

Chapter 1 She Does Not Know Who He Is

It was late at night. A black full-size Lincoln SUV is driving into an extravagant mansion in A City's most expensive suburb. Inside the mansion. Bianca Rayne's eyes were covered with a silk blindfold. He did not want her to know who he was. "Don't be afraid. Take deep breaths. "You can do it, Bianca. There's nothing more important than getting Dad a liver transplant so he can live. It's fine to sacrifice a little for Dad." She could not ignore the sound of the car entering the mansion. Now that it had come to this, all she could do was keep talking to herself, to persuade and comfort herself. When Luke Crawford walked in, his body tall and his spine straight, he immediately saw Bianca, who was standing in his room. She was young, in the prime of her youth— "H-Hello..." She could sense his body approaching, so she instinctively took a step back despite the blindfold, stuttering as she greeted him stiffly. She had thought that the past few days of mental preparation had left her numb to everything, so she would not shy away. Now that it was actually time, though, she still could not help but feel scared. How pathetic. The urge to run was strong. Luke did not know if what he was doing tonight was right, but he did know that he desperately needed to find a woman and have a kid before his next birthday. That was what Old Master Crawford demanded. Luke looked down on the petite girl from above. "What are you afraid of?" The man's voice was deep, mellow, and mesmerizing. Bianca was a little shocked. Why did he have such a young-sounding and melodious voice? How could a middle-aged old man have such an amazing voice?" "I don't have any sexual diseases, neither do I have any sick fetishes," the man said, his voice deep and rich. He seemed to be comforting her. He was certain that she was not shy. No, she was scared of him. Before she could recover, she heard that man continue, "Let's begin." The man spoke without warmth, as though he was announcing the start of a conference. He sounded so spectacularly solemn.

The next second, she was lifted into his arms! ... This was the first time Bianca had been carried by a man like this, and her heart nearly stopped. “If it hurts, remember to tell me to stop!” Luke said again. He thought he was being quite considerate by reminding her. This only scared Bianca even more, though. He reached out his hand to grab her. She retreated away from him. “Don’t retreat!” The man barked harshly, his Adam’s apple bobbing. He abruptly grabbed her fair and slender wrist, pulling her into his embrace and warning her in a low voice, “Don’t back away.” Bianca did not dare to pull away anymore, because his words made her face flush in an instant. Still, if he really was a young man with money and good looks, why would he have to pay for a child with a normal woman like her? Could it be that he was really, really ugly? So ugly that no woman would be willing to have his child, even though he was filthy rich? “I have a question.” “Speak.” The man’s voice was filled with impatience, and his warm hand was peeling off her clothes with some haste. “It was supposed to be an IVF procedure, so why... Why did you want to do it the natural way suddenly?” That was the question plaguing her mind. The man’s warm breath blew on her forehead. As soon as she asked that, she gasped at the sudden touch. Her little yelp immediately put some emotion in Luke’s voice. He said, “I don’t want to lose a single chromosome, so I prefer it if we cut the middle man. Is that a good enough reason for you?” The next moment, he pinched her tightly with his large hand! “Ow...” There was a thin layer of sweat on Bianca’s forehead. Her brain was not working... She struggled, but he pinned her down forcefully and easily kept her motionless! She was a tender flowering bud. Luke knew that if he had to do this if he wanted children, and he thought that the only way he could ease his guilty conscience— was by treating her as gently as he could. He frowned slightly, his breathing growing heavy. It felt like he was about to lose control of his body’s primal instincts. That night, Bianca felt like a blade of leaf drifting on the water. She

