

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 251[563 words]

Patrick figured that after all his years moving in Vaelion City's high society, he'd earned some respect. As an elder, he was now personally asking for a favor from the younger generation. Surely, they would show him some courtesy.

But to his surprise...

They were turned away the moment they arrived at the Obsidian Palace.

They weren't even allowed inside.

The lobby manager, thoroughly annoyed, waved his hand dismissively. "How many times do I have to say it? Everyone from the Wynn family has been blacklisted! All properties under the Obsidian Palace banner will refuse you service. Please leave immediately!"

Patrick's expression soured, but he could only force a stiff laugh. "It's just a squabble among the younger generation. How did it escalate to this level?"

As he spoke, he suddenly glanced at Hailey behind him.

Today, Hailey was dressed in a pink and white ladylike suit. Her long, dark hair was lightly curled, cascading down her back, and her delicate, sweet face was exquisitely made up.

She looked pure and charming.

Patrick's eyes lit up. He immediately pulled Hailey forward and pushed her in front of the lobby manager. "Hailey, hurry and apologize to the manager. He is a magnanimous man; he'll surely forgive your past immaturity."

Shoved so suddenly, Hailey nearly lost her balance in her slender high heels and almost fell into the manager's arms.

Hailey looked at the man before her in his thirties or forties, pot-bellied and greasy —and felt a wave of disgust.

The lobby manager could clearly see her reaction and found the whole family ridiculous.

What kind of person did they take him for?

He sneered, "The blacklisting isn't my decision. Now, get out!"

Marianne's eyes darted around before she took an envelope from her purse and tried to shove it into the manager's hand, her face plastered with a smile. "Sir, if you could just bend the rules for us..."

She hadn't even finished her sentence.

The manager's expression changed instantly. "What do you think you're doing?"

He quickly pulled his hand away as if

he'd touched something filthy and

snapped, "None of that! The

such

Obsidian Palace won't tolerate corruption! Mr. Wynn, Mrs. Wynn, if you don't leave now, don't blame me for having you thrown out. It will only be more humiliating for you!"

A security guard nearby actually unfurled a banner.

When Patrick saw it, his vision went dark.

Emblazoned on the banner was a line of text: *The Wynn Family and Dogs Not Allowed Inside*.

Wasn't this just blatant humiliation?

Marianne's face instantly went cold. "What is the meaning of this? Do you know who we are? You arrogant pricks, you..."

"Enough!" Patrick's face was ashen. He shot a dark glare at the banner, the veins on his forehead throbbing with anger.

Still, he gritted his teeth, suppressing the overwhelming sense of humiliation and fury.

The Obsidian Palace was the

Pech of land was

premier venue in a place like Vaelion-

City where every

gold. Its backing had to be immense.

Rumor had it...

...the Obsidian Palace was a joint venture established by the heirs of Vaelion City's top elite families.

The Wynn family was already teetering on the brink of bankruptcy; they couldn't afford to offend such powerful people.

Patrick clenched his fists,

swallowing his anger, and tried a conciliatory tone. "Mr. Redfern, please, cut us some slack... Once we clear up this misunderstanding with the Obsidian Palace, the Wynn family will remember your kindness and reward you handsomely."

Just then.

An elevator in the lobby chimed. The doors slid open, and a group of people walked out...

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Leading the group was a middle-aged man in a sharp suit, exuding a composed and imposing aura.

Beside him was a tall, stern-faced young man, whose usually severe eyes were now crinkled in a rare, polite smile. He was slightly inclined toward the middle-aged man, saying, "Well then, I hope we have a successful partnership, Mr. Taylor."

"For the Wynn Group, the opportunity you've given us is a lifeline. We will treasure it and give it our all, so as not to disappoint your trust in us."

Mr. Taylor smiled with satisfaction, his tone tinged with a condescending air of charity. "Mr. Wynn, I'm only giving the Wynn Group this chance because of your past capabilities and reputation. I hope... you won't let me down."

"Of course, of course..." The young man... was none other than the Wynn family's eldest son, Benedict Wynn.

Bitterness filled his heart, but he could only force a smile.

There was a time when others would bow and scrape before him, begging for his cooperation.

Now, it was his turn... to humble himself.

Only he knew the depth of the frustration coiling in his gut.

But for the sake of the Wynn family.

He had no choice but to swallow his pride.

Mr. Taylor raised a hand and patted Benedict's shoulder. "Young man, work hard. The Wynn family is lucky to have you..."

Before he could finish, a sharp, piercing voice cut through their conversation.

"You people at the Obsidian Palace are just bullying your customers! Is there no decency left?!"

The group's attention was drawn to the source of the noise. They saw a middle- aged woman in a form-fitting dress being shoved by security guards.

Her hair was a mess, and she was shouting profanities.

She looked... like a madwoman.

Mr. Taylor frowned in disgust. "How can a place like the Obsidian Palace have such a classless shrew? I wonder which family she belongs to. What an absolute embarrassment."

"Yes, yes, how could this place..." Benedict quickly agreed, looking over toward the commotion.

When his gaze landed on the screaming woman, the color drained from his face. An outsider might not have recognized her.

But he did, in an instant. The disheveled woman screaming with a menacing look on her face was his mother, Marianne!

Benedict's face turned livid.

Why was his mother here at the Obsidian Palace, getting into a shoving match with the security guards?

Had she no shame?! If Mr. Taylor were to recognize her...

Benedict quickly put on a smile and raised a hand, trying to guide Mr. Taylor away from the scene.

But in the next second.

A guard gave Marianne a hard shove.

She stumbled and fell to the ground.

Her disheveled hair parted, revealing

her exquisitely made-up yet horribly contorted face.

"Mom!"

"Honey!"

Patrick and Logan rushed forward to help her up.

And as they did, the faces of the Wynns were revealed for all to see.

Mr. Taylor, of course, recognized Patrick at once.

He looked astonished, as if he couldn't believe his eyes, and stared at the Wynns for a long moment.

Then he turned back to Benedict, his

eyes

with amusement and

unc mocking. "The Wynn family's upbringing is certainly unique."

Benedict was mortified.

When had he ever been so humiliated?

He was about to offer some sort of explanation.

Nearby, Hailey, who was so ashamed she wished the ground would swallow her whole, suddenly spotted Benedict.

As if seeing her savior, her eyes lit up, and she called out to him, "Benedict! You're

at the Obsidian Palace, too?!"

Hearing Hailey's cry.

Patrick and Marianne immediately looked over.

When they saw Benedict, they completely ignored his dark, livid expression. Their eyes lit up as they shouted at the lobby manager, "See that? That's my son! He's a premium member of the Obsidian Palace, a valued guest! You still dare to stop us?"

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The lobby manager glanced at Benedict.

That one look made Benedict's heart sink, and a sense of foreboding washed over him.

Sure enough, the manager picked up his walkie-talkie and said emotionlessly, "Immediately revoke the membership of the Wynn family's eldest son, Benedict. Add the entire Wynn family and all their associates to the Obsidian Palace's blacklist. Entry is forbidden."

He put down the walkie-talkie and looked at Benedict. "I'm sorry, Mr. Wynn. Effective immediately, you are no longer a member of the Obsidian Palace. Please leave the premises at once."

Benedict was beyond embarrassed and livid.

He had been about to leave with Mr. Taylor anyway.

But leaving on his own terms and being 'asked' to leave by the staff were two completely different things!

He shot his family a resentful glare.

"Mr. Wynn..."

Mr. Taylor's brow deeply furrowed as he watched the chaotic, farcical scene unfold.

He let out a soft scoff, his gaze sweeping over the Wynn family. "It seems your company is quite busy with internal affairs. I'll need to reconsider our partnership."

With that, he turned and walked toward his car without a backward glance, his entourage following him.

"Mr. Taylor! Mr. Taylor!" Benedict's face fell. He hurried after him. "Please, let me explain! The Wynn Group isn't like this at all! Mr. Taylor, just give me a chance to explain, please, Mr. Taylor..."

But the man gave him no such chance.

He got into his car, and it sped away.

Benedict was left standing in a cloud of exhaust fumes, his face a mask of despair and humiliation.

He stood frozen, his sharp, icy eyes bloodshot as he stared after the departing car. It felt as though all the blood in his body had rushed to his head.

He, the great heir to the Wynn family, one of the most outstanding talents of Vaelion City's younger generation, had always been proud.

But just now, he had groveled before a man like Mr. Taylor, someone he once looked down on, exhausting every effort just to secure this deal.

And just like that... it was all ruined!

"Benedict..." Hailey cautiously approached, reaching out to pat Benedict's shoulder.

He spun around abruptly, his

suppressed roar tinged with the fury of someone on the verge of collapse. "What is wrong with you people? This was an opportunity had to swallow my pride to get! If you can't help, can you at least not drag me down?"

Hailey flinched and took a step back, her face pale with fear, tears instantly welling in her eyes.

Seeing her precious daughter cry, Marianne immediately shielded her. "You couldn't seal the deal yourself, so why are you taking it out on Hailey?"

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Her words made Benedict laugh with rage. "I couldn't seal it? Mom, do you have any idea how close I was to getting that deal with Mr. Taylor? That was the Wynn family's last hope for a comeback, our last lifeline, do you understand? But because of you... because you were here throwing a tantrum like some classless hooligan, he thought the entire Wynn Group was full of unreasonable people like you. That's what ruined it!"

"If I had landed that deal, I could have pulled the Wynn family through this crisis. But now... it's all ruined Ruined! Are you happy now? We might as well declare bankruptcy and go live undecade bridge!"

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Chapter 254[626 words]

It was the first time her son had ever yelled at her to her face. She knew she was in the wrong, but more than that, she was hurt.

Cradling Hailey, she mumbled and pouted unhappily. "You can't talk to your mother like that. We were just trying to help the family..."

"Help the family?" Benedict's eyes were red as he pointed at Hailey and Logan. "The Wynn family already suffered a massive blow after losing the investments and partnerships from Titancrest Group and NovaForge Capital! And now, you two... cozying up to that Adrian, playing some 'Overdrive Challenge' with him at the Apex Horizon Speedway."

"Now, the Cole family has casually dumped half the debt on our heads and is demanding immediate repayment. With such high daily interest, we couldn't pay it back even if we mortgaged the entire family! Isn't the Wynn family's situation chaotic enough as it is?!"

Scolded like this, Hailey's face went pale, and she felt incredibly wronged.

She had only been trying to secure her hold on her fiancé, Adrian, for the family's sake.

If she could just marry him.

The interests of the Cole and Wynn families would inevitably become entangled. Then, the Coles would have to help the Wynns resolve their current crisis, creating a win-win situation.

Hadn't she been working hard for the family too?

It felt like he was blaming her for everything.

Hailey was practically dying from the injustice of it all, but she didn't dare let it show on her face.

She knew full well that if she wanted to continue living as a wealthy heiress, she had to rely on her older brother, the family's business prodigy.

Only by relying on her big brother could the Wynn family make a comeback.

Hailey threw herself at Benedict's

side, hugging his arm and crying beautifully "Benedict, I'm so sorrye It's all my fault... It was me. I overestimated myself. I just wanted to help the family, so I begged Mom and Dad to come with me to plead with Mr. Foster and Miss Barnes... I wanted to beg them to let the Wym family off the hook, even if it meant getting on my knees..."

Seeing his beloved little sister crying like this, the rage boiling in Benedict's chest eventually dissipated into deep exhaustion and helplessness.

He raised a hand and pinched the bridge of his nose, frustrated and resigned. "The one chance we had is gone. It's too late to say anything now. We can't even get into the Obsidian Palace... so even if we wanted to beg, there's no one to beg to."

Hailey bit her lip hard and wiped her eyes, her beautiful, tear-filled eyes now red and tinged with a stubborn glint. I just wait here at the entrance to the Obsidian Palace!

Even if I have to wait all night, I will

wait for Mr. Foster and Miss

Barnes!"

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"Nonsense!" Benedict's tone finally softened. "You're a young woman. What would it look like for you to be waiting around a place like this?"

As he was speaking, Marianne's eyes suddenly lit up. "Why wait for Mr. Foster? Look, that car!"

Everyone followed her gaze.

They saw a black Maybach speeding toward them out of the darkness, its unique license plate a blatant symbol of its owner's place at the pinnacle of Vaelion City's hierarchy.

It was... the car belonging to Nicholas, the heir of Vaelion City's Blackwood family!

Marianne's mind instantly started

racing. She threw an arm around

Hailey's shoulder, her voice

trembling with excitement. "Hailey, that's the heir to the Blackwood family! The Blackwoods are one of

Vaelion City's top families! Compared to Mr. Blackwood, that wimp Adrian is nothing!"

"You're so beautiful. If you go over there and plead with Mr. Blackwood, what if...

what if you catch his eye? Whatever the Blackwood family lets slip through their fingers would be enough for you to hit the jackpot!"

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Patrick's eyes lit up. "Yes, yes, that makes sense! Instead of waiting here for a Mr. Foster who might not even show up, we should go ask Mr. Blackwood for help!"

Hailey watched the black Maybach draw closer, her heart pounding and her cheeks flushing. She feigned coyness. "But... but I'm already with..."

"Don't you dare mention that wimp Adrian!" Marianne fumed at the very thought of him.

The Wynn family's current predicament was directly tied to him!

She pouted, her face full of disdain. "That Cole boy is a coward. The moment trouble started, he tried to wash his hands of it. He has no sense of responsibility. How can he even be compared to Mr. Blackwood?"

She patted Hailey's shoulder again and advised her earnestly, "Hailey, you need to learn to tell the difference between a rock and a diamond."

Of course, Hailey wanted to catch Nicholas's eye.

He was a man so far above her she didn't even dare to dream of him!

But her previous attempts at flirting and subtly seducing him had all been completely ignored.

Seeing Nicholas now still made her nervous.

But then she had another thought...

This time, her parents were with her.

In a way, they were Nicholas's elders, weren't they?

Surely, Nicholas would have to show some gentlemanly courtesy and respect them.

As long as he was willing to acknowledge her, that would be a great start!

"Dad, Mom, stop daydreaming. Mr. Blackwood, he..." Logan began, unable to stand his parents' excited expressions.

He hadn't even finished his sentence.

"Logan!"

Hailey's voice rose sharply, cutting him off.

She bit her lower lip.

She knew what Logan was about to say.

It was nothing more than that ambiguous relationship between Nicholas and Serena!

She didn't want her parents to know that Nicholas and Serena were close!

She didn't want them to think she was inferior to that bitch Serena!

If Serena could hook up with Nicholas, why couldn't she?

"Forget it. Pushing Hailey out there like this. it's not.." Benedict
deeply,

feeling this war beled

was highly inappropriate.

Hailey quickly interjected, "Dad, Mom,

Wynn Brother, for the sake

belet

family... I'll do my best ase Mr. Blackwood! ŝnovels

As she spoke, she ran a hand through her wavy hair and flashed ap even sweeter smile. As long as it helps the Wynn family, I'm willing to do anything!"

The black Maybach came to a smooth stop at the entrance of the Obsidian Palace.

Hailey immediately began swaying her hips, her face adorned with the sweetest, most appealing smile as she hurried forward.

She even turned slightly to the side, striking a pose that best showcased her figure.

As soon as Nicholas opened his car door, his gaze would fall upon that expanse of...

The Wynn parents followed gleefully behind her, their faces plastered with fawning, obsequious smiles.

Nicholas... was a figure they could normally never hope to meet!

How could they possibly miss such a golden opportunity?!

The door of the black Maybach slowly opened.

Hailey immediately struck her pose.

But the first thing she saw was a leg, clad in black cargo pants, stepping out crisply onto the polished ground.

The leg was long and slender.

Following it, a slim, tall figure came into the view of Hailey and the rest of the Wynn family.

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A white t-shirt, long pants, and a black baseball cap.

The dazzling, dreamlike lights of the Obsidian Palace illuminated the girl's face—a face with striking, vibrant features.

Under the glow, her skin was so fine it seemed veiled in a soft luminescence.

She casually shut the car door with a smooth, effortless motion. Tossing the car keys in the air, she caught them, shoved them into her pocket, and began sauntering toward the Obsidian Palace with an air of complete composure.

Throughout it all, she didn't spare a single glance for the members of the Wynn family who had swarmed forward.

"S-Serena!"

The air seemed to freeze in that instant.

The coy, fawning smile on Hailey's face froze solid. Her eyes widened in disbelief as she stared at the girl in front of her.

A choked cry escaped her throat as she uttered her name.

For a moment, Hailey's mind went blank.

How could it be Serena?!

Why was Serena driving Nicholas's car?

She... how could she possibly be driving Nicholas's car?!

It wasn't just Hailey.

Behind her, the rest of the Wynns stared, utterly shocked, at Serena's composed figure.

The expressions on their faces cracked, piece by piece.

They simply couldn't believe their eyes.

"Serena!"

Marianne's pupils constricted violently as she suddenly lunged toward Serena.

How dare that little bitch be so cold to her?

She really was an ungrateful brat!

The Wynns had raised her for twenty years, letting her live the life of a wealthy heiress!

And this was the attitude she showed them?

Marianne blocked Serena's path, her eyes bloodshot. She stared daggers at her and demanded through gritted teeth, "Serena, why are you driving Mr. Blackwood's car?"

Back at Le Céleste, she had been shocked that Serena even knew the heir to the Blackwood family, a man at the absolute pinnacle of Vaelion City's elite.

Even after seeing it with her own eyes, she couldn't believe it. How could Serena possibly be involved with a figure so powerful that even the Wynn family at their peak wouldn't have dared to dream of approaching?

Her only conclusion was that Serena must have used her pretty face to make some kind of dirty deal to seduce the heir of the Blackwood family!

No one in the Wynn family believed that Serena could hold his interest for long just by being a pretty face.

Once the Blackwood heir grew tired of playing with her, wouldn't she have to crawl back to her slum and rot in the mud?

Only by thinking this, by assuming this, could the Wynn family feel any better.

Especially Marianne.

Seeing Serena not only fail to sink into the gutter as she'd expected after leaving the family, but actually thrive and climb higher, made her sick.

The places Serena went, the people she surrounded herself with—they were all from a class the Wynns couldn't even touch.

She was so furious she felt like she could have a heart attack.

Thinking about the Wynn family's recent troubles and then seeing Serena driving that one-of-a-kind Maybach, worth at least ten figures,

was like a physical slap across Marianne's face content

"Serena, answer me! You damn jinx, you've brought nothing but ruin to the Wynn family, and now you're acting like nothing happened?"

Marianne's anger grew the more she

looked at Serena. "You're just in time! Let me tell you, that hundred million dollar bet from the race at Apex Horizon Speedway was all your fault! You are going to fix this for us!"

The entitled, demanding tone was laughable.

And Serena did, in fact, laugh.

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Her laughter was clear and cold. Though pleasant to the ear, it sent an inexplicable chill down their spines.

The surrounding air seemed to drop to a freezing point.

The Wynns shivered, instinctively reaching up to rub their necks.

Serena lifted her gaze slightly, her clear, bright eyes landing coolly on Marianne.

