

Chapter 643 - The Plan of Saving Nora Novel Free

By now Nora had finally guessed all her mother's plans. At the same time that she was excited, she was also anxious.

With her mother being so smart, it would probably be even more difficult for her to resolve this problem.

On the way back to the Smiths, she put on her earphones and listened to the recording her mother had left her. This was the only thing her mother had left behind.

After listening to it a few times, she had those words memorized.

Nora sighed silently.

It seemed like she had to go to California and chat with the manager of Idealian Pharmaceuticals. Since her mother had trusted him back then, he must have some important information.

As she thought about this, she listened attentively to the recording in her earpiece and suddenly captured some information.

At the same time, her phone rang.

Nora had a flash of inspiration and caught some information. However, all her inspiration was interrupted by her phone ringtone, making her frown.

She felt like something she had overlooked was about to surface, but it instantly sank to the bottom again.

She sighed silently.

It seemed like she really could not be anxious.

She picked up her phone. A gentle voice came from the other end. "Nora, I'll go to the Hunts later. Are you coming?"

It was Justin's mother, Iris.

When she thought of the gentle woman, Nora laughed softly. "Okay... Sister."

After all, she had recognized her as her God-sis back then.

Iris had really taken good care of herself. Over the years, she had been raising flowers every day and did not care about the outside world. Such a person had no worries and still looked to be in her thirties.

She probably couldn't get Nora to call her Mom, either.

Hearing Nora call her 'sister', Iris was silent for a moment before she smiled. "Only call me that in private. Don't call me that when we're at the Hunts."

Nora: "?"

Just as she raised her eyebrows, she heard her say, "I don't want my son to become a cold machine when he faces me."

When Nora heard this, she was silent for a moment before replying, "Okay."

Justin and Iris's relationship did not seem to be very good. She did not know the specific reason, but she did not want to add to the misunderstanding between them.

After hanging up, she drove back to the Hunts.

When she arrived at the door, she noticed that Iris' car had also arrived.

The woman was wearing a white dress. She was tall and slender. Her actions had the elegance and grace of a young lady from a big family. She slowly walked toward Nora.

"...What are you here for?"

Nora almost called her God-sis. Fortunately, she controlled herself.

Iris looked at her affectionately and said, "It was Cherry and Pete's birthday yesterday. I won't join in the fun, but as a grandmother, I have to make up for it. Besides... I heard that you had actually given birth to triplets back

then?"

Nora: "..."

Why were Iris's eyes so mocking when she mentioned the triplets?

She had even added, “How awesome!” at the end.

Nora felt a little awkward and followed her into the room.

In the living room, Cherry was playing games on the sofa while Pete was sitting beside her, reading. Xander was still resting upstairs. Although his fever had subsided, he was still a little weak.

When they saw Iris, their eyes lit up. They jumped down from the sofa and ran to her.

Pete was clearly much more lively than before. He took the initiative to shout, “Grandma!”

Cherry’s eyes widened as well. “Grandma, tell me the truth. Are you a vampire?”

Everyone: “?”

The others were a little surprised. Why would Cherry say such rude things?

Only Nora’s mouth twitched. She was used to it. Sure enough, she heard her next words. “Why don’t you look old at all? You’re still so young and beautiful? If we go out together, people will definitely think you’re my sister!”

Saying that she was her sister was too much.

However, such lies did not feel strange coming from Cherry’s mouth. She even wanted to laugh.

Iris smiled and picked her up. “Cherry, you’re so sweet. I wonder who you inherited that from?”

“Not Mommy!”

Her mother was the most stubborn and did not like to speak!

After Cherry subconsciously said this, she looked up at Nora. When her eyes met Nora’s, she immediately added, “After all, I’ve already inherited Mommy’s beauty~ I can’t be greedy!”

This little bootlicker.

Nora's lips curled up. Her almond-shaped eyes glared at her slightly

Iris also laughed out loud. Then, she gave the three children the gifts she had brought and went upstairs to see Xander.

Nora had lit a calming incense in the room, so the little guy was sleeping very soundly and did not wake up.

Iris did not want to stay in the Hunts for very long. She stood up and said, "I'll see him next time."

She went out and then downstairs with Nora. When she saw Justin standing there, her eyes flickered for a moment before she nodded at him.

"You're here."

Justin's attitude was also very cold. Iris said, "I'd come to see the child. I'll get going now."

Justin nodded distantly.

Iris glanced at him. Although there was a lot she wanted to say, she did not know where to start. In the end, she silently walked past Justin.

Just as she reached the door, the butler rushed in. "Sir, bad news! Old Sir is back!"

When the butler saw Iris, he instantly shut his mouth.

Iris frowned. "Who?"

The butler was anxious. He glanced at Justin and could only bite the bullet and say, "J-Jus... Justin's... father."

Iris immediately clenched her fists.

The butler added carefully, "And... and that woman."

When Nora saw the situation, she looked at Justin. She saw the man raise his eyes and stare outside with a deep gaze. He was silent for two seconds before saying, "Chase her away."

However, as soon as he finished speaking, a voice was heard. "This is my house. Let's see who dares to chase me away?"

Then, a middle-aged man strode in.

Herman was almost fifty years old this year. He looked elegant and his hair was half white, making him look a little old. On his face, which was 40% similar to Justin's, his long and narrow eyes had the wisdom of many years.

Iris looked at him.

She hadn't seen him for more than twenty years. He was still wearing the suit he loved the most back then. The years had left traces on his face, making her momentarily dazed.

Then, a gentle smiling woman followed him in. If one looked carefully, one would notice that the woman and Iris's style was a little similar. They were both gentle and elegant.

Unfortunately, the same clothes had all kinds of charm on Iris, but on her, it seemed a little too heavy.

Iris's pupils constricted.

When Herman saw her, he frowned and asked sternly, "Heh, I was wondering who wanted to chase me out? So it's you..."

His gaze fell on Justin before he looked at Iris. "You two seem to have a good mother-son relationship!"

Justin looked at the two of them in silence. He did not speak or deny this sentence because he did not want to say anything that would make Iris lose face.

When Iris heard this, her expression instantly turned cold. She turned back to look at Nora and said calmly, "From now on, you have to take good care of the three children. I'll be leaving now."

With that, she prepared to go leave.

Nora glanced at Cherry. Cherry immediately walked to Iris's side and held her arm. "Grandma, be careful~"

Iris froze when she heard her.

She immediately retracted her arm from Cherry's hand. She lowered her eyes and said calmly, "There's no need. I can walk myself."

Cherry looked at Iris in confusion. Why did her grandmother suddenly change her attitude when she was still so good to her and her brother just a moment ago?

She must be angry that she and her brother had not gone to see her for too long!

Therefore, Cherry looked up and whined, "Grandma, Pete and I will visit you often in the future!"

Iris's grip on her bag tightened slightly, but she still lowered her head and said slowly, "No."

She turned around and said coldly, "My flowers are all very expensive. You touched them so casually the last time you came to visit me. You're very rude..."

Cherry bit her lip.

Since she was young, she did not care if others criticized her or scolded her. This was the first time that someone she cared about had said something bad about her!

She widened her eyes sadly and looked at Iris in confusion.

Justin, who was a slave to his daughter, could no longer stand Cherry's aggrieved look. He stepped forward and said in a very cold tone, "She's still young. How is she being rude? Six-year-old children would naturally be curious about things. Did she harm your flowers?"

Iris said, "Orchids are the most precious. They're not for children to play with. Besides, I hate children the most. They're too noisy..."

Justin sneered. "So you hated me this much when I was young?"

Iris was stunned.

Justin ignored her and picked up Cherry. "If you like orchids, I'll buy you a hundred pots. You can smash them anywhere in the back garden."

The hostility in his words was very strong.

Nora narrowed her eyes and saw Iris' face instantly turn as pale as paper. However, following that, she continued coldly, "You're rich. You can spoil the child however you want, but don't bother me!"

Justin was about to flare up when Herman suddenly said, "Iris, why are you still so selfish? This is your granddaughter! How can you treat her like this? You're really too much!"

Iris suddenly looked at Herman with anger in her eyes. Everyone else had the right to criticize her, but what right did he have to criticize her? Did he not know why she had become like this?!

Herman narrowed his eyes and smiled. He walked forward as if he did not understand her. Step by step, he arrived in front of Justin and sighed deeply. Like an old father, he said, "Justin, it was Dad and Mom who let you down back then. For so many years, I've always wanted to come back to see you, but your mother always refused... Sigh! I came back this time because I heard that you held a birthday party for the triplets. I specially came to give gifts to my grandchildren!"

With that, he looked at the woman behind him. "Lauren, hurry up and get the gifts!"

The mistress named Lauren stepped forward and placed the three presents in her hand on the ground. Then, she took one out and handed it to Cherry. "Is your name Cherry? Your name is really cute. The little guy is also so cute. Come, let your grandmother hug you!"

A hug from a grandmother...

Iris had already reached the door, but when she heard this, she suddenly stopped.

She subconsciously turned around and saw the four of them standing together like a family. She felt like an outsider.

Iris felt a pain in her heart.

However, she still turned around forcefully and prepared to leave.

At this moment, a pair of hands held hers tightly. She was stunned for a moment. When she raised her head again, she saw Nora.

Iris was stunned.

Nora asked, "Why?"

Iris's jaw tensed up.

She clearly knew that Nora was asking why her attitude suddenly changed so much, but she still pretended to not understand. "What why?"

As the two of them were in a stalemate, Cherry's childish voice was heard. "Grandma? But isn't Grandma Daddy's mother? Why does Daddy have two mothers?"

The mistress, Lauren, was stunned for a moment and stood there awkwardly.

Herman said, "Cherry, this is my current wife. You should call her Grandma."

Cherry tilted her head and stared at him, feeling a little unhappy. "Who are you?"

Herman's expression froze. He coughed and suppressed the frustration in his heart.

Before returning home, Lauren had already asked around and found out that Justin was a slave to his daughter, so as long as she pleased Cherry, she could obtain Justin's favor.

Therefore, Herman pretended to explain patiently, "...I'm your father's father."

"Daddy's father is my grandpa, and Daddy's mother is my grandma-" Cherry pretended to be stupid and sang a children's song. After she finished, she even smiled at Justin. "Daddy, did I sing well?"

"Very well."

Justin touched her head, but his gaze swept across the area in front of him. Iris and Nora's figures tugged at each other in the corner before the two of them went out.

Justin lowered his eyes.

Outside.

“What on earth is wrong?” Nora blocked Iris’s way and asked, “Is there something you can’t

say?”

“No!” Iris looked as cheerful as before. She even smiled gently. “I just don’t like the Hunts.”

Nora frowned. “But when we first met that afternoon, you told me a lot about you and your son. You clearly care about him. I thought that you had thought things through when you came to give birthday presents to the three children.”

Iris frowned and suddenly looked up. “I just want to maintain a good relationship with

you.”

Nora: “?”

Iris revealed her purpose casually. “You know orchids so well. You’ll definitely be able to help me. Therefore, for your sake, I pretended to give my grandchildren some gifts. I don’t like them.”

Nora frowned. Her almond-shaped eyes shone with confusion. “Why?”

“Because...” Iris said word by word, “Herman’s blood flows in their veins! He betrayed me back then, so I hate everything related to him!”

Nora clenched her jaw.

Iris continued to smile as she said, “I used Justin to force Grandpa Hunt to chase him away and successfully stayed at home. It was not because I was noble, but because I wanted to fight with him for the assets! Didn’t he want Hunt Corporation? I snatched it from him! As for Justin... I really can’t get close to him. He looks too similar to Herman. As soon as I get close to him, I remember Herman’s disgusting face. I just want to stay in the villa alone. No one can disturb me.”

Iris turned around and left.

This time, Nora could not stop her.

However, Iris must have her reasons.

The woman who had confided in her for an entire afternoon was not lying. But why?

Nora thought about it and turned back to enter the room. However, the moment she turned her head, she saw Justin standing not far behind her.

The man's eyes were dark and unclear. Half of his face was in the light under the street lamp, and the other half was in the dark. Under the night sky, the mole at the corner of his eye became colder.

Obviously, he had heard Iris' words.

When Nora thought about how she and Iris were talking earlier, Iris must have clearly seen Justin's eyes, but she still said those words. She was clearly doing this on purpose!

She was even more certain that Iris had her reasons.

But what difficulties did she have?

As she was thinking, she saw a hint of loneliness flash across the man's face. Justin suddenly said, "Nora, even my birth mother doesn't like me. Do you really like me?"

At this moment, he was like a pitiful worm in the corner forgotten by everyone.

Nora looked at him and her heart softened. She walked to Justin and looked at him seriously. "I really like you."

Justin seemed to be extremely touched. He reached out and hugged her tightly as he murmured in her ear, "How could that be? Even Mother hates me... What can you like about me?"

This side of Justin was really heartbreaking.

Nora thought about it and hesitated for a long time. In the end, she replied, "You're good-looking!"

She did not see the corners of Justin's mouth twitch. "..."

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Did he not have any other merits in Nora's heart?!

As he was thinking, he felt Nora pushing him away. Justin quickly sorted out his emotions and regained his lonely expression.

He seemed to have been hurt by Iris's words.

He finally grabbed the opportunity to push Nora further. He could not let go so easily. He sighed silently. "Nora, can you stay with me tonight?" Nora: "???"

Justin looked into the distance, his deep eyes filled with sadness. "I have some things I want to tell you."

Nora was about to reject him when she heard him say, "It's about me and my mother."

Nora twitched her lips and finally sighed. "Alright."

At this moment.

Iris sat in the car and left the Hunts.

When the Hunts' iron gate was closed, Mrs. Landis couldn't help but say, "Ms. Iris, why must you do this... It has been so many years. Now that Mr. Hunt has grown up, he's clearly very powerful. Tell him your difficulties!"

Iris lowered her head. "It'll be troublesome if I tell him. Forget it. It has been so many years. He didn't grow up with me. Why should I ask him to grow old with me?"

Mrs. Landis stared at her. "What do you mean by trouble? You're his mother! You've suppressed the longing in your heart for so many years and you didn't even look at him. You hug your phone every night and repeatedly watch videos of him growing up that the servants at home had sent your husband... You can't bear to delete those videos, even if your phone is full..."

Iris didn't say anything.

Mrs. Landis suddenly leaned in front of her. "Miss, if you don't want to tell Mr. Hunt, then tell me! What happened back then? Why?"

What had happened back then...

Even Mrs. Landis didn't know the full story. All she knew was that after Herman left, Iris had suddenly packed up her things one day, moved out of the Hunt Manor, and moved into the small villa here.

From then on, it was as if she had suddenly become cold-hearted, and no longer cared about Justin.

But Mrs. Landis still remembered that one day when the five-year-old Justin, who didn't understand anything at all, suddenly ran all the way to the villa, crying and shouting for his mother.

But Iris had refused to open the door. She had stayed in the house and merely said, "Go back. I don't want to see you."

"Mom, open the door!"

Outside the door, the five-year-old Justin tried his best to knock on the door, but as though she had hardened her heart, she never opened it.

Justin was just as stubborn. He shouted, "If you don't open the door, I won't leave!"

Later, it started to rain.

It was storming, and the winds were howling in the heavy rain. The bodyguard gave him an umbrella, but he pushed him away. The stubborn little boy kept standing on that rainy night.

Justin had a very determined look in his eyes. He didn't believe that his mother would really ignore him.

Neither did he believe that his gentle mother would suddenly become so cruel and hard-hearted.

But later, cold and hungry, he finally fainted from exhaustion. Even when he had collapsed onto the ground, he kept his eyes open with the last vestiges of his strength and stared at the door.

What disappointed him was that from beginning to end, the door never opened once.

From then on, Justin understood that Iris didn't love him anymore. After visiting a few more times, he rarely came again.

But he didn't know that Mrs. Landis had seen with her own eyes that the entire time he was in the rain, Iris had also stood in the rain in the courtyard inside the villa.

When the bodyguards outside exclaimed in shock after he fainted, Iris had rushed to the door. Both her hands had been on the gates, but she never opened the door.

Her tears had mixed together with the rainwater on her face, and she wept silently with her mouth open. That was the most painful night of Iris' life that Mrs. Landis had ever seen.

She was a hundred times sadder than when Herman had betrayed her.

In her opinion, Iris didn't actually love Herman at all-or rather, she didn't love him that deeply. After all, theirs had been a political marriage.

She had given all her love to Justin.

But for some reason, mother and son had to be separated. They had clearly been so close once upon a time, yet they were like complete strangers now.

Mrs. Landis simply didn't understand what had happened. She stared at Iris, only to see tears all over her face.

Mrs. Landis panicked. "Ma'am, what's wrong? What's the matter?"

Iris covered her face with her hands.

Before coming, she'd thought that since so many years had gone by, everything must be okay by now, right?

Besides, Nora had once tried to persuade her and had told her that her son had already grown up. Perhaps her troubles were nothing more than trivial matters to him.

That was why she had, after a long internal struggle the day before, come to the Hunt Manor today with the clothes she had carefully selected for the three children.

Deep down, she wanted to repair her relationship with her son. She could also see that, although her son was surprised to see her, he was not hostile towards her. But little did she expect that... that man would come back!

As expected, those thoughts of hers were all just wishful thinking.

She should just stay in that small villa her whole life like someone's trapped canary and live out her life all by herself.

This was the price she had to pay for that incident back then.

Without any hope, there would be no disappointment.

The little spark of hope that had finally ignited after much difficulty had suddenly been extinguished that evening.

Iris lowered her head. "Don't ask anymore, Mrs. Landis."

Seeing how sad she looked, Mrs. Landis sighed.

At the Hunts'.

When Justin and Nora entered the living room, they found that Cherry had gone to the bedroom upstairs. Herman and Lauren were sitting on the sofa, drinking the tea that the butler had just handed them.

Justin seemed utterly heartbroken by Iris. There was sadness on his face. He took Nora's hand and sat opposite Herman and Lauren.

Herman said, "You saw that, didn't you? Your mother is a cold-hearted person. Justin, she has always been so selfish. You should have already become accustomed to it a long time ago, right?"

Justin raised his head suddenly, piercing light shooting out of his eyes. "Why are you here?"

Herman narrowed his eyes. "This is my home. Of course I was going to come back someday! Besides, my agreement with your mother back then was for me to leave the Hunts for twenty years! Don't worry, I know that the entire Hunt Corporation is now in your hands. Even if I'm back, I won't be able to take anything back from you... I've been doing my own business abroad all these years, and have my own assets, so I won't covet your money. I came back just to visit you, as well as your grandmother along the way." After

saying this, he stood up and started walking out. “I will go and say hi to your grandmother first. I will stay at her place tonight.”

The fake Lauren said pretentiously, “Justin, this is our gift for the children. Cherry is afraid of strangers, so she didn’t accept the gift. You can give it to her later.”

After the two left, Justin looked at Nora. “Why don’t you go upstairs first? I will deal with these gifts.”

Nora had been worried that he would misunderstand Iris, and end up being moved by Herman’s few words. It was only then that she realized that he actually disliked Herman that much. She was relieved.

She nodded and went upstairs.

After she went upstairs, Justin picked up his cell phone and answered a call. Sean’s voice came from the other side: “Boss.”

Justin’s gaze was very cold. He lowered his eyes slightly and asked, “Have you looked into it? What did she say in the car after she left...?”

Sean then recounted the conversation between Mrs. Landis and Iris in the car and told him how Iris had reacted.

Justin lowered his eyes and listened quietly.

Sean said tentatively, “Ma’am seems to be having some difficulties, and she is not indifferent to you. Although she speaks disdainfully about the videos sent to her in the past, she has actually kept them all...”

Justin knew all this, of course—because he was the one who had gotten them to send those videos!

All he wanted to know right now was—why?!

Sean was still reporting his discoveries. “The gifts that Ma’am brought for the children were all carefully selected and prepared a month in advance. After hearing that you have another child, she even prepared an additional gift overnight to make up. She was actually planning to tell you some kind of truth when she took the initiative to visit today... but it seems like she has regretted

it. It seems that the change in her emotions only took place after your father returned.”

“Okay.”

Justin understood what Sean was saying. He raised his eyes and looked ahead of him dispassionately. Then, he slowly said, “If you can’t get anything out of my mother, then try the other side.”

“Yes, sir.”

Justin stared into the distance as he hung up the call.

There was a tinge of loneliness in his eyes.

To be honest, he had never believed that his mother had suddenly stopped loving him. When he was a child, he had been so stubborn that he had fainted in rain. When he woke up, he had known right away that it would be useless to approach her again.

Later, as he grew up, he suddenly discovered one day that a servant at home was filming a video of him. After that, the servant had sent it to someone.

At first, he’d thought that the servant must be scheming something, so he’d constantly stayed on guard against him. However, even as time passed, the servant didn’t take any action.

After he grew up, Justin quietly studied and learned hacking techniques without anyone knowing. He had then hacked into the servant’s phone and discovered his secret.

As it turned out, all the videos of him—from when he was a child all the way until he turned into a young adult—had all been sent by the servant to his mother, who had never shown any concern for him!

He took the opportunity to hack into his mother’s cell phone, only to find all the videos of him stored within. Every video of him from when he was a child until he became a young adult—was in there. None of them had ever been deleted. And every night, before going to bed, she would watch the videos of him over and over again.

Justin had been thirteen years old then.

Since then, he became certain that his mother was hiding something from him, and that she had her reasons and difficulties for doing so.

It could be said that he had never held any grudge towards his mother.

However, this did not mean that he was not angry about it.

He was indeed furious.

When he was young, he couldn't do anything. Thus, for his own good, his mother had kept those secrets from him. But even as he grew up, was his mother still unable to believe in him?

Besides...

It was undeniable that feelings and relationships were built and developed through daily contact and interaction with one another. The twenty-year-long separation had left him and Iris with nothing much to say to each other.

Thus, later on, he only occasionally visited her at the villa, and never without reason.

He was waiting.

He was waiting for his mother to take the initiative to tell him the truth. But judging from her behavior, was his mother planning to keep it from him for the rest of her life? Just because it would bring him trouble?

Justin lowered his head.

To be honest, there were times when he felt like giving up on the investigation.

So what even if he found out what had happened?

Since she hadn't been by his side as he grew up, why should he accompany her as she grew old...? Besides, sometimes habit really was something awfully scary—he had already grown used to not having her at home.

If there came a day where he suddenly found himself with a mother nagging at him, he might not be able to get used to it either.

Yet when he heard from Sean that she had cried, his heart softened again.

No matter what, they were still mother and son. Even if he was indifferent by nature, and even if he might only care about a few people; the woman was still among the few he cared about.

Moreover-and also the main reason-Nora seemed to share a very good relationship with her.

Upstairs.

Nora entered the room to see Cherry pulling a long face. Although she was sitting on the sofa and playing games, she was not happy.

Pete glanced at her. "What's the matter? Is something troubling you?"

Cherry killed an enemy in the game and then looked up at him. "Is it that obvious that I'm upset?"

"... You didn't rant at anyone while playing your game today," replied Pete with the corners of his lips spasming. The little girl was pretty much just short of blatantly writing the words "I'm unhappy" on her face.

Even Princess Lucy asked, "Cherry, what's wrong? Did someone bully you? I'll get the bodyguards to beat them up!" As she spoke, she even waved her tiny little fists. She looked just like a Barbie doll.

Cherry sighed quietly. "Don't beat her up, Lucy. You don't understand."

A puzzled Lucy asked, "What don't I understand? Is this some kind of rule in America? Why should you put up with it when that person is upsetting you?" "Because it's my grandma we're talking about!"

Cherry rested her chin on her hand and said, "Grandma was really nice to me in the past, I don't know why she suddenly changed today. She must have a reason for doing so! Do you know why she did that, Pete?"

Pete shook his head. "I don't know."

Cherry was a little disappointed. "You are so stupid~"

Cherry sighed quietly. "Forget it, it's time for my live-stream!"

After speaking, she sat on the sofa and opened the live-stream app.

Seeing the little fellows chatting so happily, Nora didn't go in to disturb them and left instead.

Cherry was not someone to dwell on things, so she would never take such small matters to heart. Neither did she need Nora to comfort her. In her opinion, Justin was simply overthinking things.

After she left, she looked downstairs again and saw that there was no one in the living room. However, there was a figure on the balcony.

Although Nora was very sleepy and wanted very much to look for someplace where she could sleep, when she thought of how hurtful Iris' words earlier in the day had been for Justin, she nevertheless went down the stairs and walked towards him.

As she went over, she saw the man standing there with his back to her.

The moonlight cast a silver glow on him, making a smooth silhouette of the dark and overcast figure. He exuded a sense of alienation and indifference, yet at the same time, he looked as though he had been forgotten in a corner.

He seemed so sad and lonely that it made one feel sorry for him.

This was especially when the man, who had never smoked, actually had a cigar held in between his fingertips at the moment. The smoke from the cigar curled upwards, making him look even lonelier.

Nora felt like they could pretty much make a movie with the scene.

The corners of Nora's lips twitched a little. She hadn't expected the man to be so deeply hurt.

She walked over and stood behind him. Just as she was about to speak, the man suddenly turned around and embraced her tightly. His chest was very hard and solid. It felt rather uncomfortable when he held her so tightly.

Yet Nora did not dare to push him away at a time like this, for fear that he would become even sadder—because the man happened to whisper into her ear, "Nora, you're the only one I have left now."

Nora kept quiet for three seconds, but in the end, she still couldn't stop herself from saying, "You still have Cherry, Pete, Xander, Brenda, and also Sean and Lawrence. There's also..."

Justin: "..."

He really shouldn't have allowed the woman to speak. The moment she opened her mouth, she would absolutely become the insensitive girl who ruined the atmosphere!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed. Seeing that Nora was actually planning to continue listing the rest, he promptly and decisively lowered his head suddenly and caught the woman's lips.

He could see the girl freezing suddenly. Then, her almond-shaped eyes widened and she looked at him in astonishment. It seemed like her first reaction was to push him away, yet she held back.

Justin closed his eyes. He could sense that the girl was being extra-tolerant today, so he pushed his luck and invaded her mouth.

The crisp smell of tobacco on the man rushed into Nora's nostrils bossily, making her feel like the smell was actually quite pleasant?

To be honest, she hadn't thought of pushing him away.

If the man needed a hug and a kiss to reinforce his sense of security, then she didn't mind giving them to him.

Besides, he really was exceptionally pitiful today. Thus, not only did Nora not resist, but she even stretched out her arms and circled them around his neck tightly, and started responding to his kiss.

The atmosphere gradually turned amorous.

It seemed like all the air at the balcony had been sucked away. In the narrow space, the man and woman's chests heaved up and down. After some time, Justin suddenly picked up Nora and carried her like a newly-wed bride. He said, "Let's... go to the bedroom upstairs."

The suggestiveness in his words were very apparent.

When he stared hard at Nora, he saw the girl, whose cheeks were scarlet and her eyes misty, reply, "Okay."

To be honest, Justin hadn't expected her to agree.

He'd long discovered that the woman had always been relatively indifferent in her feelings. It hadn't been that long since the two of them confirmed their relationship, either.

The woman's chest was heaving up and down intensely at the moment, and her eyes contained a faint hint of womanly charm and shyness. When she agreed with her cheeks all red, he was instead stunned for a moment.

But right after, he regained his senses.

Seemingly afraid that the woman would go back on her word the very next second, he turned around at once and strode up the stairs.

Nora, whose head was buried into his chest, could see that his eyes were as deep and bottomless as the ocean. The way his eyes were staring at her so closely was as though he was looking at his prey, which made one feel daunted and timid.

But unfortunately, who did he think Nora was?

She had always been the hunter, not the hunted. When had she ever allowed herself to be in a disadvantageous position?

So, the next moment, she yawned. The two went up the stairs and entered the bedroom. With her in his arms, Justin rushed straight towards the bed. However, he had only just taken two steps when Nora said, "Let's take a bath first. Who's going in first, you or me?"

Justin's eyes instantly turned even darker. "... Let's go in together?"

"Get lost."

Nora sat upright and jumped out of his arms. "I'll take a bath first."

She took out an unused bath towel from the side and walked into the bathroom.

Mr. Hunt, who had stayed outside, was so anxious that he was going around in circles. He hurriedly made the bed; then he checked whether the big bed was sturdy enough and whether it would make any noise if people jumped on it.

After that, he swallowed again and smoothed his hair.

If Lawrence or Sean were to see him like this, they would probably marvel in amazement. Was that really their boss, who had never even frowned a little in the face of business transactions worth billions, or even dozens of billions?

Splash

The sound of water stopped. Justin stood up straight, his eyes fixed in the direction of the bathroom. The door opened, and Nora walked out.

The bathrobe was wrapped around her, and she was toweling her hair. Because of the hot bath, her cheeks had become even rosier and moist. Her almond-shaped eyes glanced at him shyly and she said, "It's your turn."

His Adam's apple shifted a little. "... Okay."

He picked up the bathrobe and rushed into the bathroom like an eager child.

He washed himself seriously and carefully during the bath, for fear that Nora would notice if he didn't clean any part of himself well. Even so, he took only two minutes in the bath and ran out again.

Then, he saw Nora already lying on the bed.

He slowed down, his breathing becoming heavier and heavier. He walked up to the bed where Nora was. As he thought of what was about to happen that night, he became rather excited.

But the next moment, his excitement died down.

Because! The mouth of the woman on the bed was slightly ajar, and her eyes were closed. This... Was she asleep?

Justin: "??"

How would he know that when they were downstairs just now, as they kissed and kissed, Nora had also been getting sleepier and sleepier?! This continued

until the man finally suggested going to the bedroom, and she breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Would she finally be able to go to sleep?

Therefore, with her eyelids droopy, she had replied sleepily, "Okay."

It wasn't the shy and bashful reaction that Justin had imagined on his own at all!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed a little. He wanted to lift the quilt but realized that the woman had wrapped it tightly around herself, and was refusing to let him in.

Justin took another deep breath. In the end, he stood up in silence, went into the bathroom, took out the hairdryer, and quietly started drying her hair for her.

He hoped beyond everything that perhaps the noise would wake the woman?

Unfortunately, even until her hair was all dry, she didn't wake up.

On the contrary, seeing her unintentionally exposed shoulders while drying her hair, the fire in Justin's heart started to burn even more strongly.

In the end, Justin took another cold bath that night.

Nora did not wake up until noon the next day.

She stretched comfortably. But when she turned her head to the side, she was instead faced with the man's dark and gloomy face, which gave her a huge shock.

Justin asked quietly, "Did you sleep well?"

"... Yeah."

Nora yawned. Then, she got out of bed and went to wash up.

Justin could only sigh helplessly. As he got up, he heard movement outside the door. He went over and looked through the peephole to see the three children and Brenda standing outside.

Brenda was asking nosily, “Did your Mommy really sleep in there last night? That’s why your father is sleeping in for once?”

Cherry replied, “Uh-huh, uh-huh! It seemed like Mommy’s legs felt a little weak last night, so Daddy carried her upstairs!”

Pete said, “... It’s not that Mommy’s legs were weak.”

Cherry was puzzled. “Then was it because Mommy couldn’t walk anymore? So she was acting like a baby?”

Pete: “?”

At the side, Lucy covered her mouth and giggled.

Brenda’s eyes, however, were gleaming in an extremely gossipy manner. She said, “Cherry, you are so dumb! They are making younger brothers and sisters for you!” Cherry: “?”

Justin: “??”

What kind of nonsense was she saying? What was she teaching his daughter?

Justin opened the door angrily. His voice deepened and he reprimanded, “Brenda!”

Brenda got a huge fright. But when she looked over at him, she received an even bigger fright. She swallowed and asked, “How hard were you guys going at it last night, Justin? It gave you dark circles under your eyes?”.

Justin: “?”

Before he could speak, Brenda spoke again. “I understand, I understand it all. After all, this is the first time you guys were doing it after such a long time. It’s very normal that you wouldn’t be able to hold yourself back. But you guys still have a long future ahead of you, you know? You have to...”

The corners of Brenda’s lips curled into a smile as she spoke. With an alluring voice, she said, “... take it easy a little~ After all, Nora is frail and unable to take care of herself. You mustn’t be a beast to her, Justin.”

Justin retorted angrily, “What nonsense are you saying?”

“What do you mean ‘nonsense’~?” But after she spoke, something suddenly occurred to Brenda and she became terribly alarmed. “Surely not? The two of you, a lone man and a lone woman sharing the same room, you know? Could it be that you have some kind of undisclosed condition, Justin? If so, then you mustn’t keep it to yourself. Nora’s a doctor, hurry up and have her give you a checkup!”

Justin’s expression turned even darker. “No, I don’t!”

“That’s more like it!” Brenda breathed a sigh of relief and patted her chest. “Otherwise, you’ll be worse than a beast.”

“...”

Justin felt like he was about to get a heart attack from anger.

Who was she calling worse than a beast, goddammit?!

Bang!

Justin shut the door.

In the suburbs.

At noon, Iris stood in the greenhouse and took care of her orchids in boredom.

The door was suddenly pushed open and Herman strode in. When he saw her, he entered the greenhouse.

Iris frowned at the sight of him. “Get lost, you are not welcome here.”

Herman said, “Don’t get me wrong, I’m not here to rekindle old relationships with you. It’s just that... how were you taking care of our son at home? Your relationship with him is terrible. I was not by Justin’s side when he was a child, yet you didn’t stay with him?!”

Iris balled up her fists tightly. “You’re asking why my relationship with Justin is so terrible when you already know the answer to that question?! Isn’t it all because...”

“Because...”

Iris had hidden the secret about what happened all those years ago in her heart for twenty years and had never mentioned it to anyone. Everyone in this world could criticize her, scold her, and hate her.

In fact, it was okay even if Justin refused to acknowledge her as his mother. However, the man in front of her was the only person who was not worthy of speaking about her relationship with her son!

She stared at Herman, though, there wasn't any anger in her. She merely felt that the man couldn't get any more thick-skinned than he already was. She sneered and slowly said, "It's all because of the fantastic things you did back then!"

Herman frowned when he heard this. "What does it have to do with me? You were obviously the one who was unfaithful!"

"You—!"

Iris really found his words ridiculous to the extreme. She stared at Herman. A short while later, she sneered, "It's been twenty years. Your ability to reverse right and wrong and twist the truth has really improved!"

Herman wanted to speak again, but Lauren walked in through the door and interrupted their conversation. She said, "That's enough. Dear, Iris, don't argue anymore. I know you still hold a grudge against Herman, but it's already been twenty years now, so what's the point of doing that to yourself? Justin has already grown up. What Herman did for you back then is already good enough. He has already given up all of his inheritance to the family assets for the two of you... He practically left the family penniless."

Lauren sighed. "You don't know how difficult it has been for us to start from scratch when we were abroad all these years."

Iris: "?"

What a clever way of phrasing things. Those who didn't know better might really have thought that Herman was a good man!

Iris was not a woman of forbearance. She said eloquently, "How come I don't remember Herman leaving the Hunts penniless back then? Weren't the company shares from back then his father's? Just because his father had

chosen Justin over him as the heir to the family, it somehow ended up becoming him giving the assets to me and my son?"

A sharp look flashed across Lauren's eyes. "Sigh, you don't understand. It was Herman who took the initiative to withdraw from the fight because he felt that he had let the two of you down. Otherwise, why would the old sir have chosen a child, who was only five years old, over him?"

Iris was really rendered speechless by her shameless remark. She sneered and said, "So, am I supposed to be thanking the two of you then?"

A sullen Herman said, "You can skip the words of gratitude! What was that way of bringing up the boy, though? Just because I was forced into leaving and couldn't see Justin anymore, you really left him to fend for himself?! And ended up causing that boy to become so perverse and domineering?!"

Seeing that he was criticizing her again, Iris was so furious that she actually laughed. "I have never stopped you from visiting him, but have you ever taken the initiative to contact him all these years? Your son had probably already stopped existing in your eyes when he was lost back then!"

Herman frowned. "How can you say that, Iris? Isn't it obvious that I didn't contact him because I was afraid that you would feel uncomfortable about it? If I contacted him frequently whereas you, his mother, stayed here like a widow, then he would have hated and resented you even more!"

Iris gave a low laugh. Suddenly, she really couldn't be bothered to say anything to him anymore. He was simply so capable of twisting all her words.

For Iris, her son was what mattered to her the most.

All these years, because she hadn't been able to stay by his side, the child had lacked mother's love. She had been counting on Herman to stay in contact with him frequently. After all, a father played a very important role in a child's growth!

But he hadn't.

Herman rarely ever contacted Justin. In fact, he had only called Justin twice during the past twenty years.

She took a deep breath and pointed to the door. “This is my home. Please leave, otherwise, I’m going to call for someone to send you out.”

Justin had told her before that he’d stationed some bodyguards for her nearby.

Due to certain reasons, Iris had agreed to it. The bodyguards were standing right outside the door at the moment. However, they hadn’t come in to stop Herman.

To be honest, this made Iris a little uncomfortable.

The son must still resent her. That was why he hadn’t protected her despite the circumstances.

While she was thinking, Lauren continued adding fuel to the fire and said, “Well, no matter what happened in the past, now that Justin has grown up, you’ll have to interact with Justin in the business market, Herman. Iris, we came back to America this time partially to expand our business into the domestic market. It just so happens that we can deal more with the Hunts for some of our operations. They are father and son after all. They will eventually get in touch with each other once they work together, and will slowly make up for the regrets from the past.”

After saying that, she looked at Iris. “Also, Justin’s kids are really just too adorable! You don’t know how funny Cherry is. She loves the princess dress I brought over to her this morning.”

Iris’s heart tightened.

Her granddaughter was having fun with Lauren?

But when the thought formed, she felt like she was being narrow-minded again.

That’s true, even though she and Herman were divorced, it did not mean that Justin had to sever all contact with him. The Hunts were Herman’s family, and the elderly Mrs. Hunt was his mother...

She had only just thought of that when Lauren spoke again. She said, “By the way, we don’t have a place to stay during our temporary return to America, so we will stay at the Hunt Manor for the time being. You won’t have any objections, right? Cherry is very welcoming of us, she even said that she likes me, her grandmother, very much...”

The two of them had stayed at the Hunts’ the previous night.

Iris’s heart felt even heavier. Then, she heard Lauren sigh and say, “Iris, we will be part of the same family in the future. I hope you can let go of all your grievances from the past so that we can all live in peace with one another. This way, Justin won’t feel awkward being caught in the middle either, right?”.

Iris clenched her fists. “We won’t interfere with each other’s lives as long as you people don’t come over and bother me!”

Lauren took Herman’s arm. “Why would we bother you?”

With a big smile, she said, “Herman, since there’s nothing else we need with Iris here, then let’s go back. We just need to inform Justin that he needn’t worry about Iris being unhappy about it! Let’s go back, Cherry is still waiting for me to play dolls with her!”

Herman nodded, and the two turned and left.

As she stared at them from the back, Iris felt as if there were needles pricking her heart.

Even though she couldn’t approach her son or her grandchildren before, she could still live with it somewhat. But why should Herman and Lauren be able to stay at the Hunt Manor? Why should they be able to play with her granddaughter every day?

Iris’ eyes reddened.

Mrs. Landis came over. She heaved a quiet sigh and said, “Ma’am, if you still keep the truth of what had happened back then to yourself, that scumbag and that cheap woman will take Mr. Hunt away from you! Look at how the bodyguards didn’t even stop them from going in and out of here. These must have been Mr. Hunt’s instructions!”

Iris felt even worse.

At this moment, Cherry's voice suddenly rang out from Mrs. Landis' cell phone...

Cherry should be live-streaming at this time.

Iris suddenly took the phone from her. She would see how Lauren was going to interact intimately with Cherry!

Cherry had switched on her webcam during her live-stream that day, so the live-stream was relatively more formal this time.

Every time she live-streamed, her Sponsor Grandpa would definitely be online. Sponsor Daddy occasionally came in to visit, but it was not as frequent as before.

It was probably because he could now see her in person every day.

Cherry wasn't bothered about these things, though.

However, a Sponsor Grandma had joined the live-stream recently.

Of course, she wasn't addressing that person as Grandma; rather, "Sponsor Grandma" was that person's username. Sponsor Grandma was currently ranked second in her virtual gift rankings.

