

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! -

Chapter 81[554 words]

"What's important is that you tried. You learned something in the process and improved yourself."

Her smile grew even more gentle. "Besides, our Isabella is already outstanding."

These were meant to be comforting words, but to Isabella, they were like needles piercing her skin.

Results don't matter?

The process is what's valuable?

Excuses!

They were playing favorites!

Such blatant favoritism!

They just didn't want to bother with her!

Saying they treated her like family, that they would be fair-it was all lies!

They could shove a slacker like Serena into the National Research Institute, and even Mr. Harrison was gentle with her. Why couldn't they help her?

All they had to do was mention her name when they were pushing Serena through. Out of respect for the Lancaster family, Mr. Harrison's attitude toward her today would have been completely different!

They just wanted to save all the resources for Serena.

Hatred churned inside Isabella, so intense it made her stomach turn, but her expression only grew more aggrieved. Large tears rolled down her cheeks, one by

one.

She sobbed uncontrollably. "Mom... am I really that bad? Does Mr. Harrison just not accept students like me?"

She was trying to force Catherine to help her.

To help her the same way they helped that slacker Serena get in with Mr. Harrison.

But Catherine just hugged her, patting her back gently. Her voice was incredibly soft. "Silly child, of course you're brilliant. Mr. Harrison not accepting you only means you two aren't the right fit. Your talent is undeniable."

Bullshit!

Of course she knew she was talented.

But what good was talent?

It was nothing compared to power and money.

She was so talented and worked so hard, so why did Mr. Harrison reject her but accept Serena, a high school dropout?

Isabella grew more resentful the more she thought about it. With red-rimmed eyes, she started crying again about how much time she'd spent the lab on her thesis how hard she had worked, and allth effort she had put in for Mr. Harrison.

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But Catherine remained unmoved. She continued to soothe her with a gentle and patient voice, but showed no intention of helping.

Isabella was so frustrated she was on the verge of real tears.

She had hinted so obviously.

Her mother was just playing dumb, refusing to pull strings for her with Mr. Harrison.

Serena must have said something to the family. That's why her mom was being so cold-hearted, refusing to help her!

"Alright, stop overthinking things," Catherine said, patting her back. "Get something to eat, sleep well, and when you wake up tomorrow, you'll see that none of this is a big deal."

After a few more words of comfort, she remembered Serena. Worried that she had just returned from a long day only to stay up working again Catherine stood up. "Finish eating and get some rest. I need to go check on Serena. She's had a long day."

"Mom..." Isabella anxiously grabbed Catherine's hand, biting her lower lip, her eyes red.

She wanted to make Catherine stay, to stop her from going to Serena.

But Catherine just patted her hand and said softly, "Don't cry anymore. Your eyes will get puffy, and you won't look as pretty. Get some rest."

The door closed.

The pitiful expression on Isabella's face instantly twisted into a vicious snarl.

Favoritism!

Her mom was so obviously playing favorites!

Ever since Serena returned to this family, everyone has been biased toward Serena!

She grabbed a pillow and hurled it violently against the door.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 82[566 words]

The next day, at seven in the morning.

Serena came downstairs.

Edward and Julian had both postponed their morning meetings at the company to be at home.

All eyes on Serena were filled with a mixture of hope and nervousness.

Catherine went to her, took her hands, and scanned her face. "Serena, did you sleep well last night?"

After a night's rest, there was no trace of fatigue in Serena's eyes. She smiled and nodded. "I slept very well. I just need to prepare, and then I can begin the treatment for Grandpa."

"No rush, have breakfast first," Catherine said, instructing a servant to bring out the food.

Serena nodded and used the time during breakfast to go over the details of the required equipment with Alfred.

Alfred was completely reliable.

Everything she needed had been prepared perfectly and was already arranged in the garden gazebo under his supervision.

Half an hour later.

The family pushed a tense Old Mr. Lancaster, who was sitting rigidly in his wheelchair, in a large procession toward the garden gazebo.

The location was perfect, the timing was right, the sun was just right, and the air was fresh.

It would greatly help alleviate Old Mr. Lancaster's pain during the procedure.

A custom-made rosewood therapy bed was placed in the gazebo, with countless tools neatly arranged beside it.

Old Mr. Lancaster was wheeled next to the bed, and two servants carefully helped him lie down.

The entire time, Old Mr. Lancaster's body was stiff with tension.

The other family members, including all the servants, were so nervous they were barely breathing. The atmosphere was heavy.

"Al... alright, Serena." Even though Old Mr. Lancaster was trying his best to remain calm, his hands resting on his thighs were visibly trembling.

Even his voice shook.

Serena hummed in

acknowledgment, standing beside him. She raised her hand and pulled the blanket covering his legs up to his thighs. "Grandpa, relax. The more tense you are, the more it will amplify the pain."

Old Mr. Lancaster took a deep breath, trying hard to calm himself.

"Huh, where's Isabella?" Catherine looked around but didn't see her adopted daughter.

She frowned slightly. "That child... she didn't oversleep because she was so upset last night, did she?"

"She took a big hit yesterday. She probably didn't sleep much at all," Edward said, putting an arm around his wife's shoulders. "It's fine, let Isabella get some more rest. She

Can't help

with anything here

anyway."

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He then looked at Serena, his voice gentle and clear. "Serena, don't feel any pressure. Just do your best."

Catherine nodded repeatedly. "Yes, yes, please don't put too much pressure on yourself. No matter the outcome, we are a family, and we can handle it."

"That's right, just relax," Julian added.

Despite his nervousness, Old Mr. Lancaster was philosophical... "Exactly Serena I'm an old man f get better, it's a bonus. If not 've lived a full life and I'm used to it."

As he spoke, he even patted his own chest.

Serena was speechless. She wasn't nervous or feeling any pressure at all. On the contrary, they seemed far more tense than she was.

However, she knew her family was worried she was putting too much pressure on herself and would feel guilty and sad if the outcome wasn't good.

But for her, there was no 'if.'

If she said she could cure it, she was one hundred percent certain. There was no room for failure.

Serena finished her preliminary preparations, turned to look at Old Mr. Lancaster, and smiled slightly. "You're all worried about the wrong thing."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 83[540 words]

"Grandpa, as long as you can endure the pain that's coming, everything else will be fine."

Old Mr. Lancaster's smile instantly froze on his face.

He remembered the excruciating, bone-deep pain when Serena had pressed that point on his foot...

A cold sweat immediately broke out on his forehead.

He took a deep breath, a look of grim determination on his face, like a man marching to his doom. "Go ahead! Do it! Don't hold back! Grandpa... can take it!"

He spoke with bravado, even forcing a smile.

But the smile was incredibly strained.

It faltered even more when he saw Serena pick up a few silver needles and dip them into a specially prepared medicinal oil.

The gleaming silver needles now shone with an oily luster...

Old Mr. Lancaster swallowed hard, his throat making a nervous gulping sound.

It was a good thing his feet couldn't move.

Otherwise, they would undoubtedly be shaking uncontrollably right now.

"I'm starting."

Serena's slender fingers moved.

Under the golden light, the long, thin needle in the girl's hand shimmered.

She raised her hand, ready to insert it—

"Wait!"

A sharp, urgent voice cut through the air. "You can't perform the treatment!"

Serena paused, her hand hovering, and lifted her eyes.

She saw Isabella leading an elderly man dressed in a formal dark blue suit. He had

a goatee, white hair, and a distinguished, scholarly air about him. They were rushing toward the gazebo.

The old man was carrying a traditional doctor's bag, his stride steady, and his shrewd eyes were sharp and full of vigor.

"Grandpa, Dad, Mom, Julian!" Isabella ran ahead, looking at Old Mr. Lancaster on the therapy bed with a face full of concern. "I couldn't sleep all night, I was so worried about Grandpa's legs..."

"I know my sister means well and wants to help Grandpa, and I understand her good intentions, but... but just can't rest easy. Traditional medicine is complex and profound,

and it relies on experience. It's not something to be taken lightly. Serena is still so young and lacks experience. What if... what if she makes a mistake and hurts

Grandpa?"