Her expression was calm and detached, devoid of any emotion.

The look sent Marianne stumbling back several steps, her hand flying to her racing heart.

She stared at Serena with a flicker of fear.

When Marianne realized what she had just done, she was overcome with shame and humiliation.

Her face turned green, as if she'd been slapped by an invisible hand, and she exploded in a rage. "What are you laughing at? What right do you have to laugh?"

"You ungrateful brat! Last time at Le Céleste, you nearly got us thrown in jail! And now, you deliberately went after Hailey's fiancé, which is why he tried to get rid of you with that ridiculous racing bet!"

"You've caused the Wynn family so much trouble. You alone should bear all our losses!"

The more Marianne spoke, the more righteous and entitled she sounded.

She pointed at the black Maybach Serena had just driven up in, her voice gaining momentum. "Since you've sold your body to get in with the Blackwood heir, you can be the one to clean... clean... up this mess for us."

Her voice trailed off on the last few words.

Serena's gaze was fixed on her, chilling her to the bone.

The blustering confidence she had managed to summon instantly deflated.

How could a little tramp from the countryside have such a powerful presence?

It was actually... intimidating.

"Wh-what are you looking at! Hurry up and..." Marianne swallowed hard, trying to puff out her chest and reclaim the authority she once had as Serena's mother.

Serena's lips curved into a smile,

and she enunciated each word

as your teash not on tight?"

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Marianne's eyes widened in disbelief as she stared at Serena.

Did she... just call her a dog?!

How dare she?!

The Serena she remembered had been meek and subservient, always trying to please her.

How had she become like this?

Marianne was practically insane

Qu

with rage. "Serena, do you really think you're on top of the world just because you crawled into MP. Blackwood's bed? You're just a slut who sold her body, as worthless as your parents from that slum-"

Serena's eyes instantly turned cold and hard.

"Ah!"

A scream tore through the air.

Before anyone could react, Serena had grabbed a handful of Hailey's carefully styled hair and yanked it hard.

The immense force felt like her scalp was being ripped off, and Hailey let out a piercing shriek of pain.

SLAP_

A sharp slap landed squarely across Hailey's face.

Hailey's cry grew more desperate as she instinctively tried to pull away from Serena's grasp.

But the more she struggled, the

more

causing the pain became,

causing her to convulse. Her body was forced to bend forward, a pathetic and disheveled sight.

Blood trickled from the corner of her mouth.

"Hailey!" Stunned by Serena's cold eyes and sudden violence, Marianne took a moment to react.

She lunged toward them. "You little bitch, how dare you hit my daughter!"

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Serena's lips curled, but the smile didn't reach her eyes.

She tightened her grip on Hailey's hair and jerked it downward.

The sharp pain made Hailey scream and sob uncontrollably.

Just as Marianne lunged forward, Serena lifted her foot and viciously kicked Hailey in the stomach.

THUD!

Hailey couldn't even scream. Her body flew backward, landing hard several feet away.

She curled up on the ground, clutching her stomach, writhing in agony and unable to straighten up.

Only pained whimpers escaped her lips.

Marianne's lunge missed, and she nearly stumbled to the ground.

"Hailey! My daughter!" She scrambled over to Hailey. Seeing her daughter's miserable state, she was both furious and terrified. The hand she pointed at Serena was trembling. "Serena, you bitch, do you really think some man will protect you forever? Believe it or not, I can destroy your family-"

"Mrs. Wynn." Serena's gaze turned icy, her oppressive presence utterly intimidating. "Say one more filthy word, and I'll take it out on your precious daughter. Go on, give it a try. Let's see which of us enjoys it more you running your mouth, or me putting her in her place."

Marianne's voice died in her throat.

Serena's eyes were so cold they seemed to pierce right through her.

All the curses she was about to hurl felt as if they were being choked off by an invisible hand.

Not another word could escape, only ragged, heavy breaths.

Benedict narrowed his eyes, studying the girl before him who was both familiar and strangely foreign.

It was... the same face.

But the aura she projected, her expression-it was all completely different from the Serena he remembered.

In his memory... this younger sister, raised by her grandmother in the countryside, had been nothing but timid and meek ever since she was brought back to the Wynn family

He had taken over the Wynn Group in recent years and was rarely home.

He only recalled that whenever he returned, Serena would carefully present him with a steaming bowl of soup and timidly call him Benedict

To be honest, Benedict didn't have much of an impression of this sister.

Her only value, perhaps, was to use her face to secure a marriage alliance with the Cole family and elevate the Wynns status among the elite

He never expected that after leaving the family, his little sister would become so rebellious.

He frowned, his expression turning cold as he adopted the tone of an elder brother and berated her.

"Serena, who gave you permission to speak to Mom like that? Who told you to lay a hand on Hailey? Is this how you were raised?"

"You attack Hailey just because you're jealous, because you envy how well we treat her? Is that what the Wynn family taught you?!"

Ever since Hailey had been found, she had been the apple of the family's eye.

After all, Hailey had suffered so much out there; it was only right for them to dote on her.

It was Serena who had stolen so many years of Hailey's life.

What right did Serena have to be jealous of Hailey?

Benedict's face was grim. "Serena, I've decided. You will apologize to Hailey immediately, and we'll consider this matter closed."

Serena's cold eyes flickered toward him as she scoffed, "Apologize?"

She held up her hand, her slender, fair fingers curled into a fist. "I can continue apologizing to all of you with my fist. Want to try?"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 259[607 words]

"Serena, look at yourself!" Benedict's expression shifted. "You're full of hostility, utterly crass!"

His frown deepened. "The Wynn family owes you nothing. It is you who owes the Wynn family! You owe Hailey! Acting like this will only make people despise you more. It's counterproductive."

"Mom was right. You seduced Adrian, which led to the bet and caused the Cole family to go a hundred million dollars into debt! This whole mess started because of you."

"I've decided. You will arrange a meeting with Mr. Blackwood. Have him give the Wynn Group a few core projects and tell the Peis and the Barnes family to just forget about the racing bet!"

Serena couldn't help but laugh at Benedict's shamelessness.

"You've decided?"

She laughed out loud, her eyes dripping with mockery as she looked at him. "Benedict, who the hell do you think you are to make decisions for me?"

"On what authority? Your company that's on the verge of bankruptcy? Or that pathetic display you just made when that exec, Taylor, tossed you aside like garbage? You're a nobody, and you have the nerve to put on airs?"

"Hah, asking me to bring Nicholas out... I can hear your gears turning from a mile away. When it comes to hypocrisy, the Wynn family really takes the cake."

Serena truly hadn't realized before how self-important the Wynns were.

They were like a bunch of clowns.

With a soft sneer, Serena's cold, bright eyes fell on Benedict. Her tone was glacial and dripping with irony. "The Wynn family owes me nothing? What gives you the right to say that?"

"And another thing—I seduced Adrian?" Serena's sneer deepened. "He's a piece of shit. Do you really think he's worthy of my attention? Only your dear sister could mistake a turd for a treasure."

"You... you!" Benedict's face turned ashen, his expression ugly.

He never imagined that the once-timid Serena, who had always tried so hard to please him, would dare to mock him so openly in public.

A vein bulged on his forehead. "Serena, you're being completely unreasonable!"

"Get out of my sight. You're an eyesore." Serena coldly retracted her gaze, not bothering to look at them again as she walked straight toward the entrance of the Obsidian Palace.

"Ungrateful brat! You're an ungrateful brat!" Marianne fumed, watching Serena's arrogant retreat.

Serena must have been faking it all those years!

This was her true face!

Looking down at her precious daughter, curled in her arms with a face twisted in pain and a body still trembling, Marianne didn't hesitate. She strode up to Serena and swung her hand to slap her. "Once those men get tired of you, you'll be thrown out like a cheap whore! Let's see how arrogant you are then!"

Serena's brow twitched.

She raised her hand and caught Marianne's wrist.

Her cold eyes were absolutely bone-chilling.

CRACK!

Serena gave a slight twist.

The sound of a breaking bone was accompanied by Marianne's piercing scream.

Marianne's face contorted in agony,

cold sweat beading on her forehead. The words she spoke were

squeezed through gritted teeth. Serena, you little bitch, are you insane?!"

She..... she actually dared to lay a hand on her?!

If that wasn't insane, what was?

Serena, expressionless, flung her aside.

The sheer force made Marianne feel weightless for a moment before she was sent flying.

She landed heavily on top of Hailey.

The mother and daughter were piled together, and Hailey let out a fresh wave of screams.

"Mom!"

"Honey!"

Patrick and Logan rushed over, pulling the two apart and helping them up.

Marianne had never experienced such pain.

Her face twisted in a snarl as she yelled at the security guards by the Obsidian Palace entrance, "What are you standing there for? This bitch is causing a scene the Obsidian Palace! Call the police! Call the police!"

at the same time

c 260

The guards not only ignored Marianne completely but even smiled fawningly at Serena, bowing and scraping. "Miss Lancaster, is there anything we can help you with?"

The attitude was a complete reversal from the cold indifference they had shown when blocking the Wynn family from entering the Obsidian Palace.

"S-Serena!"

Logan looked at the miserable state of his mother and sister, then at Serena's defiant posture.

His hot temper flared, and he couldn't hold back any longer.

Serena had gone too far!

She even dared to hit their mother!

Even if Serena wasn't part of the Wynn family anymore, she had called Marianne

'Mom' for twenty years.

How could she bring herself to do that?

It was monstrous!

"What the hell is with this tough-girl act? Trying to look all cool and badass?! You think this is going to make us respect you?"

"I don't hit women, but today, I'm going to teach you a goddamn lesson!"

Furious, Logan clenched his fists and rushed forward.

"Well, well. I'd like to see who dares to lay a hand on her."

Suddenly, a drawling voice, laced with a hint of coldness, cut through the air.

A large group was striding out of the Obsidian Palace's main entrance.

Leading them was Brian, flamboyant and unrestrained with his wild hair color and a fluorescent green outfit.

Beside him stood the enchanting Chloe in a fiery red dress.

Behind them followed four other young men and women, equally well-dressed and radiating an incredibly powerful presence.

As the six of them approached, an invisible pressure descended, nearly suffocating the members of the Wynn family.

Logan froze mid-stride, staring dumbfounded at the group before him.

These... these were the heirs of Vaelion City's top families!

This was a circle he could spend his entire life trying to enter and still fail!

And now, this group of untouchable figures stood before him, their domineering

presence and condescending glares crushing him.

Logan swallowed hard, so frightened that he quickly retracted his hand.

When Patrick saw the group, his eyes lit up.

They had waited at the entrance of the Obsidian Palace for so long, suffering such humiliation.

Wasn't it all for Brian and Chloe?

He never expected that not only would those two appear, but they'd bring along the heirs of Vaelion City's other top families!

Patrick couldn't care less about Serena anymore.

het

He quickly put on a fawning smile and scurried forward. "Well, hello young masters and ladies! What a pleasure, what a coincidence! I'm Patrick from the Wynn Group..."

SLAP!

A crisp smack cut off Patrick's sycophantic words.

The group of elites didn't even bother to look at Patrick.

Brian simply raised his hand and slapped Logan across the face.

Patrick's smile froze on his face, his expression faltering. "M-Mr. Foster..."
THUD!

Brian lifted his foot and kicked Logan square in the chest.

Logan let out a cry, spitting out a mouthful of blood as he collapsed to the ground in

a pathetic heap, coughing violently.

At that moment, Patrick started to piece things together. A phrase echoed in his

mind, the one the group of heirs had said as they walked out—

"I'd like to see who dares to lay a hand on her."

Her?

Were they referring to... Serena?!

Was Mr. Foster standing up for Serena?

He had just started to process this when Marianne, seeing the group of elites she could normally only dream of looking at, started wailing and playing the

victim. "Mr. Foster, why did you hit my son The one you should be hitting is that little bitch!"

"Look at me, look at my daughter.... That little bitch is causing trouble.on your property, beating up guests of

the Obsidian Palace like this isn't

that a direct insur to your

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 261[557 words]

A sharp slap echoed.

Then another, and another.

A rapid series of slaps followed.

That was Brian's response to Marianne.

He had bent down, grabbed Logan by the collar, and once again raised his hand to deliver several more slaps.

The force was so great that both of Logan's cheeks swelled and turned bright red.

Marianne was stunned.

Her wailing sobs came to an abrupt halt.

"Who are you calling a little bitch? Hmm?" Brian held Logan up by his collar, raising a single eyebrow as he looked at Marianne with arrogant dominance.

Marianne's eyes widened. She looked at her son with heartache, then turned a terrified gaze to Brian.

She swallowed hard, her forehead breaking out in a cold sweat from the tension.

If it had been anyone else treating her son this way, she would have thrown a massive fit.

But this group...

Every single person standing before her was someone she absolutely could not afford to offend.

Any one of them could crush the Wynn family with the flick of a finger!

Her lips trembled, her face a mask of horror.

Patrick was the first to react. He immediately hurried forward with a sycophantic smile, grabbing Marianne's arm. He laughed at Brian, "She was calling herself a little bitch, calling my wife a little bitch... Yes, yes, my wife is a bitch!"

Marianne's face twitched, and she moved her arm, about to protest. But Patrick held her firmly in place, shooting her a fierce, warning glare.

Turning back, Patrick once again beamed obsequiously at the group of elites. "Mr. Foster, young masters, and ladies, it's all a misunderstanding! A misunderstanding!" "Serena... she's our adopted daughter! Do you all know our Serena? Well, what a small world! It's all one big happy family, hahaha..."

He was a true businessman, always knowing how to play the game.

For a chance to curry favor with these scions, he was willing to cast aside his wife and son.

After all, wasn't the whole reason he was embarrassing himself at the entrance of Obsidian Palace tonight to see Brian and Chloe?

And now, he was seeing the heirs of several top-tier families.

If he could just use Serena to get on their good side...

Even if they were just the second generation of their families, without a guaranteed chance to take over their companies...

A single word from them could save the Wynn Group from ruin!

"Who the hell is family with you?"

Brian glanced up, his eyes filled with contempt and disdain for Patrick, showing no respect for his age.

He let out

bet

"Which arrogant, cold sneer.

blind bastard was it ju

just

and

who dared to yell at our Seren even try to lay a hand on her hmm?

Patrick's smile froze on his face, his eyes widening in shock.

Besides Logan and Hailey, both Marianne and Benedict stared in astonishment at the girl standing at the entrance of Obsidian Palace hands in her pockets, her expression cool and aloof.

Serena?!

This group of top-tier heirs, these golden children that he, Patrick, could never hope to approach, were calling Serena... Serena?!

In the circle of these wealthy heirs...

Even if he wasn't part of their circle, he knew that these young elites were all incredibly arrogant, none of them willing to bow to another.

Let alone willingly call someone so informally.

Especially Brian, known throughout Vaelion City as its resident hell-raiser, famous in their circles for being outrageously arrogant, bowing to no one, and ready to take on anyone.

But now...

He had just heard this hell-raiser call Serena?!

c 262

A cold sweat dripped down Patrick's back, his lips trembling as he desperately tried to explain, "Mr. Foster, it's a misunderstanding... It really is..."

Before he could even finish his sentence, an even greater shock awaited the Wynn family.

Brian tossed Logan to the ground, slowly straightened up, and looked down on them with his disdainful and arrogant eyes.

"Listen up, all of you! Serena is our friend!"

"A single strand of her hair is worth more than the lives of your entire family! What gives you the right to curse our Serena in front of us? And you even wanted to get physical?"

"N-no..." Patrick's voice was trembling.

"No, my ass!" Brian spat. "You try to touch someone under my protection, on my turf? Who the hell gave you the balls?!"

Chloe crossed her arms. "Why are you wasting so many words on him? I saw it just now. It was him... and her, who both tried to attack Serena."

She smiled charmingly, her movements alluring as she pointed a slender, pale finger at Logan, then at Marianne.

Her voice was soft and seductive, but the words that came out were as sharp as a blade. "The hand they used to attack her-take them away and cripple it. Don't let them be an eyesore in front of Serena."

"Don't... please don't..." Patrick was so drenched in a cold sweat it soaked through his shirt.

He had originally thought Serena had only managed to get acquainted with this circle by latching onto that heir from the Blackwood family.

He assumed these scions were only helping Serena out of respect for the Blackwood heir.

He never imagined they would be so protective of her.

That fierce protectiveness...

It was as if they were worshipping Serena like a queen!

No wonder Serena was able to get into the VIP area of Le Céleste last time...

If Serena knew these people, why didn't she tell them sooner?

If Serena had told them about this connection earlier...

How could he have let Marianne kick her out?

And the Wynn family would never have ended up in this dire situation.

With this connection, the Wynn family would have soared to new heights by now!

Why didn't Serena say anything from the beginning?

Marianne, in particular, was so shocked by what the arrogant heirs face twisted in were saying that her face twisted were saying t disbelief.

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Beyond her shock at Serena managing to infiltrate this elite circle, she was mostly filled with... rage.

She was furious that Serena knew these people and was clearly on good terms with them.

Yet Serena had never mentioned a word of it.

She had never thought to use this connection to help the Wynn family, to let them ride this wave to success!

She really was an ungrateful viper, always hiding things and holding out on the Wynn family!

Since Serena was their friend, why couldn't she have just agreed to her request earlier?

If Serena had just said the word, the debt from the car race could have been completely wiped away!

If Serena had just said the word, the Wynn family wouldn't be teetering on the edge of bankruptcy right now!

That little bitch did it on purpose!

She intentionally wanted to see the Wynn family become a laughingstock, to watch

them grovel!

Marianne's hateful glare was too obvious.

So obvious that Brian narrowed his eyes and shot her a disdainful look.

"It seems Mrs. Wynn is quite

displeased. A cocky, arrogant smile played on his lips, but it didn't

reach his eyes, which were filled

with a bone-chilling coldness.

"What? Does Mrs. Wynn think I don't

have the right to take one of your hands?"

c 263

An icy chill shot straight to the top of Marianne's head.

These rich kids... were serious!

They really wanted to cripple her hand?!

Patrick's face turned deathly pale. He couldn't believe his wife was foolish enough to still be showing her disgust for Serena at a time like this.

He quickly stepped forward, positioning himself in front of Marianne, and smiled fawningly at Brian, even bowing his back. "Of course not, of course not. How could we possibly be displeased?"

As he spoke, he frowned and shot Marianne a fierce, warning glare.

However, the group of heirs before him remained stone-faced, their expressions

cold and unmoved by his groveling.

Patrick steeled himself and suddenly yanked Marianne to his side.

He raised his hand.

Slap! Slap! Slap!

Several crisp sounds echoed as he slapped Marianne hard across the face.

The sounds made it clear that he had used immense force, landing several solid blows.

"You idiot! Hurry up and apologize to Mr. Foster! Apologize to all the young masters and ladies!" Patrick yelled, holding onto Marianne.

Then, he turned back to Brian's group with a fawning smile, which he also directed at Serena. "And most importantly, of course, apologize to Serena!"

Marianne was stunned by the blows, her ears ringing and both sides of her face burning with intense pain.

She stared in disbelief at the man she had shared a bed with for decades.