The one in the first place was always Sponsor Grandpa. No one could surpass him.

The one in third place, Sponsor Daddy, no longer cared about the ranking these days, so his score had been slowly dropping. Cherry first greeted Sponsor Grandpa. Then, when she saw Sponsor Grandma enter the live-stream, the little fellow immediately called out sweetly, "Hi, Sponsor Grandma! How are you doing?"

Sponsor Grandma wrote in the comments: 'Not well.'

As the big boss ranked second in her virtual gift rankings, her comment was highlighted in the live-stream.

Cherry saw the comment right away. Puzzled, she asked, "Why? Did someone make you angry? Beat them up then!"

Iris looked at the live-stream. She wanted to say, "You're the one who made me angry, you little brat."

To think she was actually having fun with someone like Lauren...

If Lauren had gotten into a relationship with Herman after the two of them had divorced normally, then Iris actually would not have prevented Lauren and Cherry from having fun with each other.

After all, it was good for her to have another person who loved her.

But Lauren was not a good person at all. She was afraid that Lauren would lead Cherry astray.

Iris was terribly angry and frustrated. When she was about to send another comment, she suddenly caught a glimpse of a princess dress on the sofa behind Cherry.

Was that the gift that Lauren had spoken of? The one that she had delivered to Cherry early in the morning?

Iris suddenly felt very discouraged.

She put down the phone silently and stood up.

To be honest, when she agreed to that condition back then, she had already left the family. It was destined that she would no longer have much of a relationship with her son for the rest of her life.

In that case, why bother disturbing his life?

Iris lowered her head and turned off the live-stream.

She didn't want to ask Cherry about Lauren anymore-after all, she was the one who had pushed Cherry away with her own hands the night before.

Since she had already made her choice, then what right did she have to demand that Cherry be close to her?

Iris was caught in a dilemma and internal struggle. Mrs. Landis, who was looking at her from the side, was terribly anxious. However, she also knew that once Iris made up her mind, no one would be able to convince her otherwise.

She heaved a silent sigh and changed the subject. “Ma’am, the pot of Jade Orchids you wanted to buy will be delivered soon, right? Where should we put it?”

Sure enough, Iris finally perked up a little when she heard this. She stood up and walked one round in the greenhouse with Mrs. Landis. At last, she said, “That pot of Jade Orchids is very rare and very difficult to take care of. We must treat it with great care.”

“Okay.”

As the two chatted, they got busy in the greenhouse.

Seeing that she was finally no longer so listless anymore, Mrs. Landis breathed a sigh of relief.

An hour later, the two finally made room for the new pot of orchid. Only then did they sit down again.

Night had almost fallen. The sky had gradually darkened, and the surroundings were quiet. Apart from the chirping of birds, there was no other sound.

When one looked up, through the small courtyard, they could see the skies of New York that were hazy all year round.

Iris had lived like this for a whole twenty years.

Mrs. Landis had left to make dinner. As Iris sat in the greenhouse, her gaze fell onto Mrs. Landis’ cell phone again, hardly able to stand the itch in her heart.

Suddenly, she really wanted to hear Cherry’s voice.

She opened the live-stream again. At once, she heard Cherry’s clear and pleasant voice: “... Jungler, have you gone invisible? How come I never see you during team battles?”

Iris couldn’t help but smile at the way she spoke when she dissed other players, and she almost laughed out loud.

As expected, Cherry was still the same bundle of joy she knew her to be.

Beep.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang

Iris picked it up casually, the smile still on her face. She saw that someone had sent her a short video. She opened it casually, upon which Lauren's face immediately appeared. She was speaking to the camera with a smile on her face, "Iris, I am going to go and play with Cherry now. Cherry has always been a very polite and adorable child~"

Iris: "!!"

She stood up angrily. Lauren must have been afraid that she wouldn't believe that they had a better relationship with Justin's family, so she had deliberately sent that to provoke her, right?

Iris was jealous and envious, but even more helpless and sad.

She stared at the video. She could see that it was Cherry's room that Lauren was about to enter.

The next moment, in Cherry's live-stream, the sound of someone knocking on the door, as well as Lauren's gentle voice rang out: "Cherry? Grandma's coming in, okay_?"

Iris clenched her fists.

She looked at Mrs. Landis' cell phone and stared at Cherry's live-stream.

She wanted to close it so that she wouldn't see their interaction, yet at the same time, she wanted to open her eyes wide and take a good look at what exactly she had lost...

She felt as though a big invisible hand had closed around her heart tightly. Her chest felt stuffy and tight, and she felt awfully aggrieved.

Just as she was in a dilemma, she heard Cherry's young and tender voice become impatient: "Who said you could come in here?"

At the Hunts'.

Lauren entered the room with a smile on her face. She'd originally wanted to get along properly with Cherry-after all, she really did want to make Cherry happy.

Once she pleased Cherry, that would mean that she had also pleased Justin.

But she hadn't expected Cherry to always look so impatient whenever she saw her.

She didn't know that Cherry was live-streaming, so she smiled and said, "Grandma misses little Cherry, so I came over to visit you..."

After speaking, as if she was on very good terms with Cherry, she walked over to the sofa next to her and picked up the princess dress she had given Cherry earlier that day. She asked, "Don't you like the princess dress that Grandma bought you? Why didn't you put it on?"

Cherry blinked with her big eyes and answered bluntly, "Because I don't like it, of course!"

Lauren looked at her hesitantly. "Then what kind do you like? Pink ones? Purple ones?"

Or?"

Cherry tilted her head to the side, which made her look very naughty. Her grin made her look even more like a little devil. She replied, "It's you I don't like."

Lauren was taken aback.

Cherry said, "So, as long as it is from you, I won't like it. Don't waste your time trying to please me. Please go out! I don't have a grandmother like you!"

The little fellow's voice was crisp and clear, and she spoke loudly and sonorously.

Lauren flushed, but she didn't dare to bully Cherry, especially in this room. Thus, she said, "Cherry, it is not right of you to speak to your grandma like this. It's very impolite behavior..."

Cherry suddenly stood up and walked straight towards Lauren.

The camera in her live-stream was facing the side right from the start, so it had captured part of the scene.

As a result, everyone saw Cherry pick up the princess dress and then push Lauren out the door. The little fellow was very strong. After she pushed Lauren out of the room, she stood there and said, "Go away you... you... wh*re!"

Cherry had never ever called anyone names.

Even when she was dissing people in her live-streams, she had never called anyone names. Therefore, when she tried to think of a word for Lauren, she had to think for a very long time before she finally remembered one of the insults that Xander frequently used.

After calling Lauren a wh*re, Cherry slammed the door shut.

Cherry continued her live-stream after she returned.

But at this point, she noticed that a lot of reproachful remarks had suddenly appeared in the comments:

"Isn't the live-streamer's behavior too crass? What did that gentle old lady do to you? To think you're actually calling her names?"

"I've already found her an eyesore a long time ago. She's only five, yet she's so skilled at dissing people in games. To think you guys claim that she has never called anyone names. Ha, didn't she do just that just now?"

Some of her fans were also trying to correct her:

"sweetcherry, that's your grandma. You mustn't call your family such awful names."

"Yeah. It's very rude of you to just toss the dress that your grandma bought for you..."

A group of Internet keyboard warriors, who didn't even know anything about her family situation, started to leave comments in her live-stream.

A bad-ass Cherry replied, "You are not me, so what would you know? She is a bad person! My mom told me to stay away from her!"

The comments instantly became even fiercer.

However, Iris was no longer in the live-stream at this point.

She had closed the live-stream when Lauren knocked on the door. She didn't want to watch their heartwarming moments, which would only sadden her. She stared ahead of her blankly.

About half an hour later, Lauren sent her another text message: 'Sorry about that, Iris, I was playing with Cherry the whole time just now. I realized that the little girl is really very well-behaved. We had a lot of fun together. She also said that she likes me very much.'

Little by little, Iris' heart sank as she read the message.

Yeah, how would Cherry possibly not be lovable?

She had always been a good girl who was polite and sweet-talking. Every time she saw her, the things she said made her heart melt.

It seemed that no matter what, she just couldn't harden her heart towards the little fellow.

Everyone would probably like her, no matter who it was.

Iris didn't want to think about it anymore, so she straight-up blocked Lauren's phone number. Then, she stood up and went to dinner.

Mrs. Landis had made mushroom risotto that evening.

The two of them had a plate each. However, the usually fresh and delicious mushroom risotto didn't taste right to her that evening. She said, "Mrs. Landis, the mushroom risotto doesn't taste very nice today."

Mrs. Landis took a bite. "It tastes pretty good, Ma'am. You only think it tastes bad because you are in a bad mood. Every time you are in a bad mood, you don't feel like eating."

"... Really?"

Iris slowly put down her spoon. She sighed silently. Then, she got up and started walking upstairs. "I'm not eating anymore. I'll go to bed instead."

Mrs. Landis heaved a quiet sigh as she stared at her from the back.

Iris had originally thought that she would be fine after she went upstairs and had a good night's sleep. But after she lay down, she simply couldn't get to sleep.

The text messages that Lauren had sent to her kept appearing before her eyes, making her feel like there was something stuck in her chest, unable to get out.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang.

When Iris answered, Lauren's voice came from the other side again. "Iris, why did you block me? Is it because you don't want me to send you those messages? Well, that makes sense. I'm sure you don't want Cherry and I to be so close to each other, but the child wants a grandmother too!"

Her words made Iris so mad that she was shaking all over. Right at this moment, she suddenly heard a rush of footsteps. Then, Mrs. Landis opened the door and entered her room. She said, "Ma'am, Cherry is trending!"

Trending?

What was trending?

Iris pretty much subconsciously picked up her cell phone. Right away, she saw that sweetcherry was trending on social media because she had called her grandma names out of anger in her live-stream.

To be honest, it wasn't really trending that high in the rankings.

It barely entered the top fifty in the rankings and had only just made the list. Mrs. Landis had only found out because her attention was on Cherry.

Iris hurriedly opened the article linked in the post, where she saw a video clip from the live-stream footage. In the clip, Cherry had driven her grandma out of her room and called her a wh*re.

Chapter 644 - The Plan of Saving Nora Novel Free

Iris looked at him.

She hadn't seen him for more than twenty years. He was still wearing the suit he loved the most back then. The years had left traces on his face, making her momentarily dazed.

Then, a gentle smiling woman followed him in. If one looked carefully, one would notice that the woman and Iris's style was a little similar. They were both gentle and elegant.

Unfortunately, the same clothes had all kinds of charm on Iris, but on her, it seemed a little too heavy.

Iris's pupils constricted.

When Herman saw her, he frowned and asked sternly, "Heh, I was wondering who wanted to chase me out? So it's you..."

His gaze fell on Justin before he looked at Iris. "You two seem to have a good mother-son relationship!"

Justin looked at the two of them in silence. He did not speak or deny this sentence because he did not want to say anything that would make Iris lose face.

When Iris heard this, her expression instantly turned cold. She turned back to look at Nora and said calmly, "From now on, you have to take good care of the three children. I'll be leaving now."

With that, she prepared to go leave.

Nora glanced at Cherry. Cherry immediately walked to Iris's side and held her arm. "Grandma, be careful~"

Iris froze when she heard her.

She immediately retracted her arm from Cherry's hand. She lowered her eyes and said calmly, "There's no need. I can walk myself."

Cherry looked at Iris in confusion. Why did her grandmother suddenly change her attitude when she was still so good to her and her brother just a moment ago?

She must be angry that she and her brother had not gone to see her for too long!

Therefore, Cherry looked up and whined, “Grandma, Pete and I will visit you often in the future!”

Iris’s grip on her bag tightened slightly, but she still lowered her head and said slowly, “No.”

She turned around and said coldly, “My flowers are all very expensive. You touched them so casually the last time you came to visit me. You’re very rude...”

Cherry bit her lip.

Since she was young, she did not care if others criticized her or scolded her. This was the first time that someone she cared about had said something bad about her!

She widened her eyes sadly and looked at Iris in confusion.

Justin, who was a slave to his daughter, could no longer stand Cherry’s aggrieved look. He stepped forward and said in a very cold tone, “She’s still young. How is she being rude? Six-year-old children would naturally be curious about things. Did she harm your flowers?”

Iris said, “Orchids are the most precious. They’re not for children to play with. Besides, I hate children the most. They’re too noisy...”

Justin sneered. “So you hated me this much when I was young?”

Iris was stunned.

Justin ignored her and picked up Cherry. “If you like orchids, I’ll buy you a hundred pots. You can smash them anywhere in the back garden.”

The hostility in his words was very strong.

Nora narrowed her eyes and saw Iris’ face instantly turn as pale as paper. However, following that, she continued coldly, “You’re rich. You can spoil the child however you want, but don’t bother me!”

Justin was about to flare up when Herman suddenly said, “Iris, why are you still so selfish? This is your granddaughter! How can you treat her like this? You’re really too much!”

Iris suddenly looked at Herman with anger in her eyes. Everyone else had the right to criticize her, but what right did he have to criticize her? Did he not know why she had become like this?!

Herman narrowed his eyes and smiled. He walked forward as if he did not understand her. Step by step, he arrived in front of Justin and sighed deeply. Like an old father, he said, "Justin, it was Dad and Mom who let you down back then. For so many years, I've always wanted to come back to see you, but your mother always refused... Sigh! I came back this time because I heard that you held a birthday party for the triplets. I specially came to give gifts to my grandchildren!"

With that, he looked at the woman behind him. "Lauren, hurry up and get the gifts!"

The mistress named Lauren stepped forward and placed the three presents in her hand on the ground. Then, she took one out and handed it to Cherry. "Is your name Cherry? Your name is really cute. The little guy is also so cute. Come, let your grandmother hug you!"

A hug from a grandmother...

Iris had already reached the door, but when she heard this, she suddenly stopped.

She subconsciously turned around and saw the four of them standing together like a family. She felt like an outsider.

Iris felt a pain in her heart.

However, she still turned around forcefully and prepared to leave.

At this moment, a pair of hands held hers tightly. She was stunned for a moment. When she raised her head again, she saw Nora.

Iris was stunned.

Nora asked, "Why?"

Iris's jaw tensed up.

She clearly knew that Nora was asking why her attitude suddenly changed so much, but she still pretended to not understand. "What why?"

As the two of them were in a stalemate, Cherry's childish voice was heard. "Grandma? But isn't Grandma Daddy's mother? Why does Daddy have two mothers?"

The mistress, Lauren, was stunned for a moment and stood there awkwardly.

Herman said, "Cherry, this is my current wife. You should call her Grandma."

Cherry tilted her head and stared at him, feeling a little unhappy. "Who are you?"

Herman's expression froze. He coughed and suppressed the frustration in his heart.

Before returning home, Lauren had already asked around and found out that Justin was a slave to his daughter, so as long as she pleased Cherry, she could obtain Justin's favor.

Therefore, Herman pretended to explain patiently, "...I'm your father's father."

"Daddy's father is my grandpa, and Daddy's mother is my grandma-" Cherry pretended to be stupid and sang a children's song. After she finished, she even smiled at Justin. "Daddy, did I sing well?"

"Very well."

Justin touched her head, but his gaze swept across the area in front of him. Iris and Nora's figures tugged at each other in the corner before the two of them went out.

Justin lowered his eyes.

Outside.

"What on earth is wrong?" Nora blocked Iris's way and asked, "Is there something you can't

say?"

"No!" Iris looked as cheerful as before. She even smiled gently. "I just don't like the Hunts."

Nora frowned. "But when we first met that afternoon, you told me a lot about you and your son. You clearly care about him. I thought that you had thought things through when you came to give birthday presents to the three children."

Iris frowned and suddenly looked up. "I just want to maintain a good relationship with

you."

Nora: "?"

Iris revealed her purpose casually. "You know orchids so well. You'll definitely be able to help me. Therefore, for your sake, I pretended to give my grandchildren some gifts. I don't like them."

Nora frowned. Her almond-shaped eyes shone with confusion. "Why?"

"Because..." Iris said word by word, "Herman's blood flows in their veins! He betrayed me back then, so I hate everything related to him!"

Nora clenched her jaw.

Iris continued to smile as she said, "I used Justin to force Grandpa Hunt to chase him away and successfully stayed at home. It was not because I was noble, but because I wanted to fight with him for the assets! Didn't he want Hunt Corporation? I snatched it from him! As for Justin... I really can't get close to him. He looks too similar to Herman. As soon as I get close to him, I remember Herman's disgusting face. I just want to stay in the villa alone. No one can disturb me."

Iris turned around and left.

This time, Nora could not stop her.

However, Iris must have her reasons.

The woman who had confided in her for an entire afternoon was not lying. But why?

Nora thought about it and turned back to enter the room. However, the moment she turned her head, she saw Justin standing not far behind her.

The man's eyes were dark and unclear. Half of his face was in the light under the street lamp, and the other half was in the dark. Under the night sky, the mole at the corner of his eye became colder.

Obviously, he had heard Iris' words.

When Nora thought about how she and Iris were talking earlier, Iris must have clearly seen Justin's eyes, but she still said those words. She was clearly doing this on purpose!

She was even more certain that Iris had her reasons.

But what difficulties did she have?

As she was thinking, she saw a hint of loneliness flash across the man's face. Justin suddenly said, "Nora, even my birth mother doesn't like me. Do you really like me?"

At this moment, he was like a pitiful worm in the corner forgotten by everyone.

Nora looked at him and her heart softened. She walked to Justin and looked at him seriously. "I really like you."

Justin seemed to be extremely touched. He reached out and hugged her tightly as he murmured in her ear, "How could that be? Even Mother hates me... What can you like about me?"

This side of Justin was really heartbreaking.

Nora thought about it and hesitated for a long time. In the end, she replied, "You're good-looking!"

She did not see the corners of Justin's mouth twitch. "..."

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Did he not have any other merits in Nora's heart?!

As he was thinking, he felt Nora pushing him away. Justin quickly sorted out his emotions and regained his lonely expression.

He seemed to have been hurt by Iris's words.

He finally grabbed the opportunity to push Nora further. He could not let go so easily. He sighed silently. "Nora, can you stay with me tonight?" Nora: "???"

Justin looked into the distance, his deep eyes filled with sadness. "I have some things I want to tell you."

Nora was about to reject him when she heard him say, "It's about me and my mother."

Nora twitched her lips and finally sighed. "Alright."

At this moment.

Iris sat in the car and left the Hunts.

When the Hunts' iron gate was closed, Mrs. Landis couldn't help but say, "Ms. Iris, why must you do this... It has been so many years. Now that Mr. Hunt has grown up, he's clearly very powerful. Tell him your difficulties!"

Iris lowered her head. "It'll be troublesome if I tell him. Forget it. It has been so many years. He didn't grow up with me. Why should I ask him to grow old with me?"

Mrs. Landis stared at her. "What do you mean by trouble? You're his mother! You've suppressed the longing in your heart for so many years and you didn't even look at him. You hug your phone every night and repeatedly watch videos of him growing up that the servants at home had sent your husband... You can't bear to delete those videos, even if your phone is full..."

Iris didn't say anything.

Mrs. Landis suddenly leaned in front of her. "Miss, if you don't want to tell Mr. Hunt, then tell me! What happened back then? Why?"

What had happened back then...

Even Mrs. Landis didn't know the full story. All she knew was that after Herman left, Iris had suddenly packed up her things one day, moved out of the Hunt Manor, and moved into the small villa here.

From then on, it was as if she had suddenly become cold-hearted, and no longer cared about Justin.

But Mrs. Landis still remembered that one day when the five-year-old Justin, who didn't understand anything at all, suddenly ran all the way to the villa, crying and shouting for his mother.

But Iris had refused to open the door. She had stayed in the house and merely said, "Go back. I don't want to see you."

"Mom, open the door!"

Outside the door, the five-year-old Justin tried his best to knock on the door, but as though she had hardened her heart, she never opened it.

Justin was just as stubborn. He shouted, "If you don't open the door, I won't leave!"

Later, it started to rain.

It was storming, and the winds were howling in the heavy rain. The bodyguard gave him an umbrella, but he pushed him away. The stubborn little boy kept standing on that rainy night.

Justin had a very determined look in his eyes. He didn't believe that his mother would really ignore him.

Neither did he believe that his gentle mother would suddenly become so cruel and hard-hearted.

But later, cold and hungry, he finally fainted from exhaustion. Even when he had collapsed onto the ground, he kept his eyes open with the last vestiges of his strength and stared at the door.

What disappointed him was that from beginning to end, the door never opened once.

From then on, Justin understood that Iris didn't love him anymore. After visiting a few more times, he rarely came again.

But he didn't know that Mrs. Landis had seen with her own eyes that the entire time he was in the rain, Iris had also stood in the rain in the courtyard inside the villa.

When the bodyguards outside exclaimed in shock after he fainted, Iris had rushed to the door. Both her hands had been on the gates, but she never opened the door.

Her tears had mixed together with the rainwater on her face, and she wept silently with her mouth open. That was the most painful night of Iris' life that Mrs. Landis had ever seen.

She was a hundred times sadder than when Herman had betrayed her.

In her opinion, Iris didn't actually love Herman at all-or rather, she didn't love him that deeply. After all, theirs had been a political marriage.

She had given all her love to Justin.

But for some reason, mother and son had to be separated. They had clearly been so close once upon a time, yet they were like complete strangers now.

Mrs. Landis simply didn't understand what had happened. She stared at Iris, only to see tears all over her face.

Mrs. Landis panicked. "Ma'am, what's wrong? What's the matter?"

Iris covered her face with her hands.

Before coming, she'd thought that since so many years had gone by, everything must be okay by now, right?

Besides, Nora had once tried to persuade her and had told her that her son had already grown up. Perhaps her troubles were nothing more than trivial matters to him.

That was why she had, after a long internal struggle the day before, come to the Hunt Manor today with the clothes she had carefully selected for the three children.

Deep down, she wanted to repair her relationship with her son. She could also see that, although her son was surprised to see her, he was not hostile towards her. But little did she expect that... that man would come back!

As expected, those thoughts of hers were all just wishful thinking.

She should just stay in that small villa her whole life like someone's trapped canary and live out her life all by herself.

This was the price she had to pay for that incident back then.

Without any hope, there would be no disappointment.

The little spark of hope that had finally ignited after much difficulty had suddenly been extinguished that evening.

Iris lowered her head. "Don't ask anymore, Mrs. Landis."

Seeing how sad she looked, Mrs. Landis sighed.

At the Hunts'.

When Justin and Nora entered the living room, they found that Cherry had gone to the bedroom upstairs. Herman and Lauren were sitting on the sofa, drinking the tea that the butler had just handed them.

Justin seemed utterly heartbroken by Iris. There was sadness on his face. He took Nora's hand and sat opposite Herman and Lauren.

Herman said, "You saw that, didn't you? Your mother is a cold-hearted person. Justin, she has always been so selfish. You should have already become accustomed to it a long time ago, right?"

Justin raised his head suddenly, piercing light shooting out of his eyes. "Why are you here?"

Herman narrowed his eyes. "This is my home. Of course I was going to come back someday! Besides, my agreement with your mother back then was for me to leave the Hunts for twenty years! Don't worry, I know that the entire Hunt Corporation is now in your hands. Even if I'm back, I won't be able to take anything back from you... I've been doing my own business abroad all these years, and have my own assets, so I won't covet your money. I came back just to visit you, as well as your grandmother along the way." After saying this, he stood up and started walking out. "I will go and say hi to your grandmother first. I will stay at her place tonight."

The fake Lauren said pretentiously, “Justin, this is our gift for the children. Cherry is afraid of strangers, so she didn’t accept the gift. You can give it to her later.”

After the two left, Justin looked at Nora. “Why don’t you go upstairs first? I will deal with these gifts.”

Nora had been worried that he would misunderstand Iris, and end up being moved by Herman’s few words. It was only then that she realized that he actually disliked Herman that much. She was relieved.

She nodded and went upstairs.

After she went upstairs, Justin picked up his cell phone and answered a call. Sean’s voice came from the other side: “Boss.”

Justin’s gaze was very cold. He lowered his eyes slightly and asked, “Have you looked into it? What did she say in the car after she left...?”

Sean then recounted the conversation between Mrs. Landis and Iris in the car and told him how Iris had reacted.

Justin lowered his eyes and listened quietly.

Sean said tentatively, “Ma’am seems to be having some difficulties, and she is not indifferent to you. Although she speaks disdainfully about the videos sent to her in the past, she has actually kept them all...”

Justin knew all this, of course—because he was the one who had gotten them to send those videos!

All he wanted to know right now was—why?!

Sean was still reporting his discoveries. “The gifts that Ma’am brought for the children were all carefully selected and prepared a month in advance. After hearing that you have another child, she even prepared an additional gift overnight to make up. She was actually planning to tell you some kind of truth when she took the initiative to visit today... but it seems like she has regretted it. It seems that the change in her emotions only took place after your father returned.”

“Okay.”

Justin understood what Sean was saying. He raised his eyes and looked ahead of him dispassionately. Then, he slowly said, "If you can't get anything out of my mother, then try the other side."

"Yes, sir."

Justin stared into the distance as he hung up the call.

There was a tinge of loneliness in his eyes.

To be honest, he had never believed that his mother had suddenly stopped loving him. When he was a child, he had been so stubborn that he had fainted in rain. When he woke up, he had known right away that it would be useless to approach her again.

Later, as he grew up, he suddenly discovered one day that a servant at home was filming a video of him. After that, the servant had sent it to someone.

At first, he'd thought that the servant must be scheming something, so he'd constantly stayed on guard against him. However, even as time passed, the servant didn't take any action.

After he grew up, Justin quietly studied and learned hacking techniques without anyone knowing. He had then hacked into the servant's phone and discovered his secret.

As it turned out, all the videos of him—from when he was a child all the way until he turned into a young adult—had all been sent by the servant to his mother, who had never shown any concern for him!

He took the opportunity to hack into his mother's cell phone, only to find all the videos of him stored within. Every video of him from when he was a child until he became a young adult—was in there. None of them had ever been deleted. And every night, before going to bed, she would watch the videos of him over and over again.

Justin had been thirteen years old then.

Since then, he became certain that his mother was hiding something from him, and that she had her reasons and difficulties for doing so.

It could be said that he had never held any grudge towards his mother.

However, this did not mean that he was not angry about it.

He was indeed furious.

When he was young, he couldn't do anything. Thus, for his own good, his mother had kept those secrets from him. But even as he grew up, was his mother still unable to believe in him?

Besides...

It was undeniable that feelings and relationships were built and developed through daily contact and interaction with one another. The twenty-year-long separation had left him and Iris with nothing much to say to each other.

Thus, later on, he only occasionally visited her at the villa, and never without reason.

He was waiting.

He was waiting for his mother to take the initiative to tell him the truth. But judging from her behavior, was his mother planning to keep it from him for the rest of her life? Just because it would bring him trouble?

Justin lowered his head.

To be honest, there were times when he felt like giving up on the investigation.

So what even if he found out what had happened?

Since she hadn't been by his side as he grew up, why should he accompany her as she grew old...? Besides, sometimes habit really was something awfully scary—he had already grown used to not having her at home.

If there came a day where he suddenly found himself with a mother nagging at him, he might not be able to get used to it either.

Yet when he heard from Sean that she had cried, his heart softened again.

No matter what, they were still mother and son. Even if he was indifferent by nature, and even if he might only care about a few people; the woman was still among the few he cared about.

Moreover-and also the main reason-Nora seemed to share a very good relationship with her.

Upstairs.

Nora entered the room to see Cherry pulling a long face. Although she was sitting on the sofa and playing games, she was not happy.

Pete glanced at her. "What's the matter? Is something troubling you?"

Cherry killed an enemy in the game and then looked up at him. "Is it that obvious that I'm upset?"

"... You didn't rant at anyone while playing your game today," replied Pete with the corners of his lips spasming. The little girl was pretty much just short of blatantly writing the words "I'm unhappy" on her face.

Even Princess Lucy asked, "Cherry, what's wrong? Did someone bully you? I'll get the bodyguards to beat them up!" As she spoke, she even waved her tiny little fists. She looked just like a Barbie doll.

Cherry sighed quietly. "Don't beat her up, Lucy. You don't understand."

A puzzled Lucy asked, "What don't I understand? Is this some kind of rule in America? Why should you put up with it when that person is upsetting you?" "Because it's my grandma we're talking about!"

Cherry rested her chin on her hand and said, "Grandma was really nice to me in the past, I don't know why she suddenly changed today. She must have a reason for doing so! Do you know why she did that, Pete?"

Pete shook his head. "I don't know."

Cherry was a little disappointed. "You are so stupid~"

Cherry sighed quietly. "Forget it, it's time for my live-stream!"

After speaking, she sat on the sofa and opened the live-stream app.

Seeing the little fellows chatting so happily, Nora didn't go in to disturb them and left instead.

Cherry was not someone to dwell on things, so she would never take such small matters to heart. Neither did she need Nora to comfort her. In her opinion, Justin was simply overthinking things.

After she left, she looked downstairs again and saw that there was no one in the living room. However, there was a figure on the balcony.

Although Nora was very sleepy and wanted very much to look for someplace where she could sleep, when she thought of how hurtful Iris' words earlier in the day had been for Justin, she nevertheless went down the stairs and walked towards him.

As she went over, she saw the man standing there with his back to her.

The moonlight cast a silver glow on him, making a smooth silhouette of the dark and overcast figure. He exuded a sense of alienation and indifference, yet at the same time, he looked as though he had been forgotten in a corner.

He seemed so sad and lonely that it made one feel sorry for him.

This was especially when the man, who had never smoked, actually had a cigar held in between his fingertips at the moment. The smoke from the cigar curled upwards, making him look even lonelier.

Nora felt like they could pretty much make a movie with the scene.

The corners of Nora's lips twitched a little. She hadn't expected the man to be so deeply hurt.

She walked over and stood behind him. Just as she was about to speak, the man suddenly turned around and embraced her tightly. His chest was very hard and solid. It felt rather uncomfortable when he held her so tightly.

Yet Nora did not dare to push him away at a time like this, for fear that he would become even sadder—because the man happened to whisper into her ear, “Nora, you're the only one I have left now.”

Nora kept quiet for three seconds, but in the end, she still couldn't stop herself from saying, “You still have Cherry, Pete, Xander, Brenda, and also Sean and Lawrence. There's also...”

Justin: “...”

He really shouldn't have allowed the woman to speak. The moment she opened her mouth, she would absolutely become the insensitive girl who ruined the atmosphere!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed. Seeing that Nora was actually planning to continue listing the rest, he promptly and decisively lowered his head suddenly and caught the woman's lips.

He could see the girl freezing suddenly. Then, her almond-shaped eyes widened and she looked at him in astonishment. It seemed like her first reaction was to push him away, yet she held back.

Justin closed his eyes. He could sense that the girl was being extra-tolerant today, so he pushed his luck and invaded her mouth.

The crisp smell of tobacco on the man rushed into Nora's nostrils bossily, making her feel like the smell was actually quite pleasant?

To be honest, she hadn't thought of pushing him away.

If the man needed a hug and a kiss to reinforce his sense of security, then she didn't mind giving them to him.

Besides, he really was exceptionally pitiful today. Thus, not only did Nora not resist, but she even stretched out her arms and circled them around his neck tightly, and started responding to his kiss.

The atmosphere gradually turned amorous.

It seemed like all the air at the balcony had been sucked away. In the narrow space, the man and woman's chests heaved up and down. After some time, Justin suddenly picked up Nora and carried her like a newly-wed bride. He said, "Let's... go to the bedroom upstairs."

The suggestiveness in his words were very apparent.

When he stared hard at Nora, he saw the girl, whose cheeks were scarlet and her eyes misty, reply, "Okay."

To be honest, Justin hadn't expected her to agree.

He'd long discovered that the woman had always been relatively indifferent in her feelings. It hadn't been that long since the two of them confirmed their relationship, either.

The woman's chest was heaving up and down intensely at the moment, and her eyes contained a faint hint of womanly charm and shyness. When she agreed with her cheeks all red, he was instead stunned for a moment.

But right after, he regained his senses.

Seemingly afraid that the woman would go back on her word the very next second, he turned around at once and strode up the stairs.

Nora, whose head was buried into his chest, could see that his eyes were as deep and bottomless as the ocean. The way his eyes were staring at her so closely was as though he was looking at his prey, which made one feel daunted and timid.

But unfortunately, who did he think Nora was?

She had always been the hunter, not the hunted. When had she ever allowed herself to be in a disadvantageous position?

So, the next moment, she yawned. The two went up the stairs and entered the bedroom. With her in his arms, Justin rushed straight towards the bed. However, he had only just taken two steps when Nora said, "Let's take a bath first. Who's going in first, you or me?"

Justin's eyes instantly turned even darker. "... Let's go in together?"

"Get lost."

Nora sat upright and jumped out of his arms. "I'll take a bath first."

She took out an unused bath towel from the side and walked into the bathroom.

Mr. Hunt, who had stayed outside, was so anxious that he was going around in circles. He hurriedly made the bed; then he checked whether the big bed was sturdy enough and whether it would make any noise if people jumped on it.

After that, he swallowed again and smoothed his hair.

If Lawrence or Sean were to see him like this, they would probably marvel in amazement. Was that really their boss, who had never even frowned a little in the face of business transactions worth billions, or even dozens of billions?

Splash

The sound of water stopped. Justin stood up straight, his eyes fixed in the direction of the bathroom. The door opened, and Nora walked out.

The bathrobe was wrapped around her, and she was toweling her hair. Because of the hot bath, her cheeks had become even rosier and moist. Her almond-shaped eyes glanced at him shyly and she said, "It's your turn."

His Adam's apple shifted a little. "... Okay."

He picked up the bathrobe and rushed into the bathroom like an eager child.

He washed himself seriously and carefully during the bath, for fear that Nora would notice if he didn't clean any part of himself well. Even so, he took only two minutes in the bath and ran out again.

Then, he saw Nora already lying on the bed.

He slowed down, his breathing becoming heavier and heavier. He walked up to the bed where Nora was. As he thought of what was about to happen that night, he became rather excited.

But the next moment, his excitement died down.

Because! The mouth of the woman on the bed was slightly ajar, and her eyes were closed. This... Was she asleep?

Justin: "??"

How would he know that when they were downstairs just now, as they kissed and kissed, Nora had also been getting sleepier and sleepier?! This continued until the man finally suggested going to the bedroom, and she breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Would she finally be able to go to sleep?

Therefore, with her eyelids droopy, she had replied sleepily, "Okay."

It wasn't the shy and bashful reaction that Justin had imagined on his own at all!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed a little. He wanted to lift the quilt but realized that the woman had wrapped it tightly around herself, and was refusing to let him in.

Justin took another deep breath. In the end, he stood up in silence, went into the bathroom, took out the hairdryer, and quietly started drying her hair for her.

He hoped beyond everything that perhaps the noise would wake the woman?

Unfortunately, even until her hair was all dry, she didn't wake up.

On the contrary, seeing her unintentionally exposed shoulders while drying her hair, the fire in Justin's heart started to burn even more strongly.

In the end, Justin took another cold bath that night.

Nora did not wake up until noon the next day.

She stretched comfortably. But when she turned her head to the side, she was instead faced with the man's dark and gloomy face, which gave her a huge shock.

Justin asked quietly, "Did you sleep well?"

"... Yeah."

Nora yawned. Then, she got out of bed and went to wash up.

Justin could only sigh helplessly. As he got up, he heard movement outside the door. He went over and looked through the peephole to see the three children and Brenda standing outside.

Brenda was asking nosily, "Did your Mommy really sleep in there last night? That's why your father is sleeping in for once?"

Cherry replied, "Uh-huh, uh-huh! It seemed like Mommy's legs felt a little weak last night, so Daddy carried her upstairs!"

Pete said, "... It's not that Mommy's legs were weak."

Cherry was puzzled. "Then was it because Mommy couldn't walk anymore? So she was acting like a baby?"

Pete: "?"

At the side, Lucy covered her mouth and giggled.

Brenda's eyes, however, were gleaming in an extremely gossipy manner. She said, "Cherry, you are so dumb! They are making younger brothers and sisters for you!" Cherry: "?"

Justin: "??"

What kind of nonsense was she saying? What was she teaching his daughter?

Justin opened the door angrily. His voice deepened and he reprimanded, "Brenda!"

Brenda got a huge fright. But when she looked over at him, she received an even bigger fright. She swallowed and asked, "How hard were you guys going at it last night, Justin? It gave you dark circles under your eyes?"

Justin: "?"

Before he could speak, Brenda spoke again. "I understand, I understand it all. After all, this is the first time you guys were doing it after such a long time. It's very normal that you wouldn't be able to hold yourself back. But you guys still have a long future ahead of you, you know? You have to..."

The corners of Brenda's lips curled into a smile as she spoke. With an alluring voice, she said, "... take it easy a little~ After all, Nora is frail and unable to take care of herself. You mustn't be a beast to her, Justin."

Justin retorted angrily, "What nonsense are you saying?"

"What do you mean 'nonsense'~?" But after she spoke, something suddenly occurred to Brenda and she became terribly alarmed. "Surely not? The two of you, a lone man and a lone woman sharing the same room, you know? Could it be that you have some kind of undisclosed condition, Justin? If so, then you mustn't keep it to yourself. Nora's a doctor, hurry up and have her give you a checkup!"

Justin's expression turned even darker. "No, I don't!"

"That's more like it!" Brenda breathed a sigh of relief and patted her chest. "Otherwise, you'll be worse than a beast."

"..."

Justin felt like he was about to get a heart attack from anger.

Who was she calling worse than a beast, goddammit?!

Bang!

Justin shut the door.

In the suburbs.

At noon, Iris stood in the greenhouse and took care of her orchids in boredom.

The door was suddenly pushed open and Herman strode in. When he saw her, he entered the greenhouse.

Iris frowned at the sight of him. "Get lost, you are not welcome here."

Herman said, "Don't get me wrong, I'm not here to rekindle old relationships with you. It's just that... how were you taking care of our son at home? Your relationship with him is terrible. I was not by Justin's side when he was a child, yet you didn't stay with him?!"

Iris balled up her fists tightly. "You're asking why my relationship with Justin is so terrible when you already know the answer to that question?! Isn't it all because..."

"Because..."

Iris had hidden the secret about what happened all those years ago in her heart for twenty years and had never mentioned it to anyone. Everyone in this world could criticize her, scold her, and hate her.

In fact, it was okay even if Justin refused to acknowledge her as his mother. However, the man in front of her was the only person who was not worthy of speaking about her relationship with her son!

She stared at Herman, though, there wasn't any anger in her. She merely felt that the man couldn't get any more thick-skinned than he already was. She sneered and slowly said, "It's all because of the fantastic things you did back then!"

Herman frowned when he heard this. "What does it have to do with me? You were obviously the one who was unfaithful!"

"You—!"

Iris really found his words ridiculous to the extreme. She stared at Herman. A short while later, she sneered, "It's been twenty years. Your ability to reverse right and wrong and twist the truth has really improved!"

Herman wanted to speak again, but Lauren walked in through the door and interrupted their conversation. She said, "That's enough. Dear, Iris, don't argue anymore. I know you still hold a grudge against Herman, but it's already been twenty years now, so what's the point of doing that to yourself? Justin has already grown up. What Herman did for you back then is already good enough. He has already given up all of his inheritance to the family assets for the two of you... He practically left the family penniless."

Lauren sighed. "You don't know how difficult it has been for us to start from scratch when we were abroad all these years."

Iris: "?"

What a clever way of phrasing things. Those who didn't know better might really have thought that Herman was a good man!

Iris was not a woman of forbearance. She said eloquently, "How come I don't remember Herman leaving the Hunts penniless back then? Weren't the company shares from back then his father's? Just because his father had chosen Justin over him as the heir to the family, it somehow ended up becoming him giving the assets to me and my son?"

A sharp look flashed across Lauren's eyes. "Sigh, you don't understand. It was Herman who took the initiative to withdraw from the fight because he felt that he had let the two of you down. Otherwise, why would the old sir have chosen a child, who was only five years old, over him?"

Iris was really rendered speechless by her shameless remark. She sneered and said, "So, am I supposed to be thanking the two of you then?"