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Isabella spoke with heartfelt sincerity, then turned to introduce the man beside her. "Grandpa, this is the renowned Marcus Doyle, Mr. Doyle He's the head of our Vaelion City's Holistic Medicine Association, and he's

especially skilled i acupuncture and therapeutic massage. He has treated countless difficult cases and isn't someone

you can hire with just money."

"It took a lot of convincing to get Mr. Doyle to come here. I was hoping he could take a look at Grandpa."

Marcus Doyle stroked his goatee, his arrogant gaze falling on Old Mr. Lancaster's legs before slowly turning to Serena.

Looking at Serena's young, beautiful face and the needle she held, he frowned instantly, his eyes filled with disdain and disapproval. "Preposterous! Treatment is not a child's game! What does a young girl like you know about massage? What do you understand about restorative techniques?"

"Old Mr. Lancaster's condition

involves blocked meridians and depleted circulation. I have been practicing for over fifty years, and even wouldn't dare claim I could cure it! You, a young girl, think you can do it just because you've watched a few TV shows? Are you willing to gamble with your elder's life? If anything goes wrong, you won't be healing him, you'll be harming him! You'll be disgracing a centuries-old healing art!"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 84[576 words]

Marcus's words were self-righteous and blunt.

He berated Serena as an ignorant young girl who was just putting on a show, and he even burdened her with the heavy accusation of tarnishing the reputation of traditional medicine.

The condescending tone made the Lancaster family elders' expressions darken, and they shot Marcus Doyle looks of displeasure.

"Grandpa, Dad, Mom, Julian, please don't be angry!" Isabella, ever skilled at reading the room, put on a facade of concern for Old Mr. Lancaster. "Mr. Doyle isn't wrong. Serena is just anxious to help Grandpa, but..... I'm also genuinely worried that she's under too much pressure..."

"Mr. Doyle is renowned in Vaelion City and very experienced. Since he's already here, why not let him take a look first and hear what he has to say? If Mr. Doyle has a solution, then my sister won't have to bear such a heavy burden. And if... if even

Mr. Doyle can't do it, it won't be too late for Serena to try, right?"

Her tone was earnest, her face etched with worry. "This provides a double

insurance, and it's all for the sake of Grandpa's legs... to make sure they can really be healed."

Her words and expression were flawless, leaving no room for criticism.

From the very beginning, Isabella never believed Serena could possibly heal their grandfather.

But she couldn't just stand by and watch Serena put on a show for him. So, she pulled a lot of strings and spent all the allowance she had saved over the years to hire Mr. Doyle, the famous master physician of Vaelion City.

Since Serena could pretend to treat their grandfather, then the master physician she brought would surely be able to do it for real!

Instead of letting Serena do it, it was better to have the person she brought. If her grandfather's legs were truly healed, she would be the one he thanked!

And with that, she could win back her family's attention and affection.

Once the whole family was grateful to her, she would have plenty of opportunities to make Serena pack her bags and get out of this house!

Old Mr. Lancaster glanced at Isabella, then at Marcus Doyle, frowning slightly.

He didn't have much of an opinion about this suddenly appearing master physician.

Over the years, what kind of experts and masters, both traditional and modern, hadn't he seen about his legs?

Forget the head of Vaelion City's association, even the president of the global association, along with top international experts, had studied his case and concluded that there was no chance of him ever walking again.

So some local master from Vaelion City was going to have a solution?

He would rather trust his own granddaughter.

At least Serena had managed to

make him feel a long-forgotten, net

excruciating pain his numb leg just by pressing a single point.

He was about to refuse. "There's no need. I trust Seren-"

"Grandpa!" Isabella boldly took Old Mr. Lancaster's hand, her voice soft and coaxing. "Please, just let him take a look. I've already brought M Doyle all the way here. Just let him examine you and give his opinion. Think of it as an extra guarantee that your legs can be healed."

Then, she smiled at Marcus Doyle. "Mr. Doyle, please, please!"

Serena glanced at Isabella with cool, emotionless eyes.

She knew exactly what Isabella was thinking.

She withdrew her hand and took a step back, her voice indifferent. "Fine."

Seeing Serena "concede," Marcus Doyle let out a smug humph.

As expected. How could a mere girl compare to a renowned and authoritative master like him?

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 85[571 words]

He put on a grand air, stroking his goatee. "That's more like it!"

He settled himself beside Old Mr. Lancaster with a self-important air.

"Serena....." Old Mr. Lancaster frowned, about to speak.

Serena had already put down the tool. "She won't give up until she gets what she wants. I don't want to be disturbed during the procedure. It's annoying."

Isabella's face went pale.

Was Serena not even going to pretend in front of the family anymore?

The family members, of course, understood Serena's meaning. They all frowned slightly, casting a displeased glance at Isabella.

Isabella's expression soured even more.

She clenched her fists, feeling an urge to cry from the injustice.

She was doing this for their grandfather's sake! She had phrased it so nicely, even making it seem like she was looking out for Serena.

And now... they were blaming her just because of one sentence from Serena?

The more they reacted this way, the more determined Isabella was to prove she was right.

She bit her lip hard and looked at Marcus Doyle. "Mr. Doyle, I'll leave it in your hands."

Marcus Doyle gave a knowing smile and began to check Old Mr. Lancaster's pulse.

He was very thorough, examining the condition of the leg muscles and repeatedly pressing key acupoints with his fingers, asking Old Mr. Lancaster what he felt.

But Old Mr. Lancaster's face remained impassive, completely numb.

The more he examined, the tighter Marcus Doyle's brow furrowed.

These legs...

They were far, far more serious than he had imagined!

The meridians were almost completely blocked, and the muscles had atrophied to the point where blood flow was barely detectable...

In this condition, forgetting about a cure or getting him to walk again, it was a miracle he hadn't needed an amputation!

No wonder no other master physicians had dared to treat this wealthy family.

They had probably all taken a look and realized there was nothing they could do.

And that young girl had the nerve to claim she could cure Old Mr. Lancaster?

What an act!

It was all that Lancaster girl's fault for not explaining the situation clearly. She had just said some country bumpkin claimed she could do it, so he figured he must be better than some young amateur

He never imagined..... he had bitten off more than he could chew!

"How is it, Mr. Doyle? Is there any hope for my grandfather's legs?" Isabella had been watching his expression the whole time, her face a mask of nervous anticipation.

Beads of sweat had formed on

Marcus Doyle's forehead. While he had a reputation in Vaelion City for treating all sorts of difficult illnesses, those were mostly ailments that could indeed be managed with holistic care, which he then exaggerated for effect.

But this...

This was a case of total paralysis that had lasted for years. He was completely out of his depth!

But years of bluffing and deception

allowed Marcus Doyle to maintain his composure. He cleared his throat and spoke with a profound air, "Hmm... Old Mr. Lancaster's condition is indeed quite tricky..."

He spouted a long string of professional-sounding medical jargon, making the situation sound as dire as possible.

Isabella's face turned pale, and she looked like she was about to cry with worry. "So, Mr. Doyle, is there a cure?"

"A cure, you say..." Mr. Doyle stroked his goatee and nodded sagely. "Well, it's not entirely hopeless."

The words made Isabella's eyes light up instantly.

The other Lancaster family members also looked at Marcus Doyle in surprise.

Marcus Doyle shook his head slowly. "It just requires some extremely rare and precious medicinal ingredients, like hundred-year-old wild ginseng..."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 86[626 words]

Marcus Doyle reeled off a long list of medicinal herbs, each one incredibly rare, and many of them were names they had never even heard of before.

Their value was unimaginable.

Then, stroking his beard, he maintained the air of a reclusive master. "With these herbs, combined with my unique and secret technique to unblock the meridians and extend life, and supplemented by a special medicinal bath I've formulated to nourish the body, given time... there is hope that he can stand again."

He slowly opened his eyes as he spoke. "However, the course of treatment..... is quite long, and the consumption of herbs will be immense. As for the financial aspect..."