Just moments ago, when Serena had fractured her wrist, Patrick had been so concerned for her.

But now, because of... Serena, he had hit her?

And he was telling her to apologize to that bitch Serena?!

Patrick was using the most direct and humiliating method possible, sacrificing her to

show his loyalty to this group and hopefully resolve the situation.

For her, this was an immense humiliation!

Especially in front of that bitch Serena!

Apologize to Serena? She would rather die!

A country girl raised in the middle of

Where a lowlife from the

What right

she have t

demand an apology from her?

Marianne's entire face contorted in a mask of fury, her eyes filled with rage and

resentment as she glared at Serena.

She just couldn't understand it.

Were these rich kids out of their minds, or had that bitch Serena cast some kind of spell on them?

What right did Serena have to make them call her "sister"?

What right did Serena have to be placed on a pedestal by them, the center of their attention?

Especially when, among this group of top-tier heirs, Serena herself was acting all high and mighty putting on airs as if she were above

them

all.

Marianne's eyes turned red with anger.

Why was Serena even allowed to stand among them?

The person who should be fawned over and protected by these top-tier heirs was her Hailey!

The more Marianne thought about it, the more ferocious her expression became. She held her head high, refusing to bow.

Brian let out a cold chuckle.

The sound was lazy, yet it carried an extreme chill.

Patrick's expression changed.

He knew the tempers of these elite heirs. This meant their patience was wearing thin.

If this continued to escalate...

It would undoubtedly push the already precarious Wynn family closer to the brink of collapse!

They had come to Obsidian Palace today to solve problems, not create bigger ones.

For the sake of the Wynn family, for his own sake.

He had to... be ruthless!

Patrick's eyes turned fierce. He suddenly grabbed a handful of

Maria and kicked her hard

in the back of her knees. .net>

"Bitch, I told you to apologize, didn't you hear me?!"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 264[554 words]

Marianne's knees slammed onto the hard ground.

The intense pain made her cry out in agony.

But she couldn't move.

Patrick held her head and neck in a death grip, forcing her into an utterly humiliating position. He pushed her down in Serena's direction.

He then slammed her head against the ground twice. "Apologize!"

When he looked up at Serena again, the change in his expression was as seamless as a mask changing.

He beamed at Serena with an incredibly sycophantic smile. "Serena, look... your mother has apologized to you like this. Dad knows you're a filial child, so please forgive your mother..."

"You know your mother is just a blind fool with a filthy mouth. I'll apologize to you too, okay?"

It was only then that Patrick noticed something...

Serena was dressed in a simple, plain white T-shirt and a pair of pants, with not a single luxury item on her.

Yet, standing among that group of top-tier heirs, her presence wasn't overshadowed in the slightest.

In fact...

She was even more dazzling than them.

It wasn't because of her striking, intensely beautiful features, but because of her aura...

It was so composed, as if... no, not 'as if.'

She was a king, surveying her domain.

A cold sweat instantly soaked the back of Patrick's neck.

His pupils contracted in shock, a deep sense of dread filling his heart.

Was this really the country girl who grew up in the countryside, raised by his mother?

Why had he never sensed such an aura from Serena in the past twenty years?

Meanwhile, Serena stood with her hands in her pockets, her cool, bright eyes under the brim of her hat watching the scene unfold with calm indifference.

She watched as Marianne, disheveled, her cheeks swollen, looking like a madwoman, had her head pinned to the ground in public humiliation.

She couldn't help but raise an eyebrow.

Honestly, she had to admit she was somewhat impressed by Patrick right now.

Back when she was still with the Wynn family, Patrick did seem to have some genuine feelings for Marianne.

Otherwise, given the Wynn family's status, a daughter of a nouveau riche family like Marianne was not quite a suitable match.

On a daily basis, Patrick had always doted on Marianne, and they had appeared to be a loving couple.

But now...

Faced with personal gain, he was able to sacrifice Marianne without a moment's hesitation.

As Marianne's husband of several decades, he had to know... how much someone like her, who had clawed her way up from new money cared about her pride.

Yet he was still humiliating her in such a degrading way.

To be able to bend and adapt to this extent was, indeed, a skill.

This scene made Benedict frown deeply.

He glanced at his fourth brother,

Logan, who was curled up on the ground, his face twisted in pain, in pain Then he looked at his mother forcibly held on the ground by his own father, looking wretched and humiliated.

He couldn't understand how things had suddenly escalated to this point.

He couldn't approve of his father's actions.

But he also knew that, aside from this...

There was truly no better way.

If they truly offended this group of top-tier heirs a single casual remark from them could plunge the Wynn family into a state of utter ruin.

Benedict closed his eyes, forcing himself to look away.

But his gaze...

Fell upon Hailey, who was cowering nearby, staring at Patrick in terror, like a timid little bird, not making a sound.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 265[599 words]

Hailey had her neck shrunk down, her face filled with terror as she watched Patrick, her small hands clamped tightly over her mouth.

She looked completely terrified.

She didn't dare to make a single sound.

Benedict's frown deepened.

He understood Hailey's fear at that moment.

But looking at her, a complicated emotion swelled within him.

If... if it were Serena, upon seeing their father treat their mother like this, she would have definitely rushed forward without a second thought to protect her...

But Hailey?

She was the precious treasure their mother had doted on and spoiled her entire life, yet now she was only concerned with her own fear. Forget protecting her mother...

She didn't even have the courage to say a word in her defense or offer a helping hand.

Benedict subconsciously frowned and looked at Serena, trying to find a trace of pity or emotion on her face.

But...

The girl's expression remained as calm as still water, her cool, bright eyes holding nothing but pure indifference.

There was even...

A hint of mockery.

It was as if the drama unfolding before her was nothing more than a clown show. There was absolutely no sign that she was moved by Marianne's miserable state. That look in her eyes...

It was like a sharp thorn that stabbed fiercely into Benedict's heart, intensifying the inexplicable emotion welling up inside him.

The girl before him was completely different from the one in his memory, the one who was always carefully trying to please everyone.

But the old Serena...

Her world had revolved around them.

This stark contrast... left a heavy feeling in Benedict's chest.

He couldn't help but speak up. "Serena, Mom and Dad... are already in this state; and it's embarrassing enough. At the very least.... you called them Mom and Dad for twenty years. Do you really have to push things to a point where no one can back down and the situation becomes irreparable? You should know when to let things go! I'll take charge here... let's just end this now!"

"Yes, Serena. Patrick quickly chimed in, his posture servile and pleading "After all, I'm your father right? Just ask the young masters and ladies... to be the bigger person and let me go, let the Wynn family go, okay?"

Serena's indifferent gaze finally shifted slightly, landing on the Wynn father and son.

She lifted her red lips into a slight curve, the mockery at the corners of her eyes and in her expression practically overflowing.

"Twenty years of being my Mom and Dad?"

She scoffed, the curve of her lips deepening. "In these twenty years, are you sure you ever once acted like a real mother and father to me, or a real older brother?"

The girl's direct question made the Wynn father and son's eyes flicker, and they guiltily looked away.

Patrick was the quickest to react, forcing a smile, his face full of eagerness. "That was because Dad was too busy before, so I didn't have time to care about you. Don't worry, re... in the future, Dad will be there on you like a princess, definitely a treasure!"

"Your room, your mother and I haven't touched it. You can move right back in!"

Serena couldn't help but laugh out loud.

Her laughter was utterly sarcastic, as if she had just heard the biggest joke in the world.

That laugh made Patrick's heart pound with anxiety.

Serena's eyes were filled with scorn. "Mr. Wynn, I'm afraid that even now, you still have no idea where I actually lived in the Wynn family home, do you?"

Patrick's heart lurched violently. He subconsciously glanced at Marianne, who was still on the ground.

Marianne had clearly remembered something. Amidst the humiliation twisting her features, a rare and unnatural flicker of guilt appeared on her face.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy!

Chapter 266[546 words]

A muscle in Patrick's brow twitched.

"The Wynn family? When did I ever have a room there?" Serena looked at him with a cold smile, her gaze so cool it was devoid of any emotion.

The obsession that had defined the past twenty years of her life was finally, in this moment, extinguished.

"Mr. Wynn, from the moment I signed that agreement severing our ties, I have had nothing to do with you or the Wynn family.

"Whether you live or die, whether you beg or grovel, it has nothing to do with me."

She couldn't be bothered to waste any more time on them, nor did she want to.

She glanced at the time, then turned her head and lazily lifted her gaze to Brian and the others.

She beckoned with a single finger.

She casually pulled a piece of paper from a side pocket of her canvas bag. "The design schematics."

Chloe, swaying her hips alluringly, eagerly rushed over to Serena and took the papers with both hands.

She immediately unfolded the document.

It was the design for a motorcycle.

Chloe's eyes lit up the moment she saw the schematics, which were so detailed that every single component and accessory was clearly labeled.

She was so excited she looked like she wanted to pucker up and plant a few big kisses right on the paper.

But wearing her bright red lipstick, she couldn't bear the thought of smudging the drawing.

So, she threw her arms around Serena in a tight hug. "Aaaah, Serena, I love you to death! I knew you cared about me the most!"

"Mm," Serena said, not moving and letting Chloe hug her.

But her cool eyes softened a little.

Her red lips curved slightly. "I've made the delivery. I'm leaving now."

"Aw..." Chloe pouted in disappointment, her charming eyes looking at Serena with reluctance. "Alright... I get it. It's different for a treasure who has family waiting at home.

I won't keep you for a drink with us. Wouldn't want your family to think we're a bad influence on their precious little girl!"

After all, in high-society circles, both she and Brian were.....

Notorious... delinquents.

The infamous kind.

She didn't want to leave Serena's real family with any bad impressions.

Serena let out a soft laugh, a smile that reached her eyes and made her bright, exquisite face even more vibrant, "Yeah I'll invite you all over to my place in a little while,

"You got it!" Chloe gave a thumbs-up and grinning, she let go of Serena.

Then, she lifted her captivating eyes and shot a sidelong glance at the Wynns. "What about this trash?"

Her voice was casual, her eyes filled with disdain, as if she were talking about taking out the garbage.

Serena had already turned and was

walking toward the black Maybucket

Without looking back, she defiantly, "Whatever contest

belongs

That "whatever."

Now that was interesting.

Chloe smiled flirtatiously. "OK, I get it. I promise I'll handle things perfectly!"

Patrick watched the two of them interact so naturally, and saw Brian and the other top-tier heirs all

waiting at Serena's retirement set

back

calling out to her.

"Serena, we'll let you off the hook this time for your family's sake, but you won't get away next time!"

"Take care, Serena!"

"See you, Serena!"

Patrick watched as his last lifeline casually tossed them to this group of powerful heirs.

Given Serena's attitude just now...

How could this group possibly treat him, or the Wynn family, with any kindness?

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Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 267[572 words]

His face paled, and he scrambled to chase after her. "Serena, wait! Don't go... Don't go! I really know I was wrong. You wouldn't accept your mother's apology, so what if... what if I get on my knees for you?"

But the slender, tall figure didn't pause for a second.

Just then, Brian stepped sideways, blocking his path and preventing him from pleading with Serena.

Seeing he had no other options, Patrick grew desperate and shouted at Serena's retreating figure, "Serena... you can't be so heartless as to let the Wynn family go bankrupt! Even if you won't do it for your mother and me, you should at least... for your grandmother's sake, spare us!"

Serena's steps came to an abrupt halt.

Patrick's eyes lit up, and he yelled even more fervently, "Serena, if your

grandmother knew you were treating us like this, she wouldn't be able to rest in peace!"

"You were the person your grandmother doted on most when she was alive. Can you really bear to see her unable to close her eyes in the afterlife?!"

Serena turned around, bit by bit.

Beneath the brim of her hat, her bright eyes, like shattered ice, were bone-chillingly cold.

The intensity of her gaze made the words die in Patrick's throat. He couldn't force out another sound.

Her powerful, stunning presence was so oppressive he could barely breathe.

"If it weren't for Grandma, do you think... you, and the rest of you..."

Serena's icy gaze swept over the Wynn family with contempt and disdain. "Would even have the chance to stand before me?"

For her, bankrupting a family was as easy as lifting a finger.

If she had wanted to.

The Wynn family would have been finished the day she left.

She had tolerated the Wynn family until now.

It was only because she remembered the kindness of her grandmother... Patrick's own mother!

So, after leaving the Wynn family, she had only revoked all the special treatment and privileges she had once granted them, but she hadn't driven them to ruin.

The fact that the Wynn family had ended up in this state...

Was their own doing, not because she had deliberately targeted them.

And now, Patrick actually had the audacity to bring up Grandma, trying to use her memory to make Serena soften?

It was clear that Patrick had severely miscalculated.

Serena stared at him coldly. "If

Bel.n

Grandma were still alive and knew how you treated me after she passed, she would have told me to stay as far away from you as possible.

Mentioning Old Mrs. Wynn caused a slight flicker in Serena's otherwise calm demeanor. "Mr. Wynn, you are the last person who has any right to mention Grandma content

"The only thing you should be thankful for... is that you are her son!"

With that, Serena didn't spare him another glance.

She opened the car door and got in.

The car's engine roared to life.

In an instant, she sped away from Obsidian Palace, disappearing into the night.

Patrick could only watch helplessly as the black Maybach drove off into the distance.

Serena's words had drained all the color from his face.

It was over...

It was all over!

Even bringing up Old Mrs. Wynn couldn't soften Serena's heart.

So how could the Wynn family... how could the Wynn family be saved?!

"Mr. Wynn."

From behind him, Brian's arrogant, devil-may-care voice rang out.

Several sets of footsteps approached.

Patrick, his face ashen, stiffly turned his head.

The group of swaggering, top-tier heirs sauntered over and surrounded him.

With a condescending air, as if

toying with a clown, he curled his

lips into a mocking smile. "Do

know what Serena meant by

whatever

you

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Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 268[488 words]

"'Whatever' means... you pieces of trash aren't even worthy of her time."

He raised his hand and lightly patted Patrick's face. Once, then again.

The sound of the slaps was soft, but the humiliation was immense. "But me... I'm my Serena's number one lackey. The things Serena can't be bothered with, I, her loyal lackey, will handle for her."

Even while being humiliated, Patrick had to force a fawning, obsequious smile.

Brian's words made his heart sink even further.

This was far more shocking than hearing Brian call Serena by her first name!

Who was Brian?

He was the notorious devil of high society!

To put it simply, Brian wouldn't back down even if he were facing someone like Nicholas.

He'd rather fight to the death.

And this proud, arrogant demon...

Was calling himself Serena's "lackey"?

And he seemed proud of it.

Serena... how on earth did she manage to tame a demon like him?

Mr. Wynn's heart sank to the depths of his stomach.

"Well..... congratulations are in order. Our Serena is principled. She deals with the issue, not the person!" Brian raised a long-fingered hand and snapped his fingers. "The bet at Apex Horizon Speedway was with the Cole family, so we'll be collecting that hundred million from them. It has nothing to do with you."

Brian's words made Patrick's sunken heart leap into his throat.

Even Benedict's eyes lit up with incredulous joy.

Did... did this mean...

Did this mean Mr. Foster was still willing to step in and stop the Cole family from pushing that fifty-million-dollar debt onto them?

So, Mr. Foster was willing to help the Wynn family, for Serena's sake?

In that case, could he perhaps take this opportunity...

To secure some benefits for the Wynn family?!

If this group of top-tier heirs was willing to help him, then Titancrest Group and NovaForge Capital...

They wouldn't matter at all!

He could even lead the Wynn family to make a comeback, crushing all their rivals!

It was just as he thought...

Serena was just putting on a brave face!

She had spent so many years trying to please them, so many years begging for their affection.

How could she just abandon all of that so easily?

And now, wasn't she obediently letting this group of heirs step in to help him?

Patrick finally breathed a sigh of relief, a hint of arrogant pride spreading across his face.

When he looked at Brian again, the fawning respect was gone.

But that sigh of relief...

Was cut short.

The general manager of Obsidian

Palace came jogging over, holding a document, which he presented to Brian

Brian was smiling, but his smile was almost cruel. "However... I'm very

protective of my own. And the one

thing can't stand is

seeing

someone bully my Serena

Patrick's heart dropped.

He watched as Brian slammed the file directly into his face.

"Disturbing the peace in front of Obsidian Palace, and even laying a hand on Obsidian Palaces most esteemed guest...

"This is a score I'll have to settle with you, Mr. Wynn."

Patrick's hands trembled as he caught the file.

He quickly opened it, and as he read the contents, his vision went black.....

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 269[616 words]

"Mr. Wynn, you all love 'making the call,' don't you?" Brian grinned with wild abandon, his eyebrows raised. "So, who's going to make the call now and sign this contract?"

The contract, in black and white, stated the compensation amount: one hundred million dollars!

Repayment Period: Indefinite!

Interest: Obsidian Palace's highest standard rate!

"M-Mr. Foster... this, how can this be..." Patrick's hands were shaking.

"You don't want to sign?" Brian's lips curled into a lazy, arrogant smile. "That's fine, too... The Wynn family's house, the company... they should still be worth quite a bit."

He smiled, his gaze sweeping over the other members of the Wynn family. "Mr. and Mrs. Wynn are quite fertile, with such a large family. So, we'll just send the whole lot of you... to the black stone mines. The rest of your lives should be enough to slowly pay off the debt."

The black stone mines?

Everyone knew about that place. It was the Foster family's infamous slave-labor mine. Anyone who went in came out half-dead, if they came out at all.

Besides, they had always been accustomed to a life of luxury.

How could they possibly endure that kind of hardship?

And... if he gave the house and company to Brian, how could he ever make a comeback?!

"Ah..."

As if utterly bored, Brian gave a lazy yawn and slung an arm around one of his friends. "Then it's happily decided. Just have someone liquidate the Wynn family's assets and then toss the whole neat little family into the black stone mines. As for us... let's go get another drink. Can't let some irrelevant trash ruin our fun." As he spoke, they actually started to leave.

"I'll sign... I'll sign!" Patrick's face was ashen as he forced the words through gritted teeth.

"Dad!"

Benedict cried out urgently, his face just as pale.

If he signed that contract...

Wouldn't the Wynn family be signing their lives away to Brian?

For generations, the Wynn family...

Would be trapped by this hundred-million-dollar debt!

It was only a hundred million...

For the Wynn family of the past, they could have scraped it together if they had to!

To trade the entire future of the Wynn family for just a hundred million.

If they had known this would be the outcome, they would have been better off taking on the fifty million from the Cole family!

"If I don't sign, am I supposed to just watch as every path to survival is cut off for the Wynn family?"

Patrick's hand trembled as he picked upreme his eyes bloodshot with" humiliation and despair. "As long as the Wynn family exists, as long as wé exist, we have a chance to turn things around!"

If he really let Brian take over Wynn Group and send his entire family to the black stone mines...

That would truly be the end, with no hope of ever recovering.

At least now, they still had a sliver of a chance!

Faced with these top-tier heirs, he had no choice at all!

In the end, he could only sign his name and press his thumbprint onto the page.

Brian watched with satisfaction as

he signed the contract, a

devil-may-care smile on his face.