A sullen Herman said, "You can skip the words of gratitude! What was that way of bringing up the boy, though? Just because I was forced into leaving and couldn't see Justin anymore, you really left him to fend for himself?! And ended up causing that boy to become so perverse and domineering?!"

Seeing that he was criticizing her again, Iris was so furious that she actually laughed. "I have never stopped you from visiting him, but have you ever taken the initiative to contact him all these years? Your son had probably already stopped existing in your eyes when he was lost back then!"

Herman frowned. "How can you say that, Iris? Isn't it obvious that I didn't contact him because I was afraid that you would feel uncomfortable about it? If I contacted him frequently whereas you, his mother, stayed here like a widow, then he would have hated and resented you even more!"

Iris gave a low laugh. Suddenly, she really couldn't be bothered to say anything to him anymore. He was simply so capable of twisting all her words.

For Iris, her son was what mattered to her the most.

All these years, because she hadn't been able to stay by his side, the child had lacked mother's love. She had been counting on Herman to stay in contact with him frequently. After all, a father played a very important role in a child's growth!

But he hadn't.

Herman rarely ever contacted Justin. In fact, he had only called Justin twice during the past twenty years.

She took a deep breath and pointed to the door. "This is my home. Please leave, otherwise, I'm going to call for someone to send you out."

Justin had told her before that he'd stationed some bodyguards for her nearby.

Due to certain reasons, Iris had agreed to it. The bodyguards were standing right outside the door at the moment. However, they hadn't come in to stop Herman.

To be honest, this made Iris a little uncomfortable.

The son must still resent her. That was why he hadn't protected her despite the circumstances.

While she was thinking, Lauren continued adding fuel to the fire and said, "Well, no matter what happened in the past, now that Justin has grown up, you'll have to interact with Justin in the business market, Herman. Iris, we came back to America this time partially to expand our business into the domestic market. It just so happens that we can deal more with the Hunts for some of our operations. They are father and son after all. They will eventually get in touch with each other once they work together, and will slowly make up for the regrets from the

past."

After saying that, she looked at Iris. "Also, Justin's kids are really just too adorable! You don't know how funny Cherry is. She loves the princess dress I brought over to her this morning."

Iris's heart tightened.

Her granddaughter was having fun with Lauren?

But when the thought formed, she felt like she was being narrow-minded again.

That's true, even though she and Herman were divorced, it did not mean that Justin had to sever all contact with him. The Hunts were Herman's family, and the elderly Mrs. Hunt was his mother...

She had only just thought of that when Lauren spoke again. She said, "By the way, we don't have a place to stay during our temporary return to America, so we will stay at the Hunt Manor for the time being. You won't have any objections, right? Cherry is very welcoming of us, she even said that she likes me, her grandmother, very much..."

The two of them had stayed at the Hunts' the previous night.

Iris's heart felt even heavier. Then, she heard Lauren sigh and say, "Iris, we will be part of the same family in the future. I hope you can let go of all your

grievances from the past so that we can all live in peace with one another. This way, Justin won't feel awkward being caught in the middle either, right?"

Iris clenched her fists. "We won't interfere with each other's lives as long as you people don't come over and bother me!"

Lauren took Herman's arm. "Why would we bother you?"

With a big smile, she said, "Herman, since there's nothing else we need with Iris here, then let's go back. We just need to inform Justin that he needn't worry about Iris being unhappy about it! Let's go back, Cherry is still waiting for me to play dolls with her!"

Herman nodded, and the two turned and left.

As she stared at them from the back, Iris felt as if there were needles pricking her heart.

Even though she couldn't approach her son or her grandchildren before, she could still live with it somewhat. But why should Herman and Lauren be able to stay at the Hunt Manor? Why should they be able to play with her granddaughter every day?

Iris' eyes reddened.

Mrs. Landis came over. She heaved a quiet sigh and said, "Ma'am, if you still keep the truth of what had happened back then to yourself, that scumbag and that cheap woman will take Mr. Hunt away from you! Look at how the bodyguards didn't even stop them from going in and out of here. These must have been Mr. Hunt's instructions!"

Iris felt even worse.

At this moment, Cherry's voice suddenly rang out from Mrs. Landis' cell phone...

Cherry should be live-streaming at this time.

Iris suddenly took the phone from her. She would see how Lauren was going to interact intimately with Cherry!

Cherry had switched on her webcam during her live-stream that day, so the live-stream was relatively more formal this time.

Every time she live-streamed, her Sponsor Grandpa would definitely be online. Sponsor Daddy occasionally came in to visit, but it was not as frequent as before.

It was probably because he could now see her in person every day.

Cherry wasn't bothered about these things, though.

However, a Sponsor Grandma had joined the live-stream recently.

Of course, she wasn't addressing that person as Grandma; rather, "Sponsor Grandma" was that person's username. Sponsor Grandma was currently ranked second in her virtual gift rankings.

The one in the first place was always Sponsor Grandpa. No one could surpass him.

The one in third place, Sponsor Daddy, no longer cared about the ranking these days, so his score had been slowly dropping. Cherry first greeted Sponsor Grandpa. Then, when she saw Sponsor Grandma enter the live-stream, the little fellow immediately called out sweetly, "Hi, Sponsor Grandma! How are you doing?"

Sponsor Grandma wrote in the comments: 'Not well.'

As the big boss ranked second in her virtual gift rankings, her comment was highlighted in the live-stream.

Cherry saw the comment right away. Puzzled, she asked, "Why? Did someone make you angry? Beat them up then!"

Iris looked at the live-stream. She wanted to say, "You're the one who made me angry, you little brat."

To think she was actually having fun with someone like Lauren...

If Lauren had gotten into a relationship with Herman after the two of them had divorced normally, then Iris actually would not have prevented Lauren and Cherry from having fun with each other.

After all, it was good for her to have another person who loved her.

But Lauren was not a good person at all. She was afraid that Lauren would lead Cherry astray.

Iris was terribly angry and frustrated. When she was about to send another comment, she suddenly caught a glimpse of a princess dress on the sofa behind Cherry.

Was that the gift that Lauren had spoken of? The one that she had delivered to Cherry early in the morning?

Iris suddenly felt very discouraged.

She put down the phone silently and stood up.

To be honest, when she agreed to that condition back then, she had already left the family. It was destined that she would no longer have much of a relationship with her son for the rest of her life.

In that case, why bother disturbing his life?

Iris lowered her head and turned off the live-stream.

She didn't want to ask Cherry about Lauren anymore-after all, she was the one who had pushed Cherry away with her own hands the night before.

Since she had already made her choice, then what right did she have to demand that Cherry be close to her?

Iris was caught in a dilemma and internal struggle. Mrs. Landis, who was looking at her from the side, was terribly anxious. However, she also knew that once Iris made up her mind, no one would be able to convince her otherwise.

She heaved a silent sigh and changed the subject. "Ma'am, the pot of Jade Orchids you wanted to buy will be delivered soon, right? Where should we put it?"

Sure enough, Iris finally perked up a little when she heard this. She stood up and walked one round in the greenhouse with Mrs. Landis. At last, she said, "That pot of Jade Orchids is very rare and very difficult to take care of. We must treat it with great care."

"Okay."

As the two chatted, they got busy in the greenhouse.

Seeing that she was finally no longer so listless anymore, Mrs. Landis breathed a sigh of relief.

An hour later, the two finally made room for the new pot of orchid. Only then did they sit down again.

Night had almost fallen. The sky had gradually darkened, and the surroundings were quiet. Apart from the chirping of birds, there was no other sound.

When one looked up, through the small courtyard, they could see the skies of New York that were hazy all year round.

Iris had lived like this for a whole twenty years.

Mrs. Landis had left to make dinner. As Iris sat in the greenhouse, her gaze fell onto Mrs. Landis' cell phone again, hardly able to stand the itch in her heart.

Suddenly, she really wanted to hear Cherry's voice.

She opened the live-stream again. At once, she heard Cherry's clear and pleasant voice: "... Jungler, have you gone invisible? How come I never see you during team battles?"

Iris couldn't help but smile at the way she spoke when she dissed other players, and she almost laughed out loud.

As expected, Cherry was still the same bundle of joy she knew her to be.

Beep.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang

Iris picked it up casually, the smile still on her face. She saw that someone had sent her a short video. She opened it casually, upon which Lauren's face immediately appeared. She was speaking to the camera with a smile on her face, "Iris, I am going to go and play with Cherry now. Cherry has always been a very polite and adorable child~"

Iris: “!!”

She stood up angrily. Lauren must have been afraid that she wouldn't believe that they had a better relationship with Justin's family, so she had deliberately sent that to provoke her, right?

Iris was jealous and envious, but even more helpless and sad.

She stared at the video. She could see that it was Cherry's room that Lauren was about to enter.

The next moment, in Cherry's live-stream, the sound of someone knocking on the door, as well as Lauren's gentle voice rang out: “Cherry? Grandma's coming in, okay_?”

Iris clenched her fists.

She looked at Mrs. Landis' cell phone and stared at Cherry's live-stream.

She wanted to close it so that she wouldn't see their interaction, yet at the same time, she wanted to open her eyes wide and take a good look at what exactly she had lost...

She felt as though a big invisible hand had closed around her heart tightly. Her chest felt stuffy and tight, and she felt awfully aggrieved.

Just as she was in a dilemma, she heard Cherry's young and tender voice become impatient: “Who said you could come in here?”

At the Hunts'.

Lauren entered the room with a smile on her face. She'd originally wanted to get along properly with Cherry-after all, she really did want to make Cherry happy.

Once she pleased Cherry, that would mean that she had also pleased Justin.

But she hadn't expected Cherry to always look so impatient whenever she saw her.

She didn't know that Cherry was live-streaming, so she smiled and said, “Grandma misses little Cherry, so I came over to visit you...”

After speaking, as if she was on very good terms with Cherry, she walked over to the sofa next to her and picked up the princess dress she had given Cherry earlier that day. She asked, "Don't you like the princess dress that Grandma bought you? Why didn't you put it on?"

Cherry blinked with her big eyes and answered bluntly, "Because I don't like it, of course!"

Lauren looked at her hesitantly. "Then what kind do you like? Pink ones? Purple ones?"

Or?"

Cherry tilted her head to the side, which made her look very naughty. Her grin made her look even more like a little devil. She replied, "It's you I don't like."

Lauren was taken aback.

Cherry said, "So, as long as it is from you, I won't like it. Don't waste your time trying to please me. Please go out! I don't have a grandmother like you!"

The little fellow's voice was crisp and clear, and she spoke loudly and sonorously.

Lauren flushed, but she didn't dare to bully Cherry, especially in this room. Thus, she said, "Cherry, it is not right of you to speak to your grandma like this. It's very impolite behavior..."

Cherry suddenly stood up and walked straight towards Lauren.

The camera in her live-stream was facing the side right from the start, so it had captured part of the scene.

As a result, everyone saw Cherry pick up the princess dress and then push Lauren out the door. The little fellow was very strong. After she pushed Lauren out of the room, she stood there and said, "Go away you... you... wh*re!"

Cherry had never ever called anyone names.

Even when she was dissing people in her live-streams, she had never called anyone names. Therefore, when she tried to think of a word for Lauren, she

had to think for a very long time before she finally remembered one of the insults that Xander frequently used.

After calling Lauren a wh*re, Cherry slammed the door shut.

Cherry continued her live-stream after she returned.

But at this point, she noticed that a lot of reproachful remarks had suddenly appeared in the comments:

“Isn’t the live-streamer’s behavior too crass? What did that gentle old lady do to you? To think you’re actually calling her names?”

“I’ve already found her an eyesore a long time ago. She’s only five, yet she’s so skilled at dissing people in games. To think you guys claim that she has never called anyone names. Ha, didn’t she do just that just now?”

Some of her fans were also trying to correct her:

“sweetcherry, that’s your grandma. You mustn’t call your family such awful names.”

“Yeah. It’s very rude of you to just toss the dress that your grandma bought for you...”

A group of Internet keyboard warriors, who didn’t even know anything about her family situation, started to leave comments in her live-stream.

A bad-ass Cherry replied, “You are not me, so what would you know? She is a bad person! My mom told me to stay away from her!”

The comments instantly became even fiercer.

However, Iris was no longer in the live-stream at this point.

She had closed the live-stream when Lauren knocked on the door. She didn’t want to watch their heartwarming moments, which would only sadden her. She stared ahead of her blankly.

About half an hour later, Lauren sent her another text message: ‘Sorry about that, Iris, I was playing with Cherry the whole time just now. I realized that the little girl is really very well-behaved. We had a lot of fun together. She also said that she likes me very much.’

Little by little, Iris' heart sank as she read the message.

Yeah, how would Cherry possibly not be lovable?

She had always been a good girl who was polite and sweet-talking. Every time she saw her, the things she said made her heart melt.

It seemed that no matter what, she just couldn't harden her heart towards the little fellow.

Everyone would probably like her, no matter who it was.

Iris didn't want to think about it anymore, so she straight-up blocked Lauren's phone number. Then, she stood up and went to dinner.

Mrs. Landis had made mushroom risotto that evening.

The two of them had a plate each. However, the usually fresh and delicious mushroom risotto didn't taste right to her that evening. She said, "Mrs. Landis, the mushroom risotto doesn't taste very nice today."

Mrs. Landis took a bite. "It tastes pretty good, Ma'am. You only think it tastes bad because you are in a bad mood. Every time you are in a bad mood, you don't feel like eating."

"... Really?"

Iris slowly put down her spoon. She sighed silently. Then, she got up and started walking upstairs. "I'm not eating anymore. I'll go to bed instead."

Mrs. Landis heaved a quiet sigh as she stared at her from the back.

Iris had originally thought that she would be fine after she went upstairs and had a good night's sleep. But after she lay down, she simply couldn't get to sleep.

The text messages that Lauren had sent to her kept appearing before her eyes, making her feel like there was something stuck in her chest, unable to get out.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang.

When Iris answered, Lauren's voice came from the other side again. "Iris, why did you block me? Is it because you don't want me to send you those messages? Well, that makes sense. I'm sure you don't want Cherry and I to be so close to each other, but the child wants a grandmother too!"

Her words made Iris so mad that she was shaking all over. Right at this moment, she suddenly heard a rush of footsteps. Then, Mrs. Landis opened the door and entered her room. She said, "Ma'am, Cherry is trending!"

Trending?

What was trending?

Iris pretty much subconsciously picked up her cell phone. Right away, she saw that sweetcherry was trending on social media because she had called her grandma names out of anger in her live-stream.

To be honest, it wasn't really trending that high in the rankings.

It barely entered the top fifty in the rankings and had only just made the list. Mrs. Landis had only found out because her attention was on Cherry.

Iris hurriedly opened the article linked in the post, where she saw a video clip from the live-stream footage. In the clip, Cherry had driven her grandma out of her room and called her a wh*re.

Chapter 645 - The Plan of Saving Nora Novel Free

This time, Nora could not stop her.

However, Iris must have her reasons.

The woman who had confided in her for an entire afternoon was not lying. But why?

Nora thought about it and turned back to enter the room. However, the moment she turned her head, she saw Justin standing not far behind her.

The man's eyes were dark and unclear. Half of his face was in the light under the street lamp, and the other half was in the dark. Under the night sky, the mole at the corner of his eye became colder.

Obviously, he had heard Iris' words.

When Nora thought about how she and Iris were talking earlier, Iris must have clearly seen Justin's eyes, but she still said those words. She was clearly doing this on purpose!

She was even more certain that Iris had her reasons.

But what difficulties did she have?

As she was thinking, she saw a hint of loneliness flash across the man's face. Justin suddenly said, "Nora, even my birth mother doesn't like me. Do you really like me?"

At this moment, he was like a pitiful worm in the corner forgotten by everyone.

Nora looked at him and her heart softened. She walked to Justin and looked at him seriously. "I really like you."

Justin seemed to be extremely touched. He reached out and hugged her tightly as he murmured in her ear, "How could that be? Even Mother hates me... What can you like about me?"

This side of Justin was really heartbreaking.

Nora thought about it and hesitated for a long time. In the end, she replied, "You're good-looking!"

She did not see the corners of Justin's mouth twitch. "..."

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Did he not have any other merits in Nora's heart?!

As he was thinking, he felt Nora pushing him away. Justin quickly sorted out his emotions and regained his lonely expression.

He seemed to have been hurt by Iris's words.

He finally grabbed the opportunity to push Nora further. He could not let go so easily. He sighed silently. "Nora, can you stay with me tonight?" Nora: "???"

Justin looked into the distance, his deep eyes filled with sadness. “I have some things I want to tell you.”

Nora was about to reject him when she heard him say, “It’s about me and my mother.”

Nora twitched her lips and finally sighed. “Alright.”

At this moment.

Iris sat in the car and left the Hunts.

When the Hunts’ iron gate was closed, Mrs. Landis couldn’t help but say, “Ms. Iris, why must you do this... It has been so many years. Now that Mr. Hunt has grown up, he’s clearly very powerful. Tell him your difficulties!”

Iris lowered her head. “It’ll be troublesome if I tell him. Forget it. It has been so many years. He didn’t grow up with me. Why should I ask him to grow old with me?”

Mrs. Landis stared at her. “What do you mean by trouble? You’re his mother! You’ve suppressed the longing in your heart for so many years and you didn’t even look at him. You hug your phone every night and repeatedly watch videos of him growing up that the servants at home had sent your husband... You can’t bear to delete those videos, even if your phone is full...”

Iris didn’t say anything.

Mrs. Landis suddenly leaned in front of her. “Miss, if you don’t want to tell Mr. Hunt, then tell me! What happened back then? Why?”

What had happened back then...

Even Mrs. Landis didn’t know the full story. All she knew was that after Herman left, Iris had suddenly packed up her things one day, moved out of the Hunt Manor, and moved into the small villa here.

From then on, it was as if she had suddenly become cold-hearted, and no longer cared about Justin.

But Mrs. Landis still remembered that one day when the five-year-old Justin, who didn’t understand anything at all, suddenly ran all the way to the villa, crying and shouting for his mother.

But Iris had refused to open the door. She had stayed in the house and merely said, "Go back. I don't want to see you."

"Mom, open the door!"

Outside the door, the five-year-old Justin tried his best to knock on the door, but as though she had hardened her heart, she never opened it.

Justin was just as stubborn. He shouted, "If you don't open the door, I won't leave!"

Later, it started to rain.

It was storming, and the winds were howling in the heavy rain. The bodyguard gave him an umbrella, but he pushed him away. The stubborn little boy kept standing on that rainy night.

Justin had a very determined look in his eyes. He didn't believe that his mother would really ignore him.

Neither did he believe that his gentle mother would suddenly become so cruel and hard-hearted.

But later, cold and hungry, he finally fainted from exhaustion. Even when he had collapsed onto the ground, he kept his eyes open with the last vestiges of his strength and stared at the door.

What disappointed him was that from beginning to end, the door never opened once.

From then on, Justin understood that Iris didn't love him anymore. After visiting a few more times, he rarely came again.

But he didn't know that Mrs. Landis had seen with her own eyes that the entire time he was in the rain, Iris had also stood in the rain in the courtyard inside the villa.

When the bodyguards outside exclaimed in shock after he fainted, Iris had rushed to the door. Both her hands had been on the gates, but she never opened the door.

Her tears had mixed together with the rainwater on her face, and she wept silently with her mouth open. That was the most painful night of Iris' life that Mrs. Landis had ever seen.

She was a hundred times sadder than when Herman had betrayed her.

In her opinion, Iris didn't actually love Herman at all-or rather, she didn't love him that deeply. After all, theirs had been a political marriage.

She had given all her love to Justin.

But for some reason, mother and son had to be separated. They had clearly been so close once upon a time, yet they were like complete strangers now.

Mrs. Landis simply didn't understand what had happened. She stared at Iris, only to see tears all over her face.

Mrs. Landis panicked. "Ma'am, what's wrong? What's the matter?"

Iris covered her face with her hands.

Before coming, she'd thought that since so many years had gone by, everything must be okay by now, right?

Besides, Nora had once tried to persuade her and had told her that her son had already grown up. Perhaps her troubles were nothing more than trivial matters to him.

That was why she had, after a long internal struggle the day before, come to the Hunt Manor today with the clothes she had carefully selected for the three children.

Deep down, she wanted to repair her relationship with her son. She could also see that, although her son was surprised to see her, he was not hostile towards her. But little did she expect that... that man would come back!

As expected, those thoughts of hers were all just wishful thinking.

She should just stay in that small villa her whole life like someone's trapped canary and live out her life all by herself.

This was the price she had to pay for that incident back then.

Without any hope, there would be no disappointment.

The little spark of hope that had finally ignited after much difficulty had suddenly been extinguished that evening.

Iris lowered her head. "Don't ask anymore, Mrs. Landis."

Seeing how sad she looked, Mrs. Landis sighed.

At the Hunts'.

When Justin and Nora entered the living room, they found that Cherry had gone to the bedroom upstairs. Herman and Lauren were sitting on the sofa, drinking the tea that the butler had just handed them.

Justin seemed utterly heartbroken by Iris. There was sadness on his face. He took Nora's hand and sat opposite Herman and Lauren.

Herman said, "You saw that, didn't you? Your mother is a cold-hearted person. Justin, she has always been so selfish. You should have already become accustomed to it a long time ago, right?"

Justin raised his head suddenly, piercing light shooting out of his eyes. "Why are you here?"

Herman narrowed his eyes. "This is my home. Of course I was going to come back someday! Besides, my agreement with your mother back then was for me to leave the Hunts for twenty years! Don't worry, I know that the entire Hunt Corporation is now in your hands. Even if I'm back, I won't be able to take anything back from you... I've been doing my own business abroad all these years, and have my own assets, so I won't covet your money. I came back just to visit you, as well as your grandmother along the way." After saying this, he stood up and started walking out. "I will go and say hi to your grandmother first. I will stay at her place tonight."

The fake Lauren said pretentiously, "Justin, this is our gift for the children. Cherry is afraid of strangers, so she didn't accept the gift. You can give it to her later."

After the two left, Justin looked at Nora. "Why don't you go upstairs first? I will deal with these gifts."

Nora had been worried that he would misunderstand Iris, and end up being moved by Herman's few words. It was only then that she realized that he actually disliked Herman that much. She was relieved.

She nodded and went upstairs.

After she went upstairs, Justin picked up his cell phone and answered a call. Sean's voice came from the other side: "Boss."

Justin's gaze was very cold. He lowered his eyes slightly and asked, "Have you looked into it? What did she say in the car after she left...?"

Sean then recounted the conversation between Mrs. Landis and Iris in the car and told him how Iris had reacted.

Justin lowered his eyes and listened quietly.

Sean said tentatively, "Ma'am seems to be having some difficulties, and she is not indifferent to you. Although she speaks disdainfully about the videos sent to her in the past, she has actually kept them all..."

Justin knew all this, of course—because he was the one who had gotten them to send those videos!

All he wanted to know right now was—why?!

Sean was still reporting his discoveries. "The gifts that Ma'am brought for the children were all carefully selected and prepared a month in advance. After hearing that you have another child, she even prepared an additional gift overnight to make up. She was actually planning to tell you some kind of truth when she took the initiative to visit today... but it seems like she has regretted it. It seems that the change in her emotions only took place after your father returned."

"Okay."

Justin understood what Sean was saying. He raised his eyes and looked ahead of him dispassionately. Then, he slowly said, "If you can't get anything out of my mother, then try the other side."

"Yes, sir."

Justin stared into the distance as he hung up the call.

There was a tinge of loneliness in his eyes.

To be honest, he had never believed that his mother had suddenly stopped loving him. When he was a child, he had been so stubborn that he had fainted in rain. When he woke up, he had known right away that it would be useless to approach her again.

Later, as he grew up, he suddenly discovered one day that a servant at home was filming a video of him. After that, the servant had sent it to someone.

At first, he'd thought that the servant must be scheming something, so he'd constantly stayed on guard against him. However, even as time passed, the servant didn't take any action.

After he grew up, Justin quietly studied and learned hacking techniques without anyone knowing. He had then hacked into the servant's phone and discovered his secret.

As it turned out, all the videos of him—from when he was a child all the way until he turned into a young adult—had all been sent by the servant to his mother, who had never shown any concern for him!

He took the opportunity to hack into his mother's cell phone, only to find all the videos of him stored within. Every video of him from when he was a child until he became a young adult—was in there. None of them had ever been deleted. And every night, before going to bed, she would watch the videos of him over and over again.

Justin had been thirteen years old then.

Since then, he became certain that his mother was hiding something from him, and that she had her reasons and difficulties for doing so.

It could be said that he had never held any grudge towards his mother.

However, this did not mean that he was not angry about it.

He was indeed furious.

When he was young, he couldn't do anything. Thus, for his own good, his mother had kept those secrets from him. But even as he grew up, was his mother still unable to believe in him?

Besides...

It was undeniable that feelings and relationships were built and developed through daily contact and interaction with one another. The twenty-year-long separation had left him and Iris with nothing much to say to each other.

Thus, later on, he only occasionally visited her at the villa, and never without reason.

He was waiting.

He was waiting for his mother to take the initiative to tell him the truth. But judging from her behavior, was his mother planning to keep it from him for the rest of her life? Just because it would bring him trouble?

Justin lowered his head.

To be honest, there were times when he felt like giving up on the investigation.

So what even if he found out what had happened?

Since she hadn't been by his side as he grew up, why should he accompany her as she grew old...? Besides, sometimes habit really was something awfully scary—he had already grown used to not having her at home.

If there came a day where he suddenly found himself with a mother nagging at him, he might not be able to get used to it either.

Yet when he heard from Sean that she had cried, his heart softened again.

No matter what, they were still mother and son. Even if he was indifferent by nature, and even if he might only care about a few people; the woman was still among the few he cared about.

Moreover—and also the main reason—Nora seemed to share a very good relationship with her.

Upstairs.

Nora entered the room to see Cherry pulling a long face. Although she was sitting on the sofa and playing games, she was not happy.

Pete glanced at her. "What's the matter? Is something troubling you?"

Cherry killed an enemy in the game and then looked up at him. "Is it that obvious that I'm upset?"

"... You didn't rant at anyone while playing your game today," replied Pete with the corners of his lips spasming. The little girl was pretty much just short of blatantly writing the words "I'm unhappy" on her face.

Even Princess Lucy asked, "Cherry, what's wrong? Did someone bully you? I'll get the bodyguards to beat them up!" As she spoke, she even waved her tiny little fists. She looked just like a Barbie doll.

Cherry sighed quietly. "Don't beat her up, Lucy. You don't understand."

A puzzled Lucy asked, "What don't I understand? Is this some kind of rule in America? Why should you put up with it when that person is upsetting you?" "Because it's my grandma we're talking about!"

Cherry rested her chin on her hand and said, "Grandma was really nice to me in the past, I don't know why she suddenly changed today. She must have a reason for doing so! Do you know why she did that, Pete?"

Pete shook his head. "I don't know."

Cherry was a little disappointed. "You are so stupid~"

Cherry sighed quietly. "Forget it, it's time for my live-stream!"

After speaking, she sat on the sofa and opened the live-stream app.

Seeing the little fellows chatting so happily, Nora didn't go in to disturb them and left instead.

Cherry was not someone to dwell on things, so she would never take such small matters to heart. Neither did she need Nora to comfort her. In her opinion, Justin was simply overthinking things.

After she left, she looked downstairs again and saw that there was no one in the living room. However, there was a figure on the balcony.

Although Nora was very sleepy and wanted very much to look for someplace where she could sleep, when she thought of how hurtful Iris' words earlier in

the day had been for Justin, she nevertheless went down the stairs and walked towards him.

As she went over, she saw the man standing there with his back to her.

The moonlight cast a silver glow on him, making a smooth silhouette of the dark and overcast figure. He exuded a sense of alienation and indifference, yet at the same time, he looked as though he had been forgotten in a corner.

He seemed so sad and lonely that it made one feel sorry for him.

This was especially when the man, who had never smoked, actually had a cigar held in between his fingertips at the moment. The smoke from the cigar curled upwards, making him look even lonelier.

Nora felt like they could pretty much make a movie with the scene.

The corners of Nora's lips twitched a little. She hadn't expected the man to be so deeply hurt.

She walked over and stood behind him. Just as she was about to speak, the man suddenly turned around and embraced her tightly. His chest was very hard and solid. It felt rather uncomfortable when he held her so tightly.

Yet Nora did not dare to push him away at a time like this, for fear that he would become even sadder—because the man happened to whisper into her ear, “Nora, you're the only one I have left now.”

Nora kept quiet for three seconds, but in the end, she still couldn't stop herself from saying, “You still have Cherry, Pete, Xander, Brenda, and also Sean and Lawrence. There's also...”

Justin: “...”

He really shouldn't have allowed the woman to speak. The moment she opened her mouth, she would absolutely become the insensitive girl who ruined the atmosphere!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed. Seeing that Nora was actually planning to continue listing the rest, he promptly and decisively lowered his head suddenly and caught the woman's lips.

He could see the girl freezing suddenly. Then, her almond-shaped eyes widened and she looked at him in astonishment. It seemed like her first reaction was to push him away, yet she held back.

Justin closed his eyes. He could sense that the girl was being extra-tolerant today, so he pushed his luck and invaded her mouth.

The crisp smell of tobacco on the man rushed into Nora's nostrils bossily, making her feel like the smell was actually quite pleasant?

To be honest, she hadn't thought of pushing him away.

If the man needed a hug and a kiss to reinforce his sense of security, then she didn't mind giving them to him.

Besides, he really was exceptionally pitiful today. Thus, not only did Nora not resist, but she even stretched out her arms and circled them around his neck tightly, and started responding to his kiss.

The atmosphere gradually turned amorous.

It seemed like all the air at the balcony had been sucked away. In the narrow space, the man and woman's chests heaved up and down. After some time, Justin suddenly picked up Nora and carried her like a newly-wed bride. He said, "Let's... go to the bedroom upstairs."

The suggestiveness in his words were very apparent.

When he stared hard at Nora, he saw the girl, whose cheeks were scarlet and her eyes misty, reply, "Okay."

To be honest, Justin hadn't expected her to agree.

He'd long discovered that the woman had always been relatively indifferent in her feelings. It hadn't been that long since the two of them confirmed their relationship, either.

The woman's chest was heaving up and down intensely at the moment, and her eyes contained a faint hint of womanly charm and shyness. When she agreed with her cheeks all red, he was instead stunned for a moment.

But right after, he regained his senses.

Seemingly afraid that the woman would go back on her word the very next second, he turned around at once and strode up the stairs.

Nora, whose head was buried into his chest, could see that his eyes were as deep and bottomless as the ocean. The way his eyes were staring at her so closely was as though he was looking at his prey, which made one feel daunted and timid.

But unfortunately, who did he think Nora was?

She had always been the hunter, not the hunted. When had she ever allowed herself to be in a disadvantageous position?

So, the next moment, she yawned. The two went up the stairs and entered the bedroom. With her in his arms, Justin rushed straight towards the bed. However, he had only just taken two steps when Nora said, "Let's take a bath first. Who's going in first, you or me?"

Justin's eyes instantly turned even darker. "... Let's go in together?"

"Get lost."

Nora sat upright and jumped out of his arms. "I'll take a bath first."

She took out an unused bath towel from the side and walked into the bathroom.

Mr. Hunt, who had stayed outside, was so anxious that he was going around in circles. He hurriedly made the bed; then he checked whether the big bed was sturdy enough and whether it would make any noise if people jumped on it.

After that, he swallowed again and smoothed his hair.

If Lawrence or Sean were to see him like this, they would probably marvel in amazement. Was that really their boss, who had never even frowned a little in the face of business transactions worth billions, or even dozens of billions?

Splash

The sound of water stopped. Justin stood up straight, his eyes fixed in the direction of the bathroom. The door opened, and Nora walked out.

The bathrobe was wrapped around her, and she was toweling her hair. Because of the hot bath, her cheeks had become even rosier and moist. Her almond-shaped eyes glanced at him shyly and she said, "It's your turn."

His Adam's apple shifted a little. "... Okay."

He picked up the bathrobe and rushed into the bathroom like an eager child.

He washed himself seriously and carefully during the bath, for fear that Nora would notice if he didn't clean any part of himself well. Even so, he took only two minutes in the bath and ran out again.

Then, he saw Nora already lying on the bed.

He slowed down, his breathing becoming heavier and heavier. He walked up to the bed where Nora was. As he thought of what was about to happen that night, he became rather excited.

But the next moment, his excitement died down.

Because! The mouth of the woman on the bed was slightly ajar, and her eyes were closed. This... Was she asleep?

Justin: "??"

How would he know that when they were downstairs just now, as they kissed and kissed, Nora had also been getting sleepier and sleepier?! This continued until the man finally suggested going to the bedroom, and she breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Would she finally be able to go to sleep?

Therefore, with her eyelids droopy, she had replied sleepily, "Okay."

It wasn't the shy and bashful reaction that Justin had imagined on his own at all!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed a little. He wanted to lift the quilt but realized that the woman had wrapped it tightly around herself, and was refusing to let him in.

Justin took another deep breath. In the end, he stood up in silence, went into the bathroom, took out the hairdryer, and quietly started drying her hair for her.

He hoped beyond everything that perhaps the noise would wake the woman?

Unfortunately, even until her hair was all dry, she didn't wake up.

On the contrary, seeing her unintentionally exposed shoulders while drying her hair, the fire in Justin's heart started to burn even more strongly.

In the end, Justin took another cold bath that night.

Nora did not wake up until noon the next day.

She stretched comfortably. But when she turned her head to the side, she was instead faced with the man's dark and gloomy face, which gave her a huge shock.

Justin asked quietly, "Did you sleep well?"

"... Yeah."

Nora yawned. Then, she got out of bed and went to wash up.

Justin could only sigh helplessly. As he got up, he heard movement outside the door. He went over and looked through the peephole to see the three children and Brenda standing outside.

Brenda was asking nosily, "Did your Mommy really sleep in there last night? That's why your father is sleeping in for once?"

Cherry replied, "Uh-huh, uh-huh! It seemed like Mommy's legs felt a little weak last night, so Daddy carried her upstairs!"

Pete said, "... It's not that Mommy's legs were weak."

Cherry was puzzled. "Then was it because Mommy couldn't walk anymore? So she was acting like a baby?"

Pete: "?"

At the side, Lucy covered her mouth and giggled.

Brenda's eyes, however, were gleaming in an extremely gossipy manner. She said, "Cherry, you are so dumb! They are making younger brothers and sisters for you!" Cherry: "?"

Justin: "??"

What kind of nonsense was she saying? What was she teaching his daughter?

Justin opened the door angrily. His voice deepened and he reprimanded, "Brenda!"

Brenda got a huge fright. But when she looked over at him, she received an even bigger fright. She swallowed and asked, "How hard were you guys going at it last night, Justin? It gave you dark circles under your eyes?".

Justin: "?"

Before he could speak, Brenda spoke again. "I understand, I understand it all. After all, this is the first time you guys were doing it after such a long time. It's very normal that you wouldn't be able to hold yourself back. But you guys still have a long future ahead of you, you know? You have to..."

The corners of Brenda's lips curled into a smile as she spoke. With an alluring voice, she said, "... take it easy a little~ After all, Nora is frail and unable to take care of herself. You mustn't be a beast to her, Justin."

Justin retorted angrily, "What nonsense are you saying?"

"What do you mean 'nonsense'~?" But after she spoke, something suddenly occurred to Brenda and she became terribly alarmed. "Surely not? The two of you, a lone man and a lone woman sharing the same room, you know? Could it be that you have some kind of undisclosed condition, Justin? If so, then you mustn't keep it to yourself. Nora's a doctor, hurry up and have her give you a checkup!"

Justin's expression turned even darker. "No, I don't!"

"That's more like it!" Brenda breathed a sigh of relief and patted her chest. "Otherwise, you'll be worse than a beast."

"..."

Justin felt like he was about to get a heart attack from anger.

Who was she calling worse than a beast, goddammit?!

Bang!

Justin shut the door.

In the suburbs.

At noon, Iris stood in the greenhouse and took care of her orchids in boredom.

The door was suddenly pushed open and Herman strode in. When he saw her, he entered the greenhouse.

Iris frowned at the sight of him. "Get lost, you are not welcome here."

Herman said, "Don't get me wrong, I'm not here to rekindle old relationships with you. It's just that... how were you taking care of our son at home? Your relationship with him is terrible. I was not by Justin's side when he was a child, yet you didn't stay with him?!"

Iris balled up her fists tightly. "You're asking why my relationship with Justin is so terrible when you already know the answer to that question?! Isn't it all because..."

"Because..."

Iris had hidden the secret about what happened all those years ago in her heart for twenty years and had never mentioned it to anyone. Everyone in this world could criticize her, scold her, and hate her.

In fact, it was okay even if Justin refused to acknowledge her as his mother. However, the man in front of her was the only person who was not worthy of speaking about her relationship with her son!

She stared at Herman, though, there wasn't any anger in her. She merely felt that the man couldn't get any more thick-skinned than he already was. She sneered and slowly said, "It's all because of the fantastic things you did back then!"

Herman frowned when he heard this. "What does it have to do with me? You were obviously the one who was unfaithful!"

“You—!”

Iris really found his words ridiculous to the extreme. She stared at Herman. A short while later, she sneered, “It’s been twenty years. Your ability to reverse right and wrong and twist the truth has really improved!”

Herman wanted to speak again, but Lauren walked in through the door and interrupted their conversation. She said, “That’s enough. Dear, Iris, don’t argue anymore. I know you still hold a grudge against Herman, but it’s already been twenty years now, so what’s the point of doing that to yourself? Justin has already grown up. What Herman did for you back then is already good enough. He has already given up all of his inheritance to the family assets for the two of you... He practically left the family penniless.”

Lauren sighed. “You don’t know how difficult it has been for us to start from scratch when we were abroad all these years.”

Iris: “?”

What a clever way of phrasing things. Those who didn’t know better might really have thought that Herman was a good man!

Iris was not a woman of forbearance. She said eloquently, “How come I don’t remember Herman leaving the Hunts penniless back then? Weren’t the company shares from back then his father’s? Just because his father had chosen Justin over him as the heir to the family, it somehow ended up becoming him giving the assets to me and my son?”

A sharp look flashed across Lauren’s eyes. “Sigh, you don’t understand. It was Herman who took the initiative to withdraw from the fight because he felt that he had let the two of you down. Otherwise, why would the old sir have chosen a child, who was only five years old, over him?”

Iris was really rendered speechless by her shameless remark. She sneered and said, “So, am I supposed to be thanking the two of you then?”

A sullen Herman said, “You can skip the words of gratitude! What was that way of bringing up the boy, though? Just because I was forced into leaving and couldn’t see Justin anymore, you really left him to fend for himself?! And ended up causing that boy to become so perverse and domineering?!”

Seeing that he was criticizing her again, Iris was so furious that she actually laughed. "I have never stopped you from visiting him, but have you ever taken the initiative to contact him all these years? Your son had probably already stopped existing in your eyes when he was lost back then!"

Herman frowned. "How can you say that, Iris? Isn't it obvious that I didn't contact him because I was afraid that you would feel uncomfortable about it? If I contacted him frequently whereas you, his mother, stayed here like a widow, then he would have hated and resented you even more!"

Iris gave a low laugh. Suddenly, she really couldn't be bothered to say anything to him anymore. He was simply so capable of twisting all her words.

For Iris, her son was what mattered to her the most.

All these years, because she hadn't been able to stay by his side, the child had lacked mother's love. She had been counting on Herman to stay in contact with him frequently. After all, a father played a very important role in a child's growth!

But he hadn't.

Herman rarely ever contacted Justin. In fact, he had only called Justin twice during the past twenty years.

She took a deep breath and pointed to the door. "This is my home. Please leave, otherwise, I'm going to call for someone to send you out."

Justin had told her before that he'd stationed some bodyguards for her nearby.

Due to certain reasons, Iris had agreed to it. The bodyguards were standing right outside the door at the moment. However, they hadn't come in to stop Herman.

To be honest, this made Iris a little uncomfortable.

The son must still resent her. That was why he hadn't protected her despite the circumstances.

