sync, speaking one after another in a seamless performance.

A childhood engagement?

It was a non-issue!

They wouldn't let anyone use that to trap their precious

granddaughter/daughter/sister!

She should be free to choose who she loves. A forced arrangement was out of the question!

Nicholas seemed to have anticipated their reaction. Listening to them, the smile on his face grew even more captivating, his cool demeanor tinged with an ethereal charm.

"The elders are right."

He smiled, his intense gaze fixed on Serena. "That's why I'm not here today to force Serena into anything based on an old agreement. I just want to ask... what Serena herself thinks."

As he spoke, he leaned slightly in Serena's direction, his focus sharp and unwavering.

The elegant scent of pine once again drifted past Serena's nose.

Serena was at a loss for words.

So, when he had called out her name in that lingering, intimate tone outside the private room, it was all in preparation for this moment.

Just as she expected, the moment the Lancaster family heard Nicholas use her first name so familiarly, their expressions soured. They glared at him, their eyes practically shooting daggers.

Serena?

When did they get to know each other? Were they that close? Close enough for first names? Who gave him permission?

The Lancasters all turned to Serena in unison, their eyes wide, as if waiting for her to reject Nicholas Blackwood on the spot.

The entire room fell silent. All eyes were on Serena.

Outside the private room.

Isabella was rushing over from the hospital.

She couldn't possibly miss the Lancaster family dinner.

But just as she reached the Sovereign Suite, she heard Nicholas's voice from behind the slightly ajar door.

She froze instantly, her hand hovering in the air, about to push the door open.

Nicholas?

What was he doing here?

Could it be... that he was here to tell on her because she had just caused Brianna to have a heart attack?

At that thought, a shiver of fear ran through Isabella's entire body.

Panicked, she quickly stepped aside and pulled out her phone to call Agnes.

Agnes was the maid who had looked after her since she was a child, practically her nanny, and they were very close.

For years, whenever she had a problem, her first instinct was to ask Agnes for help and advice.

As soon as the call connected, Isabella told Agnes her suspicion, her voice cracking by the end. "Agnes, what do I do? What if... what if Mom and Dad think I'm the one

who hurt Brianna? If they're angry

with me, will they kick me out of the Lancaster family to appease Nicholas?"

Agnes's voice was soothing. "Don't let your imagination run wild. Mr. Blackwood isn't that kind of person. Why would he go to your parents over such a small matter? He was probably just at Le Céleste by chance."

"But... but what if Nicholas is really here because of Brianna? I'm... I'm scared..." She didn't even dare to enter the room now.

"Isabella!" Agnes's voice sharpened,

becoming serious. "The most

important thing for you to do right now is to stay calm You absolutely cannot panic! If you panic, you fall right into that wretched Serena's trap!"

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She reminded her, "Isabella, Mr. Blackwood and that conniving Serena are both in that room right now. That girl is incredibly scheming. Once she sees how outstanding Mr. Blackwood is and finds out who he is she'll definitely

to seduce him and latch onto

try to

him!"

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Isabella's eyes widened in shock, and her face went deathly pale.

Her voice trembled even more. "No... I can't let that happen. Nicholas is mine!"

"Exactly, Isabella. You must remember that!" Agnes said firmly. "Right now, Mr. Blackwood is your only chance to secure your position in the Lancaster family, and your only chance to change your own fate! You have to hold onto him and marry him!"

Right!

She had to hold on tight to Nicholas.

Nicholas was hers!

That country girl, Serena, loved to take her things!

She would absolutely not let anyone take Nicholas from her!

Isabella hung up and rushed back toward the private room.

Just then, she heard that country girl's cool voice. "Before this, the Lancaster heiress has always been Isabella. According to the engagement, that would mean you and Isabella..."

Childhood engagement?!

Isabella's heart leaped into her throat.

Could it be that they were discussing... the marriage contract between the Lancaster and Blackwood families?

Upon hearing her own name, Isabella stopped in her tracks, her fingers clenching into fists.

Serena couldn't possibly be that kind...

Why would she bring her up in front of Nicholas?

Was she trying to give the engagement to her?

Just as that thought crossed her mind, Nicholas cut Serena off. "There is no 'before.'"

Nicholas's voice wasn't loud, but it carried an undeniable finality.

At that moment, the usual lazy charm in his roguish eyes was gone. "Before you, I never once considered this engagement to be a serious matter."

In what should have been a romantic atmosphere, Old Mr.

Lancaster suddenly seemed to have an epiphany and slammed his hand on the table. "That's right! You

of your

Blackwood boy, on they to

coming of age ceremony, you told your grandfather and mein person that the engagement between our families was off! Your grandfather was fuming at you back then!"

"That's right! You said it was off yourself, so there's no childhood engagement between our families! No way! You stay away from my granddaughter!"

He glared at Nicholas, his expression screaming, *You want to go back on your word now? Not a chance!*

The Lancaster parents exchanged a look and quickly chimed in. "Yes, yes, Nicholas. You clearly stated back then that it was off, so it's still off now!"

"Since you said it yourself, then off means off," Julian said, adjusting his gold-rimmed glasses with a gentle smile.

Facing the united front of three

generations of Lancasters, Nicholas

remained perfectly composed. "M

Lancaster, Mr. and Mrs Lancaster Julian, the reason refused back then was because I, Nicholas Blackwood, will only ever commit to one person."

The curve of his lips deepened as he looked at Serena, his gaze growing more

intense. "I am only willing to fulfill this engagement..... with Serena."

His deep, almond-shaped eyes sparkled with a mesmerizing light, making his already handsome face even more bewitching. "Of course, that sustry intention won't force anyone. The so-called childhood engagement is just a formality; what truly matters is the heart As long as Serena is willing, the only fiancée I, Nicholas Blackwood, will ever have is her."

He tossed the decision back to Serena. "So, Serena... what's your answer?"

Serena met his burning gaze. Those captivating eyes, shimmering with affection as they locked with hers, looked so incredibly sincere.

Her long, dark lashes fluttered, and her crimson lips parted slightly as she was about to speak-

"Nicholas!"

A delighted voice came from outside the room.

Isabella, dressed in a soft, elegant outfit, walked in, handbag in tow.

Her eyes fell on Nicholas, and she acted as if she had just arrived and heard nothing. Her voice took on a slightly coying tone as she looked at him shyly. "Nicholas, you're here! Are you here specifically to see me?"

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She absolutely could not let Serena say anything that sounded like accepting Nicholas!

Isabella fought to suppress the turmoil in her heart, forcing a perfectly composed smile onto her face.

After entering the room, her objective was clear: she had to make Serena understand that Nicholas was her man! She had to make Serena back off!

Isabella walked gracefully toward Nicholas in her high heels, the shyness in her eyes deepening. "Nicholas, why didn't you tell me you were coming? What a wonderful surprise."

Her posture suggested a deep intimacy between them, and her words declared that his arrival was a surprise meant for her.

The Lancaster and Blackwood families had always been on good terms.

She was confident that, in front of their families, Nicholas would play along and save her face.

Isabella's smile grew sweeter, and she shot a sideways glance at Serena, her eyes filled with provocation.

Her clumsy performance was laughable.

And Serena did indeed laugh out loud.

Her laughter carried a faint, mocking tone.

Isabella's expression stiffened slightly. She looked up, biting her lower lip, and glared at Serena with resentment.

What was that country girl laughing at!

What right did she have to look at her with such a mocking expression?

Was it so funny that she and Nicholas were close?

Before Serena came back, she and Nicholas had been engaged.

Even if Nicholas didn't acknowledge it now, the childhood engagement was an undeniable fact.

What was so funny about an engaged couple being close?

Isabella was filled with indignation, as if to prove her intimate relationship with Nicholas.

She even raised her hand to place it on his shoulder. "Nicholas, why aren't you saying anything?"

However, before her hand could touch him, Nicholas stood up in one fluid motion, effortlessly avoiding her touch.

He then took a long stride and positioned himself behind Serena.

His long, slender fingers rested casually on the back of Serena's chair.

It seemed as if he had merely changed his position, wanting to lean in and speak with Serena.

But anyone could see...

He was avoiding Isabella.

He didn't even spare her a glance.

His indifferent attitude made the smile on Isabella's face freeze, and her hand was left hanging awkwardly in mid-air.

The air itself seemed to congeal.

A wave of embarrassment and

humiliation washed over Isabella and

rushing to her head and making her face flush bright red

"Nicholas..."

Isabella's voice trembled, on the verge of breaking.

Her pupils constricted in shock. She couldn't believe Nicholas would humiliate her like this in front of the Lancaster family.

What was even more unbelievable...

Was that Nicholas was standing so intimately close to Serena!

And he had initiated it?

"Ms. Isabella." Nicholas finally seemed to notice her, his eyes lifting slightly to give her a passing glance.

The extremely formal address was a stark contrast to the intimate "Serena" he used for her sister.

His thin lips curved into a smile, but

the words that came out were cold

and emotionless

The

"We're not close

way you address me makes me uncomfortable."

His words were cool, distant, and detached.

So cold that Isabella's face turned pale, and she was overcome with shame and humiliation.

Her eyes began to well up, tears pooling in them.

She hoped to use this pitiful, wronged expression to get her family to stand up for her.

To make her family publicly acknowledge her previous engagement to Nicholas!

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From the moment she first saw Nicholas, her heart had belonged to him.

Especially after her parents had jokingly let slip the childhood engagement between the Lancaster and Blackwood families.

From then on, she had completely regarded Nicholas as her fiancé.

She was convinced that she would marry Nicholas and join the Blackwood family one day.

There was no way her family didn't know how she felt!

Her family should be standing up for her, or at the very least... feel some sympathy for her years of devotion!