"Mr. Wynn is a smart man after af... Don't worry. Now that you've signed, I'll make a nice, ure you all live long... time.

He drew out the last few words, emphasizing each syllable.

The mocking tone made Patrick's eyes burn with rage.

Brian then took the contract and patted Patrick's face with it again, a deeply insulting gesture. "I'll be watching you closely. From now on, every member of the Wynn family, including any children born in the future, will work hard to make money for me, okay?"

He smiled, his grin wide and triumphant.

Putting the contract away, he straightened up. "Let's go, boys! Even though

Serena's not here, we can still celebrate her newfound freedom!"

c 270

The group departed with a triumphant swagger.

All that remained was the other hundred-million-dollar debt contract, which had been slapped hard against Patrick's face.

Patrick watched the group's retreating backs, the world spinning around him.

His vision went dark.

Then, he fell backward, stiff as a board.

The last thing he heard were a few faint shouts before he lost consciousness completely.

He didn't know how much time had passed.

Patrick woke to a throbbing headache.

He opened his eyes to the familiar sight of his bedroom ceiling.

His throat was on fire, painfully dry and sore.

"Water... water..."

His voice was so hoarse that all that came out was a weak, raspy whisper, so faint he could barely hear it himself.

The room was empty.

No one answered.

He had fainted.

And not a single person was in the room looking after him?!

Patrick's chest heaved with anger, which only made the dry, itching pain in his throat

worse, sending him into a fit of dry coughs.

Every cough felt like a knife slicing his throat.

Patrick forced himself to sit up.

As he hardly got out of bed, a wave of intense dizziness washed over him.

He reached up and touched his forehead. It was burning hot.

He clearly had a fever.

A surge of anger flared in Patrick's heart, and he started coughing uncontrollably again.

He was burning up like this.

And they hadn't even taken him to the hospital?

It was one thing to be left unattended, but they hadn't even prepared a glass of water for him?!

The angrier he got, the more it felt like razor blades were scraping his throat.

Patrick's legs trembled as he steadied himself against the wall, his steps unsteady as he painstakingly shuffled into the living room.

With a shaky hand, he poured himself a glass of cold water.

The cool liquid flowed down his throat, slightly easing the burning discomfort.

Just then, he heard voices coming from the terrace outside the living room.

"Sob... Logan... Benedict... should! really not have come back to this family? Serena... is she treating you all like this because I stole Mom and Dad from her, becaused stole you from her..."

Hailey's voice was choked with sobs as she cried brokenly. "It hurts so much to see

how she's treating the family... Mom and Dad..... I feel so useless."

"It's all my fault. It's all because of

me that the family has ended up like this... Maybe... maybe I should just leave. If Heave... maybe my sister will cool down and forgive the

family and she'll be willing to come

back."

"Hailey, what nonsense are you talking about?" Logan immediately cut her off.

"You're just too kind, that's why you blame yourself for everything!"

"How could this be your fault? It's all

that ungrateful Serena! I saw from the beginning that she was trouble that she was vicious to the core! She's a menace, a jinx, Bringing her into this family has only brought us more disaster!"

Whenever Logan thought about the Serena he had always looked down upon now being the leader of that group of top-tier heirs...

A bitter taste filled his mouth.

Especially since Serena had instigated those heirs to force the Wynn family to sign

what was essentially a contract of indentured servitude.

It was tantamount to grinding the Wynn family's dignity into the dirt!

What Logan was most unwilling to admit was that he had completely misjudged her...

He clenched his fists tightly and said through gritted teeth, "She can't even hold a candle to you!"

Hearing this, Hailey was naturally delighted, but she kept on whimpering.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 271[572 words]

Listening to Hailey's constant whimpering, Benedict felt an inexplicable wave of irritation.

When Hailey had first been brought back to the Wynn family, he had quite liked having such a cute and charming little sister.

He had even thought that despite his biological sister having been raised elsewhere, she was still exceptional, lively, and incredibly likable.

It was clearly a sign of the Wynn family's superior genes.

He was used to seeing his sister act coy and cling to him, coming to him in tears whenever she felt wronged. It gave him a great sense of superiority as the eldest brother.

But now...

This was a time of crisis for the Wynn family.

What everyone needed to do was figure out how to solve the family's current predicament. Crying and sobbing were utterly useless.

If it were Serena...

Although Serena had always been humble and timid during her time with the family, appearing plain and unable to hold her own...

Serena had never come crying to him like this.

"Alright, Logan, that's enough."

He couldn't help but interrupt Hailey's whimpering, his voice heavy with undisguised exhaustion. "Hailey, you too. There's no point in saying any of this now. Even if you left, Serena would never come back to the Wynn family."

"Don't say things like that again. It will only make Mom and Dad feel worse if they hear you."

Hailey's tear-streaked, pitiful expression froze, and her crying stopped abruptly.

Her misty eyes widened as she stared blankly at Benedict.

Was her eldest brother suggesting... she was inferior to Serena?

"Yes, yes, Hailey, don't cry. You're breaking your brothers' hearts," Logan said, producing a delicate little box from his pocket with a flourish and holding it out to her. "Look what I got for you. A surprise."

Hailey took the box and opened it. Inside was a sparkling luxury necklace.

Her eyes immediately lit up, and she broke into a smile through her tears, throwing her arms around Logan's neck. "This is the necklace I've always wanted! How did you get it, Logan?"

Being hugged so tightly, the gloom in Logan's heart finally started to dissipate.

This was how his sister should be cute, sweet, and charming!

Not like Serena...

She was like a thorny cactus now.

Every time she saw him, she looked at him with nothing but disdain.

Did she really think he cared about having her as a sister?

Logan patted

full of pride Hailey's head, his tone

full of pride. "Of course had I to buy you your favorite necklace So for

ysake, stop crying, okaye

.net>

Hailey was deeply moved, nuzzling her head against his chest, her voice sickeningly sweet. "You're the best, Logan! I knew you cared about me the most. I love you the most!"

Standing in the living room, Patrick watched the three siblings, his brow furrowed in a deep frown.

The high fever was giving him a splitting headache.

This scene only fueled the fire raging inside him.

He was burning up with a fever, and no one cared.

The family was on the verge of bankruptcy, saddled with a hundred-million-dollar debt.

And them?

They still had spare cash to buy luxury necklaces to keep Hailey happy?!

Patrick fought back the lightheadedness and dizziness, furiously shoving open the terrace doors.

A loud bang echoed through the room.

The ornate wooden doors of the terrace slammed hard against the wall, creating a massive crash.

"Dad..."

Benedict immediately stood up and walked toward Patrick. "Dad, you're awake. Why didn't you call me? How are you feeling now?"

Hailey quickly looked over as well. When she saw Patrick's grim face, she immediately recalled his brutal behavior toward Marianne outside Obsidian Palace.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 272[576 words]

Her face went pale with fear, and she flinched, burying her head in Logan's chest.

She was clearly terrified.

Patrick's brow tightened as he watched Hailey, who only knew how to cling to her brothers, looking so meek and unpresentable.

He couldn't help but compare her to the Serena he had seen last night.

"Dad, you're scaring Hailey!" Logan said, protectively holding his sister. He frowned, his tone reproachful. "And you were too rough with Mom! How could you do that to her? Look at what you did to her face!"

Patrick felt the heavy, burning pain in his head grow even worse.

His temples throbbed relentlessly.

Looking at Logan-who was nothing but a troublemaker, utterly clueless, and devoid of any sense of responsibility-only made him more irritated.

He pinched the bridge of his nose and said in a hoarse, angry voice, "You idiot! Do you think those rich kids play nice? If I hadn't done that, if I hadn't thrown your foolish mother out there, they would have already crippled us and tossed us into the sea to feed the fish!"

"If anyone's to blame, it's your stupid mother! In that kind of situation, she just had to get the last word in. Wasn't that just asking for those heirs to make an example of her?"

The more Patrick spoke, the more his head ached.

"Well... it's not our fault either," Logan mumbled, taken aback but still defiant. He stuck his neck out stubbornly. "It's all that bitch Serena's fault! Using her looks to seduce men and then egging them on..."

"Shut up!" Patrick shot him a cold glare and barked out the order.

The shout made him feel even more unsteady on his feet, and he nearly collapsed from the dizzy spell.

Fortunately, Benedict reacted quickly and caught him.

Patrick's breathing was heavy as he ground his teeth and snarled, "You idiot, get out of my sight!"

Benedict helped him to the sofa. "Dad, what... what are we going to do now?"

Patrick sank onto the sofa as if all his strength had vanished. He felt as if a thousand tiny needles were pricking his brain.

He pressed his temples hard. "Where's your mother?"

"Mom?" Logan was still resentful, pouting with a hint of complaint in his voice. "You beat her so badly her face is too swollen to even look at, and her hands injured. We don't have money to go to the hospital, so she just put on some ointment, bandaged it up, and is resting in the guest room."

After saying that, he couldn't help but pout again, his expression full of disapproval

for Patrick. "Dad, you really went too far!"

"No money for the hospital?!"

Patrick's head snapped up. He grabbed a throw pillow from the sofa and hurled it at Logan, his chest heaving with rage. "You have money to buy your sister a necklace worth over a hundred thousand dollars, but no money to take your mother-or me-to the hospital?!"

What kind of useless son did I raise?!

I'd have been better off raising anything else!

As soon as Hailey heard that, she knew there was trouble.

Her long lashes trembled, and she quickly put on a tearful expression, her eyes turning red. She

immediately made a show of trying to takeoff the necklace. "I'm... Rm so sorry... It was all my fault for being so selfish! Logan, hurry, take the necklace back and get a refund With the family in this situation, Mom and Dad's health is what's important. I don't want the necklace anymore... I don't even like it at all..."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 273[581 words]

Logan grabbed Hailey's hand, stopping her from removing the necklace. "It's already bought. Why return it? If I, Logan Wynn, take back something I've given, what will happen to my reputation?"

If he actually returned this necklace, he would become a laughingstock in his social circle.

The fourth young master of the Wynn family having to return a necklace worth over a hundred thousand dollars?

Even with the Wynn family's current situation...

Outsiders didn't know!

He still had his pride!

"Reputation?" Patrick let out a bitter laugh and grabbed another pillow, throwing it at Logan's face. "The Wynn family is about to go bankrupt! Our reputation is about to be trampled into the dirt! And you're talking to me about reputation? What damn reputation do you have left?"

After roaring, Patrick's vision went black, and he leaned against the sofa, panting heavily.

The surge of anger made his headache unbearable.

Patrick raised a hand and pressed hard on his temples, his face contorting in pain.

In a daze, he remembered the past...

Due to work pressure and long nights, he used to get terrible headaches whenever he was stressed.

After Serena was brought back from the countryside...

Every time his head was splitting with pain...

That timid little girl would silently prepare a soothing drink, bring it to his study, and massage his head with just the right amount of pressure...

It seemed that ever since Serena had arrived at the Wynn family...

He hadn't had a headache in a very, very long time.

Now that Serena was gone...

His old ailment was back.

And there was no one to care for him.

The more he thought about it, the more irritated and impatient Patrick became. "Go, get your mother down here! Ahem, ahem..."

Logan pouted. "You beat her up so badly... She just lay down to rest, and now you want to call her up again..."

"I said go!" Patrick's eyes snapped open, and he slammed his hand on the sofa, his face a mask of fury.

Logan flinched, shrinking back in fear.

Seeing this, Hailey quickly stood up and offered, "Dad, please don't be angry. I'll go get Mom right now..."

As she spoke, she scurried off toward the guest room.

While running, she didn't forget to clutch the necklace she had failed to remove, as if desperate to escape the oppressive atmosphere.

After a while...

Hailey returned, supporting Marianne, who was limping.

Marianne's face was bruised and

swollen, her lip was cut, her wrist

was

apped in gauze, and she

walked with

limp. She looked

utterly wretched and haggard.

As Hailey helped her into the living room, her eyes fell on Patrick, filled with resentment and grievance.

Her lips trembled, but she said nothing.

She was waiting for Patrick to apologize.

But Patrick only gave her a cold glance and asked directly, "Where is Serena's room?"

Marianne's accusatory expression froze. Her eyes darted away, and she avoided his gaze guiltily. "Wh-why are you asking that?"

"I'm asking you, which room did she

live in after she came back to the

Wynn family?!" Seeing her

expression, Patrick's heart sa

shouted impatiently.

He

Marianne flinched at his roar, mainly because she was still terrified from the beating

he'd given her outside Obsidian Palace.

She shrank back and stammered, "She already moved out... Her room has been cleared out. What's the use of asking now..."

"Speak!" Patrick lost all patience. He slammed his hand on the sofa again and, fighting a strong wave of dizziness, forced himself to stand.

Marianne lowered her head. "She... she

bet

To always slept in... in the storage

room at the end of the hall on the

first floor the one for junk

"The storage room?!"

Patrick's voice shot up several octaves as he stared at Marianne in disbelief.

His head swam again.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 274[611 words]

He swayed on his feet, raising a hand to press hard against his brow. "You... how could you let Serena live in a storage room!"

He took a deep breath to steady himself, then stumbled toward the dark corner at the far end of the hallway.

The three Wynn siblings exchanged glances and quickly followed.

At the very end of the hall, tucked into a corner beneath the spiral staircase, was the storage room.

The closed wooden door was incredibly thin and already somewhat warped.

Patrick's temples throbbed as he reached out and pushed the door open.

A wave of damp, musty air and dust rushed out to meet them.

Patrick coughed violently, waving a hand in front of his face.

Before him was an extremely narrow room, with only a tiny ventilation window letting in a sliver of weak light.

A small single bed was pushed against the wall, covered with a cheap, faded sheet.

An old, paint-chipped dressing table stood in a corner, its mirror cracked.

A simple wardrobe had a door that hung crookedly.

Other than that, there was nothing.

He could even see water stains and mold in the corners of the walls!

The conditions were so squalid that even the servants' quarters were hundreds of times better than this!

Patrick felt his vision go dark just looking at it.

His face ashen, he clutched his heavy head and spun around, glaring at Marianne, who had followed him. "At that time, Serena was still a daughter of the Wynn family! And this is the kind of place you arranged for her to live in?!"

Marianne was frightened by his glare and felt a pang of guilt, but she forced herself to argue back

defiantly "Sh-she was just a country bumpkin from the middle of nowhere! What does she know about good or bad? It was good enough that she got to live in such a large mansion..."

Seeing Patrick's gaze grow colder and his face darken...

Marianne's voice trailed off. She lowered her head and explained weakly, "At the time... she was brought back on short notice, and we didn't have any empty rooms. I figured... I'd let her stay in the storage room temporarily, just for a bit. Once the servants cleaned up a proper room, I'd have her move. But then... then I forgot..."

That part was true.

She wasn't so heartless as to deliberately put Serena, whom she had believed to be her biological daughter at the time, in a storage room upon her return.

Even if she disliked Serena, there was no need to mistreat her in terms of food and lodging.

However, it was also true that she hadn't cared enough to remember.

So she had simply put it out of her mind.

"You forgot?" Patrick was so angry he laughed. He pointed at Hailey. "Then how come Hailey got the best princess room the moment she came back? And Serena lived in this house for four years, and you forgot for four years?"

No wonder... No wonder Serena had worn such a sarcastic expression when he mentioned bringing her back to the family, saying her room was untouched and she could move back in anytime!

Patrick's chest heaved with rage. He turned and pointed at Benedict and Logan, berating them as well. "And you two! Did you forget, too? You're in and out of this house every day. Are you both blind?"

Faced with their father's unrestrained fury, a look of shame flickered across the Wynn brothers' faces. They were left speechless.

Looking at the narrow, damp, dark little space, and then thinking of the spacious, luxurious, castle-like room Hailey lived in...

Even Logan couldn't bring himself to shout back defiantly.

For the first time, they were confronted with a clear, profound realization...

Their neglect of Serena was so tangible and cruel.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 275[649 words]

Seeing Patrick's towering rage, Marianne was reminded of how brutally he had treated her outside Obsidian Palace just a short while ago.

Humiliation turned to anger, and she shrieked, "What are you yelling at me for? What right do you have to blame me? Or our sons? You're her father! She lived here for four years, and you never noticed either, did you? You didn't set foot in here to check on her once in four years. You never cared whether she lived or died! So don't you stand there and pretend to be the good guy now!"

Patrick's face flushed a deep red, and for a long moment, he couldn't utter a single word.

He ran his hands through his hair roughly.

She was right. Who was there to blame?

No wonder Serena hated them so much-hated them enough to leave the Wynn family without a second thought, hated them so much she refused to ever come back.

Anyone who had been treated like trash in an environment like this for four years would be filled with hate!

He leaned weakly against the wall. The fever and the intense pain in his head made his dizziness even worse.

He honestly wished he could just black out and faint again.

"Dad, right now... there's no point in saying any of this," Benedict said, looking at the heartbreakingly shabby room and then at his father, who looked unwell and deeply uncomfortable. He spoke with difficulty. "With the Wynn family in this state... and with a hundred-million-dollar debt, what are we going to do next?"

Patrick took several deep, ragged breaths, trying to regain some composure. "What can we do? We have to go to the source of the problem... Our only hope now is Serena."

"She's able to mix with Mr. Foster, the Barnes family's daughter, Mr. Hawthorne... that whole group of top-tier elites. And her status among them is so high..."

"If we just put in a little more effort, spend a little more time trying to win her over! If we can get her back... what's a hundred million dollars? As long as she agrees the

W family... with the help of those elites, we can absolutely make a stunning comeback. We might even break into the ranks of Vaelion City's high society!"

The more Patrick spoke, the more a light ignited in his eyes, his tone growing more and more certain.

Benedict pressed his lips together.

He knew, of course, that if Serena were willing to help, all their problems would disappear.

The problem was...

Serena had made her attitude perfectly clear.

She would never come back to the Wynn family...

"She'll give in!" Patrick said, his fists clenched tight. It was as if he were a drowning man clinging to his only lifeline, forcing himself to believe in it. "Don't you all forget what Serena used to be like."

"Deep down, what she craves most is family affection! Otherwise, why would she have spent four years trying so desperately to please us? She acted so humbly, all just to become part of this family, right?"

"Back when your grandmother died, she was so devastated. She locked herself in your grandmother's room for three days and three nights and cried until her eyes were swollen shut! That proves she's a person who values relationships and loyalty."

"As long as we're willing to humble ourselves, show enough sincerity, and make her believe that we truly regret what we did, that we truly see her as our daughter and sister. If we can make her feel the warmth of a family, she will definitely soften her heart. She will definitely come back!"

Benedict looked at his father, who was bordering on delirious, and moved his lips as if to speak.

But Patrick, fists still clenched,

seemed lost in a trance, muttering to

fnct

himself, "Yes... outside Obsidian Palace, Serena deliberately kept mentioning her family from the slums in front of us showing off how close she was with them. That was obviously just an act!"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 276[529 words]

"She's doing this on purpose to provoke us, to make us jealous! Doesn't this just prove that she cares about us? That she wants our attention?"

As Patrick spoke, he broke into another nearly maniacal laugh.