While she was thinking, Lauren continued adding fuel to the fire and said, "Well, no matter what happened in the past, now that Justin has grown up,

you'll have to interact with Justin in the business market, Herman. Iris, we came back to America this time partially to expand our business into the domestic market. It just so happens that we can deal more with the Hunts for some of our operations. They are father and son after all. They will eventually get in touch with each other once they work together, and will slowly make up for the regrets from the past."

After saying that, she looked at Iris. "Also, Justin's kids are really just too adorable! You don't know how funny Cherry is. She loves the princess dress I brought over to her this morning."

Iris's heart tightened.

Her granddaughter was having fun with Lauren?

But when the thought formed, she felt like she was being narrow-minded again.

That's true, even though she and Herman were divorced, it did not mean that Justin had to sever all contact with him. The Hunts were Herman's family, and the elderly Mrs. Hunt was his mother...

She had only just thought of that when Lauren spoke again. She said, "By the way, we don't have a place to stay during our temporary return to America, so we will stay at the Hunt Manor for the time being. You won't have any objections, right? Cherry is very welcoming of us, she even said that she likes me, her grandmother, very much..."

The two of them had stayed at the Hunts' the previous night.

Iris's heart felt even heavier. Then, she heard Lauren sigh and say, "Iris, we will be part of the same family in the future. I hope you can let go of all your grievances from the past so that we can all live in peace with one another. This way, Justin won't feel awkward being caught in the middle either, right?"

Iris clenched her fists. "We won't interfere with each other's lives as long as you people don't come over and bother me!"

Lauren took Herman's arm. "Why would we bother you?"

With a big smile, she said, “Herman, since there’s nothing else we need with Iris here, then let’s go back. We just need to inform Justin that he needn’t worry about Iris being unhappy about it! Let’s go back, Cherry is still waiting for me to play dolls with her!”

Herman nodded, and the two turned and left.

As she stared at them from the back, Iris felt as if there were needles pricking her heart.

Even though she couldn’t approach her son or her grandchildren before, she could still live with it somewhat. But why should Herman and Lauren be able to stay at the Hunt Manor? Why should they be able to play with her granddaughter every day?

Iris’ eyes reddened.

Mrs. Landis came over. She heaved a quiet sigh and said, “Ma’am, if you still keep the truth of what had happened back then to yourself, that scumbag and that cheap woman will take Mr. Hunt away from you! Look at how the bodyguards didn’t even stop them from going in and out of here. These must have been Mr. Hunt’s instructions!”

Iris felt even worse.

At this moment, Cherry’s voice suddenly rang out from Mrs. Landis’ cell phone...

Cherry should be live-streaming at this time.

Iris suddenly took the phone from her. She would see how Lauren was going to interact intimately with Cherry!

Cherry had switched on her webcam during her live-stream that day, so the live-stream was relatively more formal this time.

Every time she live-streamed, her Sponsor Grandpa would definitely be online. Sponsor Daddy occasionally came in to visit, but it was not as frequent as before.

It was probably because he could now see her in person every day.

Cherry wasn’t bothered about these things, though.

However, a Sponsor Grandma had joined the live-stream recently.

Of course, she wasn't addressing that person as Grandma; rather, "Sponsor Grandma" was that person's username. Sponsor Grandma was currently ranked second in her virtual gift rankings.

The one in the first place was always Sponsor Grandpa. No one could surpass him.

The one in third place, Sponsor Daddy, no longer cared about the ranking these days, so his score had been slowly dropping. Cherry first greeted Sponsor Grandpa. Then, when she saw Sponsor Grandma enter the live-stream, the little fellow immediately called out sweetly, "Hi, Sponsor Grandma! How are you doing?"

Sponsor Grandma wrote in the comments: 'Not well.'

As the big boss ranked second in her virtual gift rankings, her comment was highlighted in the live-stream.

Cherry saw the comment right away. Puzzled, she asked, "Why? Did someone make you angry? Beat them up then!"

Iris looked at the live-stream. She wanted to say, "You're the one who made me angry, you little brat."

To think she was actually having fun with someone like Lauren...

If Lauren had gotten into a relationship with Herman after the two of them had divorced normally, then Iris actually would not have prevented Lauren and Cherry from having fun with each other.

After all, it was good for her to have another person who loved her.

But Lauren was not a good person at all. She was afraid that Lauren would lead Cherry astray.

Iris was terribly angry and frustrated. When she was about to send another comment, she suddenly caught a glimpse of a princess dress on the sofa behind Cherry.

Was that the gift that Lauren had spoken of? The one that she had delivered to Cherry early in the morning?

Iris suddenly felt very discouraged.

She put down the phone silently and stood up.

To be honest, when she agreed to that condition back then, she had already left the family. It was destined that she would no longer have much of a relationship with her son for the rest of her life.

In that case, why bother disturbing his life?

Iris lowered her head and turned off the live-stream.

She didn't want to ask Cherry about Lauren anymore-after all, she was the one who had pushed Cherry away with her own hands the night before.

Since she had already made her choice, then what right did she have to demand that Cherry be close to her?

Iris was caught in a dilemma and internal struggle. Mrs. Landis, who was looking at her from the side, was terribly anxious. However, she also knew that once Iris made up her mind, no one would be able to convince her otherwise.

She heaved a silent sigh and changed the subject. "Ma'am, the pot of Jade Orchids you wanted to buy will be delivered soon, right? Where should we put it?"

Sure enough, Iris finally perked up a little when she heard this. She stood up and walked one round in the greenhouse with Mrs. Landis. At last, she said, "That pot of Jade Orchids is very rare and very difficult to take care of. We must treat it with great care."

"Okay."

As the two chatted, they got busy in the greenhouse.

Seeing that she was finally no longer so listless anymore, Mrs. Landis breathed a sigh of relief.

An hour later, the two finally made room for the new pot of orchid. Only then did they sit down again.

Night had almost fallen. The sky had gradually darkened, and the surroundings were quiet. Apart from the chirping of birds, there was no other sound.

When one looked up, through the small courtyard, they could see the skies of New York that were hazy all year round.

Iris had lived like this for a whole twenty years.

Mrs. Landis had left to make dinner. As Iris sat in the greenhouse, her gaze fell onto Mrs. Landis' cell phone again, hardly able to stand the itch in her heart.

Suddenly, she really wanted to hear Cherry's voice.

She opened the live-stream again. At once, she heard Cherry's clear and pleasant voice: "... Jungler, have you gone invisible? How come I never see you during team battles?"

Iris couldn't help but smile at the way she spoke when she dissed other players, and she almost laughed out loud.

As expected, Cherry was still the same bundle of joy she knew her to be.

Beep.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang

Iris picked it up casually, the smile still on her face. She saw that someone had sent her a short video. She opened it casually, upon which Lauren's face immediately appeared. She was speaking to the camera with a smile on her face, "Iris, I am going to go and play with Cherry now. Cherry has always been a very polite and adorable child~"

Iris: "!!"

She stood up angrily. Lauren must have been afraid that she wouldn't believe that they had a better relationship with Justin's family, so she had deliberately sent that to provoke her, right?

Iris was jealous and envious, but even more helpless and sad.

She stared at the video. She could see that it was Cherry's room that Lauren was about to enter.

The next moment, in Cherry's live-stream, the sound of someone knocking on the door, as well as Lauren's gentle voice rang out: "Cherry? Grandma's coming in, okay_?"

Iris clenched her fists.

She looked at Mrs. Landis' cell phone and stared at Cherry's live-stream.

She wanted to close it so that she wouldn't see their interaction, yet at the same time, she wanted to open her eyes wide and take a good look at what exactly she had lost...

She felt as though a big invisible hand had closed around her heart tightly. Her chest felt stuffy and tight, and she felt awfully aggrieved.

Just as she was in a dilemma, she heard Cherry's young and tender voice become impatient: "Who said you could come in here?"

At the Hunts'.

Lauren entered the room with a smile on her face. She'd originally wanted to get along properly with Cherry-after all, she really did want to make Cherry happy.

Once she pleased Cherry, that would mean that she had also pleased Justin.

But she hadn't expected Cherry to always look so impatient whenever she saw her.

She didn't know that Cherry was live-streaming, so she smiled and said, "Grandma misses little Cherry, so I came over to visit you..."

After speaking, as if she was on very good terms with Cherry, she walked over to the sofa next to her and picked up the princess dress she had given Cherry earlier that day. She asked, "Don't you like the princess dress that Grandma bought you? Why didn't you put it on?"

Cherry blinked with her big eyes and answered bluntly, "Because I don't like it, of course!"

Lauren looked at her hesitantly. “Then what kind do you like? Pink ones? Purple ones?

Or?”

Cherry tilted her head to the side, which made her look very naughty. Her grin made her look even more like a little devil. She replied, “It’s you I don’t like.”

Lauren was taken aback.

Cherry said, “So, as long as it is from you, I won’t like it. Don’t waste your time trying to please me. Please go out! I don’t have a grandmother like you!”

The little fellow’s voice was crisp and clear, and she spoke loudly and sonorously.

Lauren flushed, but she didn’t dare to bully Cherry, especially in this room. Thus, she said, “Cherry, it is not right of you to speak to your grandma like this. It’s very impolite behavior...”

Cherry suddenly stood up and walked straight towards Lauren.

The camera in her live-stream was facing the side right from the start, so it had captured part of the scene.

As a result, everyone saw Cherry pick up the princess dress and then push Lauren out the door. The little fellow was very strong. After she pushed Lauren out of the room, she stood there and said, “Go away you... you... wh*re!”

Cherry had never ever called anyone names.

Even when she was dissing people in her live-streams, she had never called anyone names. Therefore, when she tried to think of a word for Lauren, she had to think for a very long time before she finally remembered one of the insults that Xander frequently used.

After calling Lauren a wh*re, Cherry slammed the door shut.

Cherry continued her live-stream after she returned.

But at this point, she noticed that a lot of reproachful remarks had suddenly appeared in the comments:

“Isn’t the live-streamer’s behavior too crass? What did that gentle old lady do to you? To think you’re actually calling her names?”

“I’ve already found her an eyesore a long time ago. She’s only five, yet she’s so skilled at dissing people in games. To think you guys claim that she has never called anyone names. Ha, didn’t she do just that just now?”

Some of her fans were also trying to correct her:

“sweetcherry, that’s your grandma. You mustn’t call your family such awful names.”

“Yeah. It’s very rude of you to just toss the dress that your grandma bought for you...”

A group of Internet keyboard warriors, who didn’t even know anything about her family situation, started to leave comments in her live-stream.

A bad-ass Cherry replied, “You are not me, so what would you know? She is a bad person! My mom told me to stay away from her!”

The comments instantly became even fiercer.

However, Iris was no longer in the live-stream at this point.

She had closed the live-stream when Lauren knocked on the door. She didn’t want to watch their heartwarming moments, which would only sadden her. She stared ahead of her blankly.

About half an hour later, Lauren sent her another text message: ‘Sorry about that, Iris, I was playing with Cherry the whole time just now. I realized that the little girl is really very well-behaved. We had a lot of fun together. She also said that she likes me very much.’

Little by little, Iris’ heart sank as she read the message.

Yeah, how would Cherry possibly not be lovable?

She had always been a good girl who was polite and sweet-talking. Every time she saw her, the things she said made her heart melt.

It seemed that no matter what, she just couldn’t harden her heart towards the little fellow.

Everyone would probably like her, no matter who it was.

Iris didn't want to think about it anymore, so she straight-up blocked Lauren's phone number. Then, she stood up and went to dinner.

Mrs. Landis had made mushroom risotto that evening.

The two of them had a plate each. However, the usually fresh and delicious mushroom risotto didn't taste right to her that evening. She said, "Mrs. Landis, the mushroom risotto doesn't taste very nice today."

Mrs. Landis took a bite. "It tastes pretty good, Ma'am. You only think it tastes bad because you are in a bad mood. Every time you are in a bad mood, you don't feel like eating."

"... Really?"

Iris slowly put down her spoon. She sighed silently. Then, she got up and started walking upstairs. "I'm not eating anymore. I'll go to bed instead."

Mrs. Landis heaved a quiet sigh as she stared at her from the back.

Iris had originally thought that she would be fine after she went upstairs and had a good night's sleep. But after she lay down, she simply couldn't get to sleep.

The text messages that Lauren had sent to her kept appearing before her eyes, making her feel like there was something stuck in her chest, unable to get out.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang.

When Iris answered, Lauren's voice came from the other side again. "Iris, why did you block me? Is it because you don't want me to send you those messages? Well, that makes sense. I'm sure you don't want Cherry and I to be so close to each other, but the child wants a grandmother too!"

Her words made Iris so mad that she was shaking all over. Right at this moment, she suddenly heard a rush of footsteps. Then, Mrs. Landis opened the door and entered her room. She said, "Ma'am, Cherry is trending!"

Trending?

What was trending?

Iris pretty much subconsciously picked up her cell phone. Right away, she saw that sweetcherry was trending on social media because she had called her grandma names out of anger in her live-stream.

To be honest, it wasn't really trending that high in the rankings.

It barely entered the top fifty in the rankings and had only just made the list. Mrs. Landis had only found out because her attention was on Cherry.

Iris hurriedly opened the article linked in the post, where she saw a video clip from the live-stream footage. In the clip, Cherry had driven her grandma out of her room and called her a wh*re.

Chapter 646 - The Plan of Saving Nora Novel Free

When Justin and Nora entered the living room, they found that Cherry had gone to the bedroom upstairs. Herman and Lauren were sitting on the sofa, drinking the tea that the butler had just handed them.

Justin seemed utterly heartbroken by Iris. There was sadness on his face. He took Nora's hand and sat opposite Herman and Lauren.

Herman said, "You saw that, didn't you? Your mother is a cold-hearted person. Justin, she has always been so selfish. You should have already become accustomed to it a long time ago, right?"

Justin raised his head suddenly, piercing light shooting out of his eyes. "Why are you here?"

Herman narrowed his eyes. "This is my home. Of course I was going to come back someday! Besides, my agreement with your mother back then was for me to leave the Hunts for twenty years! Don't worry, I know that the entire Hunt Corporation is now in your hands. Even if I'm back, I won't be able to take anything back from you... I've been doing my own business abroad all these years, and have my own assets, so I won't covet your money. I came back just to visit you, as well as your grandmother along the way." After saying this, he stood up and started walking out. "I will go and say hi to your grandmother first. I will stay at her place tonight."

The fake Lauren said pretentiously, “Justin, this is our gift for the children. Cherry is afraid of strangers, so she didn’t accept the gift. You can give it to her later.”

After the two left, Justin looked at Nora. “Why don’t you go upstairs first? I will deal with these gifts.”

Nora had been worried that he would misunderstand Iris, and end up being moved by Herman’s few words. It was only then that she realized that he actually disliked Herman that much. She was relieved.

She nodded and went upstairs.

After she went upstairs, Justin picked up his cell phone and answered a call. Sean’s voice came from the other side: “Boss.”

Justin’s gaze was very cold. He lowered his eyes slightly and asked, “Have you looked into it? What did she say in the car after she left...?”

Sean then recounted the conversation between Mrs. Landis and Iris in the car and told him how Iris had reacted.

Justin lowered his eyes and listened quietly.

Sean said tentatively, “Ma’am seems to be having some difficulties, and she is not indifferent to you. Although she speaks disdainfully about the videos sent to her in the past, she has actually kept them all...”

Justin knew all this, of course—because he was the one who had gotten them to send those videos!

All he wanted to know right now was—why?!

Sean was still reporting his discoveries. “The gifts that Ma’am brought for the children were all carefully selected and prepared a month in advance. After hearing that you have another child, she even prepared an additional gift overnight to make up. She was actually planning to tell you some kind of truth when she took the initiative to visit today... but it seems like she has regretted it. It seems that the change in her emotions only took place after your father returned.”

“Okay.”

Justin understood what Sean was saying. He raised his eyes and looked ahead of him dispassionately. Then, he slowly said, "If you can't get anything out of my mother, then try the other side."

"Yes, sir."

Justin stared into the distance as he hung up the call.

There was a tinge of loneliness in his eyes.

To be honest, he had never believed that his mother had suddenly stopped loving him. When he was a child, he had been so stubborn that he had fainted in rain. When he woke up, he had known right away that it would be useless to approach her again.

Later, as he grew up, he suddenly discovered one day that a servant at home was filming a video of him. After that, the servant had sent it to someone.

At first, he'd thought that the servant must be scheming something, so he'd constantly stayed on guard against him. However, even as time passed, the servant didn't take any action.

After he grew up, Justin quietly studied and learned hacking techniques without anyone knowing. He had then hacked into the servant's phone and discovered his secret.

As it turned out, all the videos of him—from when he was a child all the way until he turned into a young adult—had all been sent by the servant to his mother, who had never shown any concern for him!

He took the opportunity to hack into his mother's cell phone, only to find all the videos of him stored within. Every video of him from when he was a child until he became a young adult—was in there. None of them had ever been deleted. And every night, before going to bed, she would watch the videos of him over and over again.

Justin had been thirteen years old then.

Since then, he became certain that his mother was hiding something from him, and that she had her reasons and difficulties for doing so.

It could be said that he had never held any grudge towards his mother.

However, this did not mean that he was not angry about it.

He was indeed furious.

When he was young, he couldn't do anything. Thus, for his own good, his mother had kept those secrets from him. But even as he grew up, was his mother still unable to believe in him?

Besides...

It was undeniable that feelings and relationships were built and developed through daily contact and interaction with one another. The twenty-year-long separation had left him and Iris with nothing much to say to each other.

Thus, later on, he only occasionally visited her at the villa, and never without reason.

He was waiting.

He was waiting for his mother to take the initiative to tell him the truth. But judging from her behavior, was his mother planning to keep it from him for the rest of her life? Just because it would bring him trouble?

Justin lowered his head.

To be honest, there were times when he felt like giving up on the investigation.

So what even if he found out what had happened?

Since she hadn't been by his side as he grew up, why should he accompany her as she grew old...? Besides, sometimes habit really was something awfully scary—he had already grown used to not having her at home.

If there came a day where he suddenly found himself with a mother nagging at him, he might not be able to get used to it either.

Yet when he heard from Sean that she had cried, his heart softened again.

No matter what, they were still mother and son. Even if he was indifferent by nature, and even if he might only care about a few people; the woman was still among the few he cared about.

Moreover-and also the main reason-Nora seemed to share a very good relationship with her.

Upstairs.

Nora entered the room to see Cherry pulling a long face. Although she was sitting on the sofa and playing games, she was not happy.

Pete glanced at her. "What's the matter? Is something troubling you?"

Cherry killed an enemy in the game and then looked up at him. "Is it that obvious that I'm upset?"

"... You didn't rant at anyone while playing your game today," replied Pete with the corners of his lips spasming. The little girl was pretty much just short of blatantly writing the words "I'm unhappy" on her face.

Even Princess Lucy asked, "Cherry, what's wrong? Did someone bully you? I'll get the bodyguards to beat them up!" As she spoke, she even waved her tiny little fists. She looked just like a Barbie doll.

Cherry sighed quietly. "Don't beat her up, Lucy. You don't understand."

A puzzled Lucy asked, "What don't I understand? Is this some kind of rule in America? Why should you put up with it when that person is upsetting you?" "Because it's my grandma we're talking about!"

Cherry rested her chin on her hand and said, "Grandma was really nice to me in the past, I don't know why she suddenly changed today. She must have a reason for doing so! Do you know why she did that, Pete?"

Pete shook his head. "I don't know."

Cherry was a little disappointed. "You are so stupid~"

Cherry sighed quietly. "Forget it, it's time for my live-stream!"

After speaking, she sat on the sofa and opened the live-stream app.

Seeing the little fellows chatting so happily, Nora didn't go in to disturb them and left instead.

Cherry was not someone to dwell on things, so she would never take such small matters to heart. Neither did she need Nora to comfort her. In her opinion, Justin was simply overthinking things.

After she left, she looked downstairs again and saw that there was no one in the living room. However, there was a figure on the balcony.

Although Nora was very sleepy and wanted very much to look for someplace where she could sleep, when she thought of how hurtful Iris' words earlier in the day had been for Justin, she nevertheless went down the stairs and walked towards him.

As she went over, she saw the man standing there with his back to her.

The moonlight cast a silver glow on him, making a smooth silhouette of the dark and overcast figure. He exuded a sense of alienation and indifference, yet at the same time, he looked as though he had been forgotten in a corner.

He seemed so sad and lonely that it made one feel sorry for him.

This was especially when the man, who had never smoked, actually had a cigar held in between his fingertips at the moment. The smoke from the cigar curled upwards, making him look even lonelier.

Nora felt like they could pretty much make a movie with the scene.

The corners of Nora's lips twitched a little. She hadn't expected the man to be so deeply hurt.

She walked over and stood behind him. Just as she was about to speak, the man suddenly turned around and embraced her tightly. His chest was very hard and solid. It felt rather uncomfortable when he held her so tightly.

Yet Nora did not dare to push him away at a time like this, for fear that he would become even sadder—because the man happened to whisper into her ear, “Nora, you're the only one I have left now.”

Nora kept quiet for three seconds, but in the end, she still couldn't stop herself from saying, “You still have Cherry, Pete, Xander, Brenda, and also Sean and Lawrence. There's also...”

Justin: “...”

He really shouldn't have allowed the woman to speak. The moment she opened her mouth, she would absolutely become the insensitive girl who ruined the atmosphere!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed. Seeing that Nora was actually planning to continue listing the rest, he promptly and decisively lowered his head suddenly and caught the woman's lips.

He could see the girl freezing suddenly. Then, her almond-shaped eyes widened and she looked at him in astonishment. It seemed like her first reaction was to push him away, yet she held back.

Justin closed his eyes. He could sense that the girl was being extra-tolerant today, so he pushed his luck and invaded her mouth.

The crisp smell of tobacco on the man rushed into Nora's nostrils bossily, making her feel like the smell was actually quite pleasant?

To be honest, she hadn't thought of pushing him away.

If the man needed a hug and a kiss to reinforce his sense of security, then she didn't mind giving them to him.

Besides, he really was exceptionally pitiful today. Thus, not only did Nora not resist, but she even stretched out her arms and circled them around his neck tightly, and started responding to his kiss.

The atmosphere gradually turned amorous.

It seemed like all the air at the balcony had been sucked away. In the narrow space, the man and woman's chests heaved up and down. After some time, Justin suddenly picked up Nora and carried her like a newly-wed bride. He said, "Let's... go to the bedroom upstairs."

The suggestiveness in his words were very apparent.

When he stared hard at Nora, he saw the girl, whose cheeks were scarlet and her eyes misty, reply, "Okay."

To be honest, Justin hadn't expected her to agree.

He'd long discovered that the woman had always been relatively indifferent in her feelings. It hadn't been that long since the two of them confirmed their relationship, either.

The woman's chest was heaving up and down intensely at the moment, and her eyes contained a faint hint of womanly charm and shyness. When she agreed with her cheeks all red, he was instead stunned for a moment.

But right after, he regained his senses.

Seemingly afraid that the woman would go back on her word the very next second, he turned around at once and strode up the stairs.

Nora, whose head was buried into his chest, could see that his eyes were as deep and bottomless as the ocean. The way his eyes were staring at her so closely was as though he was looking at his prey, which made one feel daunted and timid.

But unfortunately, who did he think Nora was?

She had always been the hunter, not the hunted. When had she ever allowed herself to be in a disadvantageous position?

So, the next moment, she yawned. The two went up the stairs and entered the bedroom. With her in his arms, Justin rushed straight towards the bed. However, he had only just taken two steps when Nora said, "Let's take a bath first. Who's going in first, you or me?"

Justin's eyes instantly turned even darker. "... Let's go in together?"

"Get lost."

Nora sat upright and jumped out of his arms. "I'll take a bath first."

She took out an unused bath towel from the side and walked into the bathroom.

Mr. Hunt, who had stayed outside, was so anxious that he was going around in circles. He hurriedly made the bed; then he checked whether the big bed was sturdy enough and whether it would make any noise if people jumped on it.

After that, he swallowed again and smoothed his hair.

If Lawrence or Sean were to see him like this, they would probably marvel in amazement. Was that really their boss, who had never even frowned a little in the face of business transactions worth billions, or even dozens of billions?

Splash

The sound of water stopped. Justin stood up straight, his eyes fixed in the direction of the bathroom. The door opened, and Nora walked out.

The bathrobe was wrapped around her, and she was toweling her hair. Because of the hot bath, her cheeks had become even rosier and moist. Her almond-shaped eyes glanced at him shyly and she said, "It's your turn."

His Adam's apple shifted a little. "... Okay."

He picked up the bathrobe and rushed into the bathroom like an eager child.

He washed himself seriously and carefully during the bath, for fear that Nora would notice if he didn't clean any part of himself well. Even so, he took only two minutes in the bath and ran out again.

Then, he saw Nora already lying on the bed.

He slowed down, his breathing becoming heavier and heavier. He walked up to the bed where Nora was. As he thought of what was about to happen that night, he became rather excited.

But the next moment, his excitement died down.

Because! The mouth of the woman on the bed was slightly ajar, and her eyes were closed. This... Was she asleep?

Justin: "??"

How would he know that when they were downstairs just now, as they kissed and kissed, Nora had also been getting sleepier and sleepier?! This continued until the man finally suggested going to the bedroom, and she breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Would she finally be able to go to sleep?

Therefore, with her eyelids droopy, she had replied sleepily, "Okay."

It wasn't the shy and bashful reaction that Justin had imagined on his own at all!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed a little. He wanted to lift the quilt but realized that the woman had wrapped it tightly around herself, and was refusing to let him in.

Justin took another deep breath. In the end, he stood up in silence, went into the bathroom, took out the hairdryer, and quietly started drying her hair for her.

He hoped beyond everything that perhaps the noise would wake the woman?

Unfortunately, even until her hair was all dry, she didn't wake up.

On the contrary, seeing her unintentionally exposed shoulders while drying her hair, the fire in Justin's heart started to burn even more strongly.

In the end, Justin took another cold bath that night.

Nora did not wake up until noon the next day.

She stretched comfortably. But when she turned her head to the side, she was instead faced with the man's dark and gloomy face, which gave her a huge shock.

Justin asked quietly, "Did you sleep well?"

"... Yeah."

Nora yawned. Then, she got out of bed and went to wash up.

Justin could only sigh helplessly. As he got up, he heard movement outside the door. He went over and looked through the peephole to see the three children and Brenda standing outside.

Brenda was asking nosily, "Did your Mommy really sleep in there last night? That's why your father is sleeping in for once?"

Cherry replied, "Uh-huh, uh-huh! It seemed like Mommy's legs felt a little weak last night, so Daddy carried her upstairs!"

Pete said, "... It's not that Mommy's legs were weak."

Cherry was puzzled. “Then was it because Mommy couldn’t walk anymore? So she was acting like a baby?”

Pete: “?”

At the side, Lucy covered her mouth and giggled.

Brenda’s eyes, however, were gleaming in an extremely gossipy manner. She said, “Cherry, you are so dumb! They are making younger brothers and sisters for you!” Cherry: “?”

Justin: “??”

What kind of nonsense was she saying? What was she teaching his daughter?

Justin opened the door angrily. His voice deepened and he reprimanded, “Brenda!”

Brenda got a huge fright. But when she looked over at him, she received an even bigger fright. She swallowed and asked, “How hard were you guys going at it last night, Justin? It gave you dark circles under your eyes?”.

Justin: “?”

Before he could speak, Brenda spoke again. “I understand, I understand it all. After all, this is the first time you guys were doing it after such a long time. It’s very normal that you wouldn’t be able to hold yourself back. But you guys still have a long future ahead of you, you know? You have to...”

The corners of Brenda’s lips curled into a smile as she spoke. With an alluring voice, she said, “... take it easy a little~ After all, Nora is frail and unable to take care of herself. You mustn’t be a beast to her, Justin.”

Justin retorted angrily, “What nonsense are you saying?”

“What do you mean ‘nonsense’~?” But after she spoke, something suddenly occurred to Brenda and she became terribly alarmed. “Surely not? The two of you, a lone man and a lone woman sharing the same room, you know? Could it be that you have some kind of undisclosed condition, Justin? If so, then you mustn’t keep it to yourself. Nora’s a doctor, hurry up and have her give you a checkup!”

Justin's expression turned even darker. "No, I don't!"

"That's more like it!" Brenda breathed a sigh of relief and patted her chest. "Otherwise, you'll be worse than a beast."

"..."

Justin felt like he was about to get a heart attack from anger.

Who was she calling worse than a beast, goddammit?!

Bang!

Justin shut the door.

In the suburbs.

At noon, Iris stood in the greenhouse and took care of her orchids in boredom.

The door was suddenly pushed open and Herman strode in. When he saw her, he entered the greenhouse.

Iris frowned at the sight of him. "Get lost, you are not welcome here."

Herman said, "Don't get me wrong, I'm not here to rekindle old relationships with you. It's just that... how were you taking care of our son at home? Your relationship with him is terrible. I was not by Justin's side when he was a child, yet you didn't stay with him?!"

Iris balled up her fists tightly. "You're asking why my relationship with Justin is so terrible when you already know the answer to that question?! Isn't it all because..."

"Because..."

Iris had hidden the secret about what happened all those years ago in her heart for twenty years and had never mentioned it to anyone. Everyone in this world could criticize her, scold her, and hate her.

In fact, it was okay even if Justin refused to acknowledge her as his mother. However, the man in front of her was the only person who was not worthy of speaking about her relationship with her son!

She stared at Herman, though, there wasn't any anger in her. She merely felt that the man couldn't get any more thick-skinned than he already was. She sneered and slowly said, "It's all because of the fantastic things you did back then!"

Herman frowned when he heard this. "What does it have to do with me? You were obviously the one who was unfaithful!"

"You—!"

Iris really found his words ridiculous to the extreme. She stared at Herman. A short while later, she sneered, "It's been twenty years. Your ability to reverse right and wrong and twist the truth has really improved!"

Herman wanted to speak again, but Lauren walked in through the door and interrupted their conversation. She said, "That's enough. Dear, Iris, don't argue anymore. I know you still hold a grudge against Herman, but it's already been twenty years now, so what's the point of doing that to yourself? Justin has already grown up. What Herman did for you back then is already good enough. He has already given up all of his inheritance to the family assets for the two of you... He practically left the family penniless."

Lauren sighed. "You don't know how difficult it has been for us to start from scratch when we were abroad all these years."

Iris: "?"

What a clever way of phrasing things. Those who didn't know better might really have thought that Herman was a good man!

Iris was not a woman of forbearance. She said eloquently, "How come I don't remember Herman leaving the Hunts penniless back then? Weren't the company shares from back then his father's? Just because his father had chosen Justin over him as the heir to the family, it somehow ended up becoming him giving the assets to me and my son?"

A sharp look flashed across Lauren's eyes. "Sigh, you don't understand. It was Herman who took the initiative to withdraw from the fight because he felt that he had let the two of you down. Otherwise, why would the old sir have chosen a child, who was only five years old, over him?"

Iris was really rendered speechless by her shameless remark. She sneered and said, "So, am I supposed to be thanking the two of you then?"

A sullen Herman said, "You can skip the words of gratitude! What was that way of bringing up the boy, though? Just because I was forced into leaving and couldn't see Justin anymore, you really left him to fend for himself?! And ended up causing that boy to become so perverse and domineering?!"

Seeing that he was criticizing her again, Iris was so furious that she actually laughed. "I have never stopped you from visiting him, but have you ever taken the initiative to contact him all these years? Your son had probably already stopped existing in your eyes when he was lost back then!"

Herman frowned. "How can you say that, Iris? Isn't it obvious that I didn't contact him because I was afraid that you would feel uncomfortable about it? If I contacted him frequently whereas you, his mother, stayed here like a widow, then he would have hated and resented you even more!"

Iris gave a low laugh. Suddenly, she really couldn't be bothered to say anything to him anymore. He was simply so capable of twisting all her words.

For Iris, her son was what mattered to her the most.

All these years, because she hadn't been able to stay by his side, the child had lacked mother's love. She had been counting on Herman to stay in contact with him frequently. After all, a father played a very important role in a child's growth!

But he hadn't.

Herman rarely ever contacted Justin. In fact, he had only called Justin twice during the past twenty years.

She took a deep breath and pointed to the door. "This is my home. Please leave, otherwise, I'm going to call for someone to send you out."

Justin had told her before that he'd stationed some bodyguards for her nearby.

Due to certain reasons, Iris had agreed to it. The bodyguards were standing right outside the door at the moment. However, they hadn't come in to stop Herman.

To be honest, this made Iris a little uncomfortable.

The son must still resent her. That was why he hadn't protected her despite the circumstances.

While she was thinking, Lauren continued adding fuel to the fire and said, "Well, no matter what happened in the past, now that Justin has grown up, you'll have to interact with Justin in the business market, Herman. Iris, we came back to America this time partially to expand our business into the domestic market. It just so happens that we can deal more with the Hunts for some of our operations. They are father and son after all. They will eventually get in touch with each other once they work together, and will slowly make up for the regrets from the

past."

After saying that, she looked at Iris. "Also, Justin's kids are really just too adorable! You don't know how funny Cherry is. She loves the princess dress I brought over to her this morning."

Iris's heart tightened.

Her granddaughter was having fun with Lauren?

But when the thought formed, she felt like she was being narrow-minded again.

That's true, even though she and Herman were divorced, it did not mean that Justin had to sever all contact with him. The Hunts were Herman's family, and the elderly Mrs. Hunt was his mother...

She had only just thought of that when Lauren spoke again. She said, "By the way, we don't have a place to stay during our temporary return to America, so we will stay at the Hunt Manor for the time being. You won't have any objections, right? Cherry is very welcoming of us, she even said that she likes me, her grandmother, very much..."

The two of them had stayed at the Hunts' the previous night.

Iris's heart felt even heavier. Then, she heard Lauren sigh and say, "Iris, we will be part of the same family in the future. I hope you can let go of all your

grievances from the past so that we can all live in peace with one another. This way, Justin won't feel awkward being caught in the middle either, right?"

Iris clenched her fists. "We won't interfere with each other's lives as long as you people don't come over and bother me!"

Lauren took Herman's arm. "Why would we bother you?"

With a big smile, she said, "Herman, since there's nothing else we need with Iris here, then let's go back. We just need to inform Justin that he needn't worry about Iris being unhappy about it! Let's go back, Cherry is still waiting for me to play dolls with her!"

Herman nodded, and the two turned and left.

As she stared at them from the back, Iris felt as if there were needles pricking her heart.

Even though she couldn't approach her son or her grandchildren before, she could still live with it somewhat. But why should Herman and Lauren be able to stay at the Hunt Manor? Why should they be able to play with her granddaughter every day?

Iris' eyes reddened.

Mrs. Landis came over. She heaved a quiet sigh and said, "Ma'am, if you still keep the truth of what had happened back then to yourself, that scumbag and that cheap woman will take Mr. Hunt away from you! Look at how the bodyguards didn't even stop them from going in and out of here. These must have been Mr. Hunt's instructions!"

Iris felt even worse.

At this moment, Cherry's voice suddenly rang out from Mrs. Landis' cell phone...

Cherry should be live-streaming at this time.

Iris suddenly took the phone from her. She would see how Lauren was going to interact intimately with Cherry!

Cherry had switched on her webcam during her live-stream that day, so the live-stream was relatively more formal this time.

Every time she live-streamed, her Sponsor Grandpa would definitely be online. Sponsor Daddy occasionally came in to visit, but it was not as frequent as before.

It was probably because he could now see her in person every day.

Cherry wasn't bothered about these things, though.

However, a Sponsor Grandma had joined the live-stream recently.

Of course, she wasn't addressing that person as Grandma; rather, "Sponsor Grandma" was that person's username. Sponsor Grandma was currently ranked second in her virtual gift rankings.

The one in the first place was always Sponsor Grandpa. No one could surpass him.

The one in third place, Sponsor Daddy, no longer cared about the ranking these days, so his score had been slowly dropping. Cherry first greeted Sponsor Grandpa. Then, when she saw Sponsor Grandma enter the live-stream, the little fellow immediately called out sweetly, "Hi, Sponsor Grandma! How are you doing?"

Sponsor Grandma wrote in the comments: 'Not well.'

As the big boss ranked second in her virtual gift rankings, her comment was highlighted in the live-stream.

Cherry saw the comment right away. Puzzled, she asked, "Why? Did someone make you angry? Beat them up then!"

Iris looked at the live-stream. She wanted to say, "You're the one who made me angry, you little brat."

To think she was actually having fun with someone like Lauren...

If Lauren had gotten into a relationship with Herman after the two of them had divorced normally, then Iris actually would not have prevented Lauren and Cherry from having fun with each other.

After all, it was good for her to have another person who loved her.

But Lauren was not a good person at all. She was afraid that Lauren would lead Cherry astray.

Iris was terribly angry and frustrated. When she was about to send another comment, she suddenly caught a glimpse of a princess dress on the sofa behind Cherry.

Was that the gift that Lauren had spoken of? The one that she had delivered to Cherry early in the morning?

Iris suddenly felt very discouraged.

She put down the phone silently and stood up.

To be honest, when she agreed to that condition back then, she had already left the family. It was destined that she would no longer have much of a relationship with her son for the rest of her life.

In that case, why bother disturbing his life?

Iris lowered her head and turned off the live-stream.

She didn't want to ask Cherry about Lauren anymore-after all, she was the one who had pushed Cherry away with her own hands the night before.

Since she had already made her choice, then what right did she have to demand that Cherry be close to her?

Iris was caught in a dilemma and internal struggle. Mrs. Landis, who was looking at her from the side, was terribly anxious. However, she also knew that once Iris made up her mind, no one would be able to convince her otherwise.

She heaved a silent sigh and changed the subject. "Ma'am, the pot of Jade Orchids you wanted to buy will be delivered soon, right? Where should we put it?"

Sure enough, Iris finally perked up a little when she heard this. She stood up and walked one round in the greenhouse with Mrs. Landis. At last, she said, "That pot of Jade Orchids is very rare and very difficult to take care of. We must treat it with great care."

"Okay."

As the two chatted, they got busy in the greenhouse.

Seeing that she was finally no longer so listless anymore, Mrs. Landis breathed a sigh of relief.

An hour later, the two finally made room for the new pot of orchid. Only then did they sit down again.

Night had almost fallen. The sky had gradually darkened, and the surroundings were quiet. Apart from the chirping of birds, there was no other sound.

When one looked up, through the small courtyard, they could see the skies of New York that were hazy all year round.

Iris had lived like this for a whole twenty years.

Mrs. Landis had left to make dinner. As Iris sat in the greenhouse, her gaze fell onto Mrs. Landis' cell phone again, hardly able to stand the itch in her heart.

Suddenly, she really wanted to hear Cherry's voice.

She opened the live-stream again. At once, she heard Cherry's clear and pleasant voice: "... Jungler, have you gone invisible? How come I never see you during team battles?"

Iris couldn't help but smile at the way she spoke when she dissed other players, and she almost laughed out loud.

As expected, Cherry was still the same bundle of joy she knew her to be.

Beep.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang

Iris picked it up casually, the smile still on her face. She saw that someone had sent her a short video. She opened it casually, upon which Lauren's face immediately appeared. She was speaking to the camera with a smile on her face, "Iris, I am going to go and play with Cherry now. Cherry has always been a very polite and adorable child~"

Iris: “!!”

She stood up angrily. Lauren must have been afraid that she wouldn't believe that they had a better relationship with Justin's family, so she had deliberately sent that to provoke her, right?

Iris was jealous and envious, but even more helpless and sad.

She stared at the video. She could see that it was Cherry's room that Lauren was about to enter.

The next moment, in Cherry's live-stream, the sound of someone knocking on the door, as well as Lauren's gentle voice rang out: “Cherry? Grandma's coming in, okay_?”

Iris clenched her fists.

She looked at Mrs. Landis' cell phone and stared at Cherry's live-stream.

She wanted to close it so that she wouldn't see their interaction, yet at the same time, she wanted to open her eyes wide and take a good look at what exactly she had lost...

She felt as though a big invisible hand had closed around her heart tightly. Her chest felt stuffy and tight, and she felt awfully aggrieved.