But all she saw were the Lancasters nodding at Nicholas with satisfaction.

Apparently, even though no one in the Lancaster family supported Nicholas's designs on their precious girl, his clear boundaries with other women was a major point in his favor.

Not a single one of them noticed Isabella's distress.

Their hearts and minds were completely occupied with Serena.

No one stood up for her. In fact... they seemed to think Nicholas's public humiliation of her was the right thing to do?

Isabella trembled with anger, her eyes growing redder.

She clenched her fists so tightly that her perfectly manicured nails dug into her palms, barely managing to suppress the overwhelming resentment and sense of injustice that threatened to erupt.

She moved meekly to Catherine's side, grabbing her arm and deliberately softening her tone, speaking as if she were joking. "Mom... look at Nicholas! Now that Serena is here, he's treating me like this. But you and Dad used to say you wanted me to..."

She was trying to remind Catherine of what they'd let slip before-that if the Blackwoods ever came to collect on the engagement and their biological daughter was missing, their adopted daughter would have to take her place.

In that case, the engagement should have been hers, Isabella's!

Catherine felt her adopted daughter's slight tremble as she held her arm and sighed inwardly.

She gently parted Isabella's hand, her tone gentle. "Isabella, we never said you should sacrifice your own marriage to stand in for Serena. Whether it's you or Serena, your relationships and marriages should be your own choice."

"Besides, Nicholas did personally and clearly cancel the childhood engagement in front of both grandfathers at

s coming-of-age

ceremony. That's a fact, and you

need to understand that."

Isabella's pupils contracted sharply as she shot a look at Nicholas.

Had Nicholas really canceled the engagement just to avoid any association with her as his fiancée?

Did he despise her that much?

That realization was even more humiliating than his earlier indifference and dismissal.

It was as if... to him, she was a plague to be avoided at all costs!

The immense shame made the ever-proud Isabella want to run out of the room crying.

But then, out of the corner of her eye, she saw Nicholas leaning over Serena's chair, whispering something to her.

The affection in his mesmerizing eyes was so deep and tender.

It was a gentleness she had never even received in her dreams!

A powerful wave of resentment made her bite her lower lip.

No!

She couldn't leave!

If she left, wouldn't that just make that country girl even more smug?

If she left, she wouldn't be able to see just how that country girl was seducing her Nicholas!

Agnes was right. That country girl was indeed full of tricks.

She wanted to see with her own eyes just how Serena was seducing her Nicholas She had to find a chance to rip off Serena's mask of cold indifference herself!

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Chapter 130[538 words]

Soon, Isabella regretted her decision.

The magnificent feast from Le Céleste was served, with the dishes Serena had personally prepared placed in the most prominent and eye-catching spots.

Old Mr. Lancaster looked as if he wanted to put up a sign next to Serena's dishes to show off his precious granddaughter's culinary skills!

The atmosphere gradually warmed up.

Isabella took a deep breath, forcing down all her emotions, and constantly looked for opportunities to show off and get closer to Nicholas.

"Nicholas... I mean, Mr. Blackwood." Isabella, having shelled some crab meat, tried to place it on the plate in front of Nicholas. "This Crab Imperial is a specialty of Le Céleste. It's delicious. I shelled it for you, you should try it."

Before the crab meat even reached the plate, the man used his utensils to block it, sliding the plate aside.

The crab meat missed its mark.

The man didn't even look up, his voice flat. "Thank you, but no need."

Distant and polite.

But just then, the man put down his utensils.

He then picked up a shrimp with his long, slender, well-defined hands and naturally began to peel it.

Those hands, practically a work of art, moved with an elegant and swift grace.

After peeling a small bowl of shrimp, he pushed it in front of Serena. "Try this. It's very fresh."

He even thoughtfully placed a small dish of special dipping sauce next to it.

His gaze never left Serena.

Isabella's hand froze awkwardly in mid-air, her smile completely stiff.

In the end, it was Catherine who took the crab meat from Isabella's hand with her own bowl, smiling to ease the tension. "My Isabella is so thoughtful."

Isabella watched the crab meat she had personally shelled go into Catherine's mouth.

She bit her lower lip, a bitter taste in her mouth.

If you're always on Serena's side, then let Serena peel crab for you! Why are you accepting what I shelled?

Isabella's eyes turned red with anger. Then she saw Nicholas pick up the serving utensils, take a piece of fish, meticulously remove all the bones, and place it in Serena's bowl.

Throughout the entire meal...

Isabella could only watch as Nicholas doted on Serena with meticulous care, as if he had practiced it a thousand times. His attention to detail was so thorough, that even the Lancaster family members were secretly amazed.

She glanced down at the single, lonely piece of venison in her own bowl, which seemed to mock her for being a clown jumping through hoops. All her deliberate attempts to please and be intimate had become a joke.

What stung the most was watching Serena simply lift her eyes to glance at Nicholas before naturally accepting his service.

As if his attentiveness was the most natural thing in the world!

The sight deeply wounded Isabella's pride.

She felt a churning in her stomach and completely lost her appetite, silently cursing Serena with every fiber of her being.

It was safe to say that, apart from Isabella, everyone else enjoyed the meal immensely.

The overall atmosphere was cheerful and harmonious.

Although Old Mr. Lancaster

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remained wary and resistant to the wolf eyeing his precious lamb, he had to admit that Nicholas's undisguised thoughtfulness and protectiveness toward his granddaughter, along with his powerful presence, were truly impeccable.

He even felt a little impressed.

The rest of the Lancaster family felt the same.

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The family dinner lasted until after nine o'clock.

As they were leaving, Old Mr. Lancaster made sure to have someone bring takeout containers to pack up all the dishes Serena had personally cooked.

He declared that when his precious granddaughter cooked, even the leftover sauces had to be savored to the last drop.

Isabella watched as the entire family fawned over Serena, all of them praising her cooking skills.

Her anger flared.

That country girl's tricks were certainly effective.

If she had known her family would be so happy over a home-cooked meal, she would have cooked for them herself.

After all, when she studied abroad, she had apprenticed under a famous foreign chef. Her command of fine dining was exquisite, producing dishes that were delicious and elegant enough for competition.

Nothing like what Serena made...

A table full of traditional, rustic dishes-unappealing and greasy, piled up so high it looked like slop for pigs.

And what was that herbal broth she'd made? The whole room still reeked of herbs.

Anyone who didn't know better would think she was trying to poison the family.

Isabella pouted, thinking to herself that once they got home, she would personally cook a meal to show her family that gourmet cuisine was far more delicious than this traditional fare.

Just then, Mr. Marshall walked in carrying several fresh food containers.

Le Céleste didn't normally offer a takeout service.

And yet, here was Mr. Marshall himself, personally delivering the containers.

This even surprised Old Mr. Lancaster.

Everyone knew that Mr. Marshall, the owner of Le Céleste, was a culinary fanatic, completely obsessed with researching and discovering all kinds of traditional delicacies.

It was usually difficult to even get a moment with him.

Old Mr. Lancaster wasn't close with Mr. Marshall; they were acquaintances at best, exchanging nods when they saw each other.

But today, he had come to the Lancaster family's private room to bring them takeout containers?

The Lancasters couldn't help but wonder about the purpose of his visit.

At that moment, Isabella, a smile, gracing her lips, stepped forward to greet Mr. Marshall. "Mr. Marshall, I should be the one paying you a visit. I can't believe I've troubled you to come here personally. It's my fault."

The Lancasters immediately turned to look at Isabella.

So, Mr. Marshall was here for their adopted daughter?

Feeling her family's eyes on her, Isabella's smile deepened, and she shot a subtle, triumphant glance in Serena's direction.

Of course Mr. Marshall had made this trip especially for her.

After all, when she was studying

abroad, her culinary instructor ha

taken her to meet Mr. Marshall when he was attending an international culinary symposium

She had made an impression on him.

She never thought he would actually remember her.

And now, he was not only making an exception to let them take food home but was even delivering the containers himself, all out of respect for her.

It was a huge boost to her ego.

Thank goodness she'd had such a prestigious mentor!

This was the difference between a top-tier socialite and a girl from the countryside.

Mr. Marshall, who had been heading toward Serena with the containers, was stopped in his tracks by this woman who had suddenly appeared.

He squinted, a bit puzzled as he looked at Isabella.

He figured that since she was dining in the same room as Miss Serena, she must be a member of her family.

So, Mr. Marshall didn't embarrass her, simply offering a polite nod. "It's no trouble."

His response only confirmed Isabella's belief: Mr. Marshall was here for her!

She reached out to take the

containers from his hands. "If my

instructor knew I was troubling you like this, he would scold me to no end. Speaking of which my instructor often mentions you, Mr. Marshall."

Mr. Marshall's brow furrowed slightly. "Your instructor?"

What in the world was this woman talking about?

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Couldn't she see he was trying to get to Miss Serena?

Apparently not.

How could Isabella pass up a chance to redeem herself after her earlier humiliations? How could she let go of an opportunity to showcase her connections in front of Nicholas?

Mr. Marshall was the perfect prop to boost her ego.

Isabella lifted her chin, her lips curving into a proud and confident smile. "Yes, my instructor is the renowned chef from Caldoria, Mr. Calvin."

Mr. Marshall's frown deepened. He clearly had no recollection of who Calvin was.

Besides, the name sounded foreign.

That immediately soured his mood. A perfectly good Elyndor native taking a foreigner as a teacher and acting so smug about it. What was there to be proud of?

Out of respect for Serena, Mr. Marshall kept his thoughts to himself and just gave a noncommittal hum.

He tried to step around Isabella.

But she was persistent.