It was as if he could already see the Wynn family's glorious revival after Serena's return, a future where they would not only recover but rise to new heights.

Benedict's lips trembled, but he ultimately pressed them together.

He watched his frenzied father, but the image that filled his mind was of Serena's indifferent, emotionless expression as she left, devoid of any lingering attachment.

He had a feeling that this time...

Things were truly different.

Nearby, Hailey, who had been silent the whole time, kept her head down, her slender fingers twisting the hem of her skirt into a wrinkled mess...

When Serena returned home, the whole family was indeed waiting for her.

She chatted with them for a while before going upstairs to her room, washing up, and heading to bed.

She figured she was just disgusted by that pack of scumbags from the Wynn family again. In a daze.

Serena felt herself transform back into the small, skinny five-year-old she once was.

She stood before a table in the old country house, under a flickering, dim yellow light.

Holding a worn-out old phone, she carefully dialed a number she had long memorized.

Her face was full of anticipation as she listened to the long dial tone, her bright, clear eyes sparkling.

But when the call connected.

All she heard was Patrick's

perpetually perfunctory voice. "Ob Serenay Dad's in the middle of a very important project. I come see you when I'm done, okay? Be a good girl, listen to your grandma, and don't..."

Before he could finish.

She heard Patrick suddenly laugh with excitement, shouting, "Mr. Keaton, you're finally here!" as he hung up the phone.

Little Serena hadn't even had the chance to say, "Daddy, I miss you," before the line went dead with a steady hum.

Her dark lashes trembled. She bit her lower lip and stubbornly dialed Marianne's number.

This time, the phone rang for a long, long time before it was finally answered.

Little Serena could hear soft music and the muffled sound of women laughing and talking in the background.

Marianne's impatient voice was

sharp and piercing. "What is it now? Why do you call so much all day? Didn't tell you not to call unless it's important. Don't you know Mommy is very busy? Can't you be more considerate?"

Just as she finished, little Serena heard a woman's delicate laugh from the side. "Mrs. Wynn, this essential oil back massage feels wonderful, doesn't it?"

Marianne quickly replied with a cheerful laugh, "Yes, yes, it's so relaxing..."

Her laughter was a world away from the sharp, harsh tone she used with little Serena.

The call was disconnected.

Little Serena clutched the phone, tears welling up in her eyes.

...

The scene suddenly changed.

It was a muddy country road, with a fine rain falling from the sky.

Little Serena was covered in scrapes and bruises. There were bandages on her forehead and body, and her left knee was wrapped in a thick dressing that was seeping blood.

She looked utterly pitiful.

A luxurious car, completely out of place in the surroundings, was parked at the entrance of the old house.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 277[586 words]

Patrick and Marianne were impatiently pulling bags of things out of the trunk.

Little Serena's eyes instantly lit up, and even the pain coursing through her body seemed to vanish.

Limping, she dragged her injured leg and rushed toward the parents she had longed to see. "Dad, Mom, you... you're really here!"

Grandma had told her that if she got hurt, her mom and dad would come to see her.

She thought Grandma was just trying to comfort her.

She never thought it was true!

However, what awaited little Serena was not her mother's warm embrace.

The moment she got close.

Marianne's brow furrowed, her face filled with disgust as she looked at the disheveled, blood-and-grime-covered child before her. Without a second thought, she shoved her away.

Little Serena was already seriously injured. The forceful push sent her small body crashing onto the gravel-strewn dirt ground.

Her wounds struck the ground again, and a searing pain made her face turn pale instantly. Tears welled up in her eyes.

"What are you crying for? All you know is how to play the victim!" Marianne stared at her coldly, her eyes showing no trace of concern for her injured daughter, only pure disgust and impatience. "Always acting pitiful, making up excuses so your grandma will call and force us to come back, right? So manipulative at such a young age!"

As she spoke, she scanned little Serena from head to toe with a sharp, judgmental gaze. "You look fine to me! You're up and about, nothing's wrong with you! Lying and scheming at your age, you really were born worthless!"

Little Serena was stunned.

She sat blankly on the muddy ground, rainwater mixing with her tears, soaking her face.

She looked down at the bandages on her body, at the stinging wounds and the blood seeping through.

Her whole body ached so much she wanted to scream.

She was so hurt, so obviously.

Why did her mother say nothing was wrong with her?

Little Serena wanted to cry, wanted to ask her mother if she couldn't see the injuries on her body at all.

But meeting Marianne's cold, impatient, and disgusted eyes, all the words caught in her throat, turning into silent sobs.

"Marianne! What are you doing?!" Old Mrs. Wynn, returning from outside with an umbrella, saw little Serena on the ground and was so furious she threw the umbrella at Marianne.

She hurried to Hittle Serena's side,

pulling her into a heartbroken embrace, then turned to yell at Patrick and Marianne. "Are you even human? How long has it been, Since you came to see your child? She's hurt like this, and you don't show a shred of concern, you just get physical with her? What kind of parents are you?"

Marianne, having been scolded,

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grew even angrier and pointed a finger at Old Mrs. Wynn's nose. "How am not human? Who do you think you have to thank for the comfortable life you're living here? Don't we have to make money?"

"Dad left us that rundown company, and it took me and Patrick ages to get it off the ground. So many people depend on us for their livelihoods!"

"Do you have any idea how much

money it costs to travel back and forth from Vaelion City to this dump? How much of my time it

f

wastes? A single day's loss for us is

deal worth millions of dollars! Do

you understand?"

Furious, she pointed at Old Mrs. Wynn, then at Serena. "From now on, unless it's an emergency, don't call us!"

"You!" Old Mrs. Wynn trembled with anger. She quickly raised her hands and

covered little Serena's ears, not wanting her to hear such heartbreaking words.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 278[573 words]

Patrick frowned and shot Marianne a glare before putting on a smile to smooth things over. "Mom, don't be angry with Marianne. She's just worried about the Wynn Group, that's why she's so anxious."

"In my opinion, why don't you and Serena just come back to Vaelion City with us? Living out here in the countryside, you're so far away. If anything happens, we can't take care of you."

Before Old Mrs. Wynn could answer.

Marianne screeched, her voice shrill as she cut him off. "Go to Vaelion City? What for?! The four brats at home are already a handful! The company is a mess of problems, and we're overwhelmed. Who has the spare time to wait on you two? Isn't it chaotic enough?"

She pointed at Patrick and said furiously, "No! Absolutely not!"

Old Mrs. Wynn hugged the silent, trembling little Serena tightly, her gaze toward Patrick turning desolate.

Especially when Patrick, faced with Marianne's refusal, remained silent with a pained expression on his face.

Old Mrs. Wynn's heart grew even colder.

"Don't worry, I won't go back with you," Old Mrs. Wynn's voice turned cold. "I'll stay here and watch over the house your father left behind! But... I worry about my granddaughter! I only ask that you two, as her parents, find a little space for Serena in your hearts. Come back and see her when you have time! Do you have any idea how much she misses you? She cries herself to sleep thinking about you!"

"Misses us? I think she just looks for ways to cause us trouble!" Marianne retorted angrily. "Look at her. What's to like? She's no help at all, just a constant burden! Do you have any idea how hard we work out there every day?"

"That's enough!" Old Mrs. Wynn couldn't take it anymore, her brow furrowed as she roared, "How old is Serena? What does she know? If you don't want this daughter, then don't ever come back! Just pretend we both died here in the countryside!"

"Fine by me! You think I enjoy coming here?" Marianne spat. "You think I want to come to this godforsaken place? This little jinx, you can have her. It's not like I want her anyway..."

"Shut up!" Patrick suddenly yanked Marianne back, giving her a harsh, warning glare.

Then, he forced a smile at Old Mrs. Wynn. "Mom, what are you saying? Please don't listen to Marianne's nonsense. How could we not want Serena? She's our daughter.

"It's just that the company is just starting out, and we're really stretched thin."

"And Serena is still so little. We're just afraid we'd neglect her while we're busy with work. We feel most at ease with her staying with you."

As he spoke, he nudged Marianne's arm with his hand.

Marianne suddenly remembered.....

Old Mrs. Wynn still held the company's original shares, and the largest portion at that!

Her expression changed. She forced down her rage and let out a reluctant, cold snort.

But in the end she couldn't resist shooting a cold glare at little Serena in Old Mrs. Wynn's arms. "You need to be more sensible from now on. Don't have your grandmother callus over every little thing. Don't use your grandma to threaten us!"

Patrick tried to smooth things over "Serena, your mother is just worried

you'll interfere with

Our work

Mommy and Daddy are earning

money for you."

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Little Serena's eyes were misty with tears. Her small body trembled violently, and

her voice was a muffled, choked explanation. "I didn't..."

But the look in Marianne's eyes had already condemned her.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 279[580 words]

...

The scene twisted once more.

Late at night, the countryside was silent and still.

After comforting herself, little Serena carefully carried a glass of milk toward Patrick and Marianne's room.

She remembered... her mother liked this.

She thought that maybe if her mother drank the milk, her mood would improve. She wouldn't be so angry, she would smile at her, and she wouldn't hate her so much.

But as she reached the door, she heard her parents arguing through the slightly ajar opening.

"...So annoying! If she hadn't used Mom to threaten us and force us back today, I could have met with Mrs. Arden! She's the connection who could introduce us to the Hawthorne family! If we could get in with them, do you know how much trouble that would save us?" Marianne cursed angrily.

"Alright, calm down. Mom was just worried because the child was hurt..." Patrick soothed.

"Hurt? I think she was faking it! So manipulative at such a young age! She deliberately had Mom call us so we'd have to drop everything and rush back!" The more Marianne spoke, the angrier she got. "And you, that deal you were about to close today was supposed to be signed! It was worth millions, and because of her phone call, it's all gone down the drain!"

"She's a jinx! Nothing good ever comes from being involved with her!"

Patrick's voice was weary. "Come on, Mom still holds 35% of the company's original shares. Dad insisted on giving them to her before he died."

Marianne snorted. "If it weren't for those shares, do you think I'd be putting up with this in a place like this?"

Patrick consoled her, "Those shares are the foundation of the Wynn Group. Mom loves Serena..... so in the future, those shares will most likely go to Serena. You should be nicer to her. Just think of it as humoring Mom for the sake of the shares."

"Give them to her? On what grounds?!" Marianne was even more furious now. "She's a useless girl! What right does she have to get so many shares? Has Mom lost her mind?"

Marianne shot to her feet. "Patrick, you're the only son of the Wynn family. Besides, didn't we have four sons? Even if it's a matter of inheritance, it shouldn't go to a girl like Serena, right? What is that old hag thinking? Clinging to the shares and wanting to give them to Serena? I swear, just looking at Serena makes me furious..."

CRASH-

As if struck by lightning, little

Serena's hands could no longer knot

it

Sontent belongs to swet

the glass cup fell to the floor

The white liquid splattered everywhere, soaking the bandages wrapped around her.

The cursing inside the room came to an abrupt halt.

"Who's there?!" Footsteps followed immediately.

The door was yanked open.

But there was no one outside, only the mess on the floor.

...

The scene blurred and shifted.

Finally, it settled on a cold hospital bed.

The smell of disinfectant was sharp and pungent.

Old Mrs. Wynn's face was ashen. She was rail-thin, her life clearly fading away.

She lay on the bed, her breathing faint and labored.

old Serena set her

acupuncture kit aside and tightly gripped old Mrs. Wynn's hand

Next to her, a phone screen was lit up.

On the screen were countless calls made to contacts labeled "Dad" and "Mom."

Over and over, but none of them would connect.

Serena's eyes were red as she held Old Mrs. Wynn's hand, her voice choked with sobs. "Grandma don't sleep..... I can save you. I've studied medicine with my old master for so long, can save you... I can definitely save you..."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 280[563 words]

Old Mrs. Wynn struggled to open her eyes. Looking at her granddaughter, who was crying her heart out, her eyes were filled with an overwhelming ache and reluctance to leave.

She tried to lift her hand to touch her granddaughter's face, but she had no strength.

She could only force a weak smile, her voice as faint as a thread. "Silly child... my time is up. My organs... my organs are failing. Not even a miracle worker... could

save me..."

She looked at Serena, her face full of pain. "All these years, it's thanks to you... thanks to you giving me massage and brewing my medicine that I've lived so many extra years."

"These last few years were stolen time. They let me stay with you a little longer... see you grow up, so accomplished. Grandma is... content."

Serena quickly pressed Old Mrs. Wynn's hand to her own cheek.

Old Mrs. Wynn took a breath, her fingers gently stroking her granddaughter's tear-streaked face. "Serena, the one I worry about most... is you..."

"Listen to Grandma. After you go back to the Wynn family, don't you let yourself be mistreated..."

"Your mother... she dislikes me, and that's why she dislikes you... It's not your fault. After I'm gone, maybe she'll be better to you..."

Old Mrs. Wynn closed her eyes for a long moment, resting, before continuing. "Promise me, if you go back to that house and feel wronged... then don't worry about family ties. Your happiness, your joy, that's the most important thing... that's what Grandma wants to see more than anything..."

With great effort, she fumbled under her pillow for a carefully wrapped object. She handed it to Serena, her frail fingers gripping Serena's hand tightly.

Her eyes held a final moment of clarity and resolve. "This... is the only thing I can leave for you. Take it, and don't you dare give it to your parents. This is what I'm leaving for you, and you alone. You can't give it to anyone..."

"No matter how much your parents pressure you, this belongs only to you. As long as you have this... in the future... even if you leave the Wynn family, you'll be able to live well..."

"Grandma...!"

Serena watched as the kind but withered old woman slowly closed her eyes in front of her.

Her last look was filled with an endless, profound concern.

"Grandma!"

Serena shot up in bed.

She was drenched in a cold sweat, her heart pounding wildly.

The despair and sorrow from the dream felt as if they were about to spill out and drown her completely.

Suddenly, a pair of warm arms wrapped around her.

Serena felt an infinite warmth that dispelled all the coldness around her.

From above her, Catherine's gentle voice came It's okay, Serena,

AS At's okay, Serena, don't

Mom's here Mons here..."

Serena's long lashes trembled. She was stunned for a long moment before she slowly lifted her head.

She was in her own room.

Catherine's gentle and serene face was right there.

She looked at her with the same loving and pained concern that Old Mrs. Wynn always had.

"You had a nightmare, didn't you?" Catherine asked, her heart aching as She gently wiped the tears from Serena's face.

This daughter of hers, from the moment she met her... had always acted incredibly calm and

composed as if she could handle

anything that came her way.

Her unshakeable and poised demeanor.

just turned twenty.

Made it easy for people to forget that she was, in fact, just a young woman who had

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 281[532 words]

Catherine pulled Serena into another embrace, gently stroking her back. Her voice was as soft as if she were cooing to a baby. "You were asleep for so long, you scared me half to death. In your dream, you kept calling for Mommy, Daddy, and Grandma... You were crying so hard, it broke my heart."

"It's okay, everything's in the past now... From now on, you have a mom and dad in this home, a grandpa, and brothers who will all be with you. We'll always be by your side..."

Serena leaned into Catherine's embrace, taking in the comforting scent.

Her racing heart gradually began to slow down.

In the dream just now...

Everything that had happened was a real part of her past.

But now, she was being held by her own biological mother.

She had yearned for this for years, humbly begged for it, this familial love she had never once felt from the Wynn family.

And now...

She truly, genuinely had it.

This was her real family.

Her true home.

Everything about the Wynn family...

Could no longer leave the slightest mark on her heart.

It would never affect her again.

Because she finally had the happiness she had always dreamed of.

"I'm okay now, Mom." Serena raised a hand to touch the dried tear tracks on her face.
"I'm going to wash up."

Catherine lovingly stroked her hair. "Yes, go wash your face and come down for dinner. You must be hungry after sleeping for so long. I'll go get your food ready now."

When Serena came downstairs.

She found the entire family sitting in the living room.

At the sound of her footsteps, they all turned to look at her in unison.

Their concerned gazes were incredibly warm.

None of them asked her what nightmare she'd had, nor did they mention her red, swollen eyes.

They simply used their warm, caring looks to dispel all of Serena's gloom.

Serena's heart was filled with warmth.

She curled her lips into a smile. "Grandpa, Dad, Julian, I'm fine. Don't worry."

Seeing the genuine smile that reached the girl's eyes, the Lancaster men finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Catherine brought the heated meal to the table. "As long as you're okay. Come and eat something."

Serena nodded and pulled out a chair to sit down.

After a few bites.

Her phone suddenly rang.

Serena picked it up. The name "Jaxon" flashed on the screen.

Her expression didn't change as she ate and answered the call. "Speak."

"Boss." Jaxon's voice was low, laced with a grim chill. "We just got word. The Kurobara Shroud and Siphon

have joined forces. In just one

might... they've sent at least half their

people into Elyndor."

"They move fast. They're coming for you."

Unfazed, Serena took a sip of milk, her cool voice betraying little emotion. "They certainly are in a hurry."

"As you instructed, the bait has been

cast. Black Mirage took it, just as expected. Jaxon's tone was tinged with a mix

of ruthlessness and

excitement. "Latest intel says that within a week, Black Mirage himself will be unable to resist and will

personally slip into Elyndor."

Serena's lips curved. "Understood."

She said nothing more and hung up.

It seemed the head of the Kurobara Shroud, Black Mirage, couldn't sit still any

longer.

She knew that a large-scale

incursion of foreign operatives into

Elyndor

would inevitably attract the
attention of the national authorities.

It had the potential to escalate into an international incident.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 282[597 words]

But the two organizations had done it anyway.

It was clear that losing their elite agents in Elyndor one after another had taken a significant toll on the Kurobara Shroud.

But it was good that they were coming.

This was the best opportunity to pull these rats out by the roots and wipe them all out in one fell swoop. It would save her the trouble of dealing with their constant meddling.

Still, it would be a bit of a hassle.

This was Elyndor, not the Gray Zone.

When the time came... she'd have to keep her hands clean and cover her tracks perfectly, leaving no loose ends.

After all, her organization, the Phantom Syndicate, had invested a great deal of effort to establish its network within Elyndor.

She absolutely could not risk tipping off the Elyndor authorities and drawing their attention to the Syndicate.

As Serena was lost in deep, solemn thought.

"Serena, what's wrong?" Catherine, who had been watching her daughter closely, keenly sensed the change in her demeanor.

She asked with concern, "Did you run into some kind of trouble?"

The other three Lancaster men all looked over. "What's wrong? What trouble? Tell us, don't try to carry everything on your own."

Old Mr. Lancaster's gaze rested on Serena's face, his eyes narrowing slightly. "Serena, the Lancaster family will always be your strongest support."

Faced with her family's concerned eyes, the warmth in Serena's heart deepened.

It was for that very reason that she couldn't drag her family into the matters from Norvane.

Serena paused for a moment, then curved her lips into a smile. "Grandpa, Mom, Dad, Julian, I need to move out for a while."

"What? Move out?!"

"Why?"

"Is there something about the house that's making you uncomfortable?"

Catherine had the strongest reaction. "Serena, why the sudden decision to move out? Is it... is it something I did? Did I make you feel wronged? You can tell me, I can change anything!"