Just as she was in a dilemma, she heard Cherry's young and tender voice become impatient: “Who said you could come in here?”

At the Hunts'.

Lauren entered the room with a smile on her face. She'd originally wanted to get along properly with Cherry-after all, she really did want to make Cherry happy.

Once she pleased Cherry, that would mean that she had also pleased Justin.

But she hadn't expected Cherry to always look so impatient whenever she saw her.

She didn't know that Cherry was live-streaming, so she smiled and said, “Grandma misses little Cherry, so I came over to visit you...”

After speaking, as if she was on very good terms with Cherry, she walked over to the sofa next to her and picked up the princess dress she had given Cherry earlier that day. She asked, "Don't you like the princess dress that Grandma bought you? Why didn't you put it on?"

Cherry blinked with her big eyes and answered bluntly, "Because I don't like it, of course!"

Lauren looked at her hesitantly. "Then what kind do you like? Pink ones? Purple ones?"

Or?"

Cherry tilted her head to the side, which made her look very naughty. Her grin made her look even more like a little devil. She replied, "It's you I don't like."

Lauren was taken aback.

Cherry said, "So, as long as it is from you, I won't like it. Don't waste your time trying to please me. Please go out! I don't have a grandmother like you!"

The little fellow's voice was crisp and clear, and she spoke loudly and sonorously.

Lauren flushed, but she didn't dare to bully Cherry, especially in this room. Thus, she said, "Cherry, it is not right of you to speak to your grandma like this. It's very impolite behavior..."

Cherry suddenly stood up and walked straight towards Lauren.

The camera in her live-stream was facing the side right from the start, so it had captured part of the scene.

As a result, everyone saw Cherry pick up the princess dress and then push Lauren out the door. The little fellow was very strong. After she pushed Lauren out of the room, she stood there and said, "Go away you... you... wh*re!"

Cherry had never ever called anyone names.

Even when she was dissing people in her live-streams, she had never called anyone names. Therefore, when she tried to think of a word for Lauren, she

had to think for a very long time before she finally remembered one of the insults that Xander frequently used.

After calling Lauren a wh*re, Cherry slammed the door shut.

Cherry continued her live-stream after she returned.

But at this point, she noticed that a lot of reproachful remarks had suddenly appeared in the comments:

“Isn’t the live-streamer’s behavior too crass? What did that gentle old lady do to you? To think you’re actually calling her names?”

“I’ve already found her an eyesore a long time ago. She’s only five, yet she’s so skilled at dissing people in games. To think you guys claim that she has never called anyone names. Ha, didn’t she do just that just now?”

Some of her fans were also trying to correct her:

“sweetcherry, that’s your grandma. You mustn’t call your family such awful names.”

“Yeah. It’s very rude of you to just toss the dress that your grandma bought for you...”

A group of Internet keyboard warriors, who didn’t even know anything about her family situation, started to leave comments in her live-stream.

A bad-ass Cherry replied, “You are not me, so what would you know? She is a bad person! My mom told me to stay away from her!”

The comments instantly became even fiercer.

However, Iris was no longer in the live-stream at this point.

She had closed the live-stream when Lauren knocked on the door. She didn’t want to watch their heartwarming moments, which would only sadden her. She stared ahead of her blankly.

About half an hour later, Lauren sent her another text message: ‘Sorry about that, Iris, I was playing with Cherry the whole time just now. I realized that the little girl is really very well-behaved. We had a lot of fun together. She also said that she likes me very much.’

Little by little, Iris' heart sank as she read the message.

Yeah, how would Cherry possibly not be lovable?

She had always been a good girl who was polite and sweet-talking. Every time she saw her, the things she said made her heart melt.

It seemed that no matter what, she just couldn't harden her heart towards the little fellow.

Everyone would probably like her, no matter who it was.

Iris didn't want to think about it anymore, so she straight-up blocked Lauren's phone number. Then, she stood up and went to dinner.

Mrs. Landis had made mushroom risotto that evening.

The two of them had a plate each. However, the usually fresh and delicious mushroom risotto didn't taste right to her that evening. She said, "Mrs. Landis, the mushroom risotto doesn't taste very nice today."

Mrs. Landis took a bite. "It tastes pretty good, Ma'am. You only think it tastes bad because you are in a bad mood. Every time you are in a bad mood, you don't feel like eating."

"... Really?"

Iris slowly put down her spoon. She sighed silently. Then, she got up and started walking upstairs. "I'm not eating anymore. I'll go to bed instead."

Mrs. Landis heaved a quiet sigh as she stared at her from the back.

Iris had originally thought that she would be fine after she went upstairs and had a good night's sleep. But after she lay down, she simply couldn't get to sleep.

The text messages that Lauren had sent to her kept appearing before her eyes, making her feel like there was something stuck in her chest, unable to get out.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang.

When Iris answered, Lauren's voice came from the other side again. "Iris, why did you block me? Is it because you don't want me to send you those messages? Well, that makes sense. I'm sure you don't want Cherry and I to be so close to each other, but the child wants a grandmother too!"

Her words made Iris so mad that she was shaking all over. Right at this moment, she suddenly heard a rush of footsteps. Then, Mrs. Landis opened the door and entered her room. She said, "Ma'am, Cherry is trending!"

Trending?

What was trending?

Iris pretty much subconsciously picked up her cell phone. Right away, she saw that sweetcherry was trending on social media because she had called her grandma names out of anger in her live-stream.

To be honest, it wasn't really trending that high in the rankings.

It barely entered the top fifty in the rankings and had only just made the list. Mrs. Landis had only found out because her attention was on Cherry.

Iris hurriedly opened the article linked in the post, where she saw a video clip from the live-stream footage. In the clip, Cherry had driven her grandma out of her room and called her a wh*re.

Chapter 647 - The Plan of Saving Nora Novel Free

Nora felt like they could pretty much make a movie with the scene.

The corners of Nora's lips twitched a little. She hadn't expected the man to be so deeply hurt.

She walked over and stood behind him. Just as she was about to speak, the man suddenly turned around and embraced her tightly. His chest was very hard and solid. It felt rather uncomfortable when he held her so tightly.

Yet Nora did not dare to push him away at a time like this, for fear that he would become even sadder—because the man happened to whisper into her ear, "Nora, you're the only one I have left now."

Nora kept quiet for three seconds, but in the end, she still couldn't stop herself from saying, "You still have Cherry, Pete, Xander, Brenda, and also Sean and Lawrence. There's also..."

Justin: "..."

He really shouldn't have allowed the woman to speak. The moment she opened her mouth, she would absolutely become the insensitive girl who ruined the atmosphere!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed. Seeing that Nora was actually planning to continue listing the rest, he promptly and decisively lowered his head suddenly and caught the woman's lips.

He could see the girl freezing suddenly. Then, her almond-shaped eyes widened and she looked at him in astonishment. It seemed like her first reaction was to push him away, yet she held back.

Justin closed his eyes. He could sense that the girl was being extra-tolerant today, so he pushed his luck and invaded her mouth.

The crisp smell of tobacco on the man rushed into Nora's nostrils bossily, making her feel like the smell was actually quite pleasant?

To be honest, she hadn't thought of pushing him away.

If the man needed a hug and a kiss to reinforce his sense of security, then she didn't mind giving them to him.

Besides, he really was exceptionally pitiful today. Thus, not only did Nora not resist, but she even stretched out her arms and circled them around his neck tightly, and started responding to his kiss.

The atmosphere gradually turned amorous.

It seemed like all the air at the balcony had been sucked away. In the narrow space, the man and woman's chests heaved up and down. After some time, Justin suddenly picked up Nora and carried her like a newly-wed bride. He said, "Let's... go to the bedroom upstairs."

The suggestiveness in his words were very apparent.

When he stared hard at Nora, he saw the girl, whose cheeks were scarlet and her eyes misty, reply, "Okay."

To be honest, Justin hadn't expected her to agree.

He'd long discovered that the woman had always been relatively indifferent in her feelings. It hadn't been that long since the two of them confirmed their relationship, either.

The woman's chest was heaving up and down intensely at the moment, and her eyes contained a faint hint of womanly charm and shyness. When she agreed with her cheeks all red, he was instead stunned for a moment.

But right after, he regained his senses.

Seemingly afraid that the woman would go back on her word the very next second, he turned around at once and strode up the stairs.

Nora, whose head was buried into his chest, could see that his eyes were as deep and bottomless as the ocean. The way his eyes were staring at her so closely was as though he was looking at his prey, which made one feel daunted and timid.

But unfortunately, who did he think Nora was?

She had always been the hunter, not the hunted. When had she ever allowed herself to be in a disadvantageous position?

So, the next moment, she yawned. The two went up the stairs and entered the bedroom. With her in his arms, Justin rushed straight towards the bed. However, he had only just taken two steps when Nora said, "Let's take a bath first. Who's going in first, you or me?"

Justin's eyes instantly turned even darker. "... Let's go in together?"

"Get lost."

Nora sat upright and jumped out of his arms. "I'll take a bath first."

She took out an unused bath towel from the side and walked into the bathroom.

Mr. Hunt, who had stayed outside, was so anxious that he was going around in circles. He hurriedly made the bed; then he checked whether the big bed was sturdy enough and whether it would make any noise if people jumped on it.

After that, he swallowed again and smoothed his hair.

If Lawrence or Sean were to see him like this, they would probably marvel in amazement. Was that really their boss, who had never even frowned a little in the face of business transactions worth billions, or even dozens of billions?

Splash

The sound of water stopped. Justin stood up straight, his eyes fixed in the direction of the bathroom. The door opened, and Nora walked out.

The bathrobe was wrapped around her, and she was toweling her hair. Because of the hot bath, her cheeks had become even rosier and moist. Her almond-shaped eyes glanced at him shyly and she said, "It's your turn."

His Adam's apple shifted a little. "... Okay."

He picked up the bathrobe and rushed into the bathroom like an eager child.

He washed himself seriously and carefully during the bath, for fear that Nora would notice if he didn't clean any part of himself well. Even so, he took only two minutes in the bath and ran out again.

Then, he saw Nora already lying on the bed.

He slowed down, his breathing becoming heavier and heavier. He walked up to the bed where Nora was. As he thought of what was about to happen that night, he became rather excited.

But the next moment, his excitement died down.

Because! The mouth of the woman on the bed was slightly ajar, and her eyes were closed. This... Was she asleep?

Justin: "??"

How would he know that when they were downstairs just now, as they kissed and kissed, Nora had also been getting sleepier and sleepier?! This continued

until the man finally suggested going to the bedroom, and she breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Would she finally be able to go to sleep?

Therefore, with her eyelids droopy, she had replied sleepily, "Okay."

It wasn't the shy and bashful reaction that Justin had imagined on his own at all!

The corners of Justin's lips spasmed a little. He wanted to lift the quilt but realized that the woman had wrapped it tightly around herself, and was refusing to let him in.

Justin took another deep breath. In the end, he stood up in silence, went into the bathroom, took out the hairdryer, and quietly started drying her hair for her.

He hoped beyond everything that perhaps the noise would wake the woman?

Unfortunately, even until her hair was all dry, she didn't wake up.

On the contrary, seeing her unintentionally exposed shoulders while drying her hair, the fire in Justin's heart started to burn even more strongly.

In the end, Justin took another cold bath that night.

Nora did not wake up until noon the next day.

She stretched comfortably. But when she turned her head to the side, she was instead faced with the man's dark and gloomy face, which gave her a huge shock.

Justin asked quietly, "Did you sleep well?"

"... Yeah."

Nora yawned. Then, she got out of bed and went to wash up.

Justin could only sigh helplessly. As he got up, he heard movement outside the door. He went over and looked through the peephole to see the three children and Brenda standing outside.

Brenda was asking nosily, “Did your Mommy really sleep in there last night? That’s why your father is sleeping in for once?”

Cherry replied, “Uh-huh, uh-huh! It seemed like Mommy’s legs felt a little weak last night, so Daddy carried her upstairs!”

Pete said, “... It’s not that Mommy’s legs were weak.”

Cherry was puzzled. “Then was it because Mommy couldn’t walk anymore? So she was acting like a baby?”

Pete: “?”

At the side, Lucy covered her mouth and giggled.

Brenda’s eyes, however, were gleaming in an extremely gossipy manner. She said, “Cherry, you are so dumb! They are making younger brothers and sisters for you!” Cherry: “?”

Justin: “??”

What kind of nonsense was she saying? What was she teaching his daughter?

Justin opened the door angrily. His voice deepened and he reprimanded, “Brenda!”

Brenda got a huge fright. But when she looked over at him, she received an even bigger fright. She swallowed and asked, “How hard were you guys going at it last night, Justin? It gave you dark circles under your eyes?”.

Justin: “?”

Before he could speak, Brenda spoke again. “I understand, I understand it all. After all, this is the first time you guys were doing it after such a long time. It’s very normal that you wouldn’t be able to hold yourself back. But you guys still have a long future ahead of you, you know? You have to...”

The corners of Brenda’s lips curled into a smile as she spoke. With an alluring voice, she said, “... take it easy a little~ After all, Nora is frail and unable to take care of herself. You mustn’t be a beast to her, Justin.”

Justin retorted angrily, “What nonsense are you saying?”

“What do you mean ‘nonsense’~?” But after she spoke, something suddenly occurred to Brenda and she became terribly alarmed. “Surely not? The two of you, a lone man and a lone woman sharing the same room, you know? Could it be that you have some kind of undisclosed condition, Justin? If so, then you mustn’t keep it to yourself. Nora’s a doctor, hurry up and have her give you a checkup!”

Justin’s expression turned even darker. “No, I don’t!”

“That’s more like it!” Brenda breathed a sigh of relief and patted her chest. “Otherwise, you’ll be worse than a beast.”

“...”

Justin felt like he was about to get a heart attack from anger.

Who was she calling worse than a beast, goddammit?!

Bang!

Justin shut the door.

In the suburbs.

At noon, Iris stood in the greenhouse and took care of her orchids in boredom.

The door was suddenly pushed open and Herman strode in. When he saw her, he entered the greenhouse.

Iris frowned at the sight of him. “Get lost, you are not welcome here.”

Herman said, “Don’t get me wrong, I’m not here to rekindle old relationships with you. It’s just that... how were you taking care of our son at home? Your relationship with him is terrible. I was not by Justin’s side when he was a child, yet you didn’t stay with him?!”

Iris balled up her fists tightly. “You’re asking why my relationship with Justin is so terrible when you already know the answer to that question?! Isn’t it all because...”

“Because...”

Iris had hidden the secret about what happened all those years ago in her heart for twenty years and had never mentioned it to anyone. Everyone in this world could criticize her, scold her, and hate her.

In fact, it was okay even if Justin refused to acknowledge her as his mother. However, the man in front of her was the only person who was not worthy of speaking about her relationship with her son!

She stared at Herman, though, there wasn't any anger in her. She merely felt that the man couldn't get any more thick-skinned than he already was. She sneered and slowly said, "It's all because of the fantastic things you did back then!"

Herman frowned when he heard this. "What does it have to do with me? You were obviously the one who was unfaithful!"

"You—!"

Iris really found his words ridiculous to the extreme. She stared at Herman. A short while later, she sneered, "It's been twenty years. Your ability to reverse right and wrong and twist the truth has really improved!"

Herman wanted to speak again, but Lauren walked in through the door and interrupted their conversation. She said, "That's enough. Dear, Iris, don't argue anymore. I know you still hold a grudge against Herman, but it's already been twenty years now, so what's the point of doing that to yourself? Justin has already grown up. What Herman did for you back then is already good enough. He has already given up all of his inheritance to the family assets for the two of you... He practically left the family penniless."

Lauren sighed. "You don't know how difficult it has been for us to start from scratch when we were abroad all these years."

Iris: "?"

What a clever way of phrasing things. Those who didn't know better might really have thought that Herman was a good man!

Iris was not a woman of forbearance. She said eloquently, "How come I don't remember Herman leaving the Hunts penniless back then? Weren't the company shares from back then his father's? Just because his father had

chosen Justin over him as the heir to the family, it somehow ended up becoming him giving the assets to me and my son?"

A sharp look flashed across Lauren's eyes. "Sigh, you don't understand. It was Herman who took the initiative to withdraw from the fight because he felt that he had let the two of you down. Otherwise, why would the old sir have chosen a child, who was only five years old, over him?"

Iris was really rendered speechless by her shameless remark. She sneered and said, "So, am I supposed to be thanking the two of you then?"

A sullen Herman said, "You can skip the words of gratitude! What was that way of bringing up the boy, though? Just because I was forced into leaving and couldn't see Justin anymore, you really left him to fend for himself?! And ended up causing that boy to become so perverse and domineering?!"

Seeing that he was criticizing her again, Iris was so furious that she actually laughed. "I have never stopped you from visiting him, but have you ever taken the initiative to contact him all these years? Your son had probably already stopped existing in your eyes when he was lost back then!"

Herman frowned. "How can you say that, Iris? Isn't it obvious that I didn't contact him because I was afraid that you would feel uncomfortable about it? If I contacted him frequently whereas you, his mother, stayed here like a widow, then he would have hated and resented you even more!"

Iris gave a low laugh. Suddenly, she really couldn't be bothered to say anything to him anymore. He was simply so capable of twisting all her words.

For Iris, her son was what mattered to her the most.

All these years, because she hadn't been able to stay by his side, the child had lacked mother's love. She had been counting on Herman to stay in contact with him frequently. After all, a father played a very important role in a child's growth!

But he hadn't.

Herman rarely ever contacted Justin. In fact, he had only called Justin twice during the past twenty years.

She took a deep breath and pointed to the door. “This is my home. Please leave, otherwise, I’m going to call for someone to send you out.”

Justin had told her before that he’d stationed some bodyguards for her nearby.

Due to certain reasons, Iris had agreed to it. The bodyguards were standing right outside the door at the moment. However, they hadn’t come in to stop Herman.

To be honest, this made Iris a little uncomfortable.

The son must still resent her. That was why he hadn’t protected her despite the circumstances.

While she was thinking, Lauren continued adding fuel to the fire and said, “Well, no matter what happened in the past, now that Justin has grown up, you’ll have to interact with Justin in the business market, Herman. Iris, we came back to America this time partially to expand our business into the domestic market. It just so happens that we can deal more with the Hunts for some of our operations. They are father and son after all. They will eventually get in touch with each other once they work together, and will slowly make up for the regrets from the

past.”

After saying that, she looked at Iris. “Also, Justin’s kids are really just too adorable! You don’t know how funny Cherry is. She loves the princess dress I brought over to her this morning.”

Iris’s heart tightened.

Her granddaughter was having fun with Lauren?

But when the thought formed, she felt like she was being narrow-minded again.

That’s true, even though she and Herman were divorced, it did not mean that Justin had to sever all contact with him. The Hunts were Herman’s family, and the elderly Mrs. Hunt was his mother...

She had only just thought of that when Lauren spoke again. She said, “By the way, we don’t have a place to stay during our temporary return to America, so we will stay at the Hunt Manor for the time being. You won’t have any objections, right? Cherry is very welcoming of us, she even said that she likes me, her grandmother, very much...”

The two of them had stayed at the Hunts’ the previous night.

Iris’s heart felt even heavier. Then, she heard Lauren sigh and say, “Iris, we will be part of the same family in the future. I hope you can let go of all your grievances from the past so that we can all live in peace with one another. This way, Justin won’t feel awkward being caught in the middle either, right?”.

Iris clenched her fists. “We won’t interfere with each other’s lives as long as you people don’t come over and bother me!”

Lauren took Herman’s arm. “Why would we bother you?”

With a big smile, she said, “Herman, since there’s nothing else we need with Iris here, then let’s go back. We just need to inform Justin that he needn’t worry about Iris being unhappy about it! Let’s go back, Cherry is still waiting for me to play dolls with her!”

Herman nodded, and the two turned and left.

As she stared at them from the back, Iris felt as if there were needles pricking her heart.

Even though she couldn’t approach her son or her grandchildren before, she could still live with it somewhat. But why should Herman and Lauren be able to stay at the Hunt Manor? Why should they be able to play with her granddaughter every day?

Iris’ eyes reddened.

Mrs. Landis came over. She heaved a quiet sigh and said, “Ma’am, if you still keep the truth of what had happened back then to yourself, that scumbag and that cheap woman will take Mr. Hunt away from you! Look at how the bodyguards didn’t even stop them from going in and out of here. These must have been Mr. Hunt’s instructions!”

Iris felt even worse.

At this moment, Cherry's voice suddenly rang out from Mrs. Landis' cell phone...

Cherry should be live-streaming at this time.

Iris suddenly took the phone from her. She would see how Lauren was going to interact intimately with Cherry!

Cherry had switched on her webcam during her live-stream that day, so the live-stream was relatively more formal this time.

Every time she live-streamed, her Sponsor Grandpa would definitely be online. Sponsor Daddy occasionally came in to visit, but it was not as frequent as before.

It was probably because he could now see her in person every day.

Cherry wasn't bothered about these things, though.

However, a Sponsor Grandma had joined the live-stream recently.

Of course, she wasn't addressing that person as Grandma; rather, "Sponsor Grandma" was that person's username. Sponsor Grandma was currently ranked second in her virtual gift rankings.

The one in the first place was always Sponsor Grandpa. No one could surpass him.

The one in third place, Sponsor Daddy, no longer cared about the ranking these days, so his score had been slowly dropping. Cherry first greeted Sponsor Grandpa. Then, when she saw Sponsor Grandma enter the live-stream, the little fellow immediately called out sweetly, "Hi, Sponsor Grandma! How are you doing?"

Sponsor Grandma wrote in the comments: 'Not well.'

As the big boss ranked second in her virtual gift rankings, her comment was highlighted in the live-stream.

Cherry saw the comment right away. Puzzled, she asked, "Why? Did someone make you angry? Beat them up then!"

Iris looked at the live-stream. She wanted to say, "You're the one who made me angry, you little brat."

To think she was actually having fun with someone like Lauren...

If Lauren had gotten into a relationship with Herman after the two of them had divorced normally, then Iris actually would not have prevented Lauren and Cherry from having fun with each other.

After all, it was good for her to have another person who loved her.

But Lauren was not a good person at all. She was afraid that Lauren would lead Cherry astray.

Iris was terribly angry and frustrated. When she was about to send another comment, she suddenly caught a glimpse of a princess dress on the sofa behind Cherry.

Was that the gift that Lauren had spoken of? The one that she had delivered to Cherry early in the morning?

Iris suddenly felt very discouraged.

She put down the phone silently and stood up.

To be honest, when she agreed to that condition back then, she had already left the family. It was destined that she would no longer have much of a relationship with her son for the rest of her life.

In that case, why bother disturbing his life?

Iris lowered her head and turned off the live-stream.

She didn't want to ask Cherry about Lauren anymore-after all, she was the one who had pushed Cherry away with her own hands the night before.

Since she had already made her choice, then what right did she have to demand that Cherry be close to her?

Iris was caught in a dilemma and internal struggle. Mrs. Landis, who was looking at her from the side, was terribly anxious. However, she also knew that once Iris made up her mind, no one would be able to convince her otherwise.

She heaved a silent sigh and changed the subject. “Ma’am, the pot of Jade Orchids you wanted to buy will be delivered soon, right? Where should we put it?”

Sure enough, Iris finally perked up a little when she heard this. She stood up and walked one round in the greenhouse with Mrs. Landis. At last, she said, “That pot of Jade Orchids is very rare and very difficult to take care of. We must treat it with great care.”

“Okay.”

As the two chatted, they got busy in the greenhouse.

Seeing that she was finally no longer so listless anymore, Mrs. Landis breathed a sigh of relief.

An hour later, the two finally made room for the new pot of orchid. Only then did they sit down again.

Night had almost fallen. The sky had gradually darkened, and the surroundings were quiet. Apart from the chirping of birds, there was no other sound.

When one looked up, through the small courtyard, they could see the skies of New York that were hazy all year round.

Iris had lived like this for a whole twenty years.

Mrs. Landis had left to make dinner. As Iris sat in the greenhouse, her gaze fell onto Mrs. Landis’ cell phone again, hardly able to stand the itch in her heart.

Suddenly, she really wanted to hear Cherry’s voice.

She opened the live-stream again. At once, she heard Cherry’s clear and pleasant voice: “... Jungler, have you gone invisible? How come I never see you during team battles?”

Iris couldn’t help but smile at the way she spoke when she dissed other players, and she almost laughed out loud.

As expected, Cherry was still the same bundle of joy she knew her to be.

Beep.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang

Iris picked it up casually, the smile still on her face. She saw that someone had sent her a short video. She opened it casually, upon which Lauren's face immediately appeared. She was speaking to the camera with a smile on her face, "Iris, I am going to go and play with Cherry now. Cherry has always been a very polite and adorable child~"

Iris: "!!"

She stood up angrily. Lauren must have been afraid that she wouldn't believe that they had a better relationship with Justin's family, so she had deliberately sent that to provoke her, right?

Iris was jealous and envious, but even more helpless and sad.

She stared at the video. She could see that it was Cherry's room that Lauren was about to enter.

The next moment, in Cherry's live-stream, the sound of someone knocking on the door, as well as Lauren's gentle voice rang out: "Cherry? Grandma's coming in, okay_?"

Iris clenched her fists.

She looked at Mrs. Landis' cell phone and stared at Cherry's live-stream.

She wanted to close it so that she wouldn't see their interaction, yet at the same time, she wanted to open her eyes wide and take a good look at what exactly she had lost...

She felt as though a big invisible hand had closed around her heart tightly. Her chest felt stuffy and tight, and she felt awfully aggrieved.

Just as she was in a dilemma, she heard Cherry's young and tender voice become impatient: "Who said you could come in here?"

At the Hunts'.

Lauren entered the room with a smile on her face. She'd originally wanted to get along properly with Cherry-after all, she really did want to make Cherry happy.

Once she pleased Cherry, that would mean that she had also pleased Justin.

But she hadn't expected Cherry to always look so impatient whenever she saw her.

She didn't know that Cherry was live-streaming, so she smiled and said, "Grandma misses little Cherry, so I came over to visit you..."

After speaking, as if she was on very good terms with Cherry, she walked over to the sofa next to her and picked up the princess dress she had given Cherry earlier that day. She asked, "Don't you like the princess dress that Grandma bought you? Why didn't you put it on?"

Cherry blinked with her big eyes and answered bluntly, "Because I don't like it, of course!"

Lauren looked at her hesitantly. "Then what kind do you like? Pink ones? Purple ones?"

Or?"

Cherry tilted her head to the side, which made her look very naughty. Her grin made her look even more like a little devil. She replied, "It's you I don't like."

Lauren was taken aback.

Cherry said, "So, as long as it is from you, I won't like it. Don't waste your time trying to please me. Please go out! I don't have a grandmother like you!"

The little fellow's voice was crisp and clear, and she spoke loudly and sonorously.

Lauren flushed, but she didn't dare to bully Cherry, especially in this room. Thus, she said, "Cherry, it is not right of you to speak to your grandma like this. It's very impolite behavior..."

Cherry suddenly stood up and walked straight towards Lauren.

The camera in her live-stream was facing the side right from the start, so it had captured part of the scene.

As a result, everyone saw Cherry pick up the princess dress and then push Lauren out the door. The little fellow was very strong. After she pushed Lauren out of the room, she stood there and said, "Go away you... you... wh*re!"

Cherry had never ever called anyone names.

Even when she was dissing people in her live-streams, she had never called anyone names. Therefore, when she tried to think of a word for Lauren, she had to think for a very long time before she finally remembered one of the insults that Xander frequently used.

After calling Lauren a wh*re, Cherry slammed the door shut.

Cherry continued her live-stream after she returned.

But at this point, she noticed that a lot of reproachful remarks had suddenly appeared in the comments:

"Isn't the live-streamer's behavior too crass? What did that gentle old lady do to you? To think you're actually calling her names?"

"I've already found her an eyesore a long time ago. She's only five, yet she's so skilled at dissing people in games. To think you guys claim that she has never called anyone names. Ha, didn't she do just that just now?"

Some of her fans were also trying to correct her:

"sweetcherry, that's your grandma. You mustn't call your family such awful names."

"Yeah. It's very rude of you to just toss the dress that your grandma bought for you..."

A group of Internet keyboard warriors, who didn't even know anything about her family situation, started to leave comments in her live-stream.

A bad-ass Cherry replied, "You are not me, so what would you know? She is a bad person! My mom told me to stay away from her!"

The comments instantly became even fiercer.

However, Iris was no longer in the live-stream at this point.

She had closed the live-stream when Lauren knocked on the door. She didn't want to watch their heartwarming moments, which would only sadden her. She stared ahead of her blankly.

About half an hour later, Lauren sent her another text message: 'Sorry about that, Iris, I was playing with Cherry the whole time just now. I realized that the little girl is really very well-behaved. We had a lot of fun together. She also said that she likes me very much.'

Little by little, Iris' heart sank as she read the message.

Yeah, how would Cherry possibly not be lovable?

She had always been a good girl who was polite and sweet-talking. Every time she saw her, the things she said made her heart melt.

It seemed that no matter what, she just couldn't harden her heart towards the little fellow.

Everyone would probably like her, no matter who it was.

Iris didn't want to think about it anymore, so she straight-up blocked Lauren's phone number. Then, she stood up and went to dinner.

Mrs. Landis had made mushroom risotto that evening.

The two of them had a plate each. However, the usually fresh and delicious mushroom risotto didn't taste right to her that evening. She said, "Mrs. Landis, the mushroom risotto doesn't taste very nice today."

Mrs. Landis took a bite. "It tastes pretty good, Ma'am. You only think it tastes bad because you are in a bad mood. Every time you are in a bad mood, you don't feel like eating."

"... Really?"

Iris slowly put down her spoon. She sighed silently. Then, she got up and started walking upstairs. "I'm not eating anymore. I'll go to bed instead."

Mrs. Landis heaved a quiet sigh as she stared at her from the back.

Iris had originally thought that she would be fine after she went upstairs and had a good night's sleep. But after she lay down, she simply couldn't get to sleep.

The text messages that Lauren had sent to her kept appearing before her eyes, making her feel like there was something stuck in her chest, unable to get out.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang.

When Iris answered, Lauren's voice came from the other side again. "Iris, why did you block me? Is it because you don't want me to send you those messages? Well, that makes sense. I'm sure you don't want Cherry and I to be so close to each other, but the child wants a grandmother too!"

Her words made Iris so mad that she was shaking all over. Right at this moment, she suddenly heard a rush of footsteps. Then, Mrs. Landis opened the door and entered her room. She said, "Ma'am, Cherry is trending!"

Trending?

What was trending?

Iris pretty much subconsciously picked up her cell phone. Right away, she saw that sweetcherry was trending on social media because she had called her grandma names out of anger in her live-stream.

To be honest, it wasn't really trending that high in the rankings.

It barely entered the top fifty in the rankings and had only just made the list. Mrs. Landis had only found out because her attention was on Cherry.

Iris hurriedly opened the article linked in the post, where she saw a video clip from the live-stream footage. In the clip, Cherry had driven her grandma out of her room and called her a wh*re.

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Brenda's eyes, however, were gleaming in an extremely gossipy manner. She said, "Cherry, you are so dumb! They are making younger brothers and sisters for you!" Cherry: "?"

Justin: "??"

What kind of nonsense was she saying? What was she teaching his daughter?

Justin opened the door angrily. His voice deepened and he reprimanded, "Brenda!"

Brenda got a huge fright. But when she looked over at him, she received an even bigger fright. She swallowed and asked, "How hard were you guys going at it last night, Justin? It gave you dark circles under your eyes?".

Justin: "?"

Before he could speak, Brenda spoke again. "I understand, I understand it all. After all, this is the first time you guys were doing it after such a long time. It's very normal that you wouldn't be able to hold yourself back. But you guys still have a long future ahead of you, you know? You have to..."

The corners of Brenda's lips curled into a smile as she spoke. With an alluring voice, she said, "... take it easy a little~ After all, Nora is frail and unable to take care of herself. You mustn't be a beast to her, Justin."

Justin retorted angrily, "What nonsense are you saying?"

"What do you mean 'nonsense'~?" But after she spoke, something suddenly occurred to Brenda and she became terribly alarmed. "Surely not? The two of you, a lone man and a lone woman sharing the same room, you know? Could it be that you have some kind of undisclosed condition, Justin? If so, then you mustn't keep it to yourself. Nora's a doctor, hurry up and have her give you a checkup!"

Justin's expression turned even darker. "No, I don't!"

"That's more like it!" Brenda breathed a sigh of relief and patted her chest. "Otherwise, you'll be worse than a beast."

"..."

Justin felt like he was about to get a heart attack from anger.

Who was she calling worse than a beast, goddammit?!

Bang!

Justin shut the door.

In the suburbs.

At noon, Iris stood in the greenhouse and took care of her orchids in boredom.

The door was suddenly pushed open and Herman strode in. When he saw her, he entered the greenhouse.

Iris frowned at the sight of him. "Get lost, you are not welcome here."

Herman said, "Don't get me wrong, I'm not here to rekindle old relationships with you. It's just that... how were you taking care of our son at home? Your relationship with him is terrible. I was not by Justin's side when he was a child, yet you didn't stay with him?!"

Iris balled up her fists tightly. "You're asking why my relationship with Justin is so terrible when you already know the answer to that question?! Isn't it all because..."

"Because..."

Iris had hidden the secret about what happened all those years ago in her heart for twenty years and had never mentioned it to anyone. Everyone in this world could criticize her, scold her, and hate her.

In fact, it was okay even if Justin refused to acknowledge her as his mother. However, the man in front of her was the only person who was not worthy of speaking about her relationship with her son!

She stared at Herman, though, there wasn't any anger in her. She merely felt that the man couldn't get any more thick-skinned than he already was. She sneered and slowly said, "It's all because of the fantastic things you did back then!"

Herman frowned when he heard this. "What does it have to do with me? You were obviously the one who was unfaithful!"

“You—!”

Iris really found his words ridiculous to the extreme. She stared at Herman. A short while later, she sneered, “It’s been twenty years. Your ability to reverse right and wrong and twist the truth has really improved!”

Herman wanted to speak again, but Lauren walked in through the door and interrupted their conversation. She said, “That’s enough. Dear, Iris, don’t argue anymore. I know you still hold a grudge against Herman, but it’s already been twenty years now, so what’s the point of doing that to yourself? Justin has already grown up. What Herman did for you back then is already good enough. He has already given up all of his inheritance to the family assets for the two of you... He practically left the family penniless.”

Lauren sighed. “You don’t know how difficult it has been for us to start from scratch when we were abroad all these years.”

Iris: “?”

What a clever way of phrasing things. Those who didn’t know better might really have thought that Herman was a good man!

Iris was not a woman of forbearance. She said eloquently, “How come I don’t remember Herman leaving the Hunts penniless back then? Weren’t the company shares from back then his father’s? Just because his father had chosen Justin over him as the heir to the family, it somehow ended up becoming him giving the assets to me and my son?”

A sharp look flashed across Lauren’s eyes. “Sigh, you don’t understand. It was Herman who took the initiative to withdraw from the fight because he felt that he had let the two of you down. Otherwise, why would the old sir have chosen a child, who was only five years old, over him?”

Iris was really rendered speechless by her shameless remark. She sneered and said, “So, am I supposed to be thanking the two of you then?”

A sullen Herman said, “You can skip the words of gratitude! What was that way of bringing up the boy, though? Just because I was forced into leaving and couldn’t see Justin anymore, you really left him to fend for himself?! And ended up causing that boy to become so perverse and domineering?!”

Seeing that he was criticizing her again, Iris was so furious that she actually laughed. "I have never stopped you from visiting him, but have you ever taken the initiative to contact him all these years? Your son had probably already stopped existing in your eyes when he was lost back then!"

Herman frowned. "How can you say that, Iris? Isn't it obvious that I didn't contact him because I was afraid that you would feel uncomfortable about it? If I contacted him frequently whereas you, his mother, stayed here like a widow, then he would have hated and resented you even more!"

Iris gave a low laugh. Suddenly, she really couldn't be bothered to say anything to him anymore. He was simply so capable of twisting all her words.

For Iris, her son was what mattered to her the most.

All these years, because she hadn't been able to stay by his side, the child had lacked mother's love. She had been counting on Herman to stay in contact with him frequently. After all, a father played a very important role in a child's growth!

But he hadn't.

Herman rarely ever contacted Justin. In fact, he had only called Justin twice during the past twenty years.

She took a deep breath and pointed to the door. "This is my home. Please leave, otherwise, I'm going to call for someone to send you out."

Justin had told her before that he'd stationed some bodyguards for her nearby.

Due to certain reasons, Iris had agreed to it. The bodyguards were standing right outside the door at the moment. However, they hadn't come in to stop Herman.

To be honest, this made Iris a little uncomfortable.

The son must still resent her. That was why he hadn't protected her despite the circumstances.

While she was thinking, Lauren continued adding fuel to the fire and said, "Well, no matter what happened in the past, now that Justin has grown up,

you'll have to interact with Justin in the business market, Herman. Iris, we came back to America this time partially to expand our business into the domestic market. It just so happens that we can deal more with the Hunts for some of our operations. They are father and son after all. They will eventually get in touch with each other once they work together, and will slowly make up for the regrets from the past."

After saying that, she looked at Iris. "Also, Justin's kids are really just too adorable! You don't know how funny Cherry is. She loves the princess dress I brought over to her this morning."

Iris's heart tightened.

Her granddaughter was having fun with Lauren?

But when the thought formed, she felt like she was being narrow-minded again.

That's true, even though she and Herman were divorced, it did not mean that Justin had to sever all contact with him. The Hunts were Herman's family, and the elderly Mrs. Hunt was his mother...

She had only just thought of that when Lauren spoke again. She said, "By the way, we don't have a place to stay during our temporary return to America, so we will stay at the Hunt Manor for the time being. You won't have any objections, right? Cherry is very welcoming of us, she even said that she likes me, her grandmother, very much..."

The two of them had stayed at the Hunts' the previous night.

Iris's heart felt even heavier. Then, she heard Lauren sigh and say, "Iris, we will be part of the same family in the future. I hope you can let go of all your grievances from the past so that we can all live in peace with one another. This way, Justin won't feel awkward being caught in the middle either, right?"

Iris clenched her fists. "We won't interfere with each other's lives as long as you people don't come over and bother me!"

Lauren took Herman's arm. "Why would we bother you?"

With a big smile, she said, “Herman, since there’s nothing else we need with Iris here, then let’s go back. We just need to inform Justin that he needn’t worry about Iris being unhappy about it! Let’s go back, Cherry is still waiting for me to play dolls with her!”

Herman nodded, and the two turned and left.

As she stared at them from the back, Iris felt as if there were needles pricking her heart.

Even though she couldn’t approach her son or her grandchildren before, she could still live with it somewhat. But why should Herman and Lauren be able to stay at the Hunt Manor? Why should they be able to play with her granddaughter every day?

Iris’ eyes reddened.

Mrs. Landis came over. She heaved a quiet sigh and said, “Ma’am, if you still keep the truth of what had happened back then to yourself, that scumbag and that cheap woman will take Mr. Hunt away from you! Look at how the bodyguards didn’t even stop them from going in and out of here. These must have been Mr. Hunt’s instructions!”

Iris felt even worse.

At this moment, Cherry’s voice suddenly rang out from Mrs. Landis’ cell phone...

Cherry should be live-streaming at this time.

Iris suddenly took the phone from her. She would see how Lauren was going to interact intimately with Cherry!

Cherry had switched on her webcam during her live-stream that day, so the live-stream was relatively more formal this time.

Every time she live-streamed, her Sponsor Grandpa would definitely be online. Sponsor Daddy occasionally came in to visit, but it was not as frequent as before.

It was probably because he could now see her in person every day.

Cherry wasn’t bothered about these things, though.

However, a Sponsor Grandma had joined the live-stream recently.

Of course, she wasn't addressing that person as Grandma; rather, "Sponsor Grandma" was that person's username. Sponsor Grandma was currently ranked second in her virtual gift rankings.

The one in the first place was always Sponsor Grandpa. No one could surpass him.