She continued to pester him until Mr. Marshall's expression darkened. Finally losing his patience, he raised a hand and pushed away Isabella's outstretched arm. "Excuse me, miss, please let me pass."

The saccharine, intimate smile Isabella had carefully crafted instantly froze on her face.

Then, she watched in disbelief as Mr. Marshall walked straight past her, hurrying toward Serena.

When his gaze landed on Serena, the impatience he had shown Isabella vanished like a storm cloud, replaced by a bright smile.

"Miss Serena, are you leaving already?" Mr. Marshall's eyes were practically sparkling as he looked at her.

Serena, however, showed no sign of being flattered by the attention of a world- renowned master chef. Instead, she coolly glanced up at him and asked dryly, "What's the problem now?"

Isabella's eyes widened in shock. She couldn't believe what she was hearing.

She clenched her fists, thinking with bitter resentment a country bumpkin will always be a country bumpkin! Serena probably has no idea who Mr. Marshall even is!

If Serena offended Mr. Marshall...

Ha!

Even if Grandpa personally apologized, Mr. Marshall's eccentric personality meant he would never accept it!

Then the family would see that Serena was just an ignorant country girl who only knew how to put on an act!

But a second later...

Her hopes were dashed.

Mr. Marshall gestured excitedly at Serena. "Miss Serena, it's about that Pan-Seared Scallops on Saffron Velouté! The last two steps, how do you balance the portions and the heat? I tried replicating it several times based on the video but something's still missing. Could you take a look and tell me where I'm going wrong?"

With that, he held out his phone to Serena.

Serena glanced down at the recorded video.

After watching for a few seconds, dragged

the progress bar, pointed to a specific point

and

explained the issue.

Mr. Marshall listened intently beside her, nodding frequently like the most

attentive student in a class. He!?

or

Was

the very picture of obedience."

Isabella stared blankly at the scene, her expression shifting from shock to horror.

The rest of the Lancaster family was stunned.

They never imagined that Mr. Marshall had come to their private room specifically for their precious Serena.

And his purpose was to... ask for her guidance?

A world-class culinary legend was asking Serena for advice on cooking?

And from the looks of it...

This seemed to be a regular occurrence.

Could it be that Serena's culinary skills surpassed even Mr. Marshall's?

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As everyone watched in stunned silence, Serena solved Mr. Marshall's problem in two minutes.

Mr. Marshall's eyes lit up, his face beaming with excitement. "So that's how it is! Of course, it had to be you, Miss Serena! I'm going to try again right now!"

Serena nodded. "I have to go."

"I still have so many..." Mr. Marshall started, disappointed, but his gaze swept over the other people in the room, and he caught himself. He sighed lightly. "Miss Serena, I won't take up any more of your time with your family. Next time you're free, I'll ask you for more advice."

He quickly called a waiter over to help them pack up their things.

In the end, Le Céleste refused to charge them a single dollar. They even declared that as Miss Serena's family, they could come to Le Céleste anytime without a reservation, and their meals would be complimentary.

It was obvious to everyone that Serena had a very close relationship with Mr. Marshall, the owner of Le Céleste.

Just how incredible were her cooking skills to make Elyndor's number one master chef, a man known for his culinary obsession, so utterly deferential to her?

Isabella, who had been completely ignored, didn't dare utter a word.

She had already made a fool of herself tonight over Nicholas.

And just now...

Her deliberate attempt to cozy up to Mr. Marshall had left her with absolutely no dignity.

She was trembling with rage, completely unable to believe what she had just seen.

Mr. Marshall was a figure so revered that even her own instructor, Calvin, would have to bow and scrape, and still might not earn a second glance from him.

She had always been so proud of having a famous chef like Calvin as her mentor.

But in front of Serena, all of it was reduced to nothing.

Why?

Serena was just a country girl!

A nobody who deserved to live at the bottom!

The Wynns had never spent a dime on her training!

How could she be so talented?

How could she be allowed to outshine Isabella?

The more she thought about it, the more suffocated she felt.

She bit her lip, her gaze finally landing on Nicholas.

No!

She had to re-establish her status and abilities in Nicholas's mind.

She had to make him understand that she was a much better fit to be the future matriarch of the Blackwood family than that country girl Serena.

Who knew what kind of tricks Serena had used to fool Mr. Marshall?

Girls from the country were full of them.

Isabella's eyes darted around, scanning the luxury cars parked at the entrance of Le Céleste. She

grabbed Catherine's hand, her tone a

e'

mix of petulance and feigned thoughtfulness Mom, don't think. our car has enough room for everyone, and I didn't drive here tonight..."

As she spoke, she cast a shy glance in Nicholas's direction.

Her meaning was unmistakable—she wanted Nicholas to be a gentleman and offer her a ride home.

If she could just get some time alone with him, she was confident she could win him over.

Catherine frowned slightly, her gaze on Isabella becoming more suspicious and analytical.

Her adopted daughter's behavior

tonight had been far too deliberate.

From the moment she arrived at Le

Céleste, she had seemed to be

losing her composure again and again.

Something was very off.

That look made Isabella's heart tighten.

She quickly forced a more obedient smile, adopting a thoughtful and

generous demeanor as she explained, "Mom, don't

misunderstand. I just noticed that since Serena came back to the family, she's always out and about and hasn't had much time to spend with you all."

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"I've seen you sighing over her photo so many times. And me... I get to be home

with you every day, and I've been with you for so many years. I just thought I'd give this chance to be with you tonight to Serena, so she can spend more time with you."

Her words were dripping with sincerity.

She sounded as if she was thinking entirely of her family, her heart aching for them.

But between the lines, another message was clear: look how thoughtful and kind I am. And Serena? She only cares about enjoying the privileges the Lancaster family provides, while being so cold to her own family.

But Isabella was, after all, the daughter Catherine had raised by her side for twenty years.

She studied Isabella for a long moment, taking in the obedient expression and the hint of bravely suppressed grievance in her eyes. In the end, she didn't say anything more, but looked at Serena. "Serena, do you want to ride with your father and me, or..."

Isabella gritted her teeth in frustration.

Even after she had laid it on so thick, her mother was still asking for Serena's opinion.

What was there to ask?

She kept saying the engagement was off, but she was still trying to push Nicholas and Serena together.

It was blatant favoritism.

At that moment, Nicholas's lazy, relaxed voice cut through the night air, sounding particularly alluring.

"Sorry, my car only has room for Serena."

As he spoke, he turned his body slightly toward Serena, his narrow, almond-shaped eyes seeming to hold the entire starry sky within them.

They shimmered... captivatingly.

"That new encrypted protocol from the institute is in my car. I can give it to you on the way?" he said with a smile.

Serena looked at his sly, handsome face, then turned to Catherine. "Mom, I'll ride with him, then."

Hearing this, the man acted as if he feared she might change her mind. He quickly opened the passenger door extending a hand in a gesture

that both gentlemanly and

elegant, inviting Serena into the car.

His eagerness made the other Lancasters chuckle. "Alright, then. Be careful on the road."

Serena nodded without a single glance at the ashen-faced Isabella. With Nicholas considerably shielding her head, she slid into the car.

Nicholas said goodbye to the Lancasters one by one and drove off.

The black Maybach quickly blended into the night.

Isabella watched Nicholas's silhouette disappear completely from sight.

She was seething, but could only suppress her rage and reluctantly get into the car with the Lancaster family.

Her foul mood cast a heavy silence over the car.

Catherine saw her adopted daughter sitting with her head down, clearly heartbroken over Nicholas.

"Isabella." Catherine took her hand and patted it gently, speaking in a soft, consoling tone. "I know you've liked that Blackwood boy since you were little, but... you can't force matters of the heart. You've seen his attitude. After all these years, he truly doesn't have those kinds of feelings for you. It just means you two aren't meant to be."

Edward also tried to comfort her. "That's right, Isabella. You're a smart girl. Nicholas has made his position very clear. His... attention is all on Serena. If Serena really says yes, he'll be your brother-in-law one day. You should let these feelings go sooner rather than later. Don't get stuck on it."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 135[615 words]

Their words were meant to comfort and guide Isabella, to help her accept Nicholas's attitude and let go of her obsession.

After all, they were a family and would see each other constantly. Being too fixated would only lead to more awkwardness in the future.

But to Isabella's ears, their words were like fuel poured on a fire.

Let Nicholas go? Why should she be the one to let him go?

Not meant to be? It was obvious that country girl Serena had stolen him from her!

Future brother-in-law? She would never accept that!

They... were clearly playing favorites!

They were trying to appease Serena by forcing her to give up on Nicholas, forcing her to abandon her only hope of marrying into a top-tier family!

They wanted her to hand Nicholas over on a silver platter!

Their hearts and minds were filled with nothing but Serena. Her twenty years of companionship and devotion were worthless in their eyes.

Isabella clenched her fists violently, keeping her head bowed to hide the rage and hatred that were about to erupt from her eyes.

Her carefully manicured nails dug so deep into her palms that they left angry red marks.

She bit her lower lip so hard that the metallic taste of blood filled her mouth.

She would never let Serena win.

Nicholas was hers.

Everything the Lancaster family had would be hers!

Serena would not take anything from her.

The black Maybach glided through the night.

Serena leaned back lazily against the seat, her eyes focused on the encrypted core data from the institute spread across her lap.

She was completely absorbed, her long, raven-like lashes casting soft shadows on her cheeks.

Nicholas drove with one hand on the steering wheel, his posture relaxed and casual. Every so often, he would glance at the girl beside him.

The warm city lights flickered across her, making her stunningly beautiful features appear even more coolly captivating.

He quirked his lips, his deep voice especially magnetic in the quiet,

confined space. "Serena, would

say we passed the first round of inspection with my future in-laws?