"Or is it because of that bunch of bastards from the Wynn family?!" Old Mr. Lancaster slammed his hand on the table, his chest heaving with anger. "Serena, had Colin look into it last night. The life you lived with the Wynns... what kind of life was that! They abandoned you in the countryside without a second

thought, and when they finally

brought you back..."

Old Mr. Lancaster was too furious to continue, clutching his chest and gasping for breath. "Don't you worry. I'll have them run out of Vaelion City today! They'll never recover!"

If it hadn't been for how the Wynns treated Serena, how could she, at just twenty years old, be so jaded? She completely lacked the energy and emotion a girl her age should have.

If it weren't for the Wynns, how could the normally composed and strong Serena have cried so heartbrokenly in her sleep?

"Grandpa, you haven't fully recovered yet. You shouldn't get so worked up." Serena's eyes curved slightly, her cool, bright gaze softening with a warm smile. "Let me finish."

"You've all been wonderful to me, and I'm very happy here. The warmth and love you've given me are things I never felt in twenty years with the Wynn family."

"But my decision to move out has nothing to do with the Wynns. They aren't worthy of influencing my choices."

"It's for the research institute. Mr.

Harrison is leading a key national

project and they need me to

oversee it. The project is classified and requires me to be on call at all times."

"The institute is a bit far from home, and the commute would waste too much time. Besides, it really requires intense focus and the project timeline is tight so I plan to stay at the institute for a while."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 283[630 words]

Hearing that it was a key national project backed by Mr. Harrison, the worry on her family's faces gradually faded, replaced by immense pride and honor.

But mostly, they were reluctant to see her go.

"Don't worry about me too much," the girl explained in her calm, cool voice. "I'll find time to come back and visit everyone. If things go smoothly... I might even make it back for Brianna's coming-of-age party."

The Lancasters exchanged glances. Though they didn't want her to leave, what could they do? Their precious girl was just that outstanding.

When the nation called, it was her duty to answer.

Old Mr. Lancaster sighed. "Since it's for work, then fine... you should go. But you have to promise us you'll call when you have time."

Serena nodded with a smile. "Of course."

Catherine held her daughter's hand, her heart aching with reluctance. "Then... you have to take good care of yourself. No matter how busy you are, you must eat on time."

Serena patted Catherine's hand. "It's just for a few days. Don't worry."

The living room was filled with a warm, caring atmosphere as everyone gathered around Serena, fussing over her.

On the second-floor landing, Isabella nearly crushed the glass in her hand.

A key national project?

And Mr. Harrison asked her to oversee it?

She was so full of herself.

Even if Serena had gotten some national-level certificate before, it was a complete fluke, and it was all thanks to her!

Serena was just taking advantage of the fact that Isabella didn't dare reveal she had stolen the laptop, forcibly claiming credit that belonged to her!

And now she was putting on such a grand act.

Did Serena have any self-awareness? She was just a country girl, a slacker who didn't even want to go to school.

The only reason she was at Mr. Harrison's institute was because the Lancasters had pulled strings to get her in, just to pad her resume.

And she was really leaning into the role?

Worst of all, the family actually believed her?

But then, the thought of Serena moving out meant that she would once again be the only young lady in the Lancaster family.

That would give her the perfect opportunity to win her family's favor!

She would show everyone that she, Isabella, was far more outstanding than Serena!

She would make them all see who the true gem of the Lancaster family was!

Meanwhile.

Old Mr. Lancaster was still looking at Serena with some unease. "Serena, tell your grandpa the truth. Does this really have nothing to do with the Wynn family? If you don't want to get your hands dirty, Grandpa can take care of it for you..."

"Why use a sledgehammer to crack a nut?" A smile bloomed in Serena's cool eyes. "Just you watch. The Wynns... you won't need to lift a finger. They're perfectly capable of destroying themselves."

Thinking about the Wynn family's current situation, Serena could almost understand why Old Mrs. Wynn had left all her shares to her before she passed away.

Part of it was out of concern for her, fearing that Marianne wouldn't like her and would treat her poorly after she returned to the family. Giving her the shares would at least make Marianne wary.

But the bigger reason was that Patrick and Marianne were simply too incompetent.

Otherwise, they wouldn't have collapsed so completely, unable to even get back up, the moment she withdrew all the support she had been providing.

Didn't that prove that the Wynn Group's rise to prominence in Vaelion City was entirely dependent on the help she provided?

They had so many good resources, yet they managed the Wynn Group into this state.

No wonder Old Mrs. Wynn hadn't been willing to give them a single share, even on her deathbed.

At this thought, Serena's eyes lifted, and she looked at Julian Lancaster. "Julian, there is actually one thing I need your help with."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 284[562 words]

Julian immediately sat up straighter. "What is it?"

"I need to borrow some people." Serena's brow arched slightly, her long, bright eyes devoid of any emotion. "Whether the Wynns sink or swim, I don't care. But... the Wynn Group cannot be allowed to go down with them."

Her gaze lifted. "The Wynn Group was Old Mr. And Mrs. Wynn's life's work, built from scratch. For Old Mrs. Wynn especially... it was her legacy."

"The Wynns are incompetent. They can't protect this business."

Serena's voice was cold. "Since they can't protect it, then I will take over."

"Julian, I need a professional team to help me audit the Wynn Group's assets, debts, and equity, and to handle the entire assessment and takeover process."

"I want to pull the company out, clean and clear, before that sinking ship of a family goes under completely."

A sharp glint flashed in Julian's eyes from behind his glasses, and he broke into a smile. "Of course. I'll arrange it for you."

Old Mr. Lancaster and Edward looked at Serena, their eyes filled with undisguised approval.

She was truly a Lancaster.

She had guts.

These words also reached Isabella's ears loud and clear.

When she heard how much Serena cared about the Wynn Group, and that she was even preparing to snatch it from the Wynn family...

A calculating light flickered in her jealous eyes.

The Wynn Group, huh...

Since Serena wanted it.

Then she would make sure Serena didn't get her wish!

With Siphon and the Kurobara Shroud joining forces, countless assassins were already slipping into Elyndor.

Serena didn't want to linger at the Lancaster estate.

Every extra minute she spent there put the family in greater danger.

She immediately packed a few things and prepared to leave.

Catherine spoke up reluctantly. "So soon?"

"The sooner I deal with it, the sooner

I can come home." Serena smiled. "I'll be back soon. In the meantime, you all... should stay home as much possible and wait for me.

as

Catherine didn't overthink it. Seeing that Serena was only taking her usual canvas bag, she quickly grabbed her hand, "Wait, is that all you're taking? Let me pack some things for you to bring along."

"Mom, it's fine. I'm only going for a few days. If she let her mother pack, she'd probably end up with more bags and suitcases than she could carry it might as well be moving day.

Apparently, the other Lancasters had the same thought.

Old Mr. Lancaster spoke up. "Alright, Catherine. It's not like Serena is gone for good. It's just a few days. She can buy whatever she needs."

With that, he looked at Serena. "Serena, I transferred ten million dollars to your account. Buy whatever you need. Don't you dare try to save money."

Serena was speechless.

Great. Instead of shoving a card in her hand, now it was a direct transfer.

She knew that even if she refused, she couldn't fight her grandfather's enthusiasm for giving her money.

She could only smile at him. "Thank you, Grandpa."

Isabella clenched her fists in jealousy.

Favoritism, favoritism, favoritism!

Every single one of them played favorites!

How long had Serena been back? How much money had Grandpa given her already?

In all the years Isabella had been with the Lancasters, all her allowance and cash rewards combined didn't even add up to half of what Serena had received!

And now, Serena's true colors were showing!

When they first gave her money, she had put on a show about not wanting the family's money.

Now she accepted it without batting an eye.

Ugh! What a hypocrite!

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 285[573 words]

Isabella watched as Serena, under the family's reluctant gazes, got into Nicholas's car and drove away from the Lancaster estate.

She bit her lip, nearly mad with jealousy.

Looking at that black Maybach, she was reminded of her embarrassing moment from the previous night-

The black Maybach. That was Nicholas's car.

When she saw it appear at the Lancaster estate, her first thought was...

Nicholas is here!

She was aware that since Serena's return, Nicholas had visited the Lancasters more times than in the past decade combined.

But as long as Nicholas came to the estate, it was an opportunity for her!

Isabella had immediately rushed to the entrance and, upon seeing the Maybach, called out in a saccharine voice, "Nicholas."

She knew he was almost certainly there for Serena.

So, her only option was to use Serena as a way to get Nicholas to acknowledge her.

Thus, she had made Serena the topic of conversation. "Nicholas, are you here to see Serena? She... isn't back yet."

She continued, lowering her gaze with a worried expression. "Serena's been like this a lot lately... either staying out all night or not coming home until the early hours. She knows the family is staying up waiting for her, but she doesn't seem to care that Grandpa and our parents are getting on in years..."

"While I strongly disapprove of her... always messing around outside, she is the apple of their eye, so I don't dare say much... I just feel bad for you, Nicholas. I'm afraid you've made a trip for nothing."

The person hadn't even gotten out of the car yet, and Isabella had already finished her entire performance.

So, when the door opened and out stepped Serena-the one person who made her blood boil just by looking at her—she froze completely.

Getting caught red-handed talking trash about someone, right to their face.

What if...

What if Serena told their parents what she had just said?

She would be finished!

Isabella's face turned pale.

This was immediately followed by a wave of intense jealousy.

Why was Serena driving Nicholas's car?

How could Serena be driving Nicholas's car?

How could Nicholas possibly let Serena drive his car?

When did Serena and Nicholas get so close?

Could it be that when Nicholas mentioned wanting to honor the engagement between their families, he wasn't joking?

While Isabella was fuming and dumbfounded, Serena got out of the car with calm composure and shot her a cool glance.

Then, she said nonchalantly, "Next time you want to put on your little act, make sure you know who you're performing for."

Isabella was furious.

To make it worse, as Serena walked past her toward the house, she

deliberately threatened her, Isabella

when I come home, or if

home, is none of your business."

"If you have a problem with that, we can take it directly to Mom and Dad and have a nice, long talk."

A threat!

A blatant threat!

That damn country girl! She was just flaunting the fact that she was the favorite! And she was using their parents to threaten her?

Standing by the floor-to-ceiling window, Isabella's fingers nearly tore the curtain.

Don't think that just because you're driving Nicholas's car, you're actually his fiancée!

Don't think that just because Old Mr.

Blackwood invited you to Bria

coming-of-age party, he's truly acknowledged you as his future

Onddes inter-in-law!

We'll see who gets the last laugh!

To make her story convincing, Serena called Mr. Harrison after leaving the

Lancaster estate to get their stories straight.

In return, Mr. Harrison used the opportunity to rope her into taking over a remote chip development project. Only then did he agree to "corroborate her story" for her family.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 286[575 words]

Mr. Harrison hung up, chuckling to himself.

Serena was just about to take off her headset, turning the steering wheel toward the house Jaxon had bought for her on the outskirts of town.

Suddenly, her phone rang again.

She glanced at it.

It was a video call from Nicholas.

Serena answered.

The man's flawlessly handsome face, cool and almost ethereally striking, appeared on the screen, perfect from every angle.

He seemed to have just showered. His wet hair was slicked back, giving him a more languid and dangerously captivating look than usual.

She wondered if he was doing it on purpose.

He was shirtless, and on the screen, his pale, defined collarbone was so alluring that it was impossible not to be drawn to it at first glance.

His skin looked exceptionally fair under the light.

The smooth lines of his muscles were just as mesmerizing.

That damn fox.

Always resorting to using his looks when he wanted something.

"Are you driving?" The man's low, magnetic voice came through the headset, as if laced with an electric current.

It inexplicably made Serena's ears tingle.

She kept her expression neutral and replied, "Mm-hmm."

"Ah... well, I can't distract you then," Nicholas said, his tone tinged with what sounded like regret.

The camera shook for a moment.

When it stabilized again, the man on the screen was wearing a black shirt.

Serena was speechless.

She knew it. That sly fox had been deliberately trying to seduce her.

She glanced at the screen, where he was slowly and deliberately buttoning his shirt with his long fingers.

up

Honestly, the act of buttoning it covering that expanse of pale skin bit by bit until only a sliver of his collarbone and his sharp Adam's apple were visible...

It was far more captivating than when he had simply been bare-chested.

Serena suspected this whole performance was intentional too.

She licked her dry lips. "What is it?"

"I heard from your brother that you're moving out for a few days?" Nicholas's dazzling, seductive eyes seemed to be staring at her right through the screen.

Serena gave him a sideways glance. "Are you and my brother that close?"

How did Nicholas already know about something that had just happened?

"We're family friends, so of course we're on good terms," Nicholas said with a smile. "And... as it happens, I'm also part of the institute."

Serena understood.

Since Nicholas and her brother were close, Julian would naturally know about Nicholas's ties to the institute.

And since she had used the institute as her excuse, her brother must have thought of asking Nicholas, who also had a position there, to look after her.

It was perfectly logical.

"I have a house near the institute, just a five-minute walk away," Nicholas said, the corner of his eye lifting flirtatiously. "Want to move in

there? It should be much more comfortable than the dorms."

Serena said, "No, thanks."

Nicholas raised an eyebrow. "Afraid of troubling me?"

Serena replied, "I'm not going to the institute."

Nicholas was confused.

Serena explained, "I'm going to stay in the countryside for a while. If my brother calls to ask about me, just tell him I'm in the dorms at the institute."

Nicholas was no fool.

It only took a moment of thought for him to grasp her intentions. "You're worried that the group of killers you ran into at Apex Horizon Speedway will harm the people around you?"

He had looked into the incident after Serena was attacked. The men had been taken away by the Department of Defense.

He had reviewed the DOD's interrogation transcripts and immediately launched his own investigation.

That group... they all belonged to a notoriously vicious assassin organization from Norvane.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 287[583 words]

Serena wasn't surprised that Nicholas had figured it out.

After all, the man's mind was as formidable as his face was bewitching.

It only took a little thought for him to deduce her reason for moving out.

"Speaking of which, I also have a villa in the west suburbs," Nicholas said, his low, husky voice like a feather brushing against her ear.

Serena glanced at the impossibly handsome face on the screen. "And?"

"So, you can move in with me," Nicholas said with a grin, dangling the bait. "My villa is a standalone property, remote enough, and has a military-grade security system. The full-coverage surveillance can be synced to your phone. Is that enough for you to lure them in and take them all out in one go?"

Serena's eyebrows lifted slightly.

Military-grade security?

A standalone property?

The conditions were... exactly what she needed.

It was quite tempting.

With two factions from Norvane descending at once, it was bound to cause a commotion. She really needed a place that was remote enough but also allowed her to maintain full control.

This meant she wouldn't have to waste energy setting everything up herself.

"It sounds pretty good," Serena admitted.

"Of course," Nicholas said, a smirk playing on his lips and an almost imperceptible smile in his voice, laced with a seductive quality. "And most importantly, I'll be staying there too... to lend you a hand."

Serena was silent.

Living with Nicholas?

Alone?

In the remote suburbs?

Her eyes narrowed.

As if guessing her reaction, Nicholas slowly sweetened the deal. "I'm only thinking of you. I'm making a personal sacrifice to make it easier to help you."

"And what if your family misses you and wants to video chat? If they see us together... it'll be more convincing, right? It will save them from worrying about you living alone, always on edge and letting their imaginations run wild, don't you think?"

The man's words perfectly addressed all of Serena's concerns.

She couldn't possibly bring danger to the institute.

And if her family did video call, she could fool them once or twice, but they eventually notice something was off if it happened too often.

That damn fox had come up with an airtight excuse.

Serena considered it for a few seconds. The pros and cons were clear.

While living alone with a man was a little strange... it didn't matter.

If Nicholas really got any funny ideas, he'd have to consider the consequences.

It wasn't like she couldn't put him in his place.

"Address, password," Serena finally conceded.

She didn't wait for Nicholas to answer.

Nicholas flashed a triumphant smile.

"Sending it now. You can head over first

Se place is always kept clean,

so you can move right in." .net>

Serena grunted in acknowledgment and ended the video call.

As the man's face disappeared from the screen, Serena felt the air in the car become a little less stuffy.

Soon, a location and a string of numbers arrived from Nicholas.

She opened the navigation app, turned the steering wheel, and followed the route toward the west suburbs.

Nicholas stared at the disconnected call, a light chuckle escaping as he tapped his tongue against the roof of his mouth.

He had just sent the address and password when his messaging app began to flash wildly.

His long fingers tapped the screen, opening the chat.

He saw that the contact saved as "Julian" had sent a flood of messages.

They kept popping up, one after another-

[Nicholas, you'd better take good care of my little sister over there!]

[But keep your hands to yourself! Don't you get any funny ideas!]

[Don't think I don't know what you're up to.

yeaking care of her is one

thing but you'd better put those Omer thoughts away!]

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 288[532 words]

[Even if our families had some childhood betrothal... you're the one who personally told Grandpa you were rejecting it! So don't you dare use that to trick my sister!]

[Until Serena agrees, that arrangement means nothing!]

[Remember, you can look after her, but if you dare make a move... you just try me!] The last message came with an emoji of a clenched fist and a menacing expression.

Even through the screen, Nicholas could clearly feel how fiercely protective his usually cool and domineering friend was of his sister, and... how much he distrusted him.

Nicholas looked at the long string of warnings and let out a low laugh.

He raised his long, slender fingers and pressed the voice message button, his voice a long, lazy drawl tinged with amusement.

"Don't worry, my future brother-in-law. I'll be sure to take excellent care of Serena."

"As for everything else... I understand. I will absolutely respect Serena's wishes and will not cross any lines."

"Even if you don't trust me, you should trust... Serena's abilities, right?"

His tone was utterly sincere.

But that "future brother-in-law" and the drawn-out words... gave Julian a very bad feeling.

He listened to Nicholas's voice message with a deep frown.

Didn't that "future brother-in-law" from Nicholas sound a bit too scheming?

He suddenly felt like he had just thrown his precious lamb into the wolf's den.

Had he made a mistake?

But in the entire institute, Nicholas was the only friend he knew through and through and could somewhat rely on.

From what his sister had said, the project at the institute was on a tight schedule. Surely... nothing too dramatic could happen, right?

Having Nicholas watch over her was better than her being alone. She had a tendency to be headstrong and neglect everything else when she got busy.

Julian sighed and sent another message: [Alright, just remember what you said. Take good care of Serena!]

Nicholas: [As you command, my future brother-in-law.]

Julian: [Who the hell is your future brother-in-law? Stop calling me that!]

Before, getting that bastard Nicholas to call him "brother" was practically impossible.

Now, Nicholas was calling him "future brother-in-law" as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

His intentions were plain for all to see.

Julian took a deep breath and

continued his instructions:

[Remember; no matter how capable

Serena is, she's still just a

twenty year-old girl.

She's very

delicate, so you'd better be careful with her!]

Reading this message, the smile on Nicholas's thin lips deepened.

He tapped his finger and replied: [As you command, my future brother-in-law. I will not fail this trust.]