The one in third place, Sponsor Daddy, no longer cared about the ranking these days, so his score had been slowly dropping. Cherry first greeted Sponsor Grandpa. Then, when she saw Sponsor Grandma enter the live-stream, the little fellow immediately called out sweetly, "Hi, Sponsor Grandma! How are you doing?"

Sponsor Grandma wrote in the comments: 'Not well.'

As the big boss ranked second in her virtual gift rankings, her comment was highlighted in the live-stream.

Cherry saw the comment right away. Puzzled, she asked, "Why? Did someone make you angry? Beat them up then!"

Iris looked at the live-stream. She wanted to say, "You're the one who made me angry, you little brat."

To think she was actually having fun with someone like Lauren...

If Lauren had gotten into a relationship with Herman after the two of them had divorced normally, then Iris actually would not have prevented Lauren and Cherry from having fun with each other.

After all, it was good for her to have another person who loved her.

But Lauren was not a good person at all. She was afraid that Lauren would lead Cherry astray.

Iris was terribly angry and frustrated. When she was about to send another comment, she suddenly caught a glimpse of a princess dress on the sofa behind Cherry.

Was that the gift that Lauren had spoken of? The one that she had delivered to Cherry early in the morning?

Iris suddenly felt very discouraged.

She put down the phone silently and stood up.

To be honest, when she agreed to that condition back then, she had already left the family. It was destined that she would no longer have much of a relationship with her son for the rest of her life.

In that case, why bother disturbing his life?

Iris lowered her head and turned off the live-stream.

She didn't want to ask Cherry about Lauren anymore-after all, she was the one who had pushed Cherry away with her own hands the night before.

Since she had already made her choice, then what right did she have to demand that Cherry be close to her?

Iris was caught in a dilemma and internal struggle. Mrs. Landis, who was looking at her from the side, was terribly anxious. However, she also knew that once Iris made up her mind, no one would be able to convince her otherwise.

She heaved a silent sigh and changed the subject. "Ma'am, the pot of Jade Orchids you wanted to buy will be delivered soon, right? Where should we put it?"

Sure enough, Iris finally perked up a little when she heard this. She stood up and walked one round in the greenhouse with Mrs. Landis. At last, she said, "That pot of Jade Orchids is very rare and very difficult to take care of. We must treat it with great care."

"Okay."

As the two chatted, they got busy in the greenhouse.

Seeing that she was finally no longer so listless anymore, Mrs. Landis breathed a sigh of relief.

An hour later, the two finally made room for the new pot of orchid. Only then did they sit down again.

Night had almost fallen. The sky had gradually darkened, and the surroundings were quiet. Apart from the chirping of birds, there was no other sound.

When one looked up, through the small courtyard, they could see the skies of New York that were hazy all year round.

Iris had lived like this for a whole twenty years.

Mrs. Landis had left to make dinner. As Iris sat in the greenhouse, her gaze fell onto Mrs. Landis' cell phone again, hardly able to stand the itch in her heart.

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She opened the live-stream again. At once, she heard Cherry's clear and pleasant voice: "... Jungler, have you gone invisible? How come I never see you during team battles?"

Iris couldn't help but smile at the way she spoke when she dissed other players, and she almost laughed out loud.

As expected, Cherry was still the same bundle of joy she knew her to be.

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Iris picked it up casually, the smile still on her face. She saw that someone had sent her a short video. She opened it casually, upon which Lauren's face immediately appeared. She was speaking to the camera with a smile on her face, "Iris, I am going to go and play with Cherry now. Cherry has always been a very polite and adorable child~"

Iris: "!!"

She stood up angrily. Lauren must have been afraid that she wouldn't believe that they had a better relationship with Justin's family, so she had deliberately sent that to provoke her, right?

Iris was jealous and envious, but even more helpless and sad.

She stared at the video. She could see that it was Cherry's room that Lauren was about to enter.

The next moment, in Cherry's live-stream, the sound of someone knocking on the door, as well as Lauren's gentle voice rang out: "Cherry? Grandma's coming in, okay_?"

Iris clenched her fists.

She looked at Mrs. Landis' cell phone and stared at Cherry's live-stream.

She wanted to close it so that she wouldn't see their interaction, yet at the same time, she wanted to open her eyes wide and take a good look at what exactly she had lost...

She felt as though a big invisible hand had closed around her heart tightly. Her chest felt stuffy and tight, and she felt awfully aggrieved.

Just as she was in a dilemma, she heard Cherry's young and tender voice become impatient: "Who said you could come in here?"

At the Hunts'.

Lauren entered the room with a smile on her face. She'd originally wanted to get along properly with Cherry-after all, she really did want to make Cherry happy.

Once she pleased Cherry, that would mean that she had also pleased Justin.

But she hadn't expected Cherry to always look so impatient whenever she saw her.

She didn't know that Cherry was live-streaming, so she smiled and said, "Grandma misses little Cherry, so I came over to visit you..."

After speaking, as if she was on very good terms with Cherry, she walked over to the sofa next to her and picked up the princess dress she had given Cherry earlier that day. She asked, "Don't you like the princess dress that Grandma bought you? Why didn't you put it on?"

Cherry blinked with her big eyes and answered bluntly, "Because I don't like it, of course!"

Lauren looked at her hesitantly. “Then what kind do you like? Pink ones? Purple ones?

Or?”

Cherry tilted her head to the side, which made her look very naughty. Her grin made her look even more like a little devil. She replied, “It’s you I don’t like.”

Lauren was taken aback.

Cherry said, “So, as long as it is from you, I won’t like it. Don’t waste your time trying to please me. Please go out! I don’t have a grandmother like you!”

The little fellow’s voice was crisp and clear, and she spoke loudly and sonorously.

Lauren flushed, but she didn’t dare to bully Cherry, especially in this room. Thus, she said, “Cherry, it is not right of you to speak to your grandma like this. It’s very impolite behavior...”

Cherry suddenly stood up and walked straight towards Lauren.

The camera in her live-stream was facing the side right from the start, so it had captured part of the scene.

As a result, everyone saw Cherry pick up the princess dress and then push Lauren out the door. The little fellow was very strong. After she pushed Lauren out of the room, she stood there and said, “Go away you... you... wh*re!”

Cherry had never ever called anyone names.

Even when she was dissing people in her live-streams, she had never called anyone names. Therefore, when she tried to think of a word for Lauren, she had to think for a very long time before she finally remembered one of the insults that Xander frequently used.

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She stared at the video. She could see that it was Cherry's room that Lauren was about to enter.

The next moment, in Cherry's live-stream, the sound of someone knocking on the door, as well as Lauren's gentle voice rang out: "Cherry? Grandma's coming in, okay_?"

Iris clenched her fists.

She looked at Mrs. Landis' cell phone and stared at Cherry's live-stream.

She wanted to close it so that she wouldn't see their interaction, yet at the same time, she wanted to open her eyes wide and take a good look at what exactly she had lost...

She felt as though a big invisible hand had closed around her heart tightly. Her chest felt stuffy and tight, and she felt awfully aggrieved.

Just as she was in a dilemma, she heard Cherry's young and tender voice become impatient: "Who said you could come in here?"

At the Hunts'.

Lauren entered the room with a smile on her face. She'd originally wanted to get along properly with Cherry-after all, she really did want to make Cherry happy.

Once she pleased Cherry, that would mean that she had also pleased Justin.

But she hadn't expected Cherry to always look so impatient whenever she saw her.

She didn't know that Cherry was live-streaming, so she smiled and said, "Grandma misses little Cherry, so I came over to visit you..."

After speaking, as if she was on very good terms with Cherry, she walked over to the sofa next to her and picked up the princess dress she had given Cherry earlier that day. She asked, "Don't you like the princess dress that Grandma bought you? Why didn't you put it on?"

Cherry blinked with her big eyes and answered bluntly, "Because I don't like it, of course!"

Lauren looked at her hesitantly. "Then what kind do you like? Pink ones? Purple ones?"

Or?"

Cherry tilted her head to the side, which made her look very naughty. Her grin made her look even more like a little devil. She replied, "It's you I don't like."

Lauren was taken aback.

Cherry said, "So, as long as it is from you, I won't like it. Don't waste your time trying to please me. Please go out! I don't have a grandmother like you!"

The little fellow's voice was crisp and clear, and she spoke loudly and sonorously.

Lauren flushed, but she didn't dare to bully Cherry, especially in this room. Thus, she said, "Cherry, it is not right of you to speak to your grandma like this. It's very impolite behavior..."

Cherry suddenly stood up and walked straight towards Lauren.

The camera in her live-stream was facing the side right from the start, so it had captured part of the scene.

As a result, everyone saw Cherry pick up the princess dress and then push Lauren out the door. The little fellow was very strong. After she pushed Lauren out of the room, she stood there and said, "Go away you... you... wh*re!"

Cherry had never ever called anyone names.

Even when she was dissing people in her live-streams, she had never called anyone names. Therefore, when she tried to think of a word for Lauren, she had to think for a very long time before she finally remembered one of the insults that Xander frequently used.

After calling Lauren a wh*re, Cherry slammed the door shut.

Cherry continued her live-stream after she returned.

But at this point, she noticed that a lot of reproachful remarks had suddenly appeared in the comments:

"Isn't the live-streamer's behavior too crass? What did that gentle old lady do to you? To think you're actually calling her names?"

"I've already found her an eyesore a long time ago. She's only five, yet she's so skilled at dissing people in games. To think you guys claim that she has never called anyone names. Ha, didn't she do just that just now?"

Some of her fans were also trying to correct her:

"sweetcherry, that's your grandma. You mustn't call your family such awful names."

"Yeah. It's very rude of you to just toss the dress that your grandma bought for you..."

A group of Internet keyboard warriors, who didn't even know anything about her family situation, started to leave comments in her live-stream.

A bad-ass Cherry replied, "You are not me, so what would you know? She is a bad person! My mom told me to stay away from her!"

The comments instantly became even fiercer.

However, Iris was no longer in the live-stream at this point.

She had closed the live-stream when Lauren knocked on the door. She didn't want to watch their heartwarming moments, which would only sadden her. She stared ahead of her blankly.

About half an hour later, Lauren sent her another text message: 'Sorry about that, Iris, I was playing with Cherry the whole time just now. I realized that the little girl is really very well-behaved. We had a lot of fun together. She also said that she likes me very much.'

Little by little, Iris' heart sank as she read the message.

Yeah, how would Cherry possibly not be lovable?

She had always been a good girl who was polite and sweet-talking. Every time she saw her, the things she said made her heart melt.

It seemed that no matter what, she just couldn't harden her heart towards the little fellow.

Everyone would probably like her, no matter who it was.

Iris didn't want to think about it anymore, so she straight-up blocked Lauren's phone number. Then, she stood up and went to dinner.

Mrs. Landis had made mushroom risotto that evening.

The two of them had a plate each. However, the usually fresh and delicious mushroom risotto didn't taste right to her that evening. She said, "Mrs. Landis, the mushroom risotto doesn't taste very nice today."

Mrs. Landis took a bite. "It tastes pretty good, Ma'am. You only think it tastes bad because you are in a bad mood. Every time you are in a bad mood, you don't feel like eating."

“... Really?”

Iris slowly put down her spoon. She sighed silently. Then, she got up and started walking upstairs. “I’m not eating anymore. I’ll go to bed instead.”

Mrs. Landis heaved a quiet sigh as she stared at her from the back.

Iris had originally thought that she would be fine after she went upstairs and had a good night’s sleep. But after she lay down, she simply couldn’t get to sleep.

The text messages that Lauren had sent to her kept appearing before her eyes, making her feel like there was something stuck in her chest, unable to get out.

At this moment, her cell phone suddenly rang.

When Iris answered, Lauren’s voice came from the other side again. “Iris, why did you block me? Is it because you don’t want me to send you those messages? Well, that makes sense. I’m sure you don’t want Cherry and I to be so close to each other, but the child wants a grandmother too!”

Her words made Iris so mad that she was shaking all over. Right at this moment, she suddenly heard a rush of footsteps. Then, Mrs. Landis opened the door and entered her room. She said, “Ma’am, Cherry is trending!”

Trending?

What was trending?

Iris pretty much subconsciously picked up her cell phone. Right away, she saw that sweetcherry was trending on social media because she had called her grandma names out of anger in her live-stream.

To be honest, it wasn’t really trending that high in the rankings.

It barely entered the top fifty in the rankings and had only just made the list. Mrs. Landis had only found out because her attention was on Cherry.

Iris hurriedly opened the article linked in the post, where she saw a video clip from the live-stream footage. In the clip, Cherry had driven her grandma out of her room and called her a wh*re.

Chapter 650 - The Plan of Saving Nora Novel Free

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Chapter 651 - The Plan of Saving Nora Novel Free

Iris stared at the video clip in shock.

Although she knew that it was certainly not right of Cherry to call people names, for some inexplicable reason, she felt really good.

While she was looking at Mrs. Landis' cell phone, Lauren was still talking to her over the phone. "Iris, Cherry is really adorable. Are you sure you don't want to come over and spend some time with her? She really likes her grandmother. When she kept calling me Grandma, I felt really sad for you..."

As she listened to the woman, Iris' lip corners suddenly curled into a smile. She turned on the cell phone's speaker mode, and then she held the other cell phone with the video clip close to her own phone's microphone. The sound of a girl scolding someone in anger rang out from it at once: "Go away, you... you... wh*re!"

Lauren's voice came to an abrupt stop.

She was terribly stunned. She first glanced at her cell phone in confusion, and then looked at the villa at the side in surprise.

If she wasn't already sure that Cherry hadn't left the house, she'd have thought that she was with Iris!

But if she wasn't, then why would her voice come from Iris' call?

While she was still in a daze, Iris chuckled lightly and said, "By the way, I forgot to tell you that Cherry loves playing games and also likes holding live-streams. Everything that happened between the two of you in the room has all been captured in her live-stream. So, how on earth are you so confident that my granddaughter would like you? You wh*re?" Lauren: "!!"

She gnashed her teeth in fury!

When Cherry called her names, she had only cursed and ranted inwardly, and felt that the girl was awfully ill-mannered. However, she hadn't really bothered getting angry with a child.

When she came out of the room, she couldn't help but still feel irritated, so she had called Iris to provoke her.

But who would have known that everything that had happened just now had been captured in the live-stream?!

This was no different from her personally putting her face in front of Iris and letting her slap it!

This was simply so... torturous!

Lauren took a deep breath at once. She countered and replied, "Even so, I am finally living with the Hunts, whereas you have been driven out!"

Iris scoffed. "The Hunts? I've already stopped caring about them all those years ago. I don't even want Herman anymore, so what would I still want the Hunts for? Things are no longer the same as before. Back then, Herman was the one in charge of the family, but the person-in-charge is now Justin! If you want to stay there, go ahead. Justin has always been bad-tempered ever since he was a child, though, so you'll have to be more tolerant with him. Sigh, it's simply not as comfortable as it is at my place, where I can grow my flowers, bask in the sun, and do whatever I want... Tsk, Mrs. Landis, don't forget to sanitize our house later, in case the wh*re who came over today had dirtied it."

Iris had originally planned to talk to Nora about the child calling people names, but in this instant, she herself had been subconsciously led astray by Cherry.

Iris, who had always followed the rules and kept her nose clean her whole life, suddenly understood at this moment just how great it felt to call someone a wh*re.

Well, it wasn't like Cherry called people names that often either, so she would just let the matter pass.

With that in mind, Iris spoke into her cell phone again. "Is there anything else, Mrs. Wh*re?"

"... Iris Evans! Do you think that you're better than me just because of this? So what even if the Hunts belong to your son? You're on bad terms with him anyway! I will show you that I am much better than you are now! You..."

"Oh, so there's nothing else, right? If so, then I'm hanging up. No one likes to listen to barking dogs."

Iris cut Lauren off and then hung up in a good mood.

This simply felt too good!

Mrs. Landis looked at her lady and shook her head. Ma'am was simply so childish, crying at one moment and then laughing the next...

No, wait, she didn't come up here to talk about that. She said anxiously, "Ma'am, don't just smile. Cherry is still being attacked on the Internet. Aren't you going to do anything about it?"

"What am I supposed to do about it?" Iris glared at Mrs. Landis. The glare from the woman, who was still charming despite her age, only made her look bewitching and alluring

The colors of the nearly fifty years old woman's eyes were still well-defined, and her gaze was also clean and clear. God had really given her a good appearance.

After Iris chided her coquettishly, she stood up right away. "If anything happens to Cherry, Justin won't just stand by and do nothing. By the way, Mrs. Landis, is there still any mushroom risotto left? I'm hungry."

After saying that, Iris started walking downstairs.

Mrs. Landis: "..."

Mrs. Landis still wanted to speak. She held up her cell phone to show it to her. She said, "Mr. Hunt probably still hasn't realized, right? Look, the post is going up the rankings again... Huh? Why is the post gone?"

Mrs. Landis stood still in a daze.

Iris, who was walking in the front, waved. "You just happened to see the post in time, and fortunately also showed it to me in time. If you were a step late, I wouldn't have been able to see it at all! Don't I know just how efficient Justin is?"

Mrs. Landis silently gave her a thumbs-up in her heart.

As expected, no one knew a son better than his mother!

At the Hunts'.

Lauren stamped her foot angrily after Iris hung up on her.

“Iris and Cherry sure are real pieces of work!”

Hearing her furious voice, Herman lowered his eyes. “I told you not to provoke them, yet you simply insisted on doing so. See, you’ve been outgunned, haven’t you?”

Lauren took a deep breath. “I did it all for your sake, and for our family...”

When she said this, her eyes widened. Then, she walked up to Herman and took his arm. “Speaking of which, though, why can’t Iris come back to the Hunt Manor? Back then, when your family chose her and Justin over you and made you leave, the Hunts shouldn’t have been so powerful that they could forbid her from entering the Hunt Manor, right?”

Herman glared at her. Lauren continued to shake his arm. “Come on, tell me why...”

Herman pushed her away. “I can’t tell you.”

“Why not?” Lauren persisted and said, “What kind of secret do you have with her that even I can’t know about? Dear, we are husband and wife, you know!”

“There are some things that even husband and wife can’t talk about!” Herman was firm. He pushed her hand away. “Alright, let’s go over to my mother’s earlier and have dinner with her!”

Lauren looked at him from the back, a sharp look flashing across her eyes.

Ha.

Did he really think that she wouldn’t know the truth if he didn’t tell her about it?

The only reason why she had asked him was just so she could see if Herman was still hiding anything from her even after spending twenty years together.

Unexpectedly, she still hadn’t completely entered the man’s heart.

Lauren took a deep breath, feeling the need to vent her pent-up emotions. When the two were about to walk over to Mrs. Hunt’s villa, the security guards suddenly stopped them. They said, “Sir, the two of you must move out today... You are not allowed to enter this place either.”

Herman and Lauren were stunned.

Lauren frowned. "Do you know who you are talking to?"

The security guard replied stiffly, "I do."

"Yet you still have the audacity to say that? You've got a lot of gall! Who gave you the courage to say something like that?"

As soon as Lauren spoke, she heard a low voice: "I did."

Lauren and Herman were both stunned. They turned around abruptly to see Justin striding over. He had a cold and sullen look on his face, and his deep-set eyes were as filled with aggressiveness as an eagle's.

Herman frowned. "Justin! How dare you dishonor your parents just because you've become the successor to the Hunts!"

Justin strode up to the pair. With a fierce and piercing look in his eyes, he pointed at the exit and said firmly and loudly, "This is the Hunt Manor, and you are someone whom Grandpa has kicked out. I am just following Grandpa's will. How would I possibly dare to be unfilial with my parents?"

"You

Since Herman was using his seniority to pressure him, then he would bring out Grandpa Hunt. This shut Herman up at once.

Justin stared at the man in front of him and narrowed his eyes dangerously.

He had left the two of them here to provoke Iris on purpose.

That was why he'd instructed the bodyguards not to stop them when they went to visit Iris earlier in the day. Firstly, he wanted to hear their conversation and see if he could sound them out about the truth behind what had happened back then.

Secondly, he wanted to push Iris into a corner and give her a sense of crisis.

But in the end, he found that even though Herman obviously knew the truth, he refused to make any mention about what had happened. Iris also refused to say a single word about it.

It seemed that this method of his was useless.

Moreover, it had even brought his precious daughter trouble. Although he had deleted all the negative comments on the Internet, there would be some trouble for him to deal with in the aftermath.

In that case, why let the two of them stay any further?

Therefore, he couldn't even be bothered to act anymore.

Justin said straightforwardly, "If you don't leave by yourself with dignity, then I can only make you leave in an undignified manner."

As soon as he said that, a few bodyguards swarmed up from behind him.

Herman and Lauren frowned, and both of them took a step back. Herman pointed at him and cursed, "You're so cold-blooded! I'm your father, you know! How dare you treat me like this! ... Don't touch me, we will leave by ourselves!"

Justin couldn't be bothered to waste his breath on them. The bodyguard next to him also took a step forward, so Herman and Lauren couldn't say any more, either. The two of them could only leave.

"Herman and Lauren have moved out of the Hunt Manor?"

When Iris received the news the moment she woke up the next day, she became even happier. She was sitting in the greenhouse with a pair of scissors in her hand and trimming her plants.

After she was done, she smiled and put down the scissors. Then, she suddenly sighed.

A puzzled Mrs. Landis asked, "Ma'am, what's the matter?"

Iris replied, "Justin has grown up."

Mrs. Landis was taken aback. "Why do you say that?"

Iris glanced at her, her pale and slender fingers gently touching the orchid next to her. She asked, "Why didn't he drive Herman and Lauren away when they first arrived at the Hunts'? Why didn't anyone stop them when they came

here? Yet he drove them away after they went back and the incident with Cherry's live-stream broke out?"

Mrs. Landis shook her head. "Why is that?"

"Because... he was trying to push me into a corner. He wanted to force me to make a stand." Iris's words confused Mrs. Landis. She scratched her head and asked, "And then?"

"Then, I saw what happened in Cherry's live-stream and realized the truth. He understood at once that these things wouldn't be able to trigger any feelings in me anymore. In that case, wouldn't having them around no longer be of any use?"

Although Mrs. Landis didn't really understand, she still said happily, "Mr. Hunt has taken your side!"

"Of course."

Iris said proudly, "That's my son we're talking about, after all!"

Then, she stared at the pot of flowers beside her that wasn't blooming very well and heaved a quiet sigh. "Say, if I approach my daughter-in-law with this pot of flowers and ask her for advice, would she hate me?"

Mrs. Landis: "..."

"Forget it." Iris seemed to have given up somewhat. She said, "Some things are meant to be yours, and some things aren't. I'm already so old; how long can I live? In that case, I'd better not make any more trouble for the children! These orchids will accompany me for the rest of my life instead!"

Mrs. Landis glared at her. "Your remaining time in this world is pretty expensive, then. Who knows how many houses you can buy with just these plants!"

Iris smiled and replied, "These are nothing. The best is still that pot of Jade Orchid. It should have arrived in New York by now, right? Why hasn't it been delivered yet?"

Almost as soon as she said that, her cell phone rang suddenly.

Iris was a little taken aback. When she answered the phone, a voice came from the other side: “Mdm. Iris, I’m really sorry!”

Iris was surprised. “Matthew, what’s wrong?”

Old Matthew, like Iris, was also an expert in cultivating orchids. Not only did he like orchids, but he was also rich. That was why he could cultivate so many orchids. The Jade Orchid in question was Matthew’s.

Iris had pestered him for very long before he finally relented and agreed to sell it to her at a high price.

Matthew heaved a huge sigh. “Originally, I’d already found a professional to deliver that pot of flowers to you in New York, but I must sell it to a lady named Lauren Hunt now!”

Lauren Hunt?

Lauren again?

Iris frowned. “That’s not how you do business, Matthew. I was the one who bought it first, you...”

“Let me finish.” Matthew said, “It’s not that I don’t want to sell it to you, but rather, something has gone wrong with my pot of Ghost Orchids. Lauren is an expert gardener, and she said that she can nurse it back to health for me. Mdm. Iris, you are also someone who loves flowers, so you should know what that pot of Ghost Orchids means to me, right? Lauren said that she will treat the orchids with alternative medicine...”

Iris said huffily, “She’s just imitating Orchidance!”

Matthew nodded. “Yes, I know, but I don’t care. I just want my Ghost Orchids to be cured. Do you know this pot of orchids has been with me for three years? It bloomed during the year that my wife passed away... Not only is this pot of flowers expensive, but it is also of special significance to me. Mdm. Iris, unless you can find me Master Orchidance, I really can’t sell that pot of flowers to you anymore... I must let you down this time!!”

Iris: “!”

How was she supposed to find Orchidance at such short notice?

Next to her, Mrs. Landis was in a panic. “Ma’am, why don’t we consult Ms. Smith about this? She can also cure orchid diseases!”

Iris paused for a moment when she heard Mrs. Landis. Then, she said to Matthew, “Give me a day. Tell me about the Ghost Orchids’ symptoms, or take a photo and send it over. I... I’ll find someone to take a look at it for you!”

Matthew was surprised. “Do you really have a solution?”

Iris sighed. “I recently met a young friend who is very skilled at treating orchids, I will go and ask her for advice. You can give the orchids to Lauren after if my friend can’t cure them!”

Matthew knew about the dispute between Iris and Lauren. Hearing this, he kept quiet for only a second before he said, “Okay! Mdm. Iris, we have been taking care of orchids for so long, so I trust you and am willing to give you a chance. If it weren’t for the Ghost Orchids, I wouldn’t have broken our agreement. But if you still can’t solve the issue by tomorrow, then you can’t hold that against me anymore.”

Iris nodded. “I understand.”

People who truly loved orchids regarded the flowers as their life. Matthew was one of the best gardeners in the industry, and the Ghost Orchids were his very life itself, so she could understand why he did what he did.

After hanging up the phone, Matthew told her the orchids’ symptoms. He was very detailed in the description-after all, he had become very experienced after cultivating flowers for so long. He included details about what he had done to the flowers in the past, the soil he planted the flowers in, and so on.

Iris stared at the description for a while before she raised her head and looked at Mrs. Landis. “That pot of Ghost Orchids has indeed encountered quite a difficult issue. I’m afraid that even Orchidance would find that pot of flowers rather difficult to save. In that case, let’s take a gamble!”

Mrs. Landis was a little taken aback. “What gamble?”

Iris took a deep breath. “A gamble on my destiny. If Nora can save this pot of flowers, then that pot of Jade Orchids will be mine. What’s meant to be mine will definitely be mine.”

Mrs. Landis didn't understand what she was hinting at. She nodded and said, "Of course!"

She didn't know that Iris had made a decision at this instant.

If Nora could save that pot of orchids, then she would have pretty much made a miracle.

If so, then she would tell them the truth about what had happened back then.

She didn't want to give the younger generation trouble, but her blood ties with her son were right there. There was one thing that Lauren had been right about—Cherry liked her grandmother.

She could cruelly push Justin away when she was young, but now that she had gotten on in her years, she was no longer as bold and resolute as she had been when she was young.

She also craved the heartwarming and gentle moments of being with Cherry and the others.

With that in mind, Iris took out her cell phone and sent a text message to Nora. First, she sent Nora the symptoms of Matthew's orchids, and then she sent another sentence: 'Can you take a look and see if you can save this pot of flowers for me?'

Nora was currently at the Andersons' and looking for something in her mother's room.

Despite the unexpected incident at Iris', and Herman's return, Nora had not forgotten what she was the most anxious about right now.

Her mother had left her information about the V16's whereabouts, yet she wasn't capable enough to find it. When she thought of how Xander was still sick, she was filled with impatience and irritability.

Mrs. Anderson was standing at the door. As she watched her turn the study upside down, she asked, "Nora, what are you looking for?"

Nora asked, "Grandma, did my mom leave anything important behind?"

Mrs. Anderson nodded. "Yes, of course!"

Nora suddenly looked up. "What did she leave behind? Show me!"

As soon as she said that, Mrs. Anderson smiled gently and kindly at her, all the wrinkles on her face squeezing together. She said, "She left you! You are the best gift she left the world."

Nora: "..."

The corners of her lips spasmed and she sighed silently. "Okay, Grandma, I'll look for it myself!"

She was about to take out the dust-covered things under the bed and flip through them when her cell phone suddenly beeped.

She picked it up and saw the messages Iris had sent to her:

'Can you take a look and see if you can save this pot of flowers for me?'

'If you can, I will tell you a story.'

Tell her a story?

Was Iris finally going to reveal her troubles? A touch of joy flashed across Nora's eyes and she immediately replied: "I'll come to you right away."

When Nora came to the villa, Iris was sitting in the greenhouse with a tea bar in front of her. She was sipping on a cup of tea, but her eyes were fixed on the greenhouse.

At the sound of footsteps, she turned and looked over. When she saw Nora, she gestured to the seat opposite her and asked absentmindedly, "Can you save them?"

"I can try." Nora had never been one to make absolute promises.

After all, Ghost Orchids were awfully delicate. A little carelessness could easily lead to problems.

Iris took a sip of tea and sighed silently. She looked at Nora. "Do you really want to hear that story?"

Nora nodded.

Iris fell silent for a while. Then, she asked, “Even if it really brings you guys a lot of trouble?”

Nora nodded again.

Even so, Iris was still worried. She pressed on and asked, “Have you asked Justin about it? Is this also what he wants?”

Before Nora could speak, Justin’s voice came from the door: “Yes, it is.”

Seeing that he was also here, Iris was stunned.

She stared at her son.

Justin had already grown to a height of a little over 6’2”, and was a full head taller than her. Her small and thin son from twenty years ago had already grown into a man with an indomitable spirit.

Iris clenched her fists.

She suddenly asked, “Don’t you hate me? No matter what my reasons are, I have ultimately been absent in your life for so many years.”

Justin’s jaw was strained, and the beauty mark at the corner of his eye was shimmering in the light. After a short silence, he answered, “I did when I was a kid, but not anymore.”

Iris was taken aback.

Justin turned his head to the side and looked away. Apart from being able to say some mushy things to Nora, he was actually a little uncomfortable saying such things to others.

The man stood up straight. As though he was talking about work matters, he said to Iris, “When I was a child, everyone had a mother except me. When I got into arguments with Roger, his mother would stand in front of him unreasonably and push me, but I didn’t have anyone like that. Not only did I not have a mother, but even my father was gone. At that time, I did indeed hate you for being so cruel.

“But now, it doesn’t matter anymore, because all of that has passed. I know you have your own difficulties and reasons for doing so.”

Justin's voice was actually very calm and dispassionate. There wasn't any emotion in it at all.

It was as if he was just narrating something that had happened in the past.

But his words painted a very lucid picture in both Iris and Nora's minds.

The little Justin had been bullied. His father had been kicked out of the family. His mother was clearly still in New York, yet she did not come home. He obviously had a father and a mother, yet he became an orphan in the Hunts.

Perhaps the little boy had cried in private. Perhaps on many nights, he had run to this very villa and looked up at the person inside, hoping that Iris would open the door and give him a hug.

But she hadn't.

Just like that, he had grown into an adult...

Nora took Justin's hand and held it quietly.

Iris felt as if her heart was being wrung tightly. However, she was already accustomed to the pain-because every night he came over, she knew he was there.

What he didn't know was that she had also been looking at him from upstairs. It was just that she couldn't go down.

The most intimate relationship in the world was the one between a mother and her child.

Children's love for their mothers was purer than their mothers' love for their children.

Because in the world of children, their mother was the only thing that mattered.

But in their mothers' world, there would always be things to weigh and evaluate, as well as worries and reservations.

Iris's eyes reddened. She lowered her head and said, "Justin, I will give you another chance. You now have children and a wife. If I tell you those reasons,

your days in the future may not be peaceful anymore. But if I don't... there are only so many days I have left in my life. Isn't it good the way we are now?"

That was how Iris had always seen the situation.

Wasn't it good for them to stay the way they currently were, where mother and son didn't meet, and each kept to themselves peacefully?

When Justin heard her mention that he now had a wife and children, he looked at Nora.

Nora held his hand tightly, the look in her eyes firm and determined.

Justin could sense her encouragement towards him. He nodded to Iris and said, "We have made our decision."

Iris' jaw tensed up.

After a while, she finally sighed and said, "Alright, in that case, then let's take a gamble. If Nora really can save that pot of Ghost Orchids, then I will tell you two the truth!"

Orchidiance's way of curing orchids was actually very miraculous. Additionally, because they were giving medical treatment to orchids, the dosage was even harder to control.

Not every alternative medicine practitioner could do that.

Even Orchidiance would probably find it rather difficult, let alone Nora.

It would be nothing short of a miracle if Nora could cure the Ghost Orchids.

Iris didn't want to lead such a dull life either. She didn't want to pretend to be all calm and unaffected here. She could harden her heart towards Justin because he had already grown up, but she also wanted to have fun with Cherry.

Thinking of this, she looked at Nora with light in her eyes.

This was the mentality of a gambler.

When Justin saw her reaction, he knew that Iris had already relented somewhat. To be honest, if he gave her another push at this point, she would tell him the truth.

But he didn't want to use such schemes against his mother.

Thus, he looked at Nora.

Nora felt great pressure from both of them looking over. The corners of her lips spasmed and she looked at Iris. She said, "Iris, you can start thinking about how to word the story."

She took out a piece of paper and handed it to Iris. "This is the prescription."

On the way here, Nora had already looked at the photos and the description of the symptoms that Iris had forwarded to her and silently computed the formula.

The prescription contained very low drug dosages, so they shouldn't pose any danger to the flowers.

Nora had always been very confident in her knowledge of her specializations. After all, when she was in California, no one would come to her for medical consultations. In order to improve her medical skills, she had instead treated the flora and fauna at home!

That was why she was so knowledgeable about orchids.

Of course, this was really difficult to achieve.

Because flowers were undoubtedly different from humans. If it weren't because Nora had experimented with flowers and plants for so long, she probably would not have mastered such fine control of drug dosages. Iris was a little dumbfounded when she saw the piece of paper she was offering to her.

She immediately took a photo of the prescription and sent it to Matthew.

It was only after she sent it that she raised her head and said, "Nora, you wrote that prescription so quickly."

She had settled on a prescription without even speaking with Matthew.

Nora slowly replied, "I have treated that disease in other flowers before, so I kinda understand it."

Iris: "..."

As the corners of her lips spasmed, she received a call from Matthew. He said, "Mdm. Iris, this prescription that you sent me...?"

Iris glanced at Nora and said, "My daughter-in-law came up with it. You can give it a go! I can at least guarantee that nothing will go wrong with it."

Matthew sighed. "It's not that I don't trust you, it's just that... you gave it to me a little too late!"

Iris was taken aback. "What?"

Matthew said, "Lauren has just borrowed that pot of Ghost Orchids from me, saying that while she cures them for me, she would also like to hold an orchid exhibition so that the people who like orchids in New York could admire them."

What Matthew didn't say was that Lauren hadn't just approached him, but also people from various wealthy and aristocratic families in New York. After all, precious and expensive flowers like orchids weren't things that ordinary people could afford.

Lauren had assembled a group of people with the euphemistic excuse of letting everyone visit an exhibition featuring famous flower species. This way, everyone could learn something new and widen their horizons. Therefore, people shouldn't hide and keep all the good things to themselves...

The meaning between the lines was that Iris was too petty.

Matthew didn't want to sow discord between them, so he had left that part out.

Iris frowned. "She has cured your Ghost Orchids?"

"Pretty much." Matthew sighed. "Actually, when I called you, I'd already used the prescription she gave me. I didn't expect the Ghost Orchids to really become much more alive just half an hour later."

Iris sighed silently.

She hadn't expected things to develop this way! What an unfortunate turn of events!

She said quietly, "Congratulations."

"What is there to congratulate me about?" Matthew smiled wryly and said, "She will be holding an exhibition tomorrow. Even if it's just for the sake of my flowers, I'll have to attend. Not only do I have to contribute my flowers, but I also have to contribute my presence. That woman is just so... Mdm. Iris, orchid lovers like us are usually people at peace with the world. We just take care of the orchids for our own joy, but look at her, isn't what she's doing no different from forcing me to..."

Iris didn't like talking about people behind their backs, let alone when it was about Lauren. Thus, she said, "It's for the best that the flowers are cured."

"Yeah."

Matthew then said, "Your daughter-in-law is very talented, though! Her prescription is only one herb off from Lauren's! Using alternative medicine to cure orchids is Orchidance's specialty. Many alternative medicine practitioners also wanted to give it a try. As a result, so many orchids have died from their attempts over the past few years. Lauren is the only one who has finally mastered the technique after studying it for a long time..."

At this point, Matthew sighed heavily. Unable to stop himself anymore, he said, "Mdm. Iris, you have to be careful. Lauren is bent on beating you in orchids this time. I heard that after she caught wind of the fact that you like orchids, she has been imitating Orchidance's methods in treating orchids for the last five years. Who knows how many orchids she has destroyed before she finally became as experienced as she is today..."

Matthew, who sounded like he found the orchids somewhat a pity, added, "Who knows how many precious orchid varieties she has destroyed just to vent her frustrations, sigh!"

Matthew looked down on Lauren's actions very much.

They were taking care of orchids because they truly loved orchids, but Lauren was just using the orchids as a springboard to edge out Iris.

It was just a pity that no matter how much one was into their hobby, they would still have to bow down in the face of reality.

Iris didn't pay any attention to those things. However, she still found it somewhat a pity.

She had already lost the gamble before it even started.

She looked at Nora and said quietly, "Alright, I'm hanging up!"

Unfortunately, the next moment, Nora grabbed the phone.

Nora stared at the phone and asked, "Which other herb did she add to the prescription?"

Matthew seemed surprised by her voice. In the end, he named a herb.

The corners of Nora's lips curled into a smile. After Iris hung up the phone, she said, "Let's go to the orchid exhibition tomorrow."

As soon as Nora said that, Mrs. Landis, who was next to her, said, "But we don't have an invitation!"

Nora and Iris looked at each other. The two spoke at the same time, "We will have one very soon."

Mrs. Landis: "?"

A puzzled Mrs. Landis looked at Justin. "Are you going to ask Mr. Hunt to ask for two tickets?"

"No, it's fine."

As soon as Iris said that, someone knocked at the door. Then, the mailman appeared and said, "Mdm. Iris, mail for you."

Iris and Nora looked at each other again.

A look of realization flashed across Nora's eyes, and she said to Mrs. Landis, "See, isn't that the invitation?"

Mrs. Landis: "?"

Mrs. Landis took the mail from the mailman. When she opened it, she found that it was indeed an invitation for the orchid exhibition. She was astounded. “Ms. Smith, Ma’am, aren’t the two of you too amazing?”

Iris scoffed. “By holding the orchid exhibition right after she returned to New York, she’s clearly coming right at me. Since she wants to slap me in the face, how could she possibly not invite me?”

Mrs. Landis couldn’t help but smack her own forehead. “Look at me, because I’ve been living here all this time and haven’t come into contact with people much, I’ve even forgotten about such basic household infighting!”

Both Nora and Iris were amused by Mrs. Landis’s use of the words “household infighting”:

Iris patted her and asked, “Where did you learn all these words from?”

Mrs. Landis replied with a smile, “Oh, you know how I watch all those TV dramas when I have nothing to do! I learned it from them!”

Iris suddenly gave her a fierce look and said, “Mrs. Landis, how dare you slack off while I wasn’t paying attention! You sneaky treacherous woman! I’m going to deduct your

pay!”

Mrs. Landis pretended to be scared. “Ma’am, other people work only nine to six, whereas I wait on you twenty-four hours a day! Aren’t you even going to allow me to watch a bit of TV for entertainment?”.

Iris smiled. “Your salary is for twenty-four hours of work each day! You should already be thankful that I’m letting you sleep!”

Mrs. Landis protested, “You capitalist!”

“In that case, I’ll pay you for sixteen hours instead?”

“... Ma’am, if you exploit your staff any further, I might secretly add poison into your favorite food.”

The two of them bickered and started to joke with each other.

There was finally a smile on Iris's face that was calm and serene all year round.

Mrs. Landis looked at her, very glad and relieved.

The two of them were just joking around, of course. Iris had given Mrs. Landis much more than her salary all these years. Both of Mrs. Landis' children were already married, and they both had their own properties in New York and were living lives of luxury. This was all thanks to Iris.