Serena didn't even look up, her fingers flipping through the documents as she replied nonchalantly, "You're overthinking it. They just respect my choices."

The man let out a low chuckle, a deep, magnetic sound that was incredibly pleasant to the ear.

It was the kind of sound that made one's ears tingle. "Then... Serena, what are your thoughts?"

Serena's hand, which had been turning a page, paused almost imperceptibly.

For some reason, whenever this sly man said her name like that, it felt like he was trying to seduce her.

"I don't have any thoughts," she said.

"Really?" he lowered his voice, the corners of his eyes lifting into a roguish, bewitching curve. "Is this face of mine not enough to give you any ideas?"

This time, Serena's fingers stopped completely, hovering over the document.

She finally lifted her gaze, her clear, cool eyes landing on his face.

The flowing city lights outside the window swept over him, tracing the impossibly perfect contours of his profile, making him look as alluring as a demon in the flickering shadows.

Those narrow, almond-shaped eyes held an unabashedly aggressive charm in the dim light, their depths dangerously captivating.

"Your face," Serena's lips curved slightly, though her voice remained flat, "is definitely enough to give someone ideas."

Nicholas's eyebrow arched, and the smile in his eyes deepened, like ripples spreading across a spring pond.

"It's just that I'm not interested in a relationship right now," Serena added.

"As long as my face can make you have ideas, then..... there's a chance."

The man's deep voice drew out the words, laced with a captivating and unshakeable confidence. "And once there's a chance, I have all the patience in the world to make sure

those ideas about my fo make eno

turn

whe

into the idea of being in a relationship with me."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 136[543 words]

Serena stared at the man's captivatingly handsome profile and his look of utter confidence.

She said nothing, simply withdrawing her gaze and turning back to the data in her hands.

It was as if that brief flicker of emotion had been nothing but an illusion.

Nicholas knew when to stop.

He didn't press the issue, smoothly changing the subject. "By the way, Brianna is awake."

Brianna?

It took Serena a moment to place the name.

He was talking about his sister, the poor girl Alfred had accidentally grazed with his car, who ended up in the hospital and was later provoked into having a heart attack.

She glanced at him. "How is she recovering?"

"With you on the case, I wasn't worried," Nicholas said, a small smile playing on his lips. "But after she woke up and learned you'd saved her again, she's very eager to thank you in person."

"In the Blackwood family, we take life-saving debts very seriously."

Serena remembered the cheerful, innocent girl with the clear eyes and nodded. "Alright."

"Then I'll pick you up from the Lancaster estate tomorrow morning," Nicholas immediately added.

Serena shot him a look that seemed to say, *Your intentions couldn't be more obvious.*

But in the end, she just gave a quiet "Mm."

A grin spread across the man's face, and his eyes were brimming with an amusement that nearly overflowed.

He was like a devilishly charming man.

He was laying on the charm thick.

The car slowly pulled to a stop in front of the Lancaster estate.

Serena tucked the data files into her canvas bag, grabbed it, and got out of the car.

It was too late, so Nicholas had to dismiss the idea of going inside to linger with Serena any longer. "See you tomorrow."

The three words tugged at her heart.

She lowered her long lashes, murmured a soft "Mm," and turned to walk into the estate.

When Serena entered the main hall, she found her family had already arrived home before her.

The entire gleaming living room was filled with beautifully wrapped gift boxes of all sizes.

"Serena, you're back!" Catherine's face lit up the moment she saw her precious daughter.

She walked over and took Serena's hand. "Serena, look at this. That Blackwood boy... he's quite thoughtful. He had all of this delivered. The entrance was nearly piled high when we got home."

"He said these are to celebrate you receiving the nation's highest honor, and some are thoughtful gifts for the older family members."

"He's being far too kind."

Serena's gaze swept over the piles of exquisite gift boxes.

Edward was holding an antique wooden box containing a priceless set of rare manuscripts. His appreciation was evident in his eyes. That young man... he certainly knows his audience. He really put a lot of thought into this."

Old Mr. Lancaster was stroking a handcrafted humidor, clearly very fond of it, but he just snorted. "All this flattery can't be for nothing Do you think can't see what he's up to?

Trying to win over our girl? Not chance!"

Julian held a gift-wrapped proposal for a new energy initiative. He adjusted his gold-rimmed glasses and looked at Serena. "Serena, when did you get to know Nicholas This display... it's clear he's serious."

That question immediately made everyone else turn to look at her.

They all started talking at once, bombarding her with questions about the details of how they met.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 137[579 words]

Catherine couldn't help but sigh. "Honestly, putting aside the fact that he's eyeing my precious daughter and trying to steal her away, that boy... he's really something."

"His looks are top-notch, his abilities are top-notch, and his family background is on par with the Lancasters, so there's no risk of one family overpowering the other."

"He's the best of the best in every way, a perfect partner. It's just a shame... he attracts so much attention, and our Serena is still so young."

"That's right." Edward put down what he was holding and added, "These are wonderful gifts, and the sentiment is clear, but... what do you think, Serena? These things are too valuable. If you're not interested, I'll personally return them."

Serena could see that the gifts from that sly fox had perfectly hit every one of her family's preferences.

She pursed her lips, remembering the man's determined, roguish charm in the car.

Her tone held a note of resignation she herself didn't even notice. "He's so persistent, he wouldn't take them back anyway. Let's just keep them."

"I'm going to the hospital to see Miss Blackwood tomorrow. I'll prepare a gift in return."

Old Mr. Lancaster nodded with a smile. "That works. It's only polite to return the gesture. Our family won't be impolite."

With that, he pressed a black card into Serena's hand. "Serena, see what you need to get, and use this. It's on me."

Serena was speechless.

This habit of handing out black cards at the drop of a hat was a bit much.

She had money, she really did!

Standing in the foyer, Isabella stared at the pile of priceless, dazzling gifts with bloodshot eyes.

She was so furious she could have burst.

She truly didn't understand why that country bumpkin deserved so much of Nicholas's attention!

How could Nicholas be willing to spend so extravagantly on that girl?!

And her grandfather, he wasn't even trying to hide it anymore, just looking for any excuse to throw money at Serena.

Yet he didn't spare a single thought for her!

What did that country bumpkin have that she didn't?!

The more Isabella thought about it, the more bitter she felt.

Just then, Agnes rushed over excitedly and grabbed Isabella's arm. "Miss Isabella, I just saw Mr. Blackwood's car! Did he bring you home personally? Oh, , knew you Mr. Blackwood must have feelings for you!"

"Miss Isabella, hurry and tell me, what did you and Mr. Blackwood talk about? Is he planning to honor the engagement with you?"

Agnes's words were like a thousand needles stabbing into Isabella's repeatedly trampled pride.

Her face flushed crimson.

The humiliating scenes from Le Céleste flooded her mind.

The intense shame and grievance erupted in that instant. "Stop asking!"

Isabella's voice was resentful and choked with tears.

She shook off Agnes's hand, covered her face, and ran upstairs to her room.

Agnes froze for a moment, sensing something was wrong.

She quickly chased after her.

As soon as she entered Isabella's room, she saw Isabella sobbing her heart out, her face streaked with tears.

Agnes's heart ached for her. She

quickly closed the door. "Oh, my dear lady what's wrong? Did that country bumpkin pull another one of her tricks?"

Isabella had been suffering all day without a single person to comfort her, and everyone was just pressuring her.

Now, with Agnes's concern, a wave of self-pity washed over her.

She sobbed, collapsing into Agnes's arms and waiting as she

recounted with some embellishment-how Nicholas had defended Serena, how he had publicly disavowed any relationship with her, and how her family was forcing her to give up on Nicholas and step aside for Serena.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 138[526 words]

Agnes was fuming with rage. "I knew that little tramp from the country was full of tricks! I don't know what she did behind the scenes, but she's got the old man and your parents wrapped around her little finger. Even the young master has fallen for her tricks!"

"And now, even Mr. Blackwood..."

"Agnes, what should I do?" Isabella cried, her eyes blurry with tears, feeling utterly helpless. "Nicholas doesn't even see me..."

"Miss Isabella, you have to fight back! You can't let that country bumpkin win!" Agnes patted Isabella's back, her eyes glinting fiercely. "No matter what, you cannot give Mr. Blackwood up!"

An idea sparked in Agnes's mind, and she leaned close to Isabella's ear. "Mr. Blackwood is under that little vixen's spell right now, so we can't approach him directly. Our priority is to make him see that vixen's true colors! We have to make him understand who is truly fit to be the future lady of the Blackwood family!"

She patted Isabella's hand. "For now... we can start with the other members of the Blackwood family."

"The people Mr. Blackwood cares about most are Old Mr. Blackwood and Miss Blackwood! You just need to work on those two, and you'll be halfway to marrying into the Blackwood family!"

Isabella sniffled, looking at Agnes through tear-filled eyes. "But..... but Brianna....."

She had angered Brianna so much that she'd had a heart attack. Would Brianna still help her?

"She's just a seventeen-year-old girl. A little flattery is all it takes to win her over!" Agnes schemed. "Miss Isabella, just spend more time around Miss Blackwood. You're so exceptional, you really think you can't handle a young girl?"

"As for Old Mr. Blackwood... that's even easier! Doesn't he always praise you for being so well-behaved and sensible? It's obvious he likes you very much! As long as Old Mr. Blackwood gives his approval and insists on the engagement between our families, Mr. Blackwood is so respectful he'll surely listen! When that happens... you'll still be the one engaged to Mr. Blackwood!"

"What is that country bumpkin? She won't stand a chance against you!"

Isabella's crying abruptly stopped. Beneath her tears, a light began to shine in her eyes.