Inside, he couldn't help but laugh.

If Julian knew... that his

"twenty-year-old," "delicate little girl

who needs to be taken care of" wasn't staying at the institute at all,

but was gearing up for a head-on

clash with an international

organization

of assassins

practically itching to tear their whole

operation down, and was as wild as they come...

His expression... would be priceless.

Serena followed the navigation system all the way to the west suburbs.

helmet

Nicholas's villa was indeed in a remote location, hidden among dense grove of trees. It was a standalone property offering a high degree of privacy

With a scenic setting by the water and mountains in the background, the environment was serene.

Just by looking at the villa's exterior, Serena could tell... the entire perimeter was equipped with Elyndor's top-of-the-line security systems.

It was insanely impressive.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 289[624 words]

As soon as Serena got out of the car, a middle-aged butler in a neat uniform with a warm smile approached her. "Miss Lancaster, hello. Welcome. I am the butler of this villa. You can just call me Nathaniel."

Serena nodded. "Nathaniel."

Nathaniel bowed slightly, his attitude respectful without being obsequious.

He was highly professional. As he led Serena into the villa, he gave her a detailed introduction to the security facilities and her access permissions.

Serena picked it up instantly. With a few swipes on the control panel, she had a complete grasp of the house's entire defense system.

Full-coverage motion-capture cameras, intelligent alert systems, high-strength anti-intrusion measures...

It was just as Nicholas had said—a military-grade security system.

If the people from Norvane tried to sneak in, they would suffer heavy losses just trying to get through the defenses.

And that would give her more than enough time to react and respond.

She was very satisfied.

After familiarizing herself with the system, Serena began to look around the standalone villa.

The interior was decorated in cool tones, with open spaces and excellent views.

It suited her aesthetic quite well.

After living in rooms decorated in pink and white for so long, staying in a house with such a minimalist design was a nice change.

Just then, the sound of an engine came from outside the villa.

Nicholas had arrived.

He was dressed in a black shirt, and his long trousers accentuated his straight, slender legs, making him look tall and elegant.

Following behind him was a woman in her forties with a gentle face and a surprisingly sturdy, powerful build.

"So, what do you think of the villa? Are you satisfied?" Nicholas asked, his captivating eyes sparkling as he saw the girl standing in the living room.

"It's not bad," Serena nodded.

Nicholas strode forward on his long legs and stood in front of Serena. He glanced sideways and gestured with his chin toward the middle-aged woman bening behind him. That's

She's an excellent cook. Whatever cuisine or dish you want, just tell her, and she can make it."

Fiona immediately greeted her with a cheerful smile. "Hello, Miss Lancaster. If you need anything at all, just let me know."

Serena's gaze fell on Fiona.

The middle-aged woman had a gentle appearance and wore a clean apron, but her steps were steady, her breathing was deep and even, and there were noticeable calluses on her knuckles...

Those weren't the kind of calluses one gets from doing housework.

She was a trained fighter, and her skills were likely impressive.

She nodded. "Hello, Fiona."

After greeting her, Fiona turned to Nicholas and said, "Young Master, I'll take your luggage upstairs for you."

Serena's gaze shifted to the simple gray-black suitcase, then swept up and down the man's lean figure, clad in the form-fitting shirt. "You know my situation. Aren't you afraid moving in here?"

Nicholas suddenly leaned in, his elegant, pine-like scent enveloping her.

A lazy, seductive smile played on his lips. "Of course I know. That's why... I'm here to protect you."

Serena glanced at him. "You? Are you up to it?"

The dazzling smile in the man's eyes deepened, spreading across his cool, ethereally handsome face.

He deliberately drew out the last syllable of his low, magnetic voice, almost like a lover's whisper. "Why don't you try me... and find out exactly what I'm capable of?"

Serena looked at Nicholas's peacocking display and couldn't even be bothered to respond.

She lazily stuck her hands in her pockets and walked straight toward the stairs. "Where do I sleep?"

"There are plenty of rooms in the villa, all with different decorations. Take your pick, whichever you like," Nicholas's voice, full of amusement, followed close behind her.

The low, magnetic laugh seemed to

have a hook in it as he drew out kis

my master

words again the best location and

bedroom has got

an incredible view. The bed is big enough, too. I don't mind sharing."

c 290

Serena shot back, "...I do."

Looking at his infuriatingly charming smile, Serena was already getting used to the man's constant showing off.

She went up to the second floor.

Her eyes swept over the empty rooms, and she finally walked toward a side bedroom.

This room faced the villa's main gate, which would give her a better vantage point to monitor everything.

Just as Serena was about to push the door open, her wrist was gently grabbed from behind by Nicholas.

The grip wasn't strong, but it was enough to make her stop.

She turned around.

The man's fingertips were cool as he held her wrist and lifted it.

He frowned, his gaze falling on the back of her hand.

The startling wound on the girl's fair, delicate hand was extremely obvious.

Nicholas's frown deepened. "Why didn't you treat this properly after you went home?"

Serena tried to pull her hand back. "It's almost healed. It doesn't need any more medicine."

After Nicholas had treated it last time, she had completely forgotten about the wound. It hadn't hurt much, and once the bleeding stopped, it seemed fine.

"What do you mean it doesn't need it?" Nicholas said, holding her hand firmly. "What if it leaves a scar because you didn't take care of it?"

As he spoke, he pulled Serena into the room diagonally across the hall. "From now on, I'm going to make sure you apply medicine until your hand is completely healed."

His tone left no room for argument.

He took a first-aid kit out of his suitcase. "If it really does scar, and Old Mr. Lancaster and Mrs. Lancaster see it, do you think their hearts won't break?"

Serena's long, dark lashes fluttered as she watched the man walk toward her with the first-aid kit.

She felt a slight flutter in her chest.

She spoke up. "You brought a first-aid kit specifically for this?"

"I figured you wouldn't take the wound on your hand seriously, so I came prepared," Nicholas said,

placing the kit on the sofa

and

kneeling in front of Serena. And as it

turns out, I was right."

The man's shirt tightened as he knelt, outlining his narrow waist and the smooth

lines of his muscles.

The tension in the air was palpable.

Especially when he knelt down and gently held her hand, as if it were a rare treasure.

lon

lowere

The goldendight streaming in from the floor-to-ceiling windows Nicholas's slightly

It cast a soft glow on his long, dark lashes, making his cool, ethereal face even more captivating.

His movements as he applied the medicine were exceptionally gentle, filled with an almost reverent care.

The air seemed to thicken at that moment, charged with a strange energy.

It felt like an electric current, spreading from her heart through her entire body.

It was like a small stone dropped into her heart, sending ripples through her.

Serena's breathing changed, becoming subtly unsteady.

As if sensing her gaze, the man, having finished applying the dressing, slowly lifted his eyes.

Serena was caught off guard, her gaze locking with his dazzling, captivating ones.

For a moment, her heart, already tingling with that electric current, suddenly throbbed.

Her breath hitched once more.

The man's deep, enchanting eyes seemed to be filled with starlight, clearly reflecting her face.

They were full of a deep, lingering affection... and held a burning intensity.

After a silent dozen seconds, Serena

was the first to look away. She

her hand back and

stood up

6. "Thanks."

She tossed out the single word, shoved her hand back into her pocket, and turned

to leave the room.

c 291

Serena returned to the guest room and closed the door.

The sound of his low, husky laughter seemed to linger in her ears, a seductive whisper that curled around her senses.

She closed her eyes for a moment.

That man...

He was a shameless flirt.

He knew exactly how to use his looks, showing off for her at every opportunity.

She felt like she wasn't acting like her usual self.

Just then, her phone vibrated.

She pulled out her phone. It was a call from Jaxon.

"Boss, Siphon and the Kurobara Shroud are making bigger moves," Jaxon relayed the latest intelligence to Serena. "Black Mirage has been mobilizing their people frequently and has contacted several arms dealers. From the looks of it... they're getting antsy."

Serena's expression grew sharp and cold.

She walked to the floor-to-ceiling window, gazing out at the quiet, dense forest beyond the villa.

"It seems he's more impatient than we anticipated." Serena's crimson lips curved into a cold smile.

This time, she had dismantled Norvane's spy network, completely destroying its foundation.

She had struck a major artery.

"Proceed with the original plan. Keep a close watch on all channels and wait for them to walk into our trap. Every step must be... foolproof!"

Jaxon replied, "Understood, Boss. Don't worry!"

She had probably gotten a little too flustered by Nicholas's charm offensive earlier.

Now, thanks to Jaxon's call, the strange, fluttering feeling in her heart subsided.

Then, her phone buzzed again. It was a dedicated app with a 'YB' icon, and messages were popping up one after another.

Serena opened it.

She saw an extremely grim and terrifying avatar bouncing frantically in the app.

It was the word 'DUE' in bold black font, complete with special effects of blood streaming down the screen and bloody handprints.

She opened the chat window.

Debt Repayment Committee: [AAAAHHH BOSS! HELP! It's a disaster!! If you don't show up, YB is going to go under!!!]

Debt Repayment Committee: [Boss, can you see this? Can you see this? I said YB is going under! I said YB is closing down!]

Debt Repayment Committee: [Praying for a random drop of new designs from the boss. praying_meme.jpg]

The person with the ID "Debt

Repayment Committee" was Rachel Sterpe, the current acting head of *** the VB brand and Serena's chief assistant at the company.

Just like her avatar, she was a deadline demon.

Serena's finger swiped across the screen, and she typed out a "?"

The reply was instantaneous.

Debt Repayment Committee:

[AAAAHHH BOSS, YOU'RE

let

YOU'RE ACTUALLY ALIVE! Did you know, YB just landed a whale! Like," super-mega-whale!] fo FindNovel.net

Debt Repayment Committee: [Our entire inventory-and I mean ALL OF IT!! The haute couture from every season, spring summer, fall and Winter Has been completely bought out

Debt Repayment Committee: [Do you know what 'bought out' even means?!]

Debt Repayment Committee: [It means the warehouse is completely empty right now! Boss, do you get what I'm saying?]

Serena was speechless.

Bought out?

What kind of big spender was this ruthless?

Even though YB focused on high-end luxury, its inventory wasn't small.

To buy everything out in one go?

That would have to be in the tens of millions, at the very least, right?

Serena: [Who's this big spender?]

Debt Repayment Committee: [It's an anonymous buyer, and the money has already been transferred!]

It seemed she really had encountered a tycoon who didn't treat money like it was real.

Serena thought for a moment: [I'll send you a batch of designs later to restock the inventory.]

Debt Repayment Committee: [About the designs... we can put a pin in that for now.] Serena: [?]

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 292[566 words]

Had the deadline demon had a change of heart?

Usually, when Serena offered designs, Rachel was more anxious than anyone. And now she was saying 'put a pin in that'? Had she been possessed?

Debt Repayment Committee: [Hehehe... The whale offered nine figures for you to personally design an evening gown. But... they're in a bit of a rush. They want the finished product in five days.]

Nine figures?

That was an unreasonably generous offer.

Although for a whale like this, that much money was probably just a string of numbers. Still, Serena couldn't help but pass judgment-more money than sense.

She mulled it over.

She was currently lying in wait for the Kurobara Shroud and Siphon to fall into her trap, which did require a lot of patient waiting.

She did have some free time.

And besides...

As soon as she returned to the Lancaster family, her family members had started handing her black cards at the drop of a hat.

She ought to give them some gifts in return.

Also... she wanted to help improve the health of everyone in the family, and the medicinal ingredients she needed were quite expensive.

She did need to earn some money.

Serena replied: [Tell him one billion. I'll take the job.]

Rachel gasped, then was overcome with ecstatic joy: [One billion?! That's our boss!]

[Wait, Boss, I'll go negotiate right now! Please don't change your mind!]

It was so rare for the boss to be willing to work and make money!

This was a once-in-a-lifetime event!

Fearing she would change her mind, Rachel went offline in a flash.

But just a few minutes later, she was back online: [Boss, they agreed to the one billion without hesitation! But they provided some design requirements. They hope you can design it according to their ideas.]

Serena raised an eyebrow: [Send them over.]

Soon, a document was sent over.

Serena opened it and quickly began to browse.

As she read, the playful amusement in her bright eyes gradually gave way to seriousness.

To be honest, the design requirements were a bit too detailed.

But..... it wasn't the kind of detail from someone giving armchair critiques.

The client's taste... was quite exceptional.

From the style, color palette, and fabric preferences to the cut and other details, every element was incredibly precise.

Every point hit the absolute pinnacle of beauty.

Just looking at these requirements, countless preliminary designs instantly flooded Serena's mind.

She could almost imagine it.

When the final sketch was complete, how stunning this design would be... and what a sensation it would cause.

When this piece was created, it would probably cause another uproar in the entire design world.

This job was definitely worth taking.

It even sparked a long-dormant, intense desire to create a perfect masterpiece.

Serena shut herself in her room, completely immersed in her design sketches.

The tip of her pen traced stunning lines across the paper.

Outside the window, the sky turned from bright to dusk and was gradually enveloped by the night.

Nicholas had been thrilled that he finally had a chance to live under the same roof as Serena.

He had already come up with countless plans on how to use his good looks to his advantage during

this period of 'cohabitation

.net>

But while the plans were made, and he'd even rehearsed the expressions and actions he would use in front of Serena countless times, he waited and waited.

But Serena's door never opened.

When dinnertime arrived, Fiona had prepared a table full of food, but Serena's door remained shut.

Nicholas went to Serena's door, his

slender elegant fingers tapping

lightly on the wood "Miss tancaster, dinner is served

c 293

The man's low, husky voice carried a lazy, casual tone.

But there was no response from inside.

If they weren't in a villa with top-notch security, with no way out other than the front door, he would have suspected Serena had snuck out through a window.

After all, she was a young woman. He could show off all he wanted, but he still had to respect her boundaries.

Nicholas didn't knock again.

Instead, he asked Fiona to go check on the situation.

There had been no sound from her all afternoon, and now she wasn't responding to the call for dinner.

He was getting a little worried.

Fiona warmed a glass of milk and knocked on Serena's door.

Hearing Fiona's voice, Serena, out of politeness, finally answered, "Come in."

Fiona glanced at Nicholas and pointed to the milk in her hand.

Nicholas's striking eyes narrowed slightly.

Alright, Serena...

Playing favorites, are we?

He let out a dry laugh, tilting his chin slightly and gesturing for Fiona to go in.

Fiona glanced at the Young Master, whose expression was a bit cold, and cleared her throat. "Miss Lancaster, I'm coming in."

As she spoke, she pushed the door open and went inside.

She thoughtfully left the door ajar, giving her young master a space to peek.

When the door opened,

Nicholas's gaze fell into the room.

The main lights were off; only a dim yellow desk lamp was on.

In the warm light, the girl sat at the desk, her head slightly bowed, holding a pen and sketching something.

A few strands of hair fell beside her cheek, her profile exquisite and stunningly beautiful.

Hearing the footsteps,

the girl lifted her gaze slightly. Under the warm lamp, her clear, bright eyes seemed to sparkle with starlight.

She looked at Fiona and took the milk. "Thank you, Fiona. I still have some things to finish up. You guys go ahead and eat, don't wait for me."

Fiona secretly glanced toward the doorway.

Seeing Nicholas nod,

she said, "Miss Lancaster, I'll leave you to it then. Please remember to come out and eat when you're done."

After Fiona left the room,

Nicholas leaned against the wall, watching the girl bathed in the warm

light of the lamp She was still

Stil

absorbed in her own world, not even sparing him a single glance.

He sighed.

The young woman was a workaholic. When she got busy, she not only forgot to eat, she forgot he even existed.

He didn't disturb her further. He turned and went downstairs, instructing Fiona, "Keep the food warm for when she's finished."

Fiona nodded.

And so he waited for several more hours.

During that time, Fiona went into Serena's room twice, bringing her warm milk and

some simple, delicate snacks to tide her over.

When she came out,

Nicholas, who was waiting nearby, would look at her.

Fiona shook her head. "Miss Lancaster only drank half a glass of milk and ate one snack. She said not

to worry about her and that

should get some rest."

Nicholas glanced at the time. "Fiona, it's too late. You go get some rest."

But he himself didn't feel sleepy at all.

He glanced at Serena's room one more time and sighed.

How do you woo a girl who's a total workaholic? he wondered. *Asking for a friend. It's urgent.*

Time flew by.

At two-thirty in the morning, Serena finally put down her pen and stretched her stiff body.

She looked up at the deep darkness outside the window, then stood up, opened the door, and walked out.

The core part of the design was

vel

finally complete. She felt a little

wired, and as the post-work relaxation set in, a wave of hunger

washed over her content

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 294[592 words]

She rubbed her stomach and decided to find something to eat before returning to make the final adjustments.

As soon as she reached the kitchen,

she saw a warm yellow light on inside.

A tall, elegant figure stood in front of the kitchen counter. He was wearing a dark, loosely tied bathrobe, the sash knotted casually, leaving the collar open to reveal a stretch of well-defined pectoral muscles.

Below the open robe, the lines of his abs were faintly visible.

The man's hair was slightly damp, as if he had just showered.

Under the warm light, he looked like a seductive fox-wild and incredibly alluring.

It had to be said.

After a full day of mental exertion that left her exhausted, seeing a face like that...

was quite a pleasant sight.

The man heard her footsteps and turned his head slightly.

When he saw Serena, his striking eyes, which had been shimmering with a lazy

charm under the warm light, instantly filled with a smile.

The way the corners of his eyes crinkled was dangerously charming.

"Our busy bee has finally emerged from her seclusion." His low, magnetic voice was tinged with amusement.

He handed Serena a glass of freshly warmed milk.

Serena took it and took a sip.

The warm liquid soothed her stomach.

The warmth seemed to spread to her heart as well.

She sipped the milk, watching the man stand at the stove, skillfully dishing out the food from a small pot.

With his movements, the open collar of his robe revealed tantalizing glimpses of muscle, catching the light and dazzling Serena's eyes.

She averted her gaze. "Why are you still up at this hour?"

Nicholas's long fingers moved the spatula slowly and deliberately. A teasing smile played on his lips as he joked, "Her Majesty has not yet dined. How could this humble servant dare to rest? Naturally, I must be on call at all times, ready to attend to you in bed... oh, I mean, serve your meal."

He had the look of someone who had 'spoken too fast and almost let his true thoughts slip.'

It was so fake.

Serena shot him a glance.

The man lazily picked up the dish. "Go sit down. It'll be ready in a moment."

He worked quickly.

In just three minutes,

the entire table of food had been reheated.

Nicholas also brought Serena a small bowl of soup.

Serena was indeed famished, so she didn't stand on ceremony, immediately picking up her fork and starting to eat.

The temperature and flavor of the food were just right.

Her movements were elegant, but her pace was fast.

Nicholas sat across from her, propping his head on one hand, leaning forward slightly, his sparkling striking eyes fixed vel

Ther

with a deep smile.

The open collar of his robe gaped even wider with the movement.

It went almost all the way down...

The firm, powerful lines of his muscles were fully displayed before Serena's eyes.