experienced all sorts of feelings, pain, tears, helplessness, drowsiness... .. Bianca did not know when he left. When she woke up, she looked at the clock and saw that it was three in the morning. The butler, Faye Thomas, was not asleep yet. She walked over to Bianca and said very respectfully, "Allow me to take you to the bathroom, Miss Rayne!" "Thanks, but I can handle it myself." Bianca was a little dazed, and the dried tears on her face made her skin feel a little stiff. She could not bring herself to expose her unsightly body to the female butler. Faye retreated out of the room. After that, Bianca got out of bed and stumbled toward the bathroom. By the time she washed herself down and returned to the room, the sheets and covers in the bedroom had been switched out. That night, she had a dream. She dreamed of that year when she was in middle school, studying in the small town her grandfather was from— It was a spring full of showers, and she was with her female classmates, looking over the wall as they sneakily peeked at the basketball competition going on in the court of the high school next year. The idol of the school was so cool and handsome, his every move stealing their hearts as he played ball. That was the senior who had transferred from another school, the boy called Crawford. ... The next day, Bianca woke up, her entire body feeling unnaturally weary and sore. She stood in front of the washbasin, holding up her toothbrush and staring at the mirror for a long time. Dazed, she remembered the dream she had last night. That upperclassman in her memories, Crawford, was the prince of every girl's impractical dreams. Back then, she was small, worthless, and bullied at school. She did not even understand what love between a man and a woman meant yet, so when she was at her most helpless and desperate, she had greedily fantasized that she had an older brother who would protect her. Later, when she reached the age to entertain her first thoughts of romance, she realized that the boy who suddenly appeared in her mind was that upperclassman named Crawford who had only studied for one year at the high school next door before

vanishing. Her thoughts wandered off, but she was soon called back to her senses by the water overflowing from the sink. She shook her head and inwardly cursed herself for being so repulsive! 'Bianca, you don't deserve to like him anymore!' ... She locked herself in the room. That night, Bianca received a message. That man was here again. Faye was quite surprised. After all, the young master had been here just last night, so why was he back here again tonight? The mansion erupted into a flurry of activity. They had to get everything ready ASAP! Bianca already felt like her body was falling apart, but she could not bring herself to make any requests regarding the frequency... Luke was wearing a pair of classy black trousers and a white shirt. After he entered the mansion, he went straight to the bedroom Bianca was staying in. She did not dare to say anything. She barely even breathed! The room was so quiet that even the sound of a pin dropping would be unbearably loud! Luke held his coat in his right hand, lifting his left hand. His eyes were fixed tightly on the blindfolded woman, and then he put his large palm on the back of her neck, pulling her toward him gently until she was right up against his body! Bianca stumbled, stiffened, and held her breath. She did not dare to move even a muscle! Luke lowered his head to look at the girl who was practically in his embrace. His throat flexed, and he pursed his thin lips, his gaze falling on her clean and fair face, about the size of his palm. His eyes gradually grew hotter, his gaze scalding as it moved downward slowly. Finally, he looked at her tender lips... However, the contract had clearly stated one thing: no kissing. Damn it, he was actually starting to regret one of the conditions he set! "Let's begin," the man said, his voice hoarse. He threw his coat aside and turned off the lights as he lifted her into his arms. She furrowed her brow deeply in the darkness and sank her teeth into the pillow! She did not dare to make a single sound!

Chapter 2 Successfully Conceived

Once he was done, the man left. Bianca was exhausted to the point of passing out. She stayed curled up on the bed for a long, long time. The doctors said it was easier for her to conceive this way. ... This continued for more nights than she could keep track of. Luke Crawford would come to the mansion every night, no matter how late his work kept him. He never failed to show up. The middle-aged driver who followed Luke around, Charles Finn, was Faye's husband. Both of them were experienced in these things, so they really wanted to give their young master a word of advice. These things should be taken slowly! Rushing it would only be unhealthy! However, their haughty and aloof young master was also known for being a harsh employer with the cold face of a devil. He was famous for being hard to handle! The couple had no choice but to keep their mouths shut! They could only watch as that young girl was rendered limp and listless every day thanks to their young master's energetic demands. She looked like she had all the energy sapped clean out of her. This was the last night of the month. Bianca seriously could not read this man's approach here. Sometimes he would be gentle, but at other times, he seemed to be determined to cause her pain. Between this and that, it felt like her body was starting to disobey her too. Once they were done, the man cleaned himself up and put on an expensive watch, looking like a proper gentleman. He addressed the girl curled up under the covers coolly, saying, "I await the good news." With that, he left. The bedroom fell silent once more. To Bianca, this stranger, whose name and looks she did not know, was nothing short of horrifying! He seemed to hide within him a monster that had just been released, and that terrified her! That night, he left the mansion later than usual. She heard him leave the room and stand outside the mansion. There was then the click of a lighter, sounding especially loud in the empty mansion. She just had to get up. She just had to sit up and look outside the window, and she would know what he looked like. However, she was afraid that what she saw would be a