It was an almost manic gleam.

Yes!

Agnes was right!

As long as she could win over Old Mr. Blackwood and Brianna.

Nicholas would have to marry her!

No matter how many tricks Serena had up her sleeve, she would never be able to shake her position!

The next day.

As soon as Serena came downstairs, she saw Isabella approaching her with a cheerful smile, carrying a fine tray.

On the tray were perfectly golden toast, a fried egg, and a glass of milk.

"Good morning, Serena."

Isabella's smile was warmer than ever, almost sickeningly sweet. "After tasting your cooking last night, I thought I should return the favor! I made this special breakfast just for you. Please, try it!"

Sereed straight past her

without a glance, speaking to a nearby Alfred in a flat voice, "Alfred, could you please prepare my breakfast? The usual."

Alfred immediately complied. "Of course, Miss Serena."

Isabella's smile froze on her face, her fingers tightening on the tray.

She stared at Serena's lazy,

indifferen

heret

her

profile, suppressing rage. She moved in front of Serena again,

ervice tinged with hurt .net"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 139[567 words]

"Serena, do you dislike me that much? You won't even take a single bite of the breakfast I woke up early to make for you? It was a gesture of goodwill....."

As she spoke, her eyes welled up, and she lowered her head. "Are you still angry with me? You won't forgive me?"

While saying this, she made sure to glance out of the corner of her eye at her parents, who were walking over to have breakfast.

Serena sat down at the dining table and raised an eyebrow, her voice flat and indifferent. "Since you already know I can't stand you, stop getting in my face." Her tone was cold, and she made no effort to put on a show for her family.

She was just as direct as ever in expressing her dislike and impatience.

In fact, in front of everyone, Serena continued bluntly, "If you can't take a hint, don't blame me for getting physical."

Isabella's face paled, and her eyes reddened with humiliation. She shot a hurt, aggrieved look at her parents, who were now seated.

She hoped they would finally see Serena's true colors!

Serena dared to threaten her like this right in front of them! Who knew how she bullied her when they weren't looking!

But...

Isabella's hurt and accusations didn't get the reaction she wanted.

Catherine sat down next to Serena and had a servant bring her breakfast, saying with a smile, "Alright, Isabella, we know you worked hard. Serena has her own tastes, so don't force her."

She couldn't believe her mother heard Serena speak to her so rudely and didn't even reprimand her, but instead defended her.

Isabella grew even angrier.

She bit her lower lip, her voice pitiful. "But... there's still the fried egg and the milk. I got up so early to cook this myself..."

"Hah."

Serena scoffed. She raised her eyes and let her gaze fall upon the tray in Isabella's hands.

Her eyes were dark, carrying a piercing gaze that seemed to see right through her. Isabella's heart skipped a beat, and a cold sweat broke out on the back of her neck.

Could it be... could that country bumpkin have found out something?

Just as Isabella's composure started to crumble, Serena shifted her gaze away, her voice so casual it was devoid of emotion. "Since you got up so early to make it yourself, it would be a shame to waste

Why

don't you enjoy it?"

Catherine nodded. "You must be hungry after all that work this morning. Sit down and eat with us."

Isabella's heart dropped. She forced a laugh. "I-I've already eaten. This was for Serena, I..."

In reality, she had been busy since dawn and had been so focused on watching for Serena to wake up that she hadn't eaten anything content .net>

Just as the words left her mouth, her stomach betrayed her with a loud rumble.

The atmosphere instantly turned awkward.

Isabella instinctively covered her stomach, her expression changing as she stammered, trying to explain.

Before she could speak, Serena

stirred the oatmeal that had been

placed before her and, with a casual

flick of her eyes said You do

the

seem very keen on eating breakfast you made yourself do you?"

She emphasized the word "yourself," the smile on her lips deepening. "Or perhaps...

you put something special in it?"

With that, everything was laid out in the open.

Catherine's suspicious gaze immediately shifted to Isabella, her eyes narrowing as if she were assessing something.

Isabella felt a chill run down her spine, her fingers clenching into fists.

How could this country bumpkin be so sharp?

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 140[575 words]

Just by looking at the tray from a distance, she knew she had put something in the breakfast?

And she exposed it right in front of the family.

Was she really planning to drop all pretenses with her in front of everyone?

A country bumpkin was a country bumpkin!

She didn't even know how to keep up appearances!

Isabella was both furious and panicked. Meeting Catherine's increasingly scrutinizing gaze, she quickly forced a laugh.

"Serena, you're so funny. I just wanted you to have the breakfast I made especially for you. But since you don't want it... I'll eat it myself. Next time, I'll make something you like."

Under her parents' watchful eyes, Isabella took a deep breath, swallowed all her emotions, and steeled herself to start eating the breakfast she had personally prepared and personally drugged.

She took one bite after another, as if she were chewing on glass.

Worst of all, she couldn't let her misery show and had to force a smile as she swallowed.

To make matters worse, Serena watched her with an utterly mocking expression and asked with a smile, "I heard you trained under a famous chef, so your cooking should be quite good. You made this yourself, so why does it look like... you're in pain eating it?"

Isabella's eyes almost turned red with anger.

Serena was doing this on purpose!

Purposely watching her make a fool of herself.

Purposely mocking her!

And she deliberately brought up her mentor, Calvin, at this moment just to show off

to the family that she knew Mr. Marshall!

No matter how much resentment boiled inside her, she couldn't let it show. She could only force a smile and speed up her eating.

After Serena leisurely finished her own breakfast, she said goodbye to her family and stood up to leave.

Isabella immediately got up and followed her. "Wait, Serena! I... I'll go with you to the hospital to see Brianna!"

She couldn't let Serena be alone with Nicholas.

Agnes was right. Serena had too many tricks up her sleeve. If given the chance, she would undoubtedly have Nicholas wrapped around her finger!

She couldn't give Serena the opportunity to seduce him!

Serena stopped, a lazy, mocking smile on her face as she looked at Isabella. "After causing such a huge mess yesterday, provoking someone into a heart attack and nearly killing them, you still have the nerve to show your face?"

She scoffed, her tone laced with sarcasm. "Are you stupid, or just that reckless?"

Isabella's face turned deathly pale, her eyes widening in shock.

How... how did Serena know that she was the one who had provoked Brianna?

Did Nicholas tell her?

Did he use the story of her upsetting Brianna to entertain Serena?

Isabella's lips trembled, and her voice shook. "I-I didn't do it on purpose. I

genuinely... want to apologize to Brianna in person."

"Your absence is the best apology you can give Miss Blackwood, understand?" Serena said, showing no mercy.

Her words made Isabella tremble with rage.

This country bumpkin really was something else!

She was trying so hard to get rid of

her, all so she could have a chance to win over Brianna, impress the Blackwood family and get Brianna to accept her as a future

sister-in-law. She wanted to

Ove

completely replace her in the

Blackwood family's eyes!

“You can't make decisions for Brianna,” Isabella said, clenching her fists. “We've always been close. I'm sure she'd be willing to hear me apologize in person!”

"So close you sent her into cardiac arrest?" Serena scoffed, her gaze shifting meaningfully toward Isabella's stomach. Besides are you sure... you're in any condition to go anywhere right now?"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 141[621 words]

Isabella's eyes widened in shock.

She understood in an instant. Serena had known from the very beginning that she had drugged the toast!

Serena had discovered it long ago!

But Serena had deliberately used her parents to force her to eat that breakfast herself!

Serena had set a trap from the start, waiting for Isabella to walk right into it!

That trick was just too vicious!

Serena knew what Isabella was thinking just by looking at her expression.

It was clear that Isabella didn't think this was her fault at all.

She had put a powerful laxative in both the toast and the fried egg, and had likely increased the dosage, hoping to give Serena diarrhea until she collapsed from dehydration.

With a dose like that, she would be stuck on the toilet for at least three days.

Even getting her stomach pumped at the hospital wouldn't do much good.

Isabella was about to go through hell.

Of course, she had to endure the laxative she'd prepared herself.

Serena lifted her gaze, shot a sideways glance at Isabella, and curved her lips into a smirk. Without another word, she turned and walked away.

"You..."

Isabella's vision swam with rage. She lunged forward, wanting to stop Serena from seeing Nicholas Blackwood.

But she had barely taken a single step.

A churning, agonizing pain suddenly ripped through her.

Her insides felt like they were being twisted into knots, and the pain drained all the color from her face.

A powerful sensation rushed downwards...

Isabella immediately clutched her stomach and clamped her legs together.

"Isabella," Catherine said with a frown after Serena had left. "What did Serena mean just now? What was that about you provoking Brianna into having an attack? Are you responsible for Brianna's heart condition?"

Isabella's face was grim, sweat beading on her forehead from the pain. She stammered, trying to explain, "No, no... Mom, it was a misunderstanding..."

Before she could finish her sentence, she couldn't hold it in any longer. In that moment, she cast aside all her poise and elegance as a high-society lady.

She bolted, stumbling towards the bathroom.

Soon, a series of blood-curdling screams echoed from within.

She had finally begun to thoroughly "enjoy" the extra-strength laxative she had so carefully prepared for Serena.

She was trapped in a living hell, an agony worse than death!

Starlight Royal Medical Center.

Serena and Nicholas arrived at Brianna's hospital room.

They pushed the door open and went inside.

Nathan was sitting by the bedside, cutting freshly peeled apple slices for the young girl in the bed.

Serena's gaze fell on the hospital bed.

A sweet and lovely-looking girl was propped up against the headboard, idly poking at the apple with a toothpick, her long lashes drooping. She seemed listless.

Serena knew that after a genet

But judging by her complexion,

recovery and taking the

heart stabilizing pill she had given her, the girl had made a full recovery.