Isabella's eyes lit up. She quickly and eagerly cut in, "Hope is all we need, Mr. Doyle! Whatever herbs or materials you require, just name them. The Lancaster family is the wealthiest in Vaelion City. It doesn't matter how expensive or hard to find they are, or how much it costs! As long as you can cure Grandpa... I have a lot of personal savings from over the years, I can contribute all of it!"

Her display of devotion was heartfelt and deeply moving.

As Isabella spoke, she couldn't help but feel a little smug.

See that?

She, Isabella, was the most devoted granddaughter. Grandpa would surely be touched by her sincerity.

Not like Serena...

All that bragging and showing off. It was probably just because she couldn't afford to pay for anything and was just trying to win Grandpa's favor with empty words.

However, Old Mr. Lancaster's face showed no trace of the joyful surprise one might expect from hearing there was hope for his legs.

Especially after hearing the names of the herbs Marcus Doyle listed...

His brow furrowed deeply.

He had consulted countless famous doctors over the years, both top traditional and modern specialists from home and abroad, and all of them had been helpless regarding his legs.

And now this... so-called miracle doctor from Vaelion City, who had appeared out of nowhere, was claiming there was hope?

Most importantly...

The herbs he mentioned, didn't they all sound like things meant to replenish vital energy and prolong life?

What did that have to do with treating his legs?

Seeing Old Mr. Lancaster remain

silent with a frown on his face, Isabella worried that his attitude might offend Dr. Marcus Doyle. She quickly said, "Grandpa, it's a good thing that Mr. Doyle is willing to help. We should..."

"A good thing?"

Serena's cool voice cut through Isabella and Marcus Doyle's little performance.

She crossed her arms, her expression icy. "Since Dr. Marcus Doyle is so confident he can provide a cure, then please, explain how your so-called technique is supposed to be implemented. And how are those herbs to be used? What effects are they meant to have?"

Her tone was laced with skepticism.

Marcus Doyle's face darkened. "You insolent brat, how I choose to treat my patients

is my trade secret. It's not for an outsider like you to know."

"Serena, if Mr. Doyle says there's hope, then there must be. Are you suggesting that the renowned Dr. Marcus Doyle would lie to us?" Isabella said, forcing down her annoyance.

She knew it. Serena wouldn't cooperate so easily and let Mr. Doyle help Grandpa. Serena just wanted to steal the spotlight!

The moment she heard Mr. Doyle could cure Grandpa, Serena panicked, afraid she wouldn't be able to use her act to impress and deceive him anymore.

She pressed her lips together. "Serena, Mr Doyle's reputation is known throughout Vaelion City. His family has been practicing medicine for three generations You can just obstruct him because he exposed" you... or because he can actually help Grandpa. Weren't we both just trying to get Grandpa better?"

She corrected herself as if she had misspoken, a clumsy attempt to hide her true intentions while clearly implying Serena had ulterior motives for interfering.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 87[576 words]

But it was a clear attempt to lead everyone to suspect that Serena had ulterior motives for stopping Marcus Doyle.

Serena let out a soft scoff, not even sparing the agitated Isabella a glance.

She lifted her languid gaze, her eyes filled with mockery. "Is it that you can't let me know, or that you don't dare to?"

Serena paused, the corners of her crimson lips curling into a cold smirk. "For instance, you mentioned needing hundred-year-old wild ginseng, and the other two herbs. Aren't all of these incredibly rare and precious?"

"But... while hundred-year-old ginseng is a powerful restorative, it primarily targets the heart and spleen. It has no effect on paralysis of the lower limbs caused by depleted energy and blood. In fact, it's more likely to trigger internal imbalances and place a greater burden on the liver and kidneys."

"As for the others..."

Serena went through all the herbs Marcus Doyle had mentioned, explaining their properties one by one.

Not only did she clearly state their effects, but she also detailed the potential consequences of using them on Old Mr. Lancaster.

Finally, she raised her eyes, her calm, emotionless gaze as cold as fractured ice, and stared directly at Marcus Doyle. "So, Dr. Marcus Doyle, could you please explain whether you intended to give my grandfather a massive restorative treatment that would send his system into shock and kill him, or if you actually planned to treat his legs?"

Marcus Doyle hadn't expected Serena to actually know her stuff, let alone to so accurately describe the properties and effects of all the expensive herbs he had listed.

His hand trembled, and he nearly tore out his own beard.

His face flushed from white to beet red as he exploded in a fit of rage and embarrassment. "What... what do you know? What nonsense are you spouting? That's all rubbish! I have my reasons for prescribing these herbs. How could a young brat like you possibly understand?"

"You're only questioning me because my presence has disrupted your little plan to win favor!"

"I've been practicing medicine for fifty years and have saved countless lives! And you? If you're so knowledgeable, then tell me, who was your teacher? Do you even have a medical license?"

He hurled accusations one after another, spit flying from his mouth, determined to overwhelm Serena with sheer force of personality.

Serena, however, didn't even flinch. She kept her eyes lowered, calmly tending to the long needles and specially-made medicinal oil on the table, as if she had already grown tired of this shoddy performance.

"You're not worthy of knowing who my teacher is," Serena said, her voice cool and detached, devoid of any emotion. "As for a medical license... of course I have one."

She lifted her gaze slightly, and the long needle between her fingertips glinted coldly in the sunlight. "But you're not worthy of seeing it, either."

Marcus Doyle's face turned black. To be so openly belittled by a junior made him tremble with rage. "Ignorant child! The arrogance!"

"You think I'm arrogant? Then let me

ask

meridians

in the Compendium of Celestial Remedies, what does the tenth entry say about meridian blockages?"

you, in the chapteral

"In the ninth volume of the Ancient Codex of Vital Arts, what is the protocol for treating paralysis of the lower limbs?"

"And..."

Serena's words were sharp and precise, each question she fired off showcasing her expertise.

Meanwhile, Marcus Doyle's face went pale. A thick layer of cold sweat broke out on his forehead as he took a step back.

He stammered, unable to answer for a long moment.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 88[559 words]

The longer he failed to answer, the more he panicked.

The more he panicked, the more flustered he became.

And the more flustered he became, the harder it was to maintain his carefully constructed facade of a wise and transcendent master.

"Serena, even other medical experts might not be able to answer those questions on the spot! Besides... you can't just dismiss Mr. Doyle's abilities because you've read a few medical books!" Isabella, seeing the miracle doctor she had brought being cornered by Serena, felt her own reputation was on the line.

She had to defend Marcus Doyle. "Remembering all those old texts is useless compared to real-world experience!"

"He can't even answer the most basic questions from the classics, yet he has the nerve to call himself a miracle doctor?" Serena scoffed, lifting her gaze to look mockingly at Isabella. "The Lancaster family invested so much in your upbringing, yet you lack even the basic ability to tell right from wrong. So easily swayed by others..."

She let out another derisive laugh, her eyes returning to Marcus Doyle. "The art of healing has never relied on just talk. You don't even understand the simplest principles of pharmacology, yet you parade around under the banner of traditional medicine, swindling people. For a doctor, integrity comes first. Forgetting that... will bring its own consequences."

Her voice was cold, devoid of any emotional fluctuation. Her exquisitely beautiful face was striking in the sunlight, almost dazzlingly so.

But her expression remained so cold that it was impossible to read.

The sharp aura she exuded shattered Marcus Doyle's psychological defenses, one by one.

His legs gave out, and he collapsed onto the ground with a thud, his face ashen. "I... I..."

Nothing more needed to be said.

Marcus Doyle's current state made everything clear.

Isabella's face instantly turned deathly pale. A chill ran through her, as if her blood had frozen solid.

She never could have imagined...

The miracle doctor she had spent so much money to hire was... a total fraud!

His claims that there was hope for her grandfather's legs were all lies?!

She... she had been scammed?

And she had just been lectured in front of her entire family by some girl from the middle of nowhere?

She swayed on her feet, nearly collapsing to the ground just as Marcus Doyle had.

Serena paid her no mind, picking up a silver needle that had been re-soaked in her specially formulated oil.

"We're about to begin. All non-essential personnel, please leave."

Without a single glance at Isabella, her eyes focused on Old Mr. Lancaster, "Grandpa, concentrate I'm going to begin the treatment now." . FindNovel.net

Old Mr. Lancaster's body tensed, and he shivered slightly.