nightmare... ... A month later. The early detection pregnancy test Bianca was holding finally showed two red lines. They were a very deep shade of red. She had been anxiously waiting for this positive result for the entire month. In the meantime, other than Faye, she had not seen anyone else from the other end of the deal, not even that man. If she had not managed to conceive in that month, she would have to continue doing those things with that man at night, just like they did last month— Yet now she finally tested positive for pregnancy! Thank goodness! She just wanted to deliver this child safely and complete her mission, so she could spend the rest of her life slowly forgetting this harrowing experience. Everything would one day fade into the past, right? Once the other party found out that she had successfully conceived, they immediately arranged an intensive check-up routine for her. When Faye first approached her with the follow-up deal, Bianca had only asked for two things. Firstly, she wanted to keep going to school as usual until she began to show. Only then would she take some time off from school in preparation for the birth. Secondly, she wanted to stay in her rental room in the meantime. She felt more at ease there. She was not used to all that space in the mansion, not in the slightest. “I’ll have to ask my boss about your requests. After all, the baby in your belly is his child!” Faye instantly turned around and made the call. Standing next to the floor-to-ceiling window high atop the hospital, she recounted Bianca’s two requests to her boss over the phone. A minute later, Faye ended the call. “The boss has agreed to your requests.” Bianca nodded, thanking her somewhat dazedly. ... That afternoon, once she was back in her rented room, she called the hospital. “Hello, is this Dr. Joyce? May I ask about my dad? How is he?” “Don’t worry,” the doctor replied. “We received the funds and we’ll have a donor soon enough too. We’re already preparing for the surgery, and it won’t be long!” “Thanks.” Bianca did not know what else she should say. She had earned both the money and the donor by selling out her

own body. Should she feel glad? Should she feel devastated? Neither! After she hung up, she lowered her head and sprawled herself onto the table, staring into space by herself. A long while later, her tears drenched her lashes nevertheless. After a pause, she used her palm to rub away the tears that were spelling everywhere. She then forced herself to smile. Her dad was saved. That was definitely something to be glad about. ... Five months later. By now, her stomach was really starting to show. Faye was fully in charge of handling Bianca's leave from school. When the butler left the school, the principal personally walked her to the day, shaking her hand and bidding her goodbye respectfully. Bianca stood a distance away, feeling a little surprised that someone like the principal had to treat Faye with that much respect. Did that mean Faye's employer, the child's father, was really such a hotshot? Still, Bianca purposely tried not to think about all of this. Faye walked over to where she was standing next to the bus stop, saying, "Don't worry. I took time off for you using the excuse that you're not feeling well. No one knows that you're pregnant, and we'll all keep it a secret." That put Bianca's heart at ease. That afternoon. Bianca went to the hospital to visit her father. She was only eighteen this year, yet she was here, pregnant with the child of a man she did not know. There was no way her father, Kevin Rayne, would accept such a thing! Thankfully, it was currently in the autumn, so she could wear more clothing to hide her bump! She wore a thin woolen sweater, but her stomach was showing, so she wore a loose hoodie on top of that. At least this way, she managed to hide her figure! This was the private hospital with the best medical technology and skills in A City. Bianca arrived at the floor where her father was warded. She made her way to the room with an air of familiarity, but before she could go in, she heard her stepmother, Jennifer Lee's voice...