He even deliberately adjusted his posture to make the smooth lines of his physique even more prominent.

Seeing Serena's gaze fall on him,

Nicholas's lips curved into a

mischievous grin. His tone was lazy and teasing. "So? Are you satisfied with the after sales service

comes with... a viewing experience."

As he spoke, he lifted his long, elegant hand, placing it on his chest and tracing a line downward.

The gesture...

was shamelessly provocative.

Serena swallowed the food in her mouth, her eyes following his finger down.

Her expression was deadpan as she gave a serious assessment, "Nice body. You could probably take a punch."

Nicholas raised an eyebrow and chuckled, his voice low and

magnette. "Are you already #mking about... how rough you can be with me in the future, Serena?

His laughter was like a feather, lightly brushing against her ears.

It was so provocative...

it made her heart flutter.

c 295

Serena buried her head in her food, refusing to look at the peacock showing off in front of her.

Nicholas also understood the principle of not overdoing it.

Sometimes, to make his charm offensive truly effective, his flirtatiousness had to be measured.

For a moment, the only sound in the room was the soft clinking of utensils.

Serena's appetite was larger than that of an average girl; she had nearly polished off the entire table of food by herself.

Nicholas silently made a mental note of the dishes that Serena had finished completely.

Seeing Serena put down her fork and prepare to clear the table,

he raised a hand to stop her. "Your Majesty has been busy all day. Leave these trivial matters to your humble servant."

The man's broad palm pressed down unexpectedly on the back of the girl's hand.

And from this angle...

The collar of his bathrobe shifted again.

His already alluringly pale skin was cast in a hazy glow under the warm light.

A flash of red.

It appeared before Serena's eyes so suddenly.

Serena froze.

Her long, raven-like lashes fluttered twice, her clear, bright eyes widening slowly.

She quickly pulled her hand out from under the man's and turned to leave. "Thanks, I'm going back to my room!"

Nicholas watched the girl's retreating back, his gaze lowering to his own hand.

The soft, warm touch of her skin seemed to linger in his palm.

He rubbed his fingers together, a fond, almost doting smile slowly forming on his lips.

He raised his hand, pulled his open bathrobe closed, and retied the sash.

His deliberate stakeout in the kitchen, the carefully planned display of his physique...

The effect wasn't bad.

At least, Serena seemed quite satisfied with his body.

He was one step closer on his quest to win her over.

Meanwhile,

Serena returned to her room, feeling much more refreshed.

She buried herself at her desk again, refining the details of the privately commissioned design one more time.

Creating this design had ignited a spark of inspiration she hadn't felt in a long time.

After finishing it,

Serena's inspiration was still flowing freely.

So she picked up her pen again, her hand flying across the paper as she finished the designs for YB in one

fell swoop

YB's inventory was critically low. Closing for even a day could cause a huge stir in the fashion world.

She couldn't let YB actually shut its doors.

It wasn't until the sky began to

lighten at dawn that Serena finished organizing all the design sketches and sent them in a batch to the eagerly waiting Rachel

After pulling an all-nighter, she had finally gotten everything done.

Serena couldn't even be bothered to wash up; she just fell onto the bed and passed

out.

When she woke up again, it was already noon.

Blinding sunlight streamed in through the open floor-to-ceiling windows, filling the room with light.

Serena rubbed her throbbing temples and picked up her phone to look at it.

Sure enough, she saw an encrypted message from Jaxon, time-stamped two hours earlier.

Jaxon: [Boss, the big fish has taken

the bait! We've confirmed Black Mirage of the Kurobara Shroud is on the move. Based on his

movements he's probably arranging his infiltration route. Hell arrive and enter Elyndor by tomorrow night at the latest. We're on standby.]

Serena narrowed her eyes, the corner of her mouth curving into a cold smile.

"This Black Mirage is even more impatient than I predicted..." she said with a dry laugh.

Fine by me.

The sooner this is dealt with, the sooner things will be quiet, and the sooner I can go back to the Lancaster family.

And... living under the same roof as that shameless fox was just too dangerous. Thinking of Nicholas,

Serena's mind unconsciously...

flashed back to the previous night, when he had pressed her hand, his bathrobe wide open, revealing the view beneath.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy!

Chapter 296[502 words]

The images she had tried so hard to forget flooded her mind again.

Serena vigorously rubbed her face and got up to wash.

She needed to wash away every trace of him.

Anything to stop her mind from wandering.

Serena took a shower, gave her hair a quick towel-dry, and walked out of the room with it still dripping wet.

As she entered the main hall, she was taken aback by the scene before her.

Nathaniel was pushing in row after row of rolling garment racks from outside.

Fiona was beside him, helping to arrange everything.

Serena glanced outside.

Wow.

A large truck was parked out front.

Nathaniel was unloading one rack after another from the truck into the hall.

The racks were packed with a dazzling array of clothes, pants, and bags.

The unique tailoring and design style...

Why did it all look so familiar?

And... were there more racks appearing? The display was getting more and more spectacular.

The hall was almost completely filled.

Noticing Serena, Fiona smiled and hurried over. "Miss Lancaster, come and see! The young master had Nathaniel deliver all of this first thing in the morning. He heard you like the brand YB, so... he basically moved a portable wardrobe here for you. Do you like it?"

Because the villa required absolute privacy, Nathaniel and Fiona were the only two servants.

They had been busy for hours since early this morning.

"YB?"

Serena's eyebrow twitched.

She stared at the endless racks of YB's latest collection-and even some of their past vintage pieces—that now took up nearly half the living room.

She fell silent for a moment.

So...

The mysterious, outrageously rich person who had quietly emptied out YB's entire inventory...

Was Nicholas?

The big spender who had dropped a billion dollars to commission a private design from her...

Was Nicholas?!

No wonder... Nicholas had told her to finish it in five days.

Because Brianna's coming-of-age party was in five days.

Had Nicholas spent a fortune specifically to have her design an evening gown for his own sister?

But...

The evening gown she designed, based on the requirements Nicholas provided was bold edgy, and had an

aggressive, striking pressed an

That style was a complete mismatch for Brianna's sweet and lively personality, which was like a ray of sunshine.

Nicholas had given so many professional design specifications when commissioning the gown, which proved his taste and design sense were exceptionally high.

He couldn't possibly be unaware of what style suited Brianna.

Serena considered whether she should

quickly design and make a

back gown for Brianna one that better matched her style. .net>

"What are you thinking about?"

A deep, masculine voice suddenly came from behind her.

Warm breath brushed against the skin behind her ear.

A crisp, pine-like scent enveloped her from behind.

Serena froze. The sudden closeness made her instinctively want to pull away.

But when she turned and met the man's smiling, mesmerizing eyes, she forced herself to remain calm.

The man had clearly just come from the kitchen.

A dark gray apron was tied around his lean waist.

He was holding a dish in one hand.

Tall, slender, and devastatingly handsome, he had a certain... husbandly charm.

"Serena, dinner's almost ready. What are you still doing standing here?" Nicholas caught her reaction and smiled.

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Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 297[594 words]

His low, magnetic voice was so close it felt like he was whispering right into her ear.

It was laced with a lingering tenderness.

Serena felt a little uncomfortable. She shifted slightly, avoiding the intimate entanglement of his presence.

Then, she pointed expressionlessly at the racks of clothes. "What's the meaning of all this?"

"I got you some clothes to change into." Nicholas's lips curved into a smile as his gaze fell on her dripping hair. "I saw you didn't bring any luggage, so I prepared some new things for you."

Serena looked at the pile of clothes, enough to open a boutique, and was at a loss for words. "...I have a change of clothes in my bag. And even if I didn't, you didn't need to get this much. I'm only staying for a few days at most."

"It doesn't matter. What's important is that you like them." Nicholas didn't like hearing her say "just a few days." "If you don't like these, I can have someone else source a new batch right now."

"..." Serena immediately replied, "I like them. This is enough."

The man's lips curved into a dazzling smile. "Good. Keep them. You can have them sent to the Lancaster estate later to wear there too."

He paused, his star-like eyes glinting with a captivating light.

"Or..."

He deliberately drew out the word, his tone lazy and melodic like a hook, adding a layer of intimacy and ambiguity. "You can just leave them here. Whenever we want to get away in the future, we can come here anytime."

Serena was speechless.

Who wanted to "get away" with him?

What was their relationship?

This man... was so presumptuous.

Besides, her closet at the Lancaster estate..... was already overflowing with clothes. Where would she even put all of this?

Thinking about the entire walk-in closet at the Lancaster estate filled with YB clothes and bags, and then looking at the racks that filled half the living room...

So this was how her inventory had been wiped out.

And in the end...

The clothes were hers, and she had earned the money from them.

Just as she was thinking this, the man's long, slender fingers suddenly hooked a damp strand of her hair.

His fingertips inadvertently brushed against the side of her neck, sending a faint ticklish sensation through her

Serena's long lashes fluttered, and she turned her head to look.

Her eyes fell on his pale, well-defined fingers tangled in her hair.

The contrast between black and white was striking.

For a moment, she was lost in a daze.

"Why didn't you dry your hair after washing it?" the man's low voice murmured by her ear.

Serena's lashes trembled, and she

tried to turn away from his ho sheet

Too lazy f'll dry soon enough."

But Nicholas simply grabbed her wrist and pulled her to sit on the sofa without any room for argument.

He looked at Fiona. "Bring me the hair dryer."

Fiona quickly brought the hair dryer over.

Seeing Nicholas holding the hair dryer, ready to dry her hair for her.....

Serena's mind inexplicably flashed back to last night...

The sly fox's "bathrobe" seduction.

If she let him get this close again...

In front of Nathaniel and Fiona, it would be bad for her image.

Serena immediately tried to refuse. "I can do it myself."

"Don't move. Do you want your hand to get worse?" Nicholas's tall frame leaned forward slightly, one hand on her shoulder. Your hand is already injured, and you worked all day yesterday. Let it rest."

Before Serena could say anything else...

Nicholas had already turned on the hair dryer, setting it to the warm setting.

After testing the temperature with his hand, he aimed it at Serena's hair.

Serena felt the warm air flow over her scalp.

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Then, the man's fingers threaded through her hair.

Serena could clearly feel... the warm air and the man's long fingers massaging her scalp.

His movements were light and incredibly gentle.

As his fingertips moved, they brought a... strange, burning sensation.

A pleasant tingle spread from her scalp through her entire body.

It made her heart flutter.

An intense, ticklish feeling.

He was also very close.

The cedar scent from him was intoxicating, mixing with the warm air to envelop her completely.

As he shifted positions...

Serena couldn't help but lift her gaze slightly.

The man was leaning over, the top two buttons of his shirt undone as always, leaving his chest casually open.

The smooth, muscular lines she had seen yesterday once again filled her vision. Above his sexy collarbones...

His prominent Adam's apple bobbed up and down under her gaze.

As if he were trying to seduce her.

Serena's heart uncontrollably skipped a beat.

She kept her expression blank, forcing herself to look away and stare at the pattern on the sofa, trying to steady her breathing.

But the comforting sensation on her scalp and the cedar scent lingering around her made the air feel... thick and heavy.

Nearby, Nathaniel and Fiona were pretending to organize the clothes on the racks, but their eyes kept darting toward the sofa.

Both of their faces were filled with utter shock.

Their young master cooking personally...

That was already a rare enough event.

In all the years they had served him, when had they ever seen him cook?

And now... he was personally drying this Miss Lancaster's hair!

His movements were as gentle as if he were handling a priceless treasure!

The scene was simply too impactful!

If his grandfather saw this, he would probably go wild with excitement!

After all, almost everyone in the Blackwood family... suspected that their young master wasn't interested in women. That perhaps he preferred men?

After all, a woman like Isabella from the Lancaster family-beautiful and so accomplished-had constantly thrown

yeune

herself at him, yet he had always treated her with cold indifference.

But now it seemed...

It wasn't that he wasn't interested in women.

He just hadn't met the right one!

This Miss Lancaster was definitely their future young madam, no doubt about it!

Seven minutes later.

Nicholas turned off the hair dryer, his long fingers still threaded through the girl's hair, gently combing it.

Even when every strand was fluffy and dry, he seemed reluctant to stop.

His fingertips finally twirled a lock of Serena's hair one last time before he nonchalantly said, "All done. Time to eat."

Serena immediately stood up and walked quickly toward the dining room. "Let's eat."

Her retreating back was a dead giveaway.

As if she were desperate to escape the intimate, tender atmosphere.

Nicholas watched her hurried figure, the corners of his captivating eyes lifting in a sly smile.

Then, he stretched his long, straight legs and lazily followed her.

Serena walked into the dining room, and Fiona was already hurrying after her with a bright, knowing smile. She even chimed in helpfully, "Miss. Lancaster, every dish on the table today was prepared by the young master himself."

Honestly he did everything, from washing and chopping the ingredients to cooking the entire meal. We tried to help, but he wouldn't let us."

"Please, have a seat and taste the young master's cooking! To be honest, this is the

first time I've ever seen him in the kitchen!"

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Fiona guided Serena to a seat at the table and quickly brought her a plate and utensils.

Serena looked at the table laden with steaming, exquisitely prepared dishes.

They looked, smelled, and tasted incredible.

And they were all her favorite types of cuisine.

Serena looked up in surprise at Nicholas as he approached.

An heir like him, born with a silver spoon and accustomed to a life of luxury...

He actually knew how to cook?

And this professionally?

Nicholas sat down beside Serena, a lazy smile on his thin lips. "What can I say? I have to be prepared to cook for Your Majesty. Of course I had to max out my cooking skill points."

Serena saw him starting to show off like a peacock again and fell silent for two seconds. "You're breaking character, Nicholas."

She enunciated the last word with a bit of force.

The man let out a low, soft laugh. He was sitting so close to Serena that when he turned slightly toward her, their proximity became intimate once again.

So close that Serena could clearly see his deep, mesmerizing eyes focused on her.

The upward tilt of his eyes held an undisguised allure, as if hiding a hook. He smiled. "Breaking character? Not at all. With you... this has always been my character."

Serena was speechless.

He got to her again with his smooth talk.

She decided to shut up and eat, not responding any further.

This man was shameless when he started showing off.

If she engaged him any more, he'd probably perform a full 360-degree peacock display on the spot.

Serena picked up her utensils and buried her head in her food.

After putting a piece of food in her mouth, her eyes instantly lit up.

She had to admit, Nicholas's cooking...

Far exceeded her expectations!

It tasted amazing.

Everything, from the heat control to the seasoning, was perfect, easily rivaling a professional chef!

Nicholas watched the girl's expression the entire time.

Seeing her eyes sparkle and the pace of her eating pick up, a smile spread across his face. "How is it?"

Serena swallowed the meat in her mouth and nodded with a hint of pride. "It's alright. Edible."

However, for something that was just "alright," her utensils never stopped moving. She was eating much faster than usual.

Nicholas's lips twitched in a smile. He didn't say anything more and started eating with her.

But while he was supposedly eating...

Nicholas spent most of his time “serving” Serena, the smile in his eyes growing deeper.

By the time Serena put down her utensils and let out a satisfied sigh...

Most of the dishes on the table were gone.

She had eaten even more than she had of Fiona's cooking the night before.

The man's eyes curved into a teasing smile. "This is just 'alright'? This is just 'edible'?"

Serena said, “.....I was using my brain too much. I was a little hungry."

The curve of the man's eyes deepened as he just watched her quietly.

Serena felt that you can't be too harsh

for yo

n someone who just

o she shouldn'toot

sting

with her praise.

She thought for a moment and said, "Actually, your cooking is pretty amazing."

A satisfied smile bloomed on the man's face. His coolly handsome features suddenly moved closer to her then, cook for you every day from now on."
Ceptent

Up close...

The man's face was even more devastatingly enchanting.

It had a soul-stealing hook to it.

As if he were casting a net of affection, trying to completely ensnare her within it.

This man...

He really did have a flawless face.

He certainly had the looks to pull off a honey trap.

"... We'll see!" What did he mean,

'every de

from now on'? It's not like

she was going to live with him

forever. Content be

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 300[585 words]

Serena looked away and stood up.

Just as she was about to leave...

The man grabbed her wrist again.

Nicholas tilted his chin, motioning for Serena to follow him to the sofa. "Time for your medicine."

Serena glanced at the back of her hand. "It's almost healed."

"Doctor's orders are twice a day. Change the dressing frequently to avoid scarring." Nicholas pulled the girl's hand, leading her to sit on the sofa. "If it scars, your family will be heartbroken."

The girl's hands were slender and fair, as delicate as porcelain—exquisite.

How could such beautiful hands be left with a scar?

Serena was speechless.

She obediently sat on the sofa.

She watched as Nicholas retrieved the first-aid kit that was already on the coffee table, sat down beside her, and skillfully removed the old dressing before reapplying the special ointment.

She didn't move, simply letting Nicholas work.

Nearby, Fiona had a fond, knowing smile on her face.

That was her young master, alright. This is how you pursue a girl-seize every single opportunity!

It wouldn't be long before she had a young madam to serve!

Fiona nudged Nathaniel, and they went to organize the clothes on the racks, leaving the space for the young couple.

There were so many clothes.

It would take them quite a while to move them all into the empty room next to Serena's.

As Nicholas applied the medicine, he glanced at the two busy servants.

He said, "The two rooms next to the one you chose are empty. I'll have someone knock down the walls and turn them into a walk-in closet for you."

Serena's long, dark lashes fluttered up. Her gaze moved from her hand to Nicholas's face in surprise.

She thought his idea was completely absurd. "I'm only staying for a few

days at most. Once the target is

caught be going back to the

Lancaster estate. There's no need to

go to all this trouble."

Nicholas's mesmerizing eyes shimmered with a faint light, a curve on his lips. "It'll come in handy eventually."

Serena frowned, looking at him with

even more astonishment. "Are

hoping get hunted down just so your meticulously designed safe house can be put to good use?"

Nicholas was speechless.

He was taken aback for a second, then let out a helpless laugh.

This girl was really clueless when it came to romance.

Once the ointment was applied and the dressing was in place...

Serena stood up and flexed her hand. "Thanks."

After thanking him, she checked the time. "I have to go out for something. You don't need to save dinner for me."

She calculated the time.

Rachel should have already created a preliminary sample from the custom design sketch she had pulled an all-nighter to finish.

Now that she knew the gown was commissioned by Nicholas for Brianna...

She naturally had to go to YB headquarters to personally oversee every detail of the evening gown and ensure it was flawless.

More importantly...

The gown's style was a terrible match for Brianna. She needed to take this opportunity to quickly create the backup gown she had in mind for her.

"Going out again?" Nicholas watched her get ready to leave, his long fingers subconsciously tightening around her wrist. You stayed up all night yesterday Aren't you going to rest today?"

He had thought he would finally get a chance to spend some time alone with Serena in this house today.

Serena glanced at the hand gripping hers, one eyebrow raised. "And you? As the esteemed heir of the Blackwood family, shouldn't you be even busier than me?"

Nicholas didn't let go. Instead, his long fingers tightened their grip slightly.

He pressed his lips together, his eyes shimmering with a faint light that held a barely perceptible hint of... hurt?