After twenty years of her company, Mrs. Landis was more like family to Iris now.

Justin stood at the side and watched them bicker and joke with each other.

To be honest, for so many years, his mother's appearance had long become vague and blurry in his mind-because every time he came over, all he would see was Iris's frosty face.

The woman's lively appearance faintly reminded him of how she had hugged, kissed him, and teased him when he was a child.

At that time, she had also laughed and talked happily like what she was currently doing.

Originally, because he hadn't had much contact with Iris for more than two decades, Justin had felt some estrangement towards his mother. However, that sense of estrangement had lessened considerably at this instant.

It was as though the mother in his memories, who loved to talk, laugh, play, and joke around, had returned. For him, the word "mother" was no longer just an identity but had once again become vivid and animated.

The feeling made the corners of his lips curl upward imperceptibly. He cast his eyes down and hid the complex emotions in his eyes. Mrs. Landis was a huge mischief-maker. She had also wanted Iris and Justin to reconcile for very long. Seeing that the atmosphere today was great, she said, "Mr. Hunt, you really loved the ravioli I made when you were a child. Why don't you stay for dinner tonight?"

Justin subconsciously looked at Nora.

When she saw him looking over, Nora nodded and said, "Alright."

Mrs. Landis became excited at once. She rolled up her sleeves and walked into the kitchen as she said, "Since you guys are staying for dinner tonight, I will have to show off my culinary skills! Ma'am eats too little, so she doesn't give me a chance to show off my skills at all."

After Mrs. Landis entered the kitchen, the atmosphere among the trio standing outside immediately became a little awkward.

Iris looked at Nora and then at Justin. At last, she said, "I'll go and give Mrs. Landis a hand. Given her age, she'll be too slow!"

After speaking, she also went into the kitchen.

Nora and Justin were the only ones left outside. The two of them looked around the greenhouse. Justin pointed at the orchids and said, "I heard that people who raise orchids have high moral character. Now it seems like that's not always the case."

He was referring to Lauren.

Nora, however, laughed and said, "I don't know about others, but I know why my god-sister likes taking care of orchids."

Nora deliberately emphasized the words "god-sister".

Justin: "??!"

He raised his eyebrows, knowing that Nora was being cheeky and asking to be taught a lesson again.

As soon as the thought formed, he looked at Nora's lips, wishing he could take a few nips to vent his "anger".

As for Nora, she said, "Do you want to know why? If you do, then call me God-aunt Nora. I'll tell you if you do."

Tsk.

She was starting to take advantage of him now.

Justin stroked his chin and suddenly leaned forward. He lowered his voice and asked, “Ms. Smith, are you sure you want to be my god-aunt?”

Nora: “?”

She decided not to tease him anymore, lest it backfired on herself. She coughed and said, “Iris... I mean, Aunt Iris and I already knew each other before she even knew who I was. She told me at that time that she was raising all these flowers because her son had given her a pot of orchids once.”

Justin was stunned.

He looked at the orchids, his jaw tensing up.

He remembered now. When he was ten years old, he had indeed given her a pot of orchids on her birthday. The woman had accepted his gift. At the same time, she had also told him that she had only accepted the gift because she liked orchids.

Since then, the floodgates opened and she started to buy a lot of orchids.

Justin had always thought that it was because she liked orchids. But as it turned out, it was just an excuse for her to accept her son’s gift.

He turned to look at Iris in the kitchen.

Mrs. Landis had prepared some ingredients, and she was picking and choosing from among them. However, everything that she picked out just so happened to be his favorite...

Justin lowered his head.

In truth, his mother had never really left him all these years, and he’d always had his mother’s love with him by his side, right?

In this instant, he suddenly reconciled with his mother—or rather, with the part of himself that had been uncomfortable because his mother hadn’t taken care of him.

He also suddenly became open-minded and let go of some things in this instant.

He let out a silent sigh. Right at this moment, his cell phone rang.

When he answered, Herman's voice came from the other side.

"Justin, didn't you want to know why your mother has been avoiding you? I will tell you now."

Upon hearing his voice, Justin narrowed his eyes. He wanted to say he didn't need it—he wanted to hear it from Iris instead—but he suddenly paused.

Iris would never tell him about her grievances. He would only be able to hear about her grievances from others.

For example, Iris would probably never tell him why she liked orchids because she had never been a woman who knew how to express her feelings.

Justin thought about it and said, "Okay, speak."

In a villa in the outskirts of New York.

Herman and Lauren sat on the sofa.

Lauren was looking at Herman, who said, "You probably only know that I cheated on your mother with Lauren back then, so all this time, you must have thought that all the problems with our marriage lie with me, right?"

Herman's words gave voice to the mentality that most women held—that every man who cheated was a scumbag.

Justin lowered his eyes, but he sneered, "You are wrong."

Herman was taken aback.

Justin said, "You are not a good husband, and at the same time, you are not a good father either."

Many people thought that once a man cheated, he would no longer be a good father.

But that wasn't necessarily true.

Some men might cheat on their wives a lot, but they wouldn't hold back on their love for their children. Perhaps the cheating itself might affect the children, but even so, they would still try to make up for it later.

Besides, some married couples were indeed not suitable to stay together. Even if they had children, those who needed to divorce would still divorce each other. However, the divorce did not affect their love for their children.

But this wasn't true in Herman's case.

Not only had he cheated and hurt Iris, but he had also left Justin to fend for himself afterward. It was as if he'd never had a son like him.

He hadn't just let Iris down, but also Justin.

Herman was stunned for a while. Then, he tried to explain himself. "Justin, it's not that I didn't care about you, or that I did not love you..."

"At your age, you shouldn't keep going on and on about things like love and romance."

Justin dissed him mercilessly again.

Herman: "..."

Justin said concisely, "Just tell me the reason."

Herman spent a while organizing his thoughts. Finally, he sighed and said, "Justin, I know I've neglected you, but you have to understand. I did all that because your mother cheated on me first! I am a man, how could I let someone cuckold me? That's why I went to Lauren! Don't be fooled by how Iris looks as if she's at peace with the world! She is not as indifferent to fame and fortune as she makes herself out to be!"

Iris had cheated on Herman?

Stunned, Justin suddenly looked at the woman in the kitchen.

Herman took a deep breath. "She had found another man outside. I couldn't condone her behavior, so I filed for a divorce. When your grandpa wanted to keep you in the family, I couldn't just let her sit back and enjoy the rewards of her success, and even hog my family's business on top of that. Besides, all she could think of was that man, so I made a request—that she would leave you alone. You were still young at that time, and I was afraid that she would usurp your power and become the real master of the Hunts. Justin, I schemed and did all this for your own good!"

Justin frowned.

Herman's argument might sound seamless and completely logical at first hearing but in truth?

If what he said was true, why did Iris spend all these years in agony in the suburban villa instead of going to her adulterous lover and keeping him company? He sneered, "Do you think I will believe that?"

Herman also panicked. "I have evidence!"

Justin asked, "What evidence?"

He was already biased towards Iris at the moment and was highly disapproving of Herman's statement. If that was really the reason, then Iris's decision to ignore him would really be too absurd.

While he was feeling uncomfortable about the whole thing, Herman said, "Those orchids! Those orchids are the evidence! She didn't like orchids at all in the past. You should remember that there were barely any orchids at home when you were young, but look at how she started to take care of so many orchids after she moved to the suburbs! It's exactly because her lover loves orchids! Ha, because I trapped her in New York, she couldn't meet her lover anymore, so she could only pour all her yearning and pining into the orchids instead!"

Justin: !!

What smooth logic!

If Nora hadn't told him just now why Iris was keeping so many orchids, he'd probably really have become suspicious.

But now...

Justin scoffed. "Is that so?"

Herman said, "Yes, everything I said is true. Justin, Dad has actually been very worried about you and has done a lot for you, so don't be so distant towards me. I know I have never shown you any fatherly love, but I can give that to you in the future..."

"I don't need it."

Justin straight-up rejected him. "Is there anything else?"

Herman said, "I want to visit your grandmother tomorrow, she's my mother after all. Tell the people at home to let me in!"

Justin scoffed. "Nice try. You can forget about ever entering the Hunt Manor for the rest of your life."

He wanted to hang up after saying that, but Herman shouted, "Justin, Justin! You can't do that to me! I did all that for you! You refuse to let me in, yet you allow Iris to enter! Tell me, did Iris bewitch you? Has she been badmouthing me all these years? No matter what, I am still your father... toot... toot... toot..."

Justin hung up on him.

Herman had called him just to sow discord between him and his mother, so as to make his way into the Hunts little by little.

In the villa.

Herman stared at his mobile phone with a frown after Justin hung up on him. He couldn't help but curse, "That brat! Why is he so stubborn?!"

Lauren looked at him: "Is the reason you said just now true?"

Herman scoffed and said, "Half of it is, I suppose."

Lauren rolled her eyes at once. "Aren't you afraid that Iris will tell him the truth? It will become even more difficult for you to repair your relationship with him then!"

Herman said confidently, "She won't."

Lauren was taken aback.

A self-mocking Herman said, "Because if she does, it would bring great trouble to her son. That's why she will never say it."

It was only after Iris and Mrs. Landis made a total of six dishes that the three of them finally sat down.

Iris wanted Mrs. Landis to eat with them, but the latter took her food and went into the kitchen instead of eating at the same table with them.

After the three of them sat down, Justin stared at Iris. Suddenly, her cell phone rang.

She was taken aback for a moment, seemingly never expecting anyone to call her.

But when she looked down at the phone, it turned out to be an unfamiliar number...

Iris's hand started shaking and she rejected the call immediately.

However, the other party persisted and kept calling

Iris became obviously nervous. She stared hard at the phone, as though the caller hailed from the depths of hell itself.

Iris was very nervous. Despite her trying to make herself appear calm and collected, her tightly-clenched fingers, as well as her dilated pupils, had exposed her emotions. Justin's gaze landed on the unfamiliar number and he said, "Your phone is ringing."

"Huh? Oh, it's probably just a sales call."

Iris said as she rejected the call again. Then, as if she was afraid that they would call again, she switched off her cell phone. She even tried to gloss over the topic and said with a smile, "They are so annoying. There are simply so many such sales calls these days. It wasn't easy for us to have a meal together."

Seeing her like this, Justin merely nodded.

Nora and Justin exchanged a look, neither of them exposing her lie.

Afterwards, even though Iris tried her best to pretend she was very excited and happy about the meal, the two of them could still tell that she was a little distracted.

After all, Nora and Justin were more insightful than most ordinary people and had astounding observation skills.

After the meal, the two bade goodbye to Iris.

Before leaving, Nora looked at Iris again and asked tentatively, "See you at the orchid exhibition tomorrow?"

Iris seemed a little hesitant. It must have been because of those phone calls.

However, she only stayed quiet for a second before she raised her head. "Yeah."

Her voice was firm.

This showed that she would not be changing her mind again.

She was really taking a gamble. If Nora managed to cure the pot of Ghost Orchids, then she would tell them the truth. If she failed, then she would take the truth with her to the grave, and never cause the children any trouble.

Seeing her like this, Nora and Justin looked at each other again and left.

Nora and Justin were in the same car. Justin was driving. After they turned the corner ahead, he stopped the car.

By then, Nora had already set her cell phone number as an unknown caller. Then, she keyed in the string of numbers that had been displayed on Iris's cell phone just now.

She had a photographic memory, so she had memorized the phone number with just a single glance.

Nora then handed her cell phone to Justin.

Justin dialed the number without hesitation.

The other party quickly picked up. A man's voice came through the phone: "Hello?"

A prompt and decisive Justin asked, "Who are you?"

The other party was silent for a while. Then, he let out a low chuckle and hung up without saying anything else.

Justin: !!

Inexplicably, what Herman had said about Iris cheating on him flashed past his mind.

He frowned.

Nora also frowned. "He kept the call time within fifteen seconds, I can't trace his location."

Justin took a deep breath. "Don't bother anymore."

Nora looked at him.

Justin said, "I won't ask anymore. I'll wait for her to tell me everything herself."

He didn't want to investigate anymore.

He had suddenly realized something because there were always people trying to sabotage his investigations, it would inevitably lead to unnecessary misunderstandings.

Nora knew what he was thinking. She gave him a thumbs-up right away and said, "Yup, that's the way. You're family, so you shouldn't harbor suspicions about each other. Besides, from what I saw just now, Iris... I mean, your mother didn't change her mind just because of that call."

Justin nodded.

Iris wasn't a weakling or a pushover.

She had taught Justin to be strong and aggressive since he was a child. This was also why Justin hadn't believed Herman's nonsense.

How could Iris possibly be someone who easily accepted fate?

If she really had a lover, then she would definitely have tried to think of ways to spend the rest of her life with him instead of wasting her youth away here.

The next day.

Nora drove to the suburban villa early in the morning.

Iris had dressed up for the occasion and was wearing an elegant and beautiful white fitted dress. She got into the car after she left the house.

The woman didn't look at all like she was nearly fifty years old. After dressing up, she was dazzling and graceful. Her figure was curvy, and coupled with her fair skin, it was only when one looked closely that one would see any wrinkles on her face. With the way she looked as she stood there, some people might believe it if one said that she was only twenty years old. Nora raised her eyebrows and formed a heart with her hands at Iris.

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Iris got into the car, and the two headed straight to the orchid exhibition.

Lauren's orchid exhibition was held at a hotel in central New York. The orchids she borrowed from various families had all been placed on shelves.

At a glance, there were all kinds of orchids that one could ever think of.

In the most eye-catching position was Matthew's Ghost Orchid.

The Ghost Orchids were very rare, so they had occupied the central position of the orchid exhibition.

After Nora and Iris got out of the car and entered the hall with the invitation, they immediately noticed the pot of Ghost Orchids.

When Iris saw the orchids, she exclaimed, "Lauren has really cured that pot of Ghost Orchids. They look so full of vigor."

Only then did Nora reveal something: "There is a problem with her prescription."

Iris, who was a little taken aback, looked at Nora.

Nora whispered, "Her prescription has one more ingredient than mine. That herb is too powerful. It can quickly allow orchids to look energetic and filled with vigor, but over time, even bigger problems will appear. It's just like how humans suddenly become very energetic before they pass away. Going by how much time has passed since the medicine was given to the Ghost Orchids yesterday, the Ghost Orchids will wither after another half an hour. In

the first place, there are a lot of restrictions when it comes to using drugs on plants. Those who are not proficient in it really shouldn't do it."

Iris was dumbfounded. She couldn't help but say, "Orchidance has also said that before, and told everyone not to imitate them. Aren't you also imitating Orchidance, though?"

Nora raised her eyebrows. Suddenly, her lips curled into a smile and she replied, "Who says I'm imitating Orchidance?"

Iris: "???"

Then, as though she had realized something, she looked at Nora in astonishment.

Could it be... that Nora was none other than Orchidance?!

Just as she was about to speak, Lauren entered the hall and said with a smile, "Iris, you're here! Did you bring any orchids with you today?"

Iris immediately reined in the complicated look she was giving Nora. She looked at Lauren and replied, "No."

"You didn't?"

Lauren was shocked. "It is written on my invitation that everyone who comes to the orchid exhibition should bring a pot of flowers, so that everyone can appreciate and admire each other's flowers."

After she spoke, Lauren sighed silently and said, "Iris, surely it's not because you can't bear to show us your flowers, right? I have heard that you have gathered a lot of rare orchids in your private collection over the years! I am holding this orchid exhibition precisely because I hope that orchid lovers can gather and share their joy with each other. In fact, an orchid exhibition like this should have been held long ago. What's the point of hiding and keeping all the good things to ourselves? Everyone here is an orchid lover, it's not like they'll spoil the flowers, right? Iris, you are being overly cautious."

Although she said that she was being too cautious, she was instead implying that Iris was too stingy and petty, just so she could highlight how generous and capable she, Lauren, was instead.

A group of people from wealthy families gradually gathered around them. Everyone looked at Iris.

Iris, however, scoffed.

Was she trying to compete with her in terms of eloquence?

She wasn't someone who would take sh*t from others!

Lauren had organized the orchid exhibition to suppress Iris' arrogance.

Back then, even though she had succeeded in changing her status from a homewrecker to the man's lawful wife, to be honest, she knew that there weren't many in the circle of wealthy ladies who approved of her. Everyone approved of Iris instead.

In that case, Lauren would outdo Iris in the latter's forte! This way, she could also show off in front of everyone else!

She said, "Iris, why are you keeping quiet? Are you upset? Well, that's true. There's no one in New York who doesn't know that you love orchids the most. By right, you should have been the one organizing the orchid exhibition instead, but because you didn't take any action, I found someone to do it instead... What a shame. I heard that you also have a pot of Ghost Orchids, so I even wanted to let everyone admire them!"

As soon as she said that, Iris looked at the people around her. She smiled and said, "The things you say are so ridiculous. Must I hold an orchid exhibition just because I like orchids? In that case, since Mrs. Lange likes diamonds, must she also hold a diamond exhibition? Since Mr. Sullivan likes antique paintings, should he open a museum then? These are just personal hobbies. On the other hand, why haven't I heard anything about you liking orchids before?"

Her few simple words had immediately suppressed Lauren.

How would the wealthy and the noble possibly take out whatever they liked and show them off to everyone? If they did that, then they wouldn't be showing off their wealth instead!

Lauren had made a mistake at a fundamental level, making her seem petty and cheap, and also making all the ladies look down on her. They had only attended the exhibition because of Matthew's Ghost Orchids.

After all, Matthew's Ghost Orchids really were a rare sight.

Iris's words had suppressed Lauren's momentum, causing everyone around them to laugh. They echoed Iris and said, "She's right, we are not frivolous people."

Showing off one's wealth for no reason would only arouse aversion and disgust from other people.

Moreover, even though Lauren wasn't an orchid lover, she had held an orchid exhibition. Iris had pointed out her objective.

Lauren clenched her fists in anger. She'd finally invited so many ladies to the exhibition today after much difficulty. Originally, she'd wanted to improve her position among the ladies, but little did she expect Iris to be so sharp-tongued!

Lauren lowered her head and smiled. "I certainly don't have any love for orchids, but don't forget that I am an alternative medicine practitioner. It's only because Matthew asked me to cure his flowers that I decided to hold the orchid exhibition. I found his Ghost Orchids such a rare sight and wanted everyone to see it! This way, everyone can also share their experience on growing orchids with one another along the way."

Her few simple words immediately made the rich ladies around them not dare to laugh at her anymore.

Everyone at the exhibition was a true flower lover. Was there anyone among them whose flowers would never have any problems? Should something go wrong, it would be great to have someone like Lauren help.

She could even cure Matthew's Ghost Orchids. Lauren was simply too skilled at curing orchids.

Someone immediately said, "Mrs. Hunt, you are so capable. You have even cured such a delicate flower that's so difficult to treat! It's amazing! By the way, my flowers have also met with a small problem. I wonder if I can ask you for some advice?"

Lauren smiled gently and replied, "Sure. In the first place, this orchid exhibition isn't meant for showing off; rather, it's to facilitate communication!"

With a few simple sentences, she had saved the scene again.

Some of the others walked over to Iris and said, "Mdm. Iris, come to think of it, that woman is actually quite capable. Her methods of curing the flowers' illnesses are very similar to Orchidance's. Everyone's privately speculating that Lauren may be Orchidance! Sometimes, for the sake of the orchids, we should bow down to others!"

"Yeah, she actually cured Matthew's Ghost Orchids. She's really very impressive."

Matthew's Ghost Orchids had been withering day by day for about half a month. He had been to many orchid masters to cure it, but it had barely seen any effect.

News of it had already spread in New York.

Through his Ghost Orchids, Lauren had made a name for herself.

At the mention of Orchidance, Iris subconsciously glanced at Nora. Then, she scoffed and said, "She's no Orchidance. Compared with Orchidance, she is far inferior!"

The contempt in her words made the ladies look at one another. In the end, none of them dared to say anything. They could only smile awkwardly.

Lauren also heard her. At once, she narrowed her eyes and said, "Mdm. Iris, now that's rather meaningless. Matthew had certainly wanted to approach Orchidance, but the problem is that Orchidance is so mysterious. No one knows who she is, let alone where to find her. I heard that she's not even in the country, so it's impossible for anyone to find her. I admit that my treatment methods are indeed imitating Orchidance's, but am I wrong to diagnose and cure Matthew's Ghost Orchids for him?"

The place was silent.

No one there dared to offend Iris-after all, she was Justin's mother. Although they weren't on good terms with each other, it was said that Justin would still specially visit the suburban villa every month.

Besides, no matter how bad their relationship was, Justin would never sit by and watch other people bully his mother.

Therefore, no one defended Lauren. However, Lauren could cure orchids' illnesses. Everyone there was an orchid lover, so none of them dared to offend Lauren either.

For a while, no one said anything.

Iris' lip corners, however, curled into a smile. Although she hadn't asked Nora just now if she was really Orchidance, it had given her confidence.

She looked at Lauren and said, "What's the big deal about being able to cure orchids? My daughter-in-law can also do it!"

She looked at Nora with a proud look on her face.

When Lauren heard this, she looked at Nora.

A moment later...

"Pft."

She let out a soft laugh.

After she laughed, Lauren said, "Sorry, I really couldn't help it. Mdm. Iris, what you said is really funny. I know Ms. Smith is the great Dr. Zabe's disciple, and I also know that she is Anti the famous surgeon, but neither of those titles is related to orchids. Mdm. Iris, surely you don't think that every alternative medicine practitioner can cure orchids, right? Flowers are different from humans!"

Iris also smiled when she heard her. "Of course I know that. It's just that my daughter-in-law happens to have studied orchids a little before. In fact, she is..."

Before she could say "Orchidance", Lauren interrupted her. "Is that so? Then why don't you come over and have a look at Matthew's Ghost Orchids, Ms. Smith? You should know that pot of Ghost Orchid's prior condition, right? Can you cure it?"

Nora glanced at it and said calmly, "Yes."

As soon as Lauren wanted to reply, Iris took out a piece of paper. “This is the prescription that my daughter-in-law wrote for that pot of Ghost Orchids. You can take a look at it!”

“Does Ms. Smith really know how to cure orchids?”

“If you think about it, there’s a chance that she does. Ms. Smith is the best alternative medicine practitioner after all!”

Once Lauren lost the advantage of being able to cure orchids’ illnesses, the people around them immediately dared to speak up for Iris.

When Lauren heard them, she immediately took the prescription from Iris. After she glanced at it, she said, “Iris, Matthew must have told you about this prescription, right? This is exactly the same as mine! It’s just a pity that even if you’ve made a copy, you left out one ingredient!”

“She didn’t leave it out.” Nora said unhurriedly, “It’s because the prescription doesn’t need that ingredient. Orchids are delicate flowers. The ingredient you added will hurt it.”

“It’ll hurt it? No way.” Lauren said confidently, “That ingredient is supposed to revive a plant’s shine and glow, so how could it possibly be harmful? What’s more, that pot of Ghost Orchids is being displayed so vividly and vibrantly in front of everyone right now. Everyone can see for themselves the flowers’ current condition. In just a day, it has regained its vitality. Ms. Smith, you are being too dogmatic!”

Nora looked at the pot of flowers. “Affliction of diseases makes one collapse like a mountain, and the treatment of diseased areas is akin to trying to extract strands of silk from one another. The usage of such strong medication will only keep the orchid alive for a while but make it wilt even faster. As an alternative medicine practitioner, surely you don’t need me to teach you something like that, right?”

Lauren: “?”

Her understatement-like way of talking made Lauren angry. She said, “Ms. Smith, I know that you are Justin’s wife. There’s nothing wrong with protecting and defending your mother-in-law, but even so, you can’t just speak so carelessly like that. This ingredient is certainly a little strong, but I’ve already tested it on other orchids before. There won’t be any problems in the future!”

Facts speak louder than words. I know that you are an alternative medicine practitioner, but alternative medicine requires many years of practice to accumulate experience. From what I see, you don't give medical consultations very often, so you're probably not very experienced when it comes to the practical aspect, right? Besides, humans are different from flowers. I have treated a lot of flowers and gone through a lot before I gained experience. What about you?"

When Nora heard this, she said calmly, "Then let's make a bet."

"What do you want to bet on?" Lauren asked.

Nora looked at the pot of Ghost Orchids and answered, "That problems will definitely occur with this pot of flowers within an hour."

Lauren scoffed. "Ms. Smith, stop joking. How can that be? I've already cured that pot of flowers! How can anything go wrong with it when it's so filled with vitality? But since you've said so, then okay, I accept the bet, Ms. Smith. If nothing goes wrong with the flowers, then I hope Mr. Hunt can allow Herman and I to return to the Hunt Manor and stay there."

Nora's lips curled into a smile. "Okay. If something goes wrong with the flowers, then I want you to apologize for wrecking someone else's marriage back then!"

Lauren's pupils shrank.

The biggest humiliation of her life was when she involved herself with Herman's marriage and became the third party persecuted by everyone. Whenever people talked about her these days, they always called her the homewrecker who had successfully become the lawful wife.

Yet Nora had brought it up in public in front of everyone. It was simply infuriating.

There was anger all over Lauren's face. She demanded, "What's the meaning of this, Ms. Smith?"

"You don't dare to make the bet with me?"

Nora raised her brows.

Pushed into a corner, the angry and anxious Lauren could only say, "Fine."

She clenched her fists tightly.

In order to return to the Hunt Manor, as well as to return to the pinnacle of status in New York, she was really holding nothing back. When she thought about it carefully, though, nothing could go wrong with that pot of flowers anyway. Nora was at a complete disadvantage when she made the bet with her.

To be honest, the moment Nora said that the ingredient was too strong, Lauren had already felt a little guilty. She'd actually had some takeaways from her time studying medicine abroad over the years.

However, she strongly believed that even if something were to really go wrong, it would only happen at a later stage.

It was impossible for that to happen within an hour.

She was sure to win the bet.

When she thought about it this way, Lauren didn't feel so unhappy anymore because the bet was clearly to Nora's disadvantage.

After the two parties made the bet, Lauren summoned some people and instructed, "Keep a close watch on this pot of Ghost Orchids. If anything goes wrong, you must notify me immediately!"

No matter how rare the Ghost Orchids were, they were nothing more than a pot of flowers for Lauren. What she cared about was not the flowers but winning the bet.

She spoke very loudly, everyone heard her. Lauren explained with a smile, "We've already made the bet, after all. I'm just afraid someone would deliberately spoil the flowers within the hour because they are sore losers. It would be terrible if people refuse to pay up when that happens."

Iris, however, ignored her. Instead, she pulled Nora to the side, lowered her voice, and asked, "Tell me the truth, are you Orchidance?"

Nora's lips curled into a smile and she nodded.

Iris: "..."

She stared at Nora with a dazed look on her face. "Orchidance is the only person capable of curing Matthew's flowers, why didn't I think of that? No, it's because you are too young. I didn't expect Orchidance to be so young, I always thought that she would be as old as me, or perhaps even older."

Nora looked at her.

After speaking, Iris's immediate thought was not that she now had someone to treat the flowers in her greenhouse, if anything ever happened to them.

On the contrary, she heaved a huge sigh.

She said, "I originally thought that there are only so few people in this world who can cure Matthew's Ghost Orchids because those flowers are really very difficult to treat. When you said that you can cure them, I thought that you were just taking a gamble. But I didn't expect that what was just a one in ten thousand probability for me, would instead be a 100% sure-win probability for you." Nora replied, "Therefore, you have to tell your story now."

Iris was taken aback for a moment. In the end, she waved and said, "Ah well, never mind, this is all meant to be!"

She had also thought things through herself. By taking a gambler's mentality with this, she was also just trying to give herself a ray of hope in the future.

She didn't want to age and die in that suburban villa and be separated from Justin for the rest of her life, either.

All of this had been predestined a long time ago, that was all.

She said, "I hope the two of you won't hate me after you hear my story."

Back then, she had shielded Justin from everything. Now that her son had grown up, it was ultimately time that he paid his debt.

Iris sighed.

Nora patted her shoulder. "We're not afraid."

When one was young, their mother was an almighty figure that shielded them from everything. Now that they had grown up, they were willing to be that almighty figure for their mother.

The two chatted for nearly an hour. When the hour passed after they made the bet, Lauren glanced at the orchid. When she saw that it was still blooming beautifully, she heaved a sigh of relief at once.

She then went up to Iris and Nora. “Ms. Smith, you’ve lost.”

Nora looked at her. “There are still two minutes to an hour.”

Lauren smiled and said, “There are only two minutes left, but that pot of flowers is now blooming even more beautifully than before. There is no risk of it wilting at all, so you two are losing for sure.”

“That’s not necessarily true.”

Nora stood up and looked down at the time on her cell phone.

Lauren curled her lips disdainfully and said, “Ms. Smith, to be honest, we are all family. How can there be any grudges among family? Why do we have to draw such a clear line between us? Why don’t we just forget about the bet? Lest it reflects poorly on us. I’m not someone who would hold grudges against my young ones either. The old madam is getting on in years, though. Herman has always wanted to be filial to his mother and be by her side, so let’s not have the Hunts stop him anymore...”

As soon as she said that, a security guard rushed over in a panic and said, “Mrs. Hunt, this is terrible!”

Lauren was taken aback. She turned around and saw that the security guard was actually the one whom she had instructed to keep a close watch over the Ghost Orchids just now!

Lauren frowned. “What are you doing? This is outrageous, why are you in such a panic?!”

The next moment, the security guard said, “The Ghost Orchids are dead!”

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The security guard replied stiffly, “I do.”

“Yet you still have the audacity to say that? You’ve got a lot of gall! Who gave you the courage to say something like that?”

As soon as Lauren spoke, she heard a low voice: "I did."

Lauren and Herman were both stunned. They turned around abruptly to see Justin striding over. He had a cold and sullen look on his face, and his deep-set eyes were as filled with aggressiveness as an eagle's.

Herman frowned. "Justin! How dare you dishonor your parents just because you've become the successor to the Hunts!"

Justin strode up to the pair. With a fierce and piercing look in his eyes, he pointed at the exit and said firmly and loudly, "This is the Hunt Manor, and you are someone whom Grandpa has kicked out. I am just following Grandpa's will. How would I possibly dare to be unfilial with my parents?"

"You

Since Herman was using his seniority to pressure him, then he would bring out Grandpa Hunt. This shut Herman up at once.

Justin stared at the man in front of him and narrowed his eyes dangerously.

He had left the two of them here to provoke Iris on purpose.

That was why he'd instructed the bodyguards not to stop them when they went to visit Iris earlier in the day. Firstly, he wanted to hear their conversation and see if he could sound them out about the truth behind what had happened back then.

Secondly, he wanted to push Iris into a corner and give her a sense of crisis.

But in the end, he found that even though Herman obviously knew the truth, he refused to make any mention about what had happened. Iris also refused to say a single word about it.

It seemed that this method of his was useless.

Moreover, it had even brought his precious daughter trouble. Although he had deleted all the negative comments on the Internet, there would be some trouble for him to deal with in the aftermath.

In that case, why let the two of them stay any further?

Therefore, he couldn't even be bothered to act anymore.

Justin said straightforwardly, “If you don’t leave by yourself with dignity, then I can only make you leave in an undignified manner.”

As soon as he said that, a few bodyguards swarmed up from behind him.

Herman and Lauren frowned, and both of them took a step back. Herman pointed at him and cursed, “You’re so cold-blooded! I’m your father, you know! How dare you treat me like this! ... Don’t touch me, we will leave by ourselves!”

Justin couldn’t be bothered to waste his breath on them. The bodyguard next to him also took a step forward, so Herman and Lauren couldn’t say any more, either. The two of them could only leave.

“Herman and Lauren have moved out of the Hunt Manor?”

When Iris received the news the moment she woke up the next day, she became even happier. She was sitting in the greenhouse with a pair of scissors in her hand and trimming her plants.

After she was done, she smiled and put down the scissors. Then, she suddenly sighed.

A puzzled Mrs. Landis asked, “Ma’am, what’s the matter?”

Iris replied, “Justin has grown up.”

Mrs. Landis was taken aback. “Why do you say that?”

Iris glanced at her, her pale and slender fingers gently touching the orchid next to her. She asked, “Why didn’t he drive Herman and Lauren away when they first arrived at the Hunts’? Why didn’t anyone stop them when they came here? Yet he drove them away after they went back and the incident with Cherry’s live-stream broke out?”

Mrs. Landis shook her head. “Why is that?”

“Because... he was trying to push me into a corner. He wanted to force me to make a stand.” Iris’s words confused Mrs. Landis. She scratched her head and asked, “And then?”

“Then, I saw what happened in Cherry’s live-stream and realized the truth. He understood at once that these things wouldn’t be able to trigger any feelings in

me anymore. In that case, wouldn't having them around no longer be of any use?"

Although Mrs. Landis didn't really understand, she still said happily, "Mr. Hunt has taken your side!"

"Of course."

Iris said proudly, "That's my son we're talking about, after all!"

Then, she stared at the pot of flowers beside her that wasn't blooming very well and heaved a quiet sigh. "Say, if I approach my daughter-in-law with this pot of flowers and ask her for advice, would she hate me?"

Mrs. Landis: "..."

"Forget it." Iris seemed to have given up somewhat. She said, "Some things are meant to be yours, and some things aren't. I'm already so old; how long can I live? In that case, I'd better not make any more trouble for the children! These orchids will accompany me for the rest of my life instead!"

Mrs. Landis glared at her. "Your remaining time in this world is pretty expensive, then. Who knows how many houses you can buy with just these plants!"

Iris smiled and replied, "These are nothing. The best is still that pot of Jade Orchid. It should have arrived in New York by now, right? Why hasn't it been delivered yet?"

Almost as soon as she said that, her cell phone rang suddenly.

Iris was a little taken aback. When she answered the phone, a voice came from the other side: "Mdm. Iris, I'm really sorry!"

Iris was surprised. "Matthew, what's wrong?"

Old Matthew, like Iris, was also an expert in cultivating orchids. Not only did he like orchids, but he was also rich. That was why he could cultivate so many orchids. The Jade Orchid in question was Matthew's.

Iris had pestered him for very long before he finally relented and agreed to sell it to her at a high price.

Matthew heaved a huge sigh. “Originally, I’d already found a professional to deliver that pot of flowers to you in New York, but I must sell it to a lady named Lauren Hunt now!”

Lauren Hunt?

Lauren again?

Iris frowned. “That’s not how you do business, Matthew. I was the one who bought it first, you...”

“Let me finish.” Matthew said, “It’s not that I don’t want to sell it to you, but rather, something has gone wrong with my pot of Ghost Orchids. Lauren is an expert gardener, and she said that she can nurse it back to health for me. Mdm. Iris, you are also someone who loves flowers, so you should know what that pot of Ghost Orchids means to me, right? Lauren said that she will treat the orchids with alternative medicine...”

Iris said huffily, “She’s just imitating Orchidance!”

Matthew nodded. “Yes, I know, but I don’t care. I just want my Ghost Orchids to be cured. Do you know this pot of orchids has been with me for three years? It bloomed during the year that my wife passed away... Not only is this pot of flowers expensive, but it is also of special significance to me. Mdm. Iris, unless you can find me Master Orchidance, I really can’t sell that pot of flowers to you anymore... I must let you down this time!!”

Iris: “!”

How was she supposed to find Orchidance at such short notice?

Next to her, Mrs. Landis was in a panic. “Ma’am, why don’t we consult Ms. Smith about this? She can also cure orchid diseases!”

Iris paused for a moment when she heard Mrs. Landis. Then, she said to Matthew, “Give me a day. Tell me about the Ghost Orchids’ symptoms, or take a photo and send it over. I... I’ll find someone to take a look at it for you!”

Matthew was surprised. “Do you really have a solution?”

Iris sighed. "I recently met a young friend who is very skilled at treating orchids, I will go and ask her for advice. You can give the orchids to Lauren after if my friend can't cure them!"

Matthew knew about the dispute between Iris and Lauren. Hearing this, he kept quiet for only a second before he said, "Okay! Mdm. Iris, we have been taking care of orchids for so long, so I trust you and am willing to give you a chance. If it weren't for the Ghost Orchids, I wouldn't have broken our agreement. But if you still can't solve the issue by tomorrow, then you can't hold that against me anymore."

Iris nodded. "I understand."

People who truly loved orchids regarded the flowers as their life. Matthew was one of the best gardeners in the industry, and the Ghost Orchids were his very life itself, so she could understand why he did what he did.

After hanging up the phone, Matthew told her the orchids' symptoms. He was very detailed in the description-after all, he had become very experienced after cultivating flowers for so long. He included details about what he had done to the flowers in the past, the soil he planted the flowers in, and so on.

Iris stared at the description for a while before she raised her head and looked at Mrs. Landis. "That pot of Ghost Orchids has indeed encountered quite a difficult issue. I'm afraid that even Orchidance would find that pot of flowers rather difficult to save. In that case, let's take a gamble!"

Mrs. Landis was a little taken aback. "What gamble?"

Iris took a deep breath. "A gamble on my destiny. If Nora can save this pot of flowers, then that pot of Jade Orchids will be mine. What's meant to be mine will definitely be mine."

Mrs. Landis didn't understand what she was hinting at. She nodded and said, "Of course!"

She didn't know that Iris had made a decision at this instant.

If Nora could save that pot of orchids, then she would have pretty much made a miracle.

If so, then she would tell them the truth about what had happened back then.

She didn't want to give the younger generation trouble, but her blood ties with her son were right there. There was one thing that Lauren had been right about—Cherry liked her grandmother.

She could cruelly push Justin away when she was young, but now that she had gotten on in her years, she was no longer as bold and resolute as she had been when she was young.

She also craved the heartwarming and gentle moments of being with Cherry and the others.

With that in mind, Iris took out her cell phone and sent a text message to Nora. First, she sent Nora the symptoms of Matthew's orchids, and then she sent another sentence: 'Can you take a look and see if you can save this pot of flowers for me?'

Nora was currently at the Andersons' and looking for something in her mother's room.

Despite the unexpected incident at Iris', and Herman's return, Nora had not forgotten what she was the most anxious about right now.

Her mother had left her information about the V16's whereabouts, yet she wasn't capable enough to find it. When she thought of how Xander was still sick, she was filled with impatience and irritability.

Mrs. Anderson was standing at the door. As she watched her turn the study upside down, she asked, "Nora, what are you looking for?"

Nora asked, "Grandma, did my mom leave anything important behind?"

Mrs. Anderson nodded. "Yes, of course!"

Nora suddenly looked up. "What did she leave behind? Show me!"

As soon as she said that, Mrs. Anderson smiled gently and kindly at her, all the wrinkles on her face squeezing together. She said, "She left you! You are the best gift she left the world."

Nora: "..."

The corners of her lips spasmed and she sighed silently. "Okay, Grandma, I'll look for it myself!"

She was about to take out the dust-covered things under the bed and flip through them when her cell phone suddenly beeped.

She picked it up and saw the messages Iris had sent to her:

'Can you take a look and see if you can save this pot of flowers for me?'

'If you can, I will tell you a story.'

Tell her a story?

Was Iris finally going to reveal her troubles? A touch of joy flashed across Nora's eyes and she immediately replied: "I'll come to you right away."

When Nora came to the villa, Iris was sitting in the greenhouse with a tea bar in front of her. She was sipping on a cup of tea, but her eyes were fixed on the greenhouse.

At the sound of footsteps, she turned and looked over. When she saw Nora, she gestured to the seat opposite her and asked absentmindedly, "Can you save them?"

"I can try." Nora had never been one to make absolute promises.

After all, Ghost Orchids were awfully delicate. A little carelessness could easily lead to problems.

Iris took a sip of tea and sighed silently. She looked at Nora. "Do you really want to hear that story?"

Nora nodded.

Iris fell silent for a while. Then, she asked, "Even if it really brings you guys a lot of trouble?"

Nora nodded again.

Even so, Iris was still worried. She pressed on and asked, "Have you asked Justin about it? Is this also what he wants?"

Before Nora could speak, Justin's voice came from the door: "Yes, it is."

Seeing that he was also here, Iris was stunned.

She stared at her son.

Justin had already grown to a height of a little over 6'2", and was a full head taller than her. Her small and thin son from twenty years ago had already grown into a man with an indomitable spirit.