Chapter 3 The Twins Are Born

“Hear me out, Kevin. We only have two daughters, right? I know, Marie isn’t your daughter by birth, but she’s called you her father all her life...” Before Jennifer finished that sentence, Kevin interrupted her. He had been recuperating in bed for many months now, and he was already feeling much better. “What are you trying to say? Just tell me straight. After all, I’m your loving husband.” “I know you love me and our Marie..” Jennifer held Kevin’s hand, so thin that it was practically skin over bone, and said softly, “You mentioned that you’d send Bianca overseas to study after she graduates from high school right? Our Marie is only two years older than Bianca, and all she does these days is hang around bars. She’s not going to class properly at all, and I’m worried sick. After all, she is my only biological child! Kevin, I want Marie to study overseas with Bianca!” Bianca stood outside the door, frowning slightly. Marie was twenty years old this year, and she had somehow learned how to play hooky from someone back in her second year of middle school. She smoked, drank, and stayed out all night. Those were all labels describing how ‘special’ this Marie was. Bianca had no love lost for this non-biological older sister of hers! Kevin Rayne was no millionaire. His entire life’s savings amounted up to exactly six hundred thousand, and he worked his heart out every day for this second family of his. In fact, he had worked so hard that he fell ill, his liver failing him completely. The doctor even declared that he was on his deathbed, yet he still refused to touch any of his six hundred thousand in savings for his own treatment. Two months ago, Kevin explicitly stated that he was giving up on getting treated. Once the patient had given up on life, there was nothing anyone else could do, be it the doctors or his own biological daughter. Kevin even tearfully forced his daughter to hear out his will, saying, “Bianca, I didn’t accomplish much in my life. All I did was save you this six hundred thousand. Don’t be too upset after I die. After the funeral, take this money and go study overseas! Live your best life! Don’t be as greedy as your

mother, and don't be as useless as your father! As long as you take that to heart, I don't mind dropping dead right now!" Even now, Bianca's eyes reddened whenever she recalled that moment. She knew very well that her father was going to save that six hundred thousand for her studies even if it meant sacrificing his life. That was why she had no choice but to make that deal in secret, in exchange for some funds and a suitable donor for her father. She stood outside the door, looking at how her father and stepmother professed their love for each other. Instead of feeling glad, she just felt an unprecedented sense of frustration. Finally, Bianca did not go in. When she went downstairs, she happened to bump into Marie. "Oh, if it isn't our good little Bianca." Marie shoved Bianca lightly with one hand, a cigarette for women held between her fingers. She then blew a mouthful of smoke into Bianca's face and then assessed Bianca's body up and down, clicking her tongue. "You're eighteen now, and your father's dying without the money for his medical fees. Whadaya say? Wanna try selling out a few more times? You could keep your dad alive for a while longer." Bianca looked at her revolting older sister evenly, her expression blank. It felt as though her frustration was building up so much that she would explode if she did not vent, so she spat in Marie's face, "I love your suggestion. It must feel so relieving, like letting a huge one rip!" Marie glared at her with her beautiful eyes. Bianca's attitude had instantly ticked her off! "Damned brat, so you have the guts to talk back to me now?!" Bianca walked away, dejected. Marie was so angry that her hand shook. She turned around and yelled at the top of her voice, "There you go, acting all holy again! Well, I can't wait to see when you show your true colors! Even your dad said that your mom's shameless! I think you should get yourself checked out at a decent hospital, just in case you turn out to be the b*stard child of some one-night stand!" ... When Bianca was seven months pregnant. She could clearly feel that the life inside her belly was growing much more energetic now. It would

kick her and that gave her an unprecedented happiness. After a while, she started to imagine what the baby would look like once it was born. Would it be a boy? Or a girl? Her stomach was so huge. Was it getting too much nutrition? Since Bianca overheard her father agreeing to send Marie overseas as well at the hospital that day, she stopped going to the hospital quite so often. It was not that she stopped loving her father. It was just that her stomach was getting larger, and she was worried that her father would be able to tell that something was wrong if she visited him too often. The heavy down clothes could help her hide it, but it was not infallible. Besides, Jennifer was constantly by Kevin's side. Bianca did not know if she was really that concerned about her husband's health or if she was more worried about saving that six hundred thousand for Marie. Bianca could only hold her head and hope it was the former. ... A little while later, Bianca found out that her father had gotten out of bed and back to work, doing overtime and going out on business trips without a moment's rest. Bianca was angry and exasperated, and she tried to persuade her father several times over the phone, but it was all to no avail. After the new year. Her expected due date had arrived. She stayed in the best maternity room the private hospital had to offer, and there were a few female doctors caring for her all day, every day. They ran tests and watched over her every need, making sure not to miss a single thing. Bianca never tried to find out who the baby's father was, but these people would sometimes discuss him openly in front of her. They never said his name, but Bianca could be certain that the baby's father was definitely no ordinary businessman. Bianca did not know the slightest thing about her own condition, but she later heard the results of the doctors' discussion. They wanted her to go for a c-section. After that, she was wheeled into the operation theater. She did not feel any pain during the process. Maybe it was hurt a lot after the anesthesia wore off. The child had lived inside her for about nine months, but now it had suddenly been taken out of her! They