Her current lack of energy was probably just boredom from being cooped up in the hospital for too long.

Upon hearing the noise, the girl's head snapped up. When she saw Serena, her bright, clear eyes lit up instantly. "Serena!"

She excitedly threw off the covers, about to get out of bed. "Serena, you really came!"

"Whoa, whoa, whoa! Easy there, you little menace, don't move! You've got all these tubes hooked up to you. If one of them comes loose you'll be stuck in here even longer!" Nathan* quickly put down the fruit knife and held the girl down.

The girl pushed at him forcefully. "What's there to be afraid of when Serena is here?!"

Nathan retorted, "Miss Lancaster can't pull you back from death's door every single time! Just stay put, if only to make things easier for her!"

The girl instantly quieted down.

She ignored Nathan and, blinking her sparkling eyes gave Serena a sweet smile. "Serena, I got to introduce myself! I'm Brianna. Thank you for saving my neck, again and again!"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 142[543 words]

The young girl's sweet, delicate face was filled with a pure, bright smile.

Her sparkling eyes made even Serena's expression soften.

From the first moment Serena saw her, she could feel a vibrant life force emanating from the girl.

It was a vitality that even a long-term illness couldn't extinguish.

She actually had a soft spot for sweet, bubbly girls like this.

Serena watched as the girl, now obediently held in place by Nathan, beamed at her. She walked over slowly. "She's fine now. You can remove all this equipment. We can start the discharge process soon."

Nathan's eyes widened. "But Dr. Beverly said that even if all her vitals are normal, she needs to be observed for a few days, just in case..."

"Oh, come on! If Serena says it's fine, then it's definitely fine!" Hearing Serena's words, Brianna acted as if she'd been granted a pardon and instantly perked up.

She pushed Nathan's hands away, her face alight with excitement. "See? Serena is the best! She's the most super-duper, amazingly awesome, best-in-the-universe, mega-cool, genius doctor ever!"

Nathan was speechless.

He glanced at Brianna, then at Nicholas.

Only after seeing Nicholas nod did he release his hold on Brianna. "Alright, alright, your Serena is the greatest. But you stay right there for now. I'll get Dr. Beverly to come take a look and remove these tubes."

Freedom was just around the corner, so Brianna was much more cooperative now. After lying back down, she waved at Serena. "Serena, come sit over here!"

Her vibrant energy was infectious.

Serena walked over and sat on the edge of the bed.

Brianna immediately grabbed her hand and leaned in, her sparkling eyes scanning Serena from top to bottom.

The girl's scrutiny wasn't bothersome in the least.

Her face was filled with pure

admiration, and she even swallowed

audibly Serena, you're just like my

just like my

brother said, you're the most

beautiful girl in the world!"

She opened her arms and gave Serena a big hug. "I love pretty big sisters the most!

Just like my brother loves you the most!"

Serena's long, dark lashes fluttered.

Nicholas... told his sister she was the most beautiful girl in the world?

What kind of things had he been telling his sister?

Serena glanced over at Nicholas.

The man stood with one hand in his pocket, his handsome, almost ethereal face, typically cool and aloof, now graced with a clear smile.

Sensing Serena's gaze, he curved his thin lips, and a gentle, captivating ripple danced in his enchanting eyes.

He seemed to be responding with unapologetic conviction—*To me, you are indeed the most beautiful girl in the world.*

That intense, unwavering gaze made Serena's lashes flutter once more.

She pressed her lips together, averted her eyes, and turned back to Brianna.

"Congratulations on your discharge. This is a celebratory gift for you."

Serena pulled a small, exquisitely wrapped box from her canvas bag and handed it to Brianna.

Though the box was only

palm-sized, Brianna held it with both hands her eyes shining. "Didn't you already give me a gift, Serena? You gave me a whole bottle of those priceless heart-stabilizing pills!"

Serena replied, "Compared to the gift Mr. Blackwood gave my family last night, those pills are nothing."

"That's different!" Brianna's eyes

widened, and she put on a serious face to rebut her. "What my brother sent yesterday was the price he has

pay to become a son-in-law to the Lancaster family!" 'FindNovel.net

A son-in-law... to the Lancaster family?

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 143[556 words]

Brianna seemed completely unaware of how shocking her words were.

She even patted Serena's shoulder. "Besides, that's all part of my brother's dowry. Don't be shy about it, Serena!"

Serena didn't know what to say.

Dowry?

Didn't the girl think that word was a bit inappropriate to use for her brother?

It made it sound like... Nicholas was marrying into the Lancaster family.

What on earth had Nicholas been telling his sister?

Serena turned her head and shot a sideways glare at Nicholas.

But the man seemed oblivious to the hostility in her eyes. He simply curved his thin lips into a smile that was both heart-melting and teasing.

He looked for all the world like a sly fox.

He seemed to completely agree with everything Brianna had said.

Serena was speechless.

Ever since their childhood engagement had come out into the open, and she had admitted that his face was indeed enough to tempt her, the man had become more and more audacious.

Brianna was a clever girl and knew when to stop. Pushing it too far would only backfire.

She flashed a brilliant smile and looked down at the delicate little box she held in both hands, her eyes sparkling. "Can I open it now?"

Serena glanced at Nicholas again. "It's probably better if you don't right now."

Brianna's eyes widened. They darted around for a moment before she quickly tucked the box into her shirt. "Okay, I won't open it! I'll look at it in secret later!"

Serena chatted with her for a while longer, until a nurse came in with Dr. Beverly's instructions: Brianna needed one more detailed check-up before she could be officially discharged.

The nurse was going to wheel Brianna for the tests, and Nicholas, as a family member, had to accompany her.

"Serena, you have to wait for me!" the young girl said from her wheelchair, reaching a hand out to Serena in a classic, dramatic scene of farewell from a soap opera. "I'll be quick, you can't sneak away, okay?"

Her playful antics made Serena's expression soften. "Okay, I'll wait for you."

Brianna reluctantly went off for her tests.

Serena sat in the waiting area outside the room.

She took out her phone to handle some urgent matters.

Just then, the sound of rushed footsteps echoed from down the hall.

"Serena!"

A trembling voice called out.

A man stood before Serena, clutching a thick stack of medical records, his eyes locked on her.

His somewhat haggard face was a canvas of complex emotions.

het

He was pale, with dark circles under his eyes. His hair wasn't as meticulously styled as usual, completely lacking the confident swagger of the genius doctor, the youngest department head at

Starlight Royal Medical Center.

When his eyes met Serena's, they were filled with pain, confusion, and a hint of disbelief.

Serena frowned, her tone impatient. "Why is it you again?"

Derek, the second-born failure of the Wynn family.

The girl's gaze stung Derek's heart. He clutched the files so tightly they rustled. "Serena... these, these results..."

His Adam's apple bobbed, and his voice trembled. "Yesterday... yesterday Miss Blackwood had a heart attack, and the hospital issued a critical condition notice. But but then you came, and all of her vitals returned to normal. She's even being discharged today!"
Contént

"It was you... you did this, didn't you?"

He had heard the professors, usually so arrogant, speak of Serena with nothing but awe in their eyes.

One after another, they praised her exquisite technique... something that could completely overturn everything they knew!

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 144[556 words]

Their words of praise fell on Derek's ears like a series of slaps across his face, mocking his own ignorance.

Even after the great Harold Whitman had personally acknowledged Serena's extraordinary talent, it was nothing compared to the shock of witnessing her astounding medical skills with his own eyes, time and again.

Serena's expression was cold. Seeing Derek's almost crazed and twisted face, a flicker of mockery crossed her eyes.

She lowered her gaze, returning her focus to her phone screen.

She had no intention of acknowledging him.

"Serena!" Accustomed to Serena's past devotion, her current indifference made the threads of Derek's sanity begin to snap, one by one.

His eyes were bloodshot, and a hysterical accusation tore from his throat. "Say something! If you had such incredible medical skills, why didn't you ever say anything when you were with the Wynn family? If I didn't believe you the first time, you could have told me a second time! If I didn't believe you twice, you could have told me a third! You kept it hidden, watching me show off my trivial accomplishments in front of you like an idiot, watching me doubt you like a fool. You must have been so proud of yourself, right?!"

Derek had always been proud.

And Serena was someone he had never taken seriously, a country girl he'd never given a second thought.

But now, the medical expertise he took so much pride in had been utterly crushed by Serena, leaving nothing but dust.

How could he possibly accept that?!

"Mr. Wynn, do you have any right to question me?" Serena sneered, lifting her eyes.

Her gaze was devoid of any emotion, except for a hint of biting sarcasm.

Her cold stare made Derek's heart tremble, and the towering rage that had consumed him moments ago suddenly deflated.

When he spoke again, his voice carried a note of grievance and accusation he himself didn't recognize. "It was you... you didn't say anything! If you had told me sooner, if you had shown me your true abilities, you wouldn't have had such a... such a... hard time at the Wynn family all these years..."

He wanted to say that Serena wouldn't have had such a miserable life with the Wynns.

But the word "miserable" caught in his throat.

His expression grew even more complicated as he looked at her.

That's right...

Serena's life with the Wynn family for the past four years could only be described as miserable.

Only now, looking back, did he realize just how cruel his coldness and disdain toward her had been.

Before Hailey, before anyone knew Serena wasn't of Wynn blood, she should have been his biological sister.

Why couldn't he have given her a chance to get close to him?

When Serena was first brought back from the countryside, she had been so cautious, so full of earnest emotion, wanting to connect with him wanting to earn her older

emotion was tin cameroide

brother's attention.

Why... why did he have to speak to such a young girl with such harsh, humiliating words, forcing her to stay away?