He swallowed hard, took a deep breath, and closed his eyes. "Do it!"

Just as the atmosphere grew tense and Old Mr. Lancaster was holding his breath almost to his limit...

A servant hurried over. "Sir, ma'am... there's a... a visitor outside."

Edward frowned. "Didn't I say no visitors today? No one is to disturb Father's treatment. Alfred, send them away."

"N-no..." The servant's expression

let

was one of such excitement that he stammered. "The guest said....he is Master Langford from the Global Medical Association

The Medical Association?

"Mr. Langford?"

Everyone in the pavilion gasped, staring at the servant in shock.

Master Langford, the president of the Global Medical Association, a true living legend! The absolute authority in his field. He was

someone even the wealthiest net

families couldn't hope to get an appointment with, no matter how much money they offered!

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 89[545 words]

Years ago, Old Mr. Lancaster's legs had been personally examined by Mr. Langford.

But at the time, even Mr. Langford, working together with top experts in both traditional and modern medicine from around the world, had been unable to find a solution.

Why would he suddenly appear at the Lancaster estate now?

Isabella's pale face, upon hearing Mr. Langford's name, suddenly brightened.

Mr. Langford!

This man was a million times more authoritative than that quack, Marcus Doyle!

With him here...

With his medical skills and reputation, there was no way Serena could fool him!

He would definitely expose Serena for the fraud she was!

If he said something, the family would absolutely believe him!

At this thought, Isabella immediately suppressed all her other emotions and put on a look of pure excitement. "Mr. Langford? Grandpa, it must be that the Global Medical Association has developed a new treatment for your legs!"

As she spoke, she shot a meaningful glance at Serena, who was still holding the silver needle.

In the presence of a true medical authority...

What was Serena?

The Lancaster family's eyes widened, a hint of excitement coloring their features.

It was possible... Isabella could be right.

Other than that possibility...

They couldn't think of any other reason why the incredibly busy and elusive Mr. Langford would suddenly pay them a visit.

Could it really be that a new treatment had been developed?

The weight of Mr. Langford's name was simply staggering.

However, after the incident with Marcus Doyle, they instinctively glanced at Serena, worried she might take it the wrong way.

Serena's face was expressionless. She said calmly, "Alfred, bring him in."

She didn't have to guess.

Raven must have leaked the news that she was treating Grandpa today to that old medicine fanatic.

He had actually managed to make it in time.

Soon, Alfred led a distinguished-looking older gentleman with an imposing air and sharp, bright eyes into the pavilion.

The man was in his early sixties, wearing black-rimmed glasses and exuding an air of dignified solemnity.

This was the globally renowned president of the Global Medical Association, Master Langford!

Known as the man with the "golden touch."

It was really him!

Mr. Langford had truly come!

Before Edward could step forward to greet him, Marcus Doyle, who was still slumped on the ground, saw him as a lifeline. A fawning, obsequious smile instantly spread across his face as he scrambled towards Mr. Langford. "M Langford, s What bungs you here in person? I'm here Marcus Doyle, from the Vaelion City

chapter. At last year's conference, I even..."

Mr. Langford merely gave him a passing glance and raised a hand to cut off his rambling.

His gaze swept past everyone, landing squarely on the slender, stern figure standing by the treatment bed.

Mr. Langford's eyes instantly filled with a fervent intensity.

Isabella, assuming Mr. Langford was looking at her grandfather's legs, rushed forward, her face a perfect picture of excitement and.

policitation. Mr. Langford, are are,

you here for my grandfather's legs? Has the association developed a new treatment for him?"

tel.n

Towards the end, her voice was on the verge of choking up. With red-rimmed eyes and clenched fists, she looked as though she was overcome with joy for her grandfather My sister was just about to perform massage on him. Thankfully... you arrived just in time."

Her words were a masterful blend of concern and insinuation, perfectly designed to

call Mr. Langford's attention to Serena... and expose her as a fraud!

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 90[578 words]

"Massage?" Mr. Langford seemed to notice Isabella for the first time.

He looked at her with a hint of confusion, then turned his gaze back to Serena, his voice filled with undisguised reverence. "With Miss Serena here, why would you need any help from an old man like me? If Miss Serena has no solution, then I certainly won't have one."

"What?!" Isabella's smile froze on her face, her voice nearly cracking.

The other members of the Lancaster family were also taken aback.

What?

Mr. Langford knew Serena?

What did he mean by that?

Then, they watched as Mr. Langford looked at Serena with a respectful and excited expression. "With Miss Serena present, I wouldn't dare presume to offer my humble skills. Besides, for Old Mr. Lancaster's condition, in this entire world, I truly cannot think of a second person besides Miss Serena who could treat it."

Those words landed like a physical slap across Isabella's face.

She could feel her cheeks burning.

By now, the Lancaster family understood. A thought emerged in their minds. "Mr. Langford, could it be that you made this trip specifically for Serena?"

"When I heard Miss Serena was performing her technique here today, I was so thrilled I could hardly contain myself. That's why I came unannounced. It was quite rude of me," Mr. Langford said, staring eagerly at the silver needle in Serena's hand. "I came specifically to observe and learn."

Observe and learn?

Those two words struck everyone present like a bolt of lightning, leaving their minds buzzing.

The Lancasters stared, dumbfounded, at the young woman who remained completely unfazed, even standing before the internationally acclaimed Mr. Langford.

They knew their daughter/sister was exceptional.

But for the president of the Global Medical Association to be so deferential, even using words like "observe and learn"...

It was beyond anything they could have comprehended!

Isabella and Marcus Doyle, in particular looked as if their blood had drained away. Their faces went from pale to ashen, their eyes practically bulging out of their sockets.

The president of the association, a living legend of Elyndor's medical community, was saying he wanted to observe and learn from... young girl who was barely an adult?

And, as if the shock he'd already delivered wasn't enough, Mr. Langford gave Serena a charming and deferential smile. "Miss Serena, I heard you were treating Mr.

Lancaster today. Your technique is a once-in-a-century marvel know a bit forward of me, but

shamelessly took this opportunity to come and learn. I hope you'll grant us this chance."

With that, he took out his phone and skillfully opened a group video call.

The small screen instantly filled with seven or eight other elderly, yet incredibly excited, faces!

They were all talking over each other, a cacophony of voices.

The moment everyone's eyes fell on the screen-

"Is... is that..."

Marcus Doyle's eyes rolled back, and he almost fainted on the spot.

Isabella looked as if she had been struck by lightning. Her eyes widened, and she could no longer control the expression on her face.

Every face on that screen...

They were all familiar and awe-inspiring figures.

Each one was a titan in the world of traditional medicine, top-tier masters whose very names could shake the field!

These were the living legends that countless wealthy families could never hope to meet, no matter how much money or power they wielded!

These people represented the absolute pinnacle of Elyndor's medical expertise! And right now, all of them were staring intently at the screen.

Even through the network, you could feel the fervent anticipation radiating from them.

"Langford, do you have a signal? Quick! Let us see!"

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 91[571 words]

"Oh my gosh, it's really Dr. Serena! Mr. Langford, hold that phone steady!"

"Miss Serena, it's an honor of a lifetime to see you work! It was worth me, Ken, clearing my entire schedule for this!"

"Miss Serena, if we have any questions later, we'd be grateful for your guidance!"

The voices from the video were so excited they were practically shouting, their words filled with a fanatical admiration for Serena.

At the sight, Isabella felt her vision swim.

It was fake!

All of it was fake!

Had Mr. Langford been fooled by that witch, Serena, too?

Or was Serena... was she really...

No!

Isabella didn't dare think any further.

She couldn't bear the thought that the "miracle worker" she had gone to such lengths to bring in, thinking she could humiliate Serena, was actually a useless fraud!

She had placed all her hopes on Mr. Langford exposing Serena's true colors, only to see him leading a group of titans of the field in showing Serena such respect and admiration. They wanted to observe and learn from her acupuncture?

Isabella's whole body trembled, her skin growing cold and stiff.