had to go their separate ways now! The feeling of parting with her own flesh and blood pained her terribly. It was a sharp ache that pierced her in the heart. Before she knew it, her tears flowed past the bridge of her nose and dripped onto her cheek. From the very beginning, all of this was just a fair and formal deal, right? So why did her heart still hurt like this?! Faye had been keeping an eye on Bianca's emotions the entire time, watching as she wept helplessly. Finally, when Bianca was wheeled out, Faye executed her orders and told Bianca, "You're only nineteen. This matter will only ever be a secret you must hide for life. Child, I hope you will shake this off soon, and I hope you have a good life from now on." Faye was consoling her, but the words were cruel. "Can you tell me if... It's a boy... or a girl...?" Bianca asked weakly. "It's a girl, and she's perfectly healthy," Faye replied just as Old Master Crawford told her to. They wanted to avoid any unnecessary trouble in the future, so they had no choice but to lie to Bianca. In truth, she had given birth to a pair of twins, a healthy baby boy and a healthy baby girl. Bianca closed her eyes, her face pale. She was exhausted and sleepy. A girl. There was a new life in the world now. It was her daughter. ... Bianca only stayed in the hospital for ten days. She could not stand doing nothing in the hospital all day. She could not stand the pain of having her thoughts centered around her daughter and nothing else. Once she left the hospital, Bianca returned to her rented room. The first thing she did was call her father. It was Kevin's phone, but Jennifer was the one who picked up. "Bianca? Your father's busy. What's the matter?" Bianca paused. Since when had it become so difficult for her to reach her father? "When will he be free?" she asked. "I can't say for sure. Your dad's working really hard to make sure you can go overseas. Should I tell him to call you once he's free?" Jennifer said. "I'll wait for his call." Bianca lowered her head and hung up the call. In truth, she knew that Jennifer would not pass the message. Right now, she could count her living relatives on one hand. Her father had

gone to another city and was working desperately for this strange family of theirs. Her newborn baby daughter might be in this city, or she could be somewhere else. From the moment she was born, that baby only belonged to the man behind that deal. As for her mother, it was as though that person had never existed at all. Bianca did not know what the woman looked like, where she was, what kind of a life she led, or if she ever once missed her daughter.

Chapter 4 Half Of Her Blood

Bianca shook her head and forced herself to not think about the mother whose name and face she did not know. That woman was a stranger to her. After a while, her phone rang. The caller was Bianca's best friend, Nina Langdon. Bianca picked up. "Hi! It's been a long time since we video-called. Why are you trying to avoid me?" Nina complained into the phone. She rested her cheek on her hand dejectedly, saying, "Are you sure you wanna go to the UK, Bea? What if someone bullies you there? My fists don't reach that far. "Also! I hear that guys mature early overseas, and loads of school dorms are co-ed! You gotta be really careful about that when you go there! Hey, do you understand what I'm getting at? Forget it, I'll just be open with you. If you really can't hold back when you see those foreign hotties! Remember to use protection!" On her screen, Bianca could see that Nina was sitting in a small restaurant. It seemed like she had just ordered her food and was waiting for it to arrive. On the wall of the restaurant behind Nina, there was a fairly large television screen. The TV was reporting some entertainment news with a very clear caption. It stated that a 56-year-old tycoon recently had a daughter! However, nobody knew who the girl's mother was. "Bea? "Bianca! Are you even listening to me?" Nina saw that Bianca had gone completely motionless on her screen, and her emotions were clearly out of whack too. Nina hastily shook her screen, saying, "Bianca, can you hear me? What's the matter? Don't scare me!" Bianca was quite sensitive right now. When she left the hospital, she swore an oath to