And then he just stood by and

watched as she endured constant

psychological manipulation and torment in that house

Now, seeing the indifferent look in her eyes, and comparing it to

way she used to look at him hét

so

cautiously always smiling with such warmth and enthusiasm...

The stark contrast left Derek's chest aching with a suffocating pain.

A tide of guilt threatened to drown him, making it hard to breathe.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 145[603 words]

"Hah."

Seeing the guilt-ridden expression on Derek's face, Serena couldn't help but let out a short, sharp laugh.

It was a sound filled with cold mockery and undisguised disgust.

"Mr. Wynn, do you have any idea how... disgusting you look right now? It's enough to make a person sick."

Derek's eyes widened, his face turning deathly pale as if he'd been struck by lightning.

Those words...

He was all too familiar with them.

Because he had once said them himself.

He was the one who, with an air of condescending superiority, had told Serena, "Your groveling act is so disgusting it makes me want to throw up."

That was how he had once treated her.

Now, the same words were being thrown back at him.

They stabbed into his heart, causing an unbearable, wrenching pain.

"Serena... I know my attitude in the past hurt you, but... but you should have told me sooner. If I had known about your abilities, I would have protected you," Derek said, his fists clenched, a pleading tone creeping into his voice.

Serena truly laughed this time.

For the past four years, she had dedicated herself to the Wynn family, trying with all her might to please every single one of them.

She had shattered all her pride, practically begging for their so-called familial affection.

And they had treated her with nothing but contempt.

Their disgust for her seemed innate.

Now that she no longer cared for their affection, no longer needed it, they were shamelessly crawling back to her.

It was pathetic, wasn't it?

"Even now, you're still using excuses to cover up your failures as a brother."

Serena's sneer was laced with contempt. "Derek, looking at your face right now, I truly feel like my four years of devotion to the Wynn family were a colossal joke."

"I yearned for your affection, poured my heart and soul out for you like a fool, giving you everything I had. All I got in return was your scorn and insults."

"And now, you have the audacity to turn around and question me? To ask why didn't try harder to prove myself to you time and again? Why should I have to prove myself to a group of people who looked down on me from the very beginning?"

Serena's expression grew colder, and her gaze, fixed on Derek, became filled with impatience and revulsion. "Selfishness is carved into the very bones of everyone in the Wynn family. You only ever care about your own feelings, your own interests. You don't understand what real family is, and you don't deserve it."

"I have already severed all ties with the Wynn family. I'd appreciate it if the great Dr. Wynn would stop bothering me in the future."

With that, she couldn't be bothered to look at him for another second. She turned away in disgust and started walking toward the area where Brianna was having her tests.

"Wait!"

Derek had finally managed to find Serena; how could he let her leave so easily?

His face was pale, but his eyes were blazing red.

He couldn't accept that Serena's medical skills surpassed his own.

He couldn't accept that she dared to treat him with such an attitude.

Every word she spoke was like a needle, piercing him with excruciating pain.

He reached out to grab Serena's arm again. "What do you mean, severed ties? I don't acknowledge it! As long as I don't acknowledge it, you will always be my sister, Derek's sister"

"I didn't say you could go! How dare you walk away?!"

Serena's brow furrowed sharply, her eyes turning to ice.

She was just about to twist Derek's outstretched arm and slam him to the ground.

"Mr. Wynn, what do you think you're doing?!"

A clear voice suddenly cut in.

A handsome young man in a white coat was striding toward them.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 146[596 words]

The wind lifted the man's white lab coat.

He rushed over, blocked Derek's hand, and shielded Serena behind him, his expression stern as he faced Derek. "This is a hospital, Mr. Wynn. Look at yourself! What do you think you're doing?"

Upon seeing the man's face, Derek's expression softened slightly. "Dr. Dawson..."

The man before him was Eric Dawson, the son of the director of Starlight Royal Medical Center. He came from a long line of doctors and was a renowned genius physician in his own right.

"That's enough. You don't need to say another word." Eric raised a hand to stop Derek from rambling. He turned to the two security guards he had summoned. "Mr. Wynn seems to be in an unstable state. Please escort him out. Also, inform HR to place Mr. Wynn on extended leave. He can return to work once he has recovered and his mental state is back to normal."

His words were delivered with perfect, methodical composure.

No one could accuse him of having a personal agenda; in fact, they would have to praise him for handling the situation perfectly.

He had the same air of authority as his father, the director.

Given who he was, even though Derek was a famously brilliant department head, the security guards dutifully moved forward and flanked him.

"Let go of me! Dr. Dawson, I need to talk to my sister. On what grounds are you—" Derek's face was livid. He struggled, casting a pleading look at Serena.

If Serena spoke up, Eric, even as the director's son, couldn't forcibly remove him. However, Serena didn't even bother to glance his way.

"On the grounds that you're acting like you're here to cause a scene!" Eric said coldly, without a hint of politeness. "Get him out of here now!"

After Derek was dragged away by security.

Eric's expression completely changed. He turned to Serena with a fawning smile. "Boss! I'm so sorry, I'm late! I can't believe I let that moron Derek bother you."

At the mention of Derek, Eric scoffed. "That idiot, he's a complete moron! Do you really need to prove your skills to him? Who does he think he is?"

"He was so arrogant and smug when the Wynn family kicked you out! And now he regrets it?"

"Hah! It's too late for regrets! If you ask me, all that medical school rotted his brain. He's blind and clueless, and he deserves it!"

"Anyway, boss, let's not let that jerk ruin our mood!"

After his tirade, Eric's expression shifted again. His handsome face

Cinto a huge, worshipful grin

as he looked at Serena his eyes sparkling

"I read Miss Blackwood's chart! Ahhh, it's such a shame! I've been overseas at some stupid summit these past few days so didn't get to witness your miraculous medical skills in person!" Eric sounded genuinely disappointed.

He rambled on excitedly, but it wasn't annoying.

Serena's expression softened slightly. "It's no great loss. There will be other opportunities."

Around the corner of the hallway.

Nicholas and Nathan were just returning after completing the discharge paperwork.

As they rounded the bend, they saw Serena standing at the door of the hospital room, talking to a handsome young doctor in a white lab coat.

The two seemed to be getting along wonderfully, the atmosphere between them incredibly friendly.

Nicholas's steps faltered slightly, his sharp, captivating eyes narrowing.

The air around him visibly chilled.

oked

Nathan stroked his chin, a grin on his face as he reveled in the drama. "Well, well, Nicholas, you've got some high-quality competition! The young master of the Dawson family, a genius doctor from a medical dynasty... Tsk, tsk. With a profession like that, he and Miss Lancaster must have endless things to talk about."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 147[563 words]

The already cold atmosphere around Nicholas instantly plummeted further.

Nathan shivered, but he couldn't keep his mouth shut. He had to keep teasing. "Oh, and look at the way Dr. Dawson is looking at Miss Lancaster... Now that's what I call pure admiration."

Nicholas shot a sideways glance at Nathan.

The chill in his eyes was practically overflowing.

Nathan immediately mimed zipping his lips. He would shut up and enjoy the show. Nicholas strode forward, his long, straight legs covering the distance in an instant.

His tall, imposing figure carried an intense, oppressive aura as he forcefully inserted himself between the two.

He didn't say a word.

He just stood there.

Eric, who had been chattering away, suddenly felt a chill run down his spine and couldn't help but shiver.

He looked up and met the man's cold, commanding gaze.

He jumped, instinctively shrinking back. "Mr... Mr. Blackwood..."

Nicholas only gave him a brief glance before turning to Serena. "Brianna is about done with her check-up. She's been asking for you, worried you might have left." His voice was lazy, but it was laced with ice.

"Ahem..."

Eric swallowed hard, his eyes darting between Serena and Nicholas.

Cold sweat poured down his back.

"Uh, I just remembered, I have an important meeting about a critical case. Boss, Mr. Blackwood, I've gotta run!"

Eric spoke at lightning speed. Without waiting for Serena's reply, he turned and fled.

Even though Mr. Blackwood wasn't looking at him, his presence was just too terrifying.

He knew when to make himself scarce.

Eric beat a hasty retreat.

Serena raised an eyebrow and looked up at Nicholas.

The man's eyes were dark, the slight narrowing at the corners casting a layer of icy frost over his already devilishly handsome face.

She asked, "Why did you scare him?"

The moment Eric was gone, the man's entire aura changed, the coldness vanishing from his eyes.

He lifted his thin lips into a smile, open and unapologetic. "I was jealous."

That smile was wickedly alluring, both dangerous and seductive, and it seemed almost predatory under the lights.

It was dazzling.

Serena's heart gave a barely perceptible flutter.

She averted her gaze, avoiding the man's scorching stare. "What's there to be jealous about?"

With that, she started walking toward the examination room.

Her pace, however, was noticeably faster than usual.

Nicholas watched her retreating back, his captivating, almond-shaped eyes filled with depth. A faint, sexy smile played on his lips.

His soft laugh was lazy and sensual.

Then, he started after her, his pace unhurried.

Brianna's test results were good, and she was cleared for discharge that afternoon.

Brianna was so excited she hugged Serena tightly, nuzzling her head into Serena's embrace. "Oh, thank goodness you

Serena Came to see net

a Otherwise

have

would ha

been stuck in the hospital forso much longer!"

The soft, fragrant feel of her fluffy hair made Serena's crimson lips

curve into a smile. She gently patted Brianna's head. "Congratulations getting out."

Nicholas, holding the discharge papers, watched the two girls hugging, his sharp eyes deepening.

His gaze finally settled on the hand Serena had placed on Brianna's head.

His stare was so intense that Serena found it impossible to ignore.