Serena... wasn't she just some hick from the countryside?

Wasn't she just a high school dropout?

Why... why did Serena know so much?

Could the story about her saving someone at Starlight Royal Medical Center be true?

No!

Absolutely not!

"Isabella."

Suddenly, Julian's gentle voice cut in.

Startled, Isabella looked over at her older brother in a panic.

Julian adjusted his glasses, his voice mild. "Why don't you escort Dr. Marcus Doyle out first."

Isabella's heart leaped into her throat.

Meeting Julian's scrutinizing gaze, she clenched her fists, her eyes turning red.

Her face was pale as she stumbled a few steps and fell to her knees beside Old Mr. Lancaster's bed. "I-I'm sorry... Grandpa. I... I was tricked by him too. I honestly just wanted what was best for you, but..... but....."

Her voice was thick with sobs, trembling uncontrollably. She looked utterly pitiful.

Old Mr. Lancaster gave her a long

look, his expression heavy as he sighed. "Serena was right. If you can't even tell right from wrong in a simple matter like this, how can ever trust you to handle things on your own?"

Isabella's hands rested on the treatment table, her face ashen, her eyes wide.

Handle things on her own?

What did Grandpa mean by that?

Was he saying that because he wanted to... kick her out of the Lancaster family?
"Grandpa..."

But Old Mr. Lancaster had lost interest in talking to her. He raised a hand and gave a dismissive wave. "That's enough. You meant well, so I'm not blaming you. Since you were up all night you should go back to your room and get some rest.

Isabella's face grew even paler. She opened her mouth, wanting to say more.

But she saw Old Mr. Lancaster close his eyes.

She knew that if she kept pressing the issue, she would only annoy him further.

But she didn't want to leave.

"It's okay, Isabella. Just go back to your room for now," Catherine said, pulling her out of the pavilion. "Serena needs quiet while she's treating Grandpa. Don't disturb her."

The tone was gentle.

But to Isabella's ears, it sounded like her mother was saying, "You're bothering Serena, so get lost."

Isabella's eyes burned red with anger, and tears began to stream down her face. Meanwhile, in the pavilion.

Serena's expression was serene. Her focus returned to Old Mr. Lancaster, unconcerned with Mr. Langford's video call. She simply said "It's fine. We're all here to advance the art of Elyndorian medicine. You can ask me anything."

"Let's begin."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 92[571 words]

"You got it, Miss Serena! I'll be your assistant!" Mr. Langford was quick on the uptake. He immediately set up his phone nearby, making sure the camera was aimed at Old Mr. Lancaster's leg.

Then, he eagerly bustled over to Serena's side, transforming into the most diligent of helpers.

He carefully opened Serena's needle kit, ready to hand her whatever tool she needed.

"Miss Serena, the tools are sterilized and the medicinal oil has been applied!"

"Miss Serena, is the temperature of this towel alright?"

"Miss Serena..."

With such eagerness, he looked nothing like the dignified president of the International Association of Elyndorian Medicine.

On the screen, the faces that usually only appeared in top medical journals and on the news were now as excited as a bunch of starstruck old men.

Looking at Mr. Langford's fawning behavior, Isabella felt a bitter taste rise in her throat. The last shred of hope she'd been clinging to crumbled in that instant.

Her carefully orchestrated plan to "expose Serena's true colors" had instead become the stepping stone for Serena to shine even brighter and win more of the family's affection!

It made all of her own actions look like those of a complete fool!

And worst of all...

It had made her family angry with her!

Isabella was so furious she could have burst. The immense humiliation and resentment made it impossible for her to stand there and watch Serena use her as a stepping stone, showing off for the family and soaking up all their attention.

Isabella bit her lip hard, covered her face, and turned, stumbling away.

She cut a pathetic figure.

As she turned to leave, Serena's fingers, holding a fine golden needle, paused for a fraction of a second. She lifted her gaze, her cool eyes landing on Isabella's frantic retreat.

Her red lips slowly curved into a faint, cold smile.

It was the look of a predator who had cornered its prey, watching its futile struggles from above...

"Wh-what's wrong?" Old Mr. Lancaster asked, his voice tight with nerves, when Serena didn't immediately place the needle.

"Nothing," Serena said, her gaze returning to him. Her fingertips moved with unwavering stability.

The slender silver needle sank precisely into an acupoint on Old Mr. Lancaster's leg.

As it settled, the end of the needle seemed to vibrate faintly.

She had moved without any warning.

Old Mr. Lancaster thought she was starting, but when nothing

happened, he tensed up. Then, just as he thought she was still talking, she inserted the needle

mid-sentence.

Old Mr. Lancaster let out a strangled cry. He hadn't been ready at all!

He sucked in a sharp breath as veins bulged on his forehead.

The pain was ten times more intense than what he had felt when Serena first examined his leg.

In an instant, the agony shot from his leg through his entire body.

His body began to tremble uncontrollably.

"Hold on, Grandpa."

The girl's voice was cool and composed, yet it seemed to possess a magical quality that could soothe the soul.

With veins popping, Old Mr.

Lancaster gritted his teeth, his voice

trembling uncontrollably.

fine.... I can... I can take it" .net>

Serena's eyes were laser-focused.

Her technique was fast, steady, and precise.

Each movement was like an elegant keystroke on a piano.

Minutes ticked by.

Old Mr. Lancaster went from

sweating profusely and enduring the

intense pain to his face contorting in agony, yet his eyes were wide and

pais to ais face contortingin

aning, fixed on his legs.

He could feel it... a faint current of energy slowly flowing through the meridians in

his legs...

Isabella stormed back to her room and slammed the door shut with a loud bang.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy!

Chapter 93[526 words]

She threw herself onto her bed, burying her face in a pillow as tears streamed down her cheeks.

After crying for some time, Isabella cautiously lifted her head from the corner of the pillow and glanced toward the door.

It was still shut. She was the only one in the room.

Her parents and brother-not a single one of them had followed to comfort her!

They... they were all gathered around Serena. None of them had even noticed her distress!

Their eyes and hearts were only for Serena. They didn't see her at all!

It was all Serena's fault!

It was all because of that hick from the countryside!

The moment she returned, everyone started favoring Serena!

Furious, Isabella hurled all the pillows from her bed onto the floor, then swept everything off her vanity as well.

The crashing and clattering sounds shattered the last of her composure.

"Waaah, why... why!"

Isabella let out a long-suppressed, infuriated sob.

This was different from before, when she had been crying in the hopes that her family would come after her. Now, she was crying out of pure rage.

Between sobs, she began to curse wildly. "Frauds! Idiots! They're all useless!"

"And that old fool, Master Langford! He must be blind! How could a country hick, a high school dropout, possibly treat anyone?"

"What gives that girl the right? I'm supposed to be the only pampered princess in this family, the one my parents and brothers dote on! Why does she have to steal everything from me!"

She had spent so much money to bring Marcus Doyle here, just to expose Serena as an ignorant fraud in front of everyone.

But instead of making the family despise Serena, she had just given her a chance to show off!

Mr. Langford and that group of doctors were acting like they'd lost their minds!

It made her look like a clown.

She had spent so much of her savings, only to pave the way for Serena's success!

Isabella was sick with jealousy. Seeing Serena as the center of attention, she couldn't help but think...

Fine, let Serena treat him!

She didn't know anything about medicine anyway!

It would be for the best if she failed to cure Grandpa, if she made his paralysis even worse...

Then the family would see that Serena was a fraud, a liar who would toy with Grandpa's health just to win favor.

When that happened, no one would be fawning over Serena anymore!

Every single one of them who chose to trust Serena would be a culprit in worsening Grandpa's condition.

They would all regret it. They would

see

Wand realize that

was the

only Lancaster dashe

worthy of their love!

As for why Master Langford and those other doctors were so enthusiastic about Serena, Isabella

figured she had just tricked them the

same way she had tricked the

family.

That hick from the countryside had a knack for tricking people. They were all so

stupid, completely taken in by her!

She remembered the bright look in Grandpa's eyes when he heard his leg could be cured, that he could stand again.

Grandpa really wanted to be able to walk.

But...