Iris clenched her fists.

She suddenly asked, "Don't you hate me? No matter what my reasons are, I have ultimately been absent in your life for so many years."

Justin's jaw was strained, and the beauty mark at the corner of his eye was shimmering in the light. After a short silence, he answered, "I did when I was a kid, but not anymore."

Iris was taken aback.

Justin turned his head to the side and looked away. Apart from being able to say some mushy things to Nora, he was actually a little uncomfortable saying such things to others.

The man stood up straight. As though he was talking about work matters, he said to Iris, "When I was a child, everyone had a mother except me. When I got into arguments with Roger, his mother would stand in front of him unreasonably and push me, but I didn't have anyone like that. Not only did I not have a mother, but even my father was gone. At that time, I did indeed hate you for being so cruel.

"But now, it doesn't matter anymore, because all of that has passed. I know you have your own difficulties and reasons for doing so."

Justin's voice was actually very calm and dispassionate. There wasn't any emotion in it at all.

It was as if he was just narrating something that had happened in the past.

But his words painted a very lucid picture in both Iris and Nora's minds.

The little Justin had been bullied. His father had been kicked out of the family. His mother was clearly still in New York, yet she did not come home. He obviously had a father and a mother, yet he became an orphan in the Hunts.

Perhaps the little boy had cried in private. Perhaps on many nights, he had run to this very villa and looked up at the person inside, hoping that Iris would open the door and give him a hug.

But she hadn't.

Just like that, he had grown into an adult...

Nora took Justin's hand and held it quietly.

Iris felt as if her heart was being wrung tightly. However, she was already accustomed to the pain-because every night he came over, she knew he was there.

What he didn't know was that she had also been looking at him from upstairs. It was just that she couldn't go down.

The most intimate relationship in the world was the one between a mother and her child.

Children's love for their mothers was purer than their mothers' love for their children.

Because in the world of children, their mother was the only thing that mattered.

But in their mothers' world, there would always be things to weigh and evaluate, as well as worries and reservations.

Iris's eyes reddened. She lowered her head and said, "Justin, I will give you another chance. You now have children and a wife. If I tell you those reasons, your days in the future may not be peaceful anymore. But if I don't... there are only so many days I have left in my life. Isn't it good the way we are now?"

That was how Iris had always seen the situation.

Wasn't it good for them to stay the way they currently were, where mother and son didn't meet, and each kept to themselves peacefully?

When Justin heard her mention that he now had a wife and children, he looked at Nora.

Nora held his hand tightly, the look in her eyes firm and determined.

Justin could sense her encouragement towards him. He nodded to Iris and said, "We have made our decision."

Iris' jaw tensed up.

After a while, she finally sighed and said, "Alright, in that case, then let's take a gamble. If Nora really can save that pot of Ghost Orchids, then I will tell you two the truth!"

Orchidiance's way of curing orchids was actually very miraculous. Additionally, because they were giving medical treatment to orchids, the dosage was even harder to control.

Not every alternative medicine practitioner could do that.

Even Orchidiance would probably find it rather difficult, let alone Nora.

It would be nothing short of a miracle if Nora could cure the Ghost Orchids.

Iris didn't want to lead such a dull life either. She didn't want to pretend to be all calm and unaffected here. She could harden her heart towards Justin because he had already grown up, but she also wanted to have fun with Cherry.

Thinking of this, she looked at Nora with light in her eyes.

This was the mentality of a gambler.

When Justin saw her reaction, he knew that Iris had already relented somewhat. To be honest, if he gave her another push at this point, she would tell him the truth.

But he didn't want to use such schemes against his mother.

Thus, he looked at Nora.

Nora felt great pressure from both of them looking over. The corners of her lips spasmed and she looked at Iris. She said, "Iris, you can start thinking about how to word the story."

She took out a piece of paper and handed it to Iris. "This is the prescription."

On the way here, Nora had already looked at the photos and the description of the symptoms that Iris had forwarded to her and silently computed the formula.

The prescription contained very low drug dosages, so they shouldn't pose any danger to the flowers.

Nora had always been very confident in her knowledge of her specializations. After all, when she was in California, no one would come to her for medical consultations. In order to improve her medical skills, she had instead treated the flora and fauna at home!

That was why she was so knowledgeable about orchids.

Of course, this was really difficult to achieve.

Because flowers were undoubtedly different from humans. If it weren't because Nora had experimented with flowers and plants for so long, she probably would not have mastered such fine control of drug dosages. Iris was a little dumbfounded when she saw the piece of paper she was offering to her.

She immediately took a photo of the prescription and sent it to Matthew.

It was only after she sent it that she raised her head and said, "Nora, you wrote that prescription so quickly."

She had settled on a prescription without even speaking with Matthew.

Nora slowly replied, "I have treated that disease in other flowers before, so I kinda understand it."

Iris: "..."

As the corners of her lips spasmed, she received a call from Matthew. He said, "Mdm. Iris, this prescription that you sent me...?"

Iris glanced at Nora and said, "My daughter-in-law came up with it. You can give it a go! I can at least guarantee that nothing will go wrong with it."

Matthew sighed. "It's not that I don't trust you, it's just that... you gave it to me a little too late!"

Iris was taken aback. "What?"

Matthew said, "Lauren has just borrowed that pot of Ghost Orchids from me, saying that while she cures them for me, she would also like to hold an orchid exhibition so that the people who like orchids in New York could admire them."

What Matthew didn't say was that Lauren hadn't just approached him, but also people from various wealthy and aristocratic families in New York. After all, precious and expensive flowers like orchids weren't things that ordinary people could afford.

Lauren had assembled a group of people with the euphemistic excuse of letting everyone visit an exhibition featuring famous flower species. This way, everyone could learn something new and widen their horizons. Therefore, people shouldn't hide and keep all the good things to themselves...

The meaning between the lines was that Iris was too petty.

Matthew didn't want to sow discord between them, so he had left that part out.

Iris frowned. "She has cured your Ghost Orchids?"

"Pretty much." Matthew sighed. "Actually, when I called you, I'd already used the prescription she gave me. I didn't expect the Ghost Orchids to really become much more alive just half an hour later."

Iris sighed silently.

She hadn't expected things to develop this way! What an unfortunate turn of events!

She said quietly, "Congratulations."

"What is there to congratulate me about?" Matthew smiled wryly and said, "She will be holding an exhibition tomorrow. Even if it's just for the sake of my flowers, I'll have to attend. Not only do I have to contribute my flowers, but I also have to contribute my presence. That woman is just so... Mdm. Iris, orchid lovers like us are usually people at peace with the world. We just take care of the orchids for our own joy, but look at her, isn't what she's doing no different from forcing me to..."

Iris didn't like talking about people behind their backs, let alone when it was about Lauren. Thus, she said, "It's for the best that the flowers are cured."

“Yeah.”

Matthew then said, “Your daughter-in-law is very talented, though! Her prescription is only one herb off from Lauren’s! Using alternative medicine to cure orchids is Orchidance’s specialty. Many alternative medicine practitioners also wanted to give it a try. As a result, so many orchids have died from their attempts over the past few years. Lauren is the only one who has finally mastered the technique after studying it for a long time...”

At this point, Matthew sighed heavily. Unable to stop himself anymore, he said, “Mdm. Iris, you have to be careful. Lauren is bent on beating you in orchids this time. I heard that after she caught wind of the fact that you like orchids, she has been imitating Orchidance’s methods in treating orchids for the last five years. Who knows how many orchids she has destroyed before she finally became as experienced as she is today...”

Matthew, who sounded like he found the orchids somewhat a pity, added, “Who knows how many precious orchid varieties she has destroyed just to vent her frustrations, sigh!”

Matthew looked down on Lauren’s actions very much.

They were taking care of orchids because they truly loved orchids, but Lauren was just using the orchids as a springboard to edge out Iris.

It was just a pity that no matter how much one was into their hobby, they would still have to bow down in the face of reality.

Iris didn’t pay any attention to those things. However, she still found it somewhat a pity.

She had already lost the gamble before it even started.

She looked at Nora and said quietly, “Alright, I’m hanging up!”

Unfortunately, the next moment, Nora grabbed the phone.

Nora stared at the phone and asked, “Which other herb did she add to the prescription?”

Matthew seemed surprised by her voice. In the end, he named a herb.

The corners of Nora's lips curled into a smile. After Iris hung up the phone, she said, "Let's go to the orchid exhibition tomorrow."

As soon as Nora said that, Mrs. Landis, who was next to her, said, "But we don't have an invitation!"

Nora and Iris looked at each other. The two spoke at the same time, "We will have one very soon."

Mrs. Landis: "?"

A puzzled Mrs. Landis looked at Justin. "Are you going to ask Mr. Hunt to ask for two tickets?"

"No, it's fine."

As soon as Iris said that, someone knocked at the door. Then, the mailman appeared and said, "Mdm. Iris, mail for you."

Iris and Nora looked at each other again.

A look of realization flashed across Nora's eyes, and she said to Mrs. Landis, "See, isn't that the invitation?"

Mrs. Landis: "?"

Mrs. Landis took the mail from the mailman. When she opened it, she found that it was indeed an invitation for the orchid exhibition. She was astounded. "Ms. Smith, Ma'am, aren't the two of you too amazing?"

Iris scoffed. "By holding the orchid exhibition right after she returned to New York, she's clearly coming right at me. Since she wants to slap me in the face, how could she possibly not invite me?"

Mrs. Landis couldn't help but smack her own forehead. "Look at me, because I've been living here all this time and haven't come into contact with people much, I've even forgotten about such basic household infighting!"

Both Nora and Iris were amused by Mrs. Landis's use of the words "household infighting":

Iris patted her and asked, "Where did you learn all these words from?"

Mrs. Landis replied with a smile, "Oh, you know how I watch all those TV dramas when I have nothing to do! I learned it from them!"

Iris suddenly gave her a fierce look and said, "Mrs. Landis, how dare you slack off while I wasn't paying attention! You sneaky treacherous woman! I'm going to deduct your

pay!"

Mrs. Landis pretended to be scared. "Ma'am, other people work only nine to six, whereas I wait on you twenty-four hours a day! Aren't you even going to allow me to watch a bit of TV for entertainment?"

Iris smiled. "Your salary is for twenty-four hours of work each day! You should already be thankful that I'm letting you sleep!"

Mrs. Landis protested, "You capitalist!"

"In that case, I'll pay you for sixteen hours instead?"

"... Ma'am, if you exploit your staff any further, I might secretly add poison into your favorite food."

The two of them bickered and started to joke with each other.

There was finally a smile on Iris's face that was calm and serene all year round.

Mrs. Landis looked at her, very glad and relieved.

The two of them were just joking around, of course. Iris had given Mrs. Landis much more than her salary all these years. Both of Mrs. Landis' children were already married, and they both had their own properties in New York and were living lives of luxury. This was all thanks to Iris.

After twenty years of her company, Mrs. Landis was more like family to Iris now.

Justin stood at the side and watched them bicker and joke with each other.

To be honest, for so many years, his mother's appearance had long become vague and blurry in his mind-because every time he came over, all he would see was Iris's frosty face.

The woman's lively appearance faintly reminded him of how she had hugged, kissed him, and teased him when he was a child.

At that time, she had also laughed and talked happily like what she was currently doing.

Originally, because he hadn't had much contact with Iris for more than two decades, Justin had felt some estrangement towards his mother. However, that sense of estrangement had lessened considerably at this instant.

It was as though the mother in his memories, who loved to talk, laugh, play, and joke around, had returned. For him, the word "mother" was no longer just an identity but had once again become vivid and animated.

The feeling made the corners of his lips curl upward imperceptibly. He cast his eyes down and hid the complex emotions in his eyes. Mrs. Landis was a huge mischief-maker. She had also wanted Iris and Justin to reconcile for very long. Seeing that the atmosphere today was great, she said, "Mr. Hunt, you really loved the ravioli I made when you were a child. Why don't you stay for dinner tonight?"

Justin subconsciously looked at Nora.

When she saw him looking over, Nora nodded and said, "Alright."

Mrs. Landis became excited at once. She rolled up her sleeves and walked into the kitchen as she said, "Since you guys are staying for dinner tonight, I will have to show off my culinary skills! Ma'am eats too little, so she doesn't give me a chance to show off my skills at all."

After Mrs. Landis entered the kitchen, the atmosphere among the trio standing outside immediately became a little awkward.

Iris looked at Nora and then at Justin. At last, she said, "I'll go and give Mrs. Landis a hand. Given her age, she'll be too slow!"

After speaking, she also went into the kitchen.

Nora and Justin were the only ones left outside. The two of them looked around the greenhouse. Justin pointed at the orchids and said, "I heard that people who raise orchids have high moral character. Now it seems like that's not always the case."

He was referring to Lauren.

Nora, however, laughed and said, “I don’t know about others, but I know why my god-sister likes taking care of orchids.”

Nora deliberately emphasized the words “god-sister”.

Justin: “?!”

He raised his eyebrows, knowing that Nora was being cheeky and asking to be taught a lesson again.

As soon as the thought formed, he looked at Nora’s lips, wishing he could take a few nips to vent his “anger”.

As for Nora, she said, “Do you want to know why? If you do, then call me God-aunt Nora. I’ll tell you if you do.”

Tsk.

She was starting to take advantage of him now.

Justin stroked his chin and suddenly leaned forward. He lowered his voice and asked, “Ms. Smith, are you sure you want to be my god-aunt?”

Nora: “?”

She decided not to tease him anymore, lest it backfired on herself. She coughed and said, “Iris... I mean, Aunt Iris and I already knew each other before she even knew who I was. She told me at that time that she was raising all these flowers because her son had given her a pot of orchids once.”

Justin was stunned.

He looked at the orchids, his jaw tensing up.

He remembered now. When he was ten years old, he had indeed given her a pot of orchids on her birthday. The woman had accepted his gift. At the same time, she had also told him that she had only accepted the gift because she liked orchids.

Since then, the floodgates opened and she started to buy a lot of orchids.

Justin had always thought that it was because she liked orchids. But as it turned out, it was just an excuse for her to accept her son's gift.

He turned to look at Iris in the kitchen.

Mrs. Landis had prepared some ingredients, and she was picking and choosing from among them. However, everything that she picked out just so happened to be his favorite...

Justin lowered his head.

In truth, his mother had never really left him all these years, and he'd always had his mother's love with him by his side, right?

In this instant, he suddenly reconciled with his mother—or rather, with the part of himself that had been uncomfortable because his mother hadn't taken care of him.

He also suddenly became open-minded and let go of some things in this instant.

He let out a silent sigh. Right at this moment, his cell phone rang.

When he answered, Herman's voice came from the other side.

"Justin, didn't you want to know why your mother has been avoiding you? I will tell you now."

Upon hearing his voice, Justin narrowed his eyes. He wanted to say he didn't need it—he wanted to hear it from Iris instead—but he suddenly paused.

Iris would never tell him about her grievances. He would only be able to hear about her grievances from others.

For example, Iris would probably never tell him why she liked orchids because she had never been a woman who knew how to express her feelings.

Justin thought about it and said, "Okay, speak."

In a villa in the outskirts of New York.

Herman and Lauren sat on the sofa.

Lauren was looking at Herman, who said, “You probably only know that I cheated on your mother with Lauren back then, so all this time, you must have thought that all the problems with our marriage lie with me, right?”

Herman’s words gave voice to the mentality that most women held—that every man who cheated was a scumbag.

Justin lowered his eyes, but he sneered, “You are wrong.”

Herman was taken aback.

Justin said, “You are not a good husband, and at the same time, you are not a good father either.”

Many people thought that once a man cheated, he would no longer be a good father.

But that wasn’t necessarily true.

Some men might cheat on their wives a lot, but they wouldn’t hold back on their love for their children. Perhaps the cheating itself might affect the children, but even so, they would still try to make up for it later.

Besides, some married couples were indeed not suitable to stay together. Even if they had children, those who needed to divorce would still divorce each other. However, the divorce did not affect their love for their children.

But this wasn’t true in Herman’s case.

Not only had he cheated and hurt Iris, but he had also left Justin to fend for himself afterward. It was as if he’d never had a son like him.

He hadn’t just let Iris down, but also Justin.

Herman was stunned for a while. Then, he tried to explain himself. “Justin, it’s not that I didn’t care about you, or that I did not love you...”

“At your age, you shouldn’t keep going on and on about things like love and romance.”

Justin dissed him mercilessly again.

Herman: “...”

Justin said concisely, “Just tell me the reason.”

Herman spent a while organizing his thoughts. Finally, he sighed and said, “Justin, I know I’ve neglected you, but you have to understand. I did all that because your mother cheated on me first! I am a man, how could I let someone cuckold me? That’s why I went to Lauren! Don’t be fooled by how Iris looks as if she’s at peace with the world! She is not as indifferent to fame and fortune as she makes herself out to be!”

Iris had cheated on Herman?

Stunned, Justin suddenly looked at the woman in the kitchen.

Herman took a deep breath. “She had found another man outside. I couldn’t condone her behavior, so I filed for a divorce. When your grandpa wanted to keep you in the family, I couldn’t just let her sit back and enjoy the rewards of her success, and even hog my family’s business on top of that. Besides, all she could think of was that man, so I made a request—that she would leave you alone. You were still young at that time, and I was afraid that she would usurp your power and become the real master of the Hunts. Justin, I schemed and did all this for your own good!”

Justin frowned.

Herman’s argument might sound seamless and completely logical at first hearing but in truth?

If what he said was true, why did Iris spend all these years in agony in the suburban villa instead of going to her adulterous lover and keeping him company? He sneered, “Do you think I will believe that?”

Herman also panicked. “I have evidence!”

Justin asked, “What evidence?”

He was already biased towards Iris at the moment and was highly disapproving of Herman’s statement. If that was really the reason, then Iris’s decision to ignore him would really be too absurd.

While he was feeling uncomfortable about the whole thing, Herman said, “Those orchids! Those orchids are the evidence! She didn’t like orchids at all in the past. You should remember that there were barely any orchids at home

when you were young, but look at how she started to take care of so many orchids after she moved to the suburbs! It's exactly because her lover loves orchids! Ha, because I trapped her in New York, she couldn't meet her lover anymore, so she could only pour all her yearning and pining into the orchids instead!"

Justin: !!

What smooth logic!

If Nora hadn't told him just now why Iris was keeping so many orchids, he'd probably really have become suspicious.

But now...

Justin scoffed. "Is that so?"

Herman said, "Yes, everything I said is true. Justin, Dad has actually been very worried about you and has done a lot for you, so don't be so distant towards me. I know I have never shown you any fatherly love, but I can give that to you in the future..."

"I don't need it."

Justin straight-up rejected him. "Is there anything else?"

Herman said, "I want to visit your grandmother tomorrow, she's my mother after all. Tell the people at home to let me in!"

Justin scoffed. "Nice try. You can forget about ever entering the Hunt Manor for the rest of your life."

He wanted to hang up after saying that, but Herman shouted, "Justin, Justin! You can't do that to me! I did all that for you! You refuse to let me in, yet you allow Iris to enter! Tell me, did Iris bewitch you? Has she been badmouthing me all these years? No matter what, I am still your father... toot... toot... toot..."

Justin hung up on him.

Herman had called him just to sow discord between him and his mother, so as to make his way into the Hunts little by little.

In the villa.

Herman stared at his mobile phone with a frown after Justin hung up on him. He couldn't help but curse, "That brat! Why is he so stubborn?!"

Lauren looked at him: "Is the reason you said just now true?"

Herman scoffed and said, "Half of it is, I suppose."

Lauren rolled her eyes at once. "Aren't you afraid that Iris will tell him the truth? It will become even more difficult for you to repair your relationship with him then!"

Herman said confidently, "She won't."

Lauren was taken aback.

A self-mocking Herman said, "Because if she does, it would bring great trouble to her son. That's why she will never say it."

It was only after Iris and Mrs. Landis made a total of six dishes that the three of them finally sat down.

Iris wanted Mrs. Landis to eat with them, but the latter took her food and went into the kitchen instead of eating at the same table with them.

After the three of them sat down, Justin stared at Iris. Suddenly, her cell phone rang.

She was taken aback for a moment, seemingly never expecting anyone to call her.

But when she looked down at the phone, it turned out to be an unfamiliar number...

Iris's hand started shaking and she rejected the call immediately.

However, the other party persisted and kept calling

Iris became obviously nervous. She stared hard at the phone, as though the caller hailed from the depths of hell itself.

Iris was very nervous. Despite her trying to make herself appear calm and collected, her tightly-clenched fingers, as well as her dilated pupils, had exposed her emotions. Justin's gaze landed on the unfamiliar number and he said, "Your phone is ringing."

"Huh? Oh, it's probably just a sales call."

Iris said as she rejected the call again. Then, as if she was afraid that they would call again, she switched off her cell phone. She even tried to gloss over the topic and said with a smile, "They are so annoying. There are simply so many such sales calls these days. It wasn't easy for us to have a meal together."

Seeing her like this, Justin merely nodded.

Nora and Justin exchanged a look, neither of them exposing her lie.

Afterwards, even though Iris tried her best to pretend she was very excited and happy about the meal, the two of them could still tell that she was a little distracted.

After all, Nora and Justin were more insightful than most ordinary people and had astounding observation skills.

After the meal, the two bade goodbye to Iris.

Before leaving, Nora looked at Iris again and asked tentatively, "See you at the orchid exhibition tomorrow?"

Iris seemed a little hesitant. It must have been because of those phone calls.

However, she only stayed quiet for a second before she raised her head. "Yeah."

Her voice was firm.

This showed that she would not be changing her mind again.

She was really taking a gamble. If Nora managed to cure the pot of Ghost Orchids, then she would tell them the truth. If she failed, then she would take the truth with her to the grave, and never cause the children any trouble.

Seeing her like this, Nora and Justin looked at each other again and left.

Nora and Justin were in the same car. Justin was driving. After they turned the corner ahead, he stopped the car.

By then, Nora had already set her cell phone number as an unknown caller. Then, she keyed in the string of numbers that had been displayed on Iris's cell phone just now.

She had a photographic memory, so she had memorized the phone number with just a single glance.

Nora then handed her cell phone to Justin.

Justin dialed the number without hesitation.

The other party quickly picked up. A man's voice came through the phone: "Hello?"

A prompt and decisive Justin asked, "Who are you?"

The other party was silent for a while. Then, he let out a low chuckle and hung up without saying anything else.

Justin: !!

Inexplicably, what Herman had said about Iris cheating on him flashed past his mind.

He frowned.

Nora also frowned. "He kept the call time within fifteen seconds, I can't trace his location."

Justin took a deep breath. "Don't bother anymore."

Nora looked at him.

Justin said, "I won't ask anymore. I'll wait for her to tell me everything herself."

He didn't want to investigate anymore.

He had suddenly realized something because there were always people trying to sabotage his investigations, it would inevitably lead to unnecessary misunderstandings.

Nora knew what he was thinking. She gave him a thumbs-up right away and said, "Yup, that's the way. You're family, so you shouldn't harbor suspicions about each other. Besides, from what I saw just now, Iris... I mean, your mother didn't change her mind just because of that call."

Justin nodded.

Iris wasn't a weakling or a pushover.

She had taught Justin to be strong and aggressive since he was a child. This was also why Justin hadn't believed Herman's nonsense.

How could Iris possibly be someone who easily accepted fate?

If she really had a lover, then she would definitely have tried to think of ways to spend the rest of her life with him instead of wasting her youth away here.

The next day.

Nora drove to the suburban villa early in the morning.

Iris had dressed up for the occasion and was wearing an elegant and beautiful white fitted dress. She got into the car after she left the house.

The woman didn't look at all like she was nearly fifty years old. After dressing up, she was dazzling and graceful. Her figure was curvy, and coupled with her fair skin, it was only when one looked closely that one would see any wrinkles on her face. With the way she looked as she stood there, some people might believe it if one said that she was only twenty years old. Nora raised her eyebrows and formed a heart with her hands at Iris.

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Iris got into the car, and the two headed straight to the orchid exhibition.

Lauren's orchid exhibition was held at a hotel in central New York. The orchids she borrowed from various families had all been placed on shelves.

At a glance, there were all kinds of orchids that one could ever think of.

In the most eye-catching position was Matthew's Ghost Orchid.

The Ghost Orchids were very rare, so they had occupied the central position of the orchid exhibition.

After Nora and Iris got out of the car and entered the hall with the invitation, they immediately noticed the pot of Ghost Orchids.

When Iris saw the orchids, she exclaimed, "Lauren has really cured that pot of Ghost Orchids. They look so full of vigor."

Only then did Nora reveal something: "There is a problem with her prescription."

Iris, who was a little taken aback, looked at Nora.

Nora whispered, "Her prescription has one more ingredient than mine. That herb is too powerful. It can quickly allow orchids to look energetic and filled with vigor, but over time, even bigger problems will appear. It's just like how humans suddenly become very energetic before they pass away. Going by how much time has passed since the medicine was given to the Ghost Orchids yesterday, the Ghost Orchids will wither after another half an hour. In the first place, there are a lot of restrictions when it comes to using drugs on plants. Those who are not proficient in it really shouldn't do it."

Iris was dumbfounded. She couldn't help but say, "Orchidance has also said that before, and told everyone not to imitate them. Aren't you also imitating Orchidance, though?"

Nora raised her eyebrows. Suddenly, her lips curled into a smile and she replied, "Who says I'm imitating Orchidance?"

Iris: "???"

Then, as though she had realized something, she looked at Nora in astonishment.

Could it be... that Nora was none other than Orchidance?!

Just as she was about to speak, Lauren entered the hall and said with a smile, "Iris, you're here! Did you bring any orchids with you today?"

Iris immediately reined in the complicated look she was giving Nora. She looked at Lauren and replied, "No."

"You didn't?"

Lauren was shocked. "It is written on my invitation that everyone who comes to the orchid exhibition should bring a pot of flowers, so that everyone can appreciate and admire each other's flowers."

After she spoke, Lauren sighed silently and said, "Iris, surely it's not because you can't bear to show us your flowers, right? I have heard that you have gathered a lot of rare orchids in your private collection over the years! I am holding this orchid exhibition precisely because I hope that orchid lovers can gather and share their joy with each other. In fact, an orchid exhibition like this should have been held long ago. What's the point of hiding and keeping all the good things to ourselves? Everyone here is an orchid lover, it's not like they'll spoil the flowers, right? Iris, you are being overly cautious."

Although she said that she was being too cautious, she was instead implying that Iris was too stingy and petty, just so she could highlight how generous and capable she, Lauren, was instead.

A group of people from wealthy families gradually gathered around them. Everyone looked at Iris.

Iris, however, scoffed.

Was she trying to compete with her in terms of eloquence?

She wasn't someone who would take sh*t from others!

Lauren had organized the orchid exhibition to suppress Iris' arrogance.

Back then, even though she had succeeded in changing her status from a homewrecker to the man's lawful wife, to be honest, she knew that there weren't many in the circle of wealthy ladies who approved of her. Everyone approved of Iris instead.

In that case, Lauren would outdo Iris in the latter's forte! This way, she could also show off in front of everyone else!

She said, "Iris, why are you keeping quiet? Are you upset? Well, that's true. There's no one in New York who doesn't know that you love orchids the most. By right, you should have been the one organizing the orchid exhibition instead, but because you didn't take any action, I found someone to do it instead... What a shame. I heard that you also have a pot of Ghost Orchids, so I even wanted to let everyone admire them!"

As soon as she said that, Iris looked at the people around her. She smiled and said, "The things you say are so ridiculous. Must I hold an orchid exhibition just because I like orchids? In that case, since Mrs. Lange likes diamonds, must she also hold a diamond exhibition? Since Mr. Sullivan likes antique paintings, should he open a museum then? These are just personal hobbies. On the other hand, why haven't I heard anything about you liking orchids before?"

Her few simple words had immediately suppressed Lauren.

How would the wealthy and the noble possibly take out whatever they liked and show them off to everyone? If they did that, then they wouldn't be showing off their wealth instead!

Lauren had made a mistake at a fundamental level, making her seem petty and cheap, and also making all the ladies look down on her. They had only attended the exhibition because of Matthew's Ghost Orchids.

After all, Matthew's Ghost Orchids really were a rare sight.

Iris's words had suppressed Lauren's momentum, causing everyone around them to laugh. They echoed Iris and said, "She's right, we are not frivolous people."

Showing off one's wealth for no reason would only arouse aversion and disgust from other people.

Moreover, even though Lauren wasn't an orchid lover, she had held an orchid exhibition. Iris had pointed out her objective.

Lauren clenched her fists in anger. She'd finally invited so many ladies to the exhibition today after much difficulty. Originally, she'd wanted to improve her position among the ladies, but little did she expect Iris to be so sharp-tongued!

Lauren lowered her head and smiled. "I certainly don't have any love for orchids, but don't forget that I am an alternative medicine practitioner. It's only because Matthew asked me to cure his flowers that I decided to hold the orchid exhibition. I found his Ghost Orchids such a rare sight and wanted everyone to see it! This way, everyone can also share their experience on growing orchids with one another along the way."

Her few simple words immediately made the rich ladies around them not dare to laugh at her anymore.

Everyone at the exhibition was a true flower lover. Was there anyone among them whose flowers would never have any problems? Should something go wrong, it would be great to have someone like Lauren help.

She could even cure Matthew's Ghost Orchids. Lauren was simply too skilled at curing orchids.

Someone immediately said, "Mrs. Hunt, you are so capable. You have even cured such a delicate flower that's so difficult to treat! It's amazing! By the way, my flowers have also met with a small problem. I wonder if I can ask you for some advice?"

Lauren smiled gently and replied, "Sure. In the first place, this orchid exhibition isn't meant for showing off; rather, it's to facilitate communication!"

With a few simple sentences, she had saved the scene again.

Some of the others walked over to Iris and said, "Mdm. Iris, come to think of it, that woman is actually quite capable. Her methods of curing the flowers' illnesses are very similar to Orchidance's. Everyone's privately speculating that Lauren may be Orchidance! Sometimes, for the sake of the orchids, we should bow down to others!"

"Yeah, she actually cured Matthew's Ghost Orchids. She's really very impressive."

Matthew's Ghost Orchids had been withering day by day for about half a month. He had been to many orchid masters to cure it, but it had barely seen any effect.

News of it had already spread in New York.

Through his Ghost Orchids, Lauren had made a name for herself.

At the mention of Orchidance, Iris subconsciously glanced at Nora. Then, she scoffed and said, “She’s no Orchidance. Compared with Orchidance, she is far inferior!”

The contempt in her words made the ladies look at one another. In the end, none of them dared to say anything. They could only smile awkwardly.

Lauren also heard her. At once, she narrowed her eyes and said, “Mdm. Iris, now that’s rather meaningless. Matthew had certainly wanted to approach Orchidance, but the problem is that Orchidance is so mysterious. No one knows who she is, let alone where to find her. I heard that she’s not even in the country, so it’s impossible for anyone to find her. I admit that my treatment methods are indeed imitating Orchidance’s, but am I wrong to diagnose and cure Matthew’s Ghost Orchids for him?”

The place was silent.

No one there dared to offend Iris-after all, she was Justin’s mother. Although they weren’t on good terms with each other, it was said that Justin would still specially visit the suburban villa every month.

Besides, no matter how bad their relationship was, Justin would never sit by and watch other people bully his mother.

Therefore, no one defended Lauren. However, Lauren could cure orchids’ illnesses. Everyone there was an orchid lover, so none of them dared to offend Lauren either.

For a while, no one said anything.

Iris’ lip corners, however, curled into a smile. Although she hadn’t asked Nora just now if she was really Orchidance, it had given her confidence.

She looked at Lauren and said, “What’s the big deal about being able to cure orchids? My daughter-in-law can also do it!”

She looked at Nora with a proud look on her face.

When Lauren heard this, she looked at Nora.

A moment later...

“Pft.”

She let out a soft laugh.

After she laughed, Lauren said, “Sorry, I really couldn’t help it. Mdm. Iris, what you said is really funny. I know Ms. Smith is the great Dr. Zabe’s disciple, and I also know that she is Anti the famous surgeon, but neither of those titles is related to orchids. Mdm. Iris, surely you don’t think that every alternative medicine practitioner can cure orchids, right? Flowers are different from humans!”

Iris also smiled when she heard her. “Of course I know that. It’s just that my daughter-in-law happens to have studied orchids a little before. In fact, she is…”

Before she could say “Orchidiance”, Lauren interrupted her. “Is that so? Then why don’t you come over and have a look at Matthew’s Ghost Orchids, Ms. Smith? You should know that pot of Ghost Orchid’s prior condition, right? Can you cure it?”

Nora glanced at it and said calmly, “Yes.”

As soon as Lauren wanted to reply, Iris took out a piece of paper. “This is the prescription that my daughter-in-law wrote for that pot of Ghost Orchids. You can take a look at it!”

“Does Ms. Smith really know how to cure orchids?”

“If you think about it, there’s a chance that she does. Ms. Smith is the best alternative medicine practitioner after all!”

Once Lauren lost the advantage of being able to cure orchids’ illnesses, the people around them immediately dared to speak up for Iris.

When Lauren heard them, she immediately took the prescription from Iris. After she glanced at it, she said, “Iris, Matthew must have told you about this prescription, right? This is exactly the same as mine! It’s just a pity that even if you’ve made a copy, you left out one ingredient!”

“She didn’t leave it out.” Nora said unhurriedly, “It’s because the prescription doesn’t need that ingredient. Orchids are delicate flowers. The ingredient you added will hurt it.”

“It’ll hurt it? No way.” Lauren said confidently, “That ingredient is supposed to revive a plant’s shine and glow, so how could it possibly be harmful? What’s more, that pot of Ghost Orchids is being displayed so vividly and vibrantly in front of everyone right now. Everyone can see for themselves the flowers’ current condition. In just a day, it has regained its vitality. Ms. Smith, you are being too dogmatic!”

Nora looked at the pot of flowers. “Affliction of diseases makes one collapse like a mountain, and the treatment of diseased areas is akin to trying to extract strands of silk from one another. The usage of such strong medication will only keep the orchid alive for a while but make it wilt even faster. As an alternative medicine practitioner, surely you don’t need me to teach you something like that, right?”

Lauren: “?”

Her understatement-like way of talking made Lauren angry. She said, “Ms. Smith, I know that you are Justin’s wife. There’s nothing wrong with protecting and defending your mother-in-law, but even so, you can’t just speak so carelessly like that. This ingredient is certainly a little strong, but I’ve already tested it on other orchids before. There won’t be any problems in the future! Facts speak louder than words. I know that you are an alternative medicine practitioner, but alternative medicine requires many years of practice to accumulate experience. From what I see, you don’t give medical consultations very often, so you’re probably not very experienced when it comes to the practical aspect, right? Besides, humans are different from flowers. I have treated a lot of flowers and gone through a lot before I gained experience. What about you?”

When Nora heard this, she said calmly, “Then let’s make a bet.”

“What do you want to bet on?” Lauren asked.

Nora looked at the pot of Ghost Orchids and answered, “That problems will definitely occur with this pot of flowers within an hour.”

Lauren scoffed. “Ms. Smith, stop joking. How can that be? I’ve already cured that pot of flowers! How can anything go wrong with it when it’s so filled with vitality? But since you’ve said so, then okay, I accept the bet, Ms. Smith. If nothing goes wrong with the flowers, then I hope Mr. Hunt can allow Herman and I to return to the Hunt Manor and stay there.”

Nora's lips curled into a smile. "Okay. If something goes wrong with the flowers, then I want you to apologize for wrecking someone else's marriage back then!"

Lauren's pupils shrank.

The biggest humiliation of her life was when she involved herself with Herman's marriage and became the third party persecuted by everyone. Whenever people talked about her these days, they always called her the homewrecker who had successfully become the lawful wife.

Yet Nora had brought it up in public in front of everyone. It was simply infuriating.

There was anger all over Lauren's face. She demanded, "What's the meaning of this, Ms. Smith?"

"You don't dare to make the bet with me?"

Nora raised her brows.

Pushed into a corner, the angry and anxious Lauren could only say, "Fine."

She clenched her fists tightly.

In order to return to the Hunt Manor, as well as to return to the pinnacle of status in New York, she was really holding nothing back. When she thought about it carefully, though, nothing could go wrong with that pot of flowers anyway. Nora was at a complete disadvantage when she made the bet with her.

To be honest, the moment Nora said that the ingredient was too strong, Lauren had already felt a little guilty. She'd actually had some takeaways from her time studying medicine abroad over the years.

However, she strongly believed that even if something were to really go wrong, it would only happen at a later stage.

It was impossible for that to happen within an hour.

She was sure to win the bet.

When she thought about it this way, Lauren didn't feel so unhappy anymore because the bet was clearly to Nora's disadvantage.

After the two parties made the bet, Lauren summoned some people and instructed, "Keep a close watch on this pot of Ghost Orchids. If anything goes wrong, you must notify me immediately!"

No matter how rare the Ghost Orchids were, they were nothing more than a pot of flowers for Lauren. What she cared about was not the flowers but winning the bet.

She spoke very loudly, everyone heard her. Lauren explained with a smile, "We've already made the bet, after all. I'm just afraid someone would deliberately spoil the flowers within the hour because they are sore losers. It would be terrible if people refuse to pay up when that happens."

Iris, however, ignored her. Instead, she pulled Nora to the side, lowered her voice, and asked, "Tell me the truth, are you Orchidance?"

Nora's lips curled into a smile and she nodded.

Iris: "..."

She stared at Nora with a dazed look on her face. "Orchidance is the only person capable of curing Matthew's flowers, why didn't I think of that? No, it's because you are too young. I didn't expect Orchidance to be so young, I always thought that she would be as old as me, or perhaps even older."

Nora looked at her.

After speaking, Iris's immediate thought was not that she now had someone to treat the flowers in her greenhouse, if anything ever happened to them.

On the contrary, she heaved a huge sigh.

She said, "I originally thought that there are only so few people in this world who can cure Matthew's Ghost Orchids because those flowers are really very difficult to treat. When you said that you can cure them, I thought that you were just taking a gamble. But I didn't expect that what was just a one in ten thousand probability for me, would instead be a 100% sure-win probability for you." Nora replied, "Therefore, you have to tell your story now."

Iris was taken aback for a moment. In the end, she waved and said, "Ah well, never mind, this is all meant to be!"

She had also thought things through herself. By taking a gambler's mentality with this, she was also just trying to give herself a ray of hope in the future.

She didn't want to age and die in that suburban villa and be separated from Justin for the rest of her life, either.

All of this had been predestined a long time ago, that was all.

She said, "I hope the two of you won't hate me after you hear my story."

Back then, she had shielded Justin from everything. Now that her son had grown up, it was ultimately time that he paid his debt.

Iris sighed.

Nora patted her shoulder. "We're not afraid."

When one was young, their mother was an almighty figure that shielded them from everything. Now that they had grown up, they were willing to be that almighty figure for their mother.

The two chatted for nearly an hour. When the hour passed after they made the bet, Lauren glanced at the orchid. When she saw that it was still blooming beautifully, she heaved a sigh of relief at once.

She then went up to Iris and Nora. "Ms. Smith, you've lost."

Nora looked at her. "There are still two minutes to an hour."

Lauren smiled and said, "There are only two minutes left, but that pot of flowers is now blooming even more beautifully than before. There is no risk of it wilting at all, so you two are losing for sure."

"That's not necessarily true."

Nora stood up and looked down at the time on her cell phone.

Lauren curled her lips disdainfully and said, "Ms. Smith, to be honest, we are all family. How can there be any grudges among family? Why do we have to draw such a clear line between us? Why don't we just forget about the bet?"

Lest it reflects poorly on us. I'm not someone who would hold grudges against my young ones either. The old madam is getting on in years, though. Herman has always wanted to be filial to his mother and be by her side, so let's not have the Hunts stop him anymore..."

As soon as she said that, a security guard rushed over in a panic and said, "Mrs. Hunt, this is terrible!"

Lauren was taken aback. She turned around and saw that the security guard was actually the one whom she had instructed to keep a close watch over the Ghost Orchids just now!

Lauren frowned. "What are you doing? This is outrageous, why are you in such a panic?!"

The next moment, the security guard said, "The Ghost Orchids are dead!"