She lifted her clear, cool eyes. "You're not going to be jealous of your own sister, are you?"

When this man got jealous, he really spared no one.

Serena took Brianna's wrist and tilted her head. "Come on, I'm taking you somewhere."

Brianna's eyes lit up instantly, and she nodded excitedly.

Serena looked up at Nicholas again. "If you have things

go do them. I'll make suhet

- Md again. "If you have things

gets home safely tonight.

your

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 148[559 words]

Nicholas, who had been about to say he could go with them, was left speechless.

Looking at the girl's cool, expressionless face, he swallowed the words he was about to say.

In the end, he just managed a soft, "Okay."

But as he turned away, his aloof, devilishly handsome face was immediately shrouded in an icy, unapproachable aura.

He looked absolutely furious.

Nathan could barely hold back his laughter.

He never thought he'd live to see the day the great Nicholas would be so thoroughly thwarted.

First, there was Eric.

And now, his own sister!

The crucial point was... compared to Nicholas, Miss Lancaster clearly cared more about Brianna!

Everyone really did have their match!

In front of Miss Lancaster, even Nicholas Blackwood could only sulk in silence.

He could barely contain his glee.

It was hilarious!

Swish-

A death glare shot his way.

The temperature around Nathan dropped abruptly.

The man, unwilling to take his frustration out on the young woman, turned his sinister gaze on him instead.

Nathan immediately wiped the smile off his face and snapped to attention, standing ramrod straight, not daring to make a sound.

The man shoved one hand in his pocket and started walking.

Nathan hurried to keep up. He saw that the man's flawless profile was tense, his jaw clenched, and his sharp, captivating eyes were radiating a bone-deep chill.

He swallowed hard. Just then, his gaze happened to catch sight of Serena and Brianna getting into an outrageously flashy, neon-blue supercar at the hospital entrance.

His eyes practically bulged out of his head.

In all of Vaelion City, only one person drove a supercar that was so obnoxiously flashy!

And that owner was a man!

Nicholas, whose jealousy spared no one, would surely...

Sure enough...

Nicholas, who was already radiating a dark aura, suddenly narrowed his deep eyes. The icy, shill

was practically pourin

As a good friend, and in the interest of saving his own skin, Nathan decided to play the ultimate wingman. He pulled out his phone, dialing a number as he spoke. You know, it's been a while since thung out with the youngest Foster son. Since we have the time, why don't we give Brian a call and meet up?"

God knew that while they were in the same circle, he ran with Nicholas and was barely acquainted with that spoiled Foster heir.

But that didn't matter. From this moment on, Brian Foster was his best friend.

As long as he could find out where Miss Lancaster was taking Brianna, anyone could be his best friend.

While on the phone asking about Brian's schedule for the day, he secretly glanced at Nicholas.

Just as he expected, Nicholas was looking at him with a raised eyebrow.

The harshness in his eyes had clearly subsided.

He had made the right move.

He grinned to himself, pleased with his own cleverness.

Serena and Brianna got into Brian's sports car.

Brianna's wide, innocent eyes darted between Brian and the ostentatious car, her face a mask of excitement. "Serena, where are we going?"

Serena looked at her. "To see your gift."

Brianna blinked, then carefully pulled the small, exquisite box Serena had given her from her bag.

She held it with both hands, treasuring it. "Isn't this my gift from you?"

"Go on, open it," Serena said, nodding her chin toward the box.

Brianna had been dying to see what Serena had given her so she could prepare a gift in return, but Serena

ha

advised her not to open it first.

So, she had obediently waited.

Now, the mystery would finally be solved!

She excitedly opened the box...

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 149[601 words]

Inside the box lay a uniquely cool-looking black metal key.

It was trimmed with gold, which shimmered brightly.

Brianna immediately spotted a ghost emblem engraved on it.

Her eyes lit up, and she nearly jumped out of her seat with excitement.

"Is... is this... the key to the Ghost?!"

Seeing the young woman's face flush with excitement as she lifted the key, looking as if she was about to cry from joy, Serena smiled and nodded.

Brianna stammered, "For... for me?!"

Serena laughed. "It's your gift. Who else would it be for?"

"Ahhhhh!" Brianna shrieked with excitement, nearly loud enough to blow the roof off the car. "Serena, I love you so much, I love you so much! You're my favorite person in the whole world!"

Even Brian, who was known for being a chatterbox, winced at the piercing scream.

He glanced in the rearview mirror at the ecstatic Brianna in the back seat. "Serena, so you were busy all night just to get her a gift? Why don't I get one? I want one, I want one!"

"I'll make it up to you next time," Serena said.

That seemed to satisfy Brian, but he still shot a jealous look at Brianna in the mirror.

Serena was already surrounded by a whole crowd of people. He had fought hard to break through and become her most loyal follower.

And now, out of nowhere... this Brianna had appeared!

And Serena was so good to her! You could almost describe it as doting.

He was not happy.

Brian didn't dare show his jealousy openly, so he channeled it into driving faster, hoping to scare the supposedly delicate young lady of the Blackwood family, who was rarely seen in their social circles.

But the sweet, seemingly fragile girl was completely focused on the key in her hands.

Or maybe, she just wasn't afraid of high speeds at all.

Brian was frustrated.

Brianna held the key to her lips, planting several kisses on it before pressing it to her cheek like a precious treasure, rubbing it gently with a look of pure bliss. "Serena, how did you know I love motorcycles? This is the best best, best gift I have ever received in my life!"

"Serena, thank you!"

The Ghost!

That was the Ghost!

It was the beloved motorcycle of Skye, the world-class racer who had once represented Elyndor, defeating countless countries to win the international championship!

That bike had accompanied Skye through numerous international competitions, always victorious, always unbeatable.

In the racing world, it was practically considered a legend.

But ever since Skye retired from the circuit four years ago, the Ghost had vanished along with her.

She never thought...

The Ghost was in Serena's possession!

Brianna was so excited she felt like she was going crazy.

"I watched the footage from Alfred's dashcam," Serena said, leaning back lazily against the seat and turning to look at her. "The reason you got into that accident was because of street racing. While Alfred isn't blameless, most of the fault lies with you."

Her eyes were cool and clear, and when she stared at someone, she had a chilling sense of seriousness.

Brianna's excited expression vanished, and she lowered her head guiltily. "I'm sorry..."

Serena said, "You don't owe me an apology. You owe it to yourself, and to the people who worry about you."

Brianna's head sank even lower.

She looked absolutely pitiful.

"You're not eighteen yet, are you?" Serena reached out and tapped the key Brianna was holding with a slender white finger. "The Ghost is yours. But until you turn eighteen, you can look, but you can't touch."

Brianna's head snapped up, her wide, clear eyes staring. "Serena, I turn eighteen in

a month! And I already have a professional license from when I was abroad. I'm a licensed rider!"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 150[539 words]

As she spoke, she pulled out her phone and showed Serena her digital license. "Last time... it was really an accident. I promise, from now on, I will strictly follow all traffic rules. I'll be careful, so, so careful!"

Serena glanced at Brianna's license. It was indeed legitimate.

She said, "But you're in Elyndor now. Since you're turning eighteen in a month, you can wait a month. Once you've fully recovered, you can take the Ghost to a proper track to ride it."

Brianna's eyes lit up, and she threw her arms around Serena. "Okay! Of course! I'll do whatever you say, Serena!"

As they were talking, Brian pulled the car into a private garage.

The garage was dimly lit, with only a few lights on along the sides, making it hard to see anything but the vague outlines of numerous cars.

Serena led Brianna out of the car.

Brian flicked on the headlights, illuminating a massive machine parked in front of them a silver and black heavy motorcycle.

Under the light, every line of the expertly modified bike was perfectly smooth, gleaming with a sharp light.

But the most eye-catching feature was the ghost emblem on its side.

"The G-Ghost! It's really the Ghost!"

Motorcycles had been Brianna's passion since she was a little girl.

Even her heart condition couldn't stop her love for them.

Elyndor's number one female racer, Skye, had been her greatest idol.

She would recognize Skye's beloved Ghost anywhere.

And this top-tier, modified racing bike before her was it.

Brianna practically threw herself at the motorcycle. Clutching the key tightly, she circled it again and again.

She kept reaching out to touch the frame, only to pull her hand back as if afraid she might damage it.

Her eyes were red with excitement and her voice choked up. "It's so cool... The Ghost is so cool! I never thought I'd ever get to see it this. close in person.

She had followed in Skye's footsteps for years, watching every single one of her races.

Such a legendary figure.

Such a wonderful, powerful person.

She had never wanted to use her status to tarnish Skye's name in any way.

So, even as the young lady of the Blackwood family, she had been just like any other fan, quietly idolizing her hero from a distance.

This was the first time she had seen the Ghost up close.

The first time she had seen her dream bike.

"Not just see it. Now... it's yours." Serena could see the little girl's love for the Ghost or rather, for the once internationally famous female racer, Skye.

It was a genuine, powerful emotion.

Serena felt her own heart fill with a warm feeling.

"Coincidentally, Brian is hosting something tonight. The atmosphere is pretty good. I'll take you to experience it" She smiled and held out her hand to Brianna: "Give me the key. You can't ride it yourself, but... I can give you a taste of the Ghost."

Brianna's red-rimmed eyes shone brightly in the dim garage. "A r-race track?" Serena nodded. "Mhm."

Brianna swallowed hard, so nervous she felt she might explode. "I... I can ride the Ghost?"

Serena raised an eyebrow. "I told you, it's your gift. Don't you want it?"

"Yes! Yes! Yes!" Brianna shouted the word three times, her voice so loud it echoed through the entire garage.

She immediately threw herself at Serena. "Take me, Serena! Take me!"