She clenched her fists in frustration.

Hmph!

She had tried her best to help him,

but if he insisted on trusting that et

country

then he could suffer the

consequences!

When he was even more paralyzed and needed an amputation, then he'd know regret!

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Messing With Her? Are You Crazy!

Chapter 94[632 words]

Isabella wiped the tears from her face.

Grandpa trusted Serena so much. He deserved to be disappointed, to understand who his truly caring and concerned granddaughter was!

She would wait right here.

Wait to see how Serena made Grandpa's legs worse, how she crippled him further.

Wait for the family to denounce Serena as a massive fraud!

Overcome with jealousy, Isabella cried for a while longer until she was exhausted and her throat was hoarse.

She went to wash her face, planning to go downstairs and ask the staff for a glass of water.

On her way to the first floor, she had to pass Serena's room.

She had been crying when she ran back earlier, so she hadn't noticed that Serena's door wasn't closed.

Last time..... hadn't Ian said that if they could get Serena's laptop, they could dig up some dirt on her and show everyone her true colors?

This was her chance.

Isabella's eyes darted around. She glanced around nervously.

Everyone was in the back garden watching Serena treat Grandpa. No one was in the main house.

She crept over, slipped into the room, and closed the door behind her.

Isabella looked around the room, taking in the meticulously designed decor.

The lights, the murals, the curtains...

Everything was custom-made, worth tens of millions of dollars!

It was so much better than her own room!

And what's more... this entire room, from top to bottom, had been designed by her mother.

All that talk about treating them equally was a lie. They were treating her like a child!

What did that hick have that she didn't?

That girl had just come back and already had more than she had received in her entire life!

Isabella's eyes burned with jealousy.

Suddenly, her gaze fell upon the laptop sitting on the desk.

Her eyes lit up. She grabbed the laptop and scurried back to her own room.

Hmph. Once Ian dug up some dirt on Serena from this computer, the family would finally realize that she was their best daughter!

In the pavilion.

As Serena was treating Old Mr. Lancaster, something in her pocket vibrated.

She lifted her gaze slightly, glancing toward the main house.

A faint smile touched her lips.

The fish has taken the bait.

She lowered her eyes, her attention returning to Old Mr. Lancaster, and continued the treatment.

The only sounds in the pavilion were Old Mr Lancaster's heavy breathing and the subtle noise of Serena!??

Occasionally adjusting the needles."

Everyone stared at Serena's focused profile.

Even the old men on the video call on the phone were holding their breath, completely silent.

This went on for about forty minutes.

Serena's slender fingers took a silver needle and inserted it into a point on the inside of Old Mr. Lancaster's ankle.

Then, her inserted the drug.

Then, to everyone's disbelief, the toes on Old Mr. Lancaster's legs-paralyzed for three long years twitched. It was a slight movement, but undeniably clear.

"It moved! Dad, your foot... it moved!"

The Lancasters were ecstatic, their eyes fixed on Old Mr. Lancaster's foot, their voices trembling with excitement.

Old Mr. Lancaster felt the movement most directly. The sensation was so foreign after so long that it brought tears to his eyes.

His eyes red, he stared in a daze at his legs, which were covered in needles, his hands shaking uncontrollably.

"That's it."

Serena stepped aside, her gaze falling on Old Mr. Lancaster's emotional face. "Grandpa, your condition is very good. Starting. today we'll do this at the same time every morning for a week along with medicinal baths. There shouldn't be a problem."

Just then, her phone rang. Seeing the caller ID, her narrow, intelligent eyes lifted, and a cold, knowing smile touched her lips.

She casually glanced toward the main house.

"Mr. Langford, I'll leave the removal of the needles to you," Serena said, looking at

him. "I have something to take care of."

"Oh my, Dr. Serena, you're leaving already!"

"I still have so many questions! That last needle you placed, what was the reasoning behind that particular point..."

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Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 95[673 words]

The phone, which had been silent for so long, immediately erupted with the voices of the old masters, all talking at once.

Mr. Langford picked up the phone. "You should just be grateful you were allowed to observe Miss Serena's process! You want to hold her up from her important business? Bah!"

With a sharp tap, he ended the video call, shoved the phone into his pocket, and turned to Serena with a fawning smile. "Miss Serena, leave the rest to me. You go handle your business!"

Serena nodded. "Thanks. I'll send you the detailed procedure from this session later. You can study it on your own."

With that, she silenced her still-ringing phone and looked at her family. "Grandpa, you need to rest well after the treatment, or all the progress will be for nothing."

"Mom, Dad, Julian, I have something to do, so I have to go. I'll be back early tonight. Please make sure Grandpa doesn't stay up waiting for me again."

Then, she hurried off.

Edward and Catherine, who had been about to shower Serena with praise, swallowed their excited words.

Sigh...

It was almost a problem, having such a brilliant daughter.

She had only just returned home, yet they had so little time with her.

They barely had a chance to say a few words before she was off to handle more business.

The doting parents were sad, but they had to be strong and support their brilliant daughter's career.

Elyndor Institute of Advanced Sciences, Central Control.

A massive screen was split into several surveillance feeds.

One of the feeds was a recording.

The location: Serena's frilly, pink, girly-dream-themed bedroom.

Isabella entered the room and took Serena's laptop. Then, following Ian's instructions, she handed it to a man in a baseball cap.

Mr. Harrison stood before the screen, watching the footage of Ian taking the laptop from the man in the cap and hurrying away. He pointed at the screen.

A line of text appeared over Ian's head: Target A-Ian.

"Serena, your plan to lure the snake out of its hole was brilliant. Not only did you draw out the traitor in our midst, but you also reeled in a much bigger fish."

Just as the atmosphere grew serious, a low, magnetic laugh broke the silence.

A tall, elegant man leaned languidly against the control console. His handsome, otherworldly face held a bewitching charm.

With a smirk on his thin lips, his gaze fell on the recording. He leaned slightly closer to Serena.

Nicholas's face was stunning, with a hint of wickedness that made him as alluring as a siren. "So... Miss Lancaster prefers this style of room."

The screen full of girlish pink was indeed rather eye-catching.

Several experts in the control room heard his comment and couldn't help but glance at the pink-drenched room on the monitor.

Serena was speechless.

When she had used her laptop to activate the camera and record everything, she had suspected her room would attract attention.

Whatever. She was used to it. It was fine.

Besides, as long as her mother was happy, that was all that mattered. She didn't care what others thought.

Serena sat impassively in the main chair, leaning back languidly. Her slender pale hand rested on the console as she watched Ian's five feed on the screen with a peatral expression

With a flick of her finger, she enlarged Ian's feed, completely covering the pink surveillance footage.

Nicholas's low laugh grew deeper, his voice laced with an intimate quality that even Mr. Harrison noticed.

He smiled. "Mr. Harrison is right. The bait was beautifully set. Using Project Aegis's core program as bait... that's a weighty lure. And a cunning one."

The man's gaze was so intense that Serena turned to meet it. Her clear, cool eyes locked with his.

His obsidian eyes, shimmering with a faint light, reflected her face.

It was as if she was the only person he could see.

It was true...

He was utterly captivating.

Even someone like Serena wasn't immune to such charms.

Her long, dark lashes fluttered for a moment before she calmly turned her gaze back to the monitor. Her voice was level. "The bait has been set the line has been cast Now it's time to close the net."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 96[963 words]

Under the watch of the surveillance cameras.

Ian clutched his laptop and hid in a small, completely sealed room.

The moment he approached the room, the surveillance feed crackled with static.

"Clever kid, knowing to hide in a room that blocks surveillance and listening devices to do his work."

Mr. Harrison was smiling when he said this, but it was an icy smile.

After all, Ian was a student he had brought here. Who would have thought his own student would pull something like this?

He remembered when Serena had reminded him to keep a close eye on Ian. He had truly felt it was a shame a shame that such a talented individual had such poor character. It was also a shame that he himself had poured his heart into cultivating a student, only to raise an ungrateful traitor.

The surveillance feed crackled for over a minute before finally settling down, the image becoming perfectly clear again.

An expert next to him couldn't help but click his tongue and sigh softly. "As expected of Miss Lancaster. She anticipated he would use anti-surveillance tools to avoid detection and had already planted a new program in the laptop."

Serena's laptop was bait-bait for a very big fish.

And so, through the crystal-clear surveillance feed, they watched as Ian connected

a special device and attempted to crack into Serena's computer.

As time went on, Ian broke out in a sweat, his expression growing more frantic and his temper more frayed.

He tried every method, every command, deploying all of his skills.

However, the computer was like an iron fortress, giving him absolutely no opening to breach it.

"Damn it! What level of encryption is this? Why can't I crack it?!" Ian's face was ashen, and sweat poured down, nearly soaking his shirt.

The more agitated he became, the harder it was to break through the complex program before him.

Red warnings for "ACCESS DENIED" and "ILLEGAL INTRUSION" continuously flashed on the screen.

Suddenly, the computer emitted a piercing alarm.

A new red warning popped up on the screen-TRACKING PROGRAM ACTIVATED!

The glaring red light made Ian's face instantly turn pale. An indescribable fear spread through his heart.

In that moment, he seemed to realize something...

Serena's identity and abilities were likely far beyond his imagination. It was highly possible that Serena was even far superior to Mr. Harrison.

Ian's face grew paler, almost gray, and his heart pounded so hard it felt like it would leap out of his throat.

He stared at the red alert on the screen, his trembling fingers reaching for his own laptop. He opened a heavily encrypted communication program and contacted someone.

In the main control room, Mr.

Harrison watched Ian's terrified

expression and the entire process of

him contacting his handler. He

1.n

clenched his fists tightly. No one could

of

accept seeing such an act of espionage, especially when the person involved was a student he once had such high hopes for.

"Ian triggered the tracking alert. To save himself and to claim credit, he will definitely contact his master for protection and support," Serena said, her gaze on the screen growing colder. "And the core data for 'Project Aegis

On the screen, Ian's conversation with someone named "Siphon" was'-this bait is one they will certainly take." displayed in full, along with the IP address of the message he received.

Her slender fingers tapped on the console. "The chain of evidence is complete. Monitor all communication bands and suspicious signals. Prepare to close the net."

"We've been watching Siphon's

network in East Asia for a long time.

This time, thanks to you Miss Langester, we can lure the snake

from its hole and pull it out by the roots," Nicholas said, his posture still relaxed, a slight curl at the corner of his eye.

But the moment he picked up the communicator, his entire demeanor sharpened. "The fish is on the hook, the snake has struck. Prepare to close the net. Ensure they are caught red-handed."

Mr. Harrison looked at the two of them standing so close together. Although they barely spoke, their every move was perfectly synchronized, as if they knew what the other needed without a word being said.

Mr. Harrison ran a hand through his graying hair. He knew it was all over now. With Serena on the case, there was no escape for the other party.

He finally relaxed, sighing inwardly. Ah, to be young!

Government action was swift. Acting on the precise location provided by the Elyndor Institute of Advanced Sciences, agents from the Department of Defense broke down the door and apprehended Ian before he even had a chance to react, catching him red-handed.

Simultaneously, following the trail from "Siphon," the Department of Defense launched a swift, covert operation. They successfully

captured several Norvane spiel

hiding in Vaelion City, as well as the individuals behind Siphon Using a program provided by Serena to the destroyed all network data related to their attempts to steal the core technology of "Project Aegis."

Five days passed in a flash.

During those five days, Isabella was on edge.

Ever since she had delivered Serena's laptop to Ian, she hadn't been able to contact him at all. Her calls went from unanswered to his phone being turned off.

She had been waiting for him to dig up some dirt on Serena, but now that he was unreachable, she started to panic. She had no idea where Ian had taken Serena's computer or what he planned to do with it.

She even went to D University to ask about him, only to hear that no one had seen Ian for five days. Five days ago—the same day she had given him Serena's laptop.

The more Isabella thought about it, the more uneasy she felt, her anxiety growing... She wondered if she should tell Serena about this. What if Ian had done something with the laptop and Serena found out? What if the family found out?

The more she thought, the more she panicked.

She returned home, still debating whether to say anything...

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 97[546 words]

As soon as she walked in the door, she saw the entire family gathered around Serena, talking excitedly about something.

From the massive television in the living room, a news broadcast could be heard: "The National Security Agency has successfully thwarted a major foreign espionage operation, arresting several criminals who attempted to steal critical national secrets. In this operation, a certain Lancaster and a certain Blackwood played crucial and decisive roles. Their outstanding contributions are hereby commended."

Lancaster? Blackwood?

Isabella froze, her eyes instinctively darting to Serena.

The girl, surrounded by her adoring family, was holding a commendation certificate stamped with a bright national emblem and a gleaming gold medal. A faint smile played on her lips as she accepted her family's praise.

The certificate and medal in Serena's hands were identical to the ones being shown on the news, which had been personally delivered by the highest echelons of the Department of Defense to the "a certain Lancaster" and "a certain Blackwood" who had made outstanding contributions to the country.

The Lancaster on the news was Serena?!

The person who made an outstanding contribution to the nation... who cracked some espionage case... was Serena?

How was that possible?

She was just some country bumpkin. How could she have the ability to get involved in a national investigation?

Isabella was completely stunned.

The entire Lancaster family looked at the bright certificate and gleaming gold medal, all of them overcome with excitement.

It was the same thought again. They knew their precious

granddaughter/daughter/sister was extraordinary, but they never imagined... she was this extraordinary!

She had been so busy lately, spinning like a top... Was it because she was working for the government? And on something this huge!

It was a matter of national security,

so they didn't know the specifics of what Serena had done, but this, highest form of national recognition was proof enough that their treasure had made a world-shaking contribution.

"Good... good girl! Serena, you are the pride of the Lancaster family!" Old Mr. Lancaster's eyes filled with tears of unprecedented pride.

"Serena, you're a national hero and your mother and I are so proud of you!" Edward and Catherine's eyes reddened as they hugged Serena tightly.

"Serving the country and bringing honor to our family. Serena, you've truly earned this," Julian said with a gentle smile.

Everyone crowded around Serena, showering her with heartfelt praise.

Catherine noticed Isabella had returned and quickly waved her over. "Isabella, come here! Come and see, Serena received a national commendation!"

Isabella bit her lower lip and walked over. The brilliant red of the honor in Serena's hand stung her eyes. She was sick with jealousy but forced a smile and said, "That's amazing, Serena. Congratulations."

Serena's eyes flickered up, her gaze landing on Isabella's face, which struggled to conceal the resentment

seeping through. A smirk, equal

parts mocking and ironic, touched her red lips.

She raised her hand, bringing the certificate and medal closer for Isabella to see clearly, and let out a soft laugh. "Do you want to know how I received this honor?"

She smiled, and the usually cool and aloof girl was suddenly imbued with a vibrant, dazzling beauty. "You know, I really have to thank... the person who stole my laptop."

Isabella's eyelid twitched violently, and her fingers clenched into fists. What did Serena mean by that? What did a national honor have to do with her laptop?

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 98[561 words]

"My laptop somehow went missing. As luck would have it, it ended up being the perfect bait to draw the snakes out of their holes, causing those spies and the people from Norvane who were trying to steal Elyndor's secrets to walk right into a trap."

As she spoke, she waved the certificate and medal in her hand, a faint smile on her face. "I never expected to be so lucky. Maybe it's because... I've come back home, and you all bring me good fortune."

The words struck Isabella like a bolt of lightning, making her head spin and her vision go dark.

What was Serena saying? This highest national honor was all because of that laptop? The laptop she had given to Ian?!

That meant... the person who should be receiving this commendation was her! This certificate, this medal-this honor should have been hers! She should have been the one sitting there, basking in the family's praise, enjoying everyone's adoring gaze!

The glory that should have been hers had been stolen by Serena!

Isabella trembled with rage, the feelings of injustice and resentment nearly boiling over.

But her family, hearing Serena's words, all chimed in with praise.

"Luck is a form of skill. This honor is rightfully yours."

"You're too modest, Serena. I'm sure you earned this national commendation with more than just a laptop."

Every word of praise, every term of endearment, felt like a physical blade stabbing her in the heart. She was so angry she could have burst!

The person they should be praising was her! She was the one who had actually delivered the laptop and helped the country crack the spy case!

But could she say that? Could she jump up and announce that she was the one who took Serena's laptop?

No!

Not only could she say nothing, but she had to pretend she knew nothing and force a smile while congratulating Serena along with the rest of the family.

It made Isabella feel like a complete joke.

She had gone to all this trouble to expose Serena's true colors and show the family she was a fraud, only to end up helping Serena receive the highest honor in the country. And she could only watch from the shadows as Serena enjoyed the glory that should have been hers.

She had shot herself in the foot and now had to swallow the bitter pill.

It was infuriating!

She couldn't even bear to imagine the envious looks Serena would receive when she appeared in

Vaelion City's high society circle met

with this honor as a Lancaster heiress. How Serena would

completely overshadow her!

"Speaking of which... this is a serious matter involving national security," Old Mr. Lancaster said, his

"Since the news report intentioned

expression turning grave again.

concealed Serena's identity, we shouldn't spread this around. We can be happy about it among ourselves, but to the outside world... we shouldn't say a word."

Edward nodded. "Dad's right. We don't want to cause any trouble for Serena, and we definitely don't want those rats in the gutter... to come after her for revenge."

After all, the people from Norvane were a bunch of treacherous villains. If they found out that Serena was the one who foiled their plan to steal Elyndor's secrets, they would surely not let her go.

Serena was incredibly capable and now had ties to the government, but they couldn't protect her every second of every day. At a time like this, keeping a low profile was the best form of protection.

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 99[646 words]

The Lancasters nodded in agreement.

Catherine took Serena's hand. "To receive such a great honor, but not be able to announce it to the world, to not let everyone see how outstanding my Serena is....."

"It's fine, I don't like being in the spotlight." Although, even if her identity was exposed and the people from Norvane came after her, they would just be delivering more commendations to her doorstep. Still, it would be a hassle.

Isabella pouted. What was she talking about, not liking the spotlight? If Serena really didn't want the attention, she should just give back the certificate and medal that rightfully belonged to her! Trying to have it both ways. What an act!

"However..." Old Mr. Lancaster's tone shifted, his face breaking into a wide smile. "This is a huge happy occasion! We may not be able to tell the public, but we should definitely have our own private celebration!"

He turned to Alfred. "Alfred, book the Sovereign Suite at Le Céleste for me. We'll celebrate Serena's achievement tonight!"

As he spoke, he let out a sigh. "It's a pity your second and third brothers are still overseas and can't make it back in time. I'll have them each give you a ten-million- dollar reward later!"

Isabella's fists clenched so tightly her knuckles turned white, her eyes red with anger. Her second and third brothers were giving Serena money again? Twenty million dollars, just like that? Serena had just returned and had already gotten fifty million from the family!

Just then, Old Mr. Lancaster pulled a solid black bank card with gold trim from his pocket and, without taking no for an answer, shoved it into Serena's hand. "Serena, take this. It's a reward from Grandpa. There's a hundred million in there. Spend it however you want. If it's not enough, just ask Grandpa for more!"

Serena looked at the card in her hand and tried to give it back. "Grandpa, I have enough money. I haven't even touched what you all gave me last time."

"Then go spend it! When it's gone, ask Grandpa for more!" Old Mr. Lancaster pushed the card back into her hand.

A hundred million dollars?!

Isabella was practically bursting with jealousy now. Booking the top suite at Le Céleste would cost tens of millions. Now they were giving Serenaa hundred million dollars in spending money When had the Lancaster family ever been so generous with her? When they were giving Serena spending money, did they not even think of her?

Ahhh!

The top suite at Le Céleste, a hundred million dollars, plus twenty million from her two brothers-all of that should have been hers!

Isabella couldn't hold back any longer. With a deliberately playful tone, she laughed and said,

“Grandpa, Mom, Dad, a celebration is definitely in order, but... isn't this a bit too extravagant Didn't we say we

should keep a low profile? We could a could just have a family dinner at home to celebrate with Serena."

“Besides.....” She turned to look at Serena. “Serena was serving the country, which is what any citizen of Elyndor should do. Giving her so many rewards... won't that taint the honor she received?"

"Nonsense!" Old Mr. Lancaster's face hardened. "My granddaughter accomplished something this great. It's already an injustice that we can't announce it to the world. A family celebration can't be simple!"

Isabella bit her lip hard and nodded reluctantly. "You're right, Grandpa..."

"Serena, hurry up and take the money!" Old Mr. Lancaster said with a stern, threatening expression. "Grandpa is giving it to you, so you must accept it. Otherwise... otherwise, Grandpa won't cooperate with your treatments!"

His childish behavior made Serena laugh, though she felt a bit helpless.

"Just take it, Serena. It will make Grandpa happy," Catherine said, closing Serena's hand around the black card. “You deserve it. You've been busy working for the country these past few days and you've also been worrying about Grandpa's leg. Look at you... you've gotten so thin from exhaustion."

Messing With Her? Are You Crazy! - Chapter 100[572 words]

Unable to refuse her family's enthusiasm, Serena accepted the card. "Thank you, Grandpa."

Old Mr. Lancaster's face lit up with a happy smile.

After a bit more conversation, the family sent Serena upstairs to rest.

Isabella watched as Serena tucked the hundred-million-dollar black card into her pocket, feeling as though the world was collapsing around her, her vision darkening. She was overcome with jealousy. That wealth, that favoritism, that glory—it all belonged to her, Isabella!

While the family was still excitedly discussing how to celebrate Serena that evening, Isabella immediately went upstairs and caught up with her.

"Serena!"

She glanced down at her family, judged the distance, and figured they couldn't hear her. Then she bit her lip. "Give me the card Grandpa gave you."

Serena crossed her arms, her eyes glinting with amusement as she looked at her with a half-smile.

Isabella hated that condescending look. Serena was just a country bumpkin who got lucky enough to return to the Lancaster family. But that couldn't hide the cheap country girl in her bones! What right did Serena have to look down on her?

Isabella dug her nails into her palms, forcing down the jealousy boiling inside her. "I'm the one who gave your laptop to — to Ian. I should be the one who cracked the spy case!"

"That commendation should be mine, and the rewards from Grandpa should be mine too."

Serena's expression was lazy and wicked. She stared at Isabella for a few seconds before suddenly laughing out loud. "Oh? Is that so?"

She took a small step closer to Isabella. An overwhelming, icy presence pressed down on her.

She curled her lips into a mocking, contemptuous smile. "Then why don't you go tell Grandpa, Dad, Mom, and our older brother? Why don't you go downstairs right now and tell them that you're the one who took my laptop? That because of you, I had the chance to crack the spy case, so the credit is yours, and the rewards should be yours too."

"You-!"

Isabella was so choked with anger she could barely breathe, her face flushing bright red.

She didn't dare! Of course, she didn't dare! If she had the guts, she would have exposed Serena for stealing her credit right then and there. Why would she have come to confront Serena privately to get back what was hers?

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Serena lazily straightened up and scoffed, her cold eyes glinting like frost, as if she were looking down on an ant. "You don't dare? Then suck it up."

She couldn't be bothered with Isabella anymore and walked right past her.

"Serena!"

Isabella was so angry she wanted to shout after her. But she was afraid of drawing the family's attention, so all she could do was stand there, fuming and utterly defeated.

Meanwhile, a pall of gloom hung over the Wynn family.

The living room of the Wynn family mansion was a mess. Most of the servants had been dismissed, and those who remained no longer did their jobs with the same diligence.

Logan was slumped on the sofa, running his hands through his hair, which was already a bird's nest.

Ever since he and Hailey had been humiliatingly kicked out of the Obsidian Palace, he had returned home only to be met with a slap" from Patrick Wynn that sent him staggering against a wall. His father had furiously demanded to know who he had offended.

The call from the executive assistant of the Lancaster Corporation hadn't been a bluff. Calls canceling their partnerships had reached every member of the Wynn family.