never think about the child she had carried inside her. Still, how could that actually be possible? That baby had half of her blood. Bianca was going mad. She was really going to lose her mind. What good would harping on it do, though? She had to stop thinking about it. She hung up and washed her face with cold water. That did nothing to calm her down. Perhaps it was because she had been abandoned by her mother since she was a child, so Bianca projected her childhood experiences onto her baby. She could not forget her ice-cold childhood. She did not have a mother, only her grandfather and father. Her father had been earning a living away from home, and her grandfather gradually grew older. Their neighbors never stopped gossiping about her parents, their negative voices echoing through her childhood days. She grew up being bullied, in a shroud of self-deprecation. She did not know why her lack of a mother made her the target of bullying, but their verbal assaults and curses filled her ears. Sometimes, she hated her mother. When she closed her eyes, all she could think of now was that middle-aged tycoon on the entertainment news report on TV. He recently had a daughter, but no one knew who the girl's mother was... Now, she had become the type of woman she hated the most, a mother who gave birth to a baby but did not take responsibility for the child. She stumbled back to her room and picked up her phone again, searching up news about that tycoon and his child. The reports showed that the man was fifty-six years old and balding, but he kept in decent shape and he was not short. For a while there, Bianca could not tell if this old man was really her baby's father. Oh yeah, there was his voice too! Bianca started searching up videos of that tycoon too, trying to hear that old man's voice. She wanted to know if it was the same voice as the one she heard those nights. Unfortunately, she searched for a long time, until her phone ran out of electricity, but she still could not find a video with his voice in it. She was filled with despair. ... In the east side of A City. At the house of the Crawfords, one

of the top dogs even among the wealthy elites. It was just about time to eat, and the dinner table in the mansion was covered with a magnificent spread of food. Almost every member of the family was here, men and women alike. Two wet nurses pushed in a pair of baby cots, bringing them to Old Master Crawford's side. Old Master Crawford was sitting in his wheelchair as he looked at his fair rosy great-grandson in his cot. "This child looks just like Luke. I'm sure he'll be a formidable figure when he grows up as well!" The old master was quite pleased. As for every other Crawford sitting around the table, they smiled slightly. Even if they were angry, they did not dare to show it. Old Master Crawford played with his great-grandson for a long time before raising his head and addressing the entire family firmly. "If it weren't for Luke and his ceaseless hard work over the past two years, the Crawfords would have long since fallen out of glory! Any objection when I say that?" No one had any objections, but no one explicitly agreed either. Despite his advanced age, Old Master Crawford still had a keen eye. He looked around him and took in everyone's expression. "I'm old now, and it's time I handed over the family business to the young people." With that, he turned to Louis Crawford and said, "Louis, you should tail your older brother from now on, and learn from him!" "Sure," Louis said flippantly before falling silent again. "Dad, what do you mean by that?!" Susan Armstrong leaped to her feet, her expression filled with resentment. "Luke is your grandson, yes, but so is our Louis! You're breaking your daughter-in-law's heart here! How is my son Louis any worse than Luke?!" It was only because Luke Crawford was not here today that Susan dared to stand up and say all that. Old Master Crawford only ever had one son, and his son had two sons, Luke and Louis Crawford. Luke was mature and down to earth, but he could be ruthless when he needed to. No one dared to say a word against him when it came to doing business. Louis, however, was known for being a playboy. He was not stupid, but he used all of his wits on

getting girls. Other than himself, no one knew if he had any ambition or desire for a career. Old Master Crawford ignored Susan's protests. Choosing an heir was a matter of utmost importance, and if he let his emotions get in the way of his decision-making, if he made a single mistake, he might end up destroying everything the Crawfords built up over the years. "Start a video call. There's something I want to discuss with Luke," instructed Old Master Crawford to his servants. Someone immediately started a video call and placed the device instead of the old master. "What's the matter, Grandfather?" Luke asked from the other end. He was on an outstation trip, and it seemed he was sitting in a solemn-looking office right now. "It's about time we gave my great-grandson a name. I have an idea, what do you think of Clarence? Clarence Crawford. I want him to grow up with a clear eye, to have a mind that is pure and white!" said the old master. Susan was furious at being ignored, but she did not dare to say anything, so she sat down crossly without a word. On the other end of the call, Luke did not respond to Old Master Crawford immediately. Instead, he frowned on the screen and stayed silent for a moment before saying with determination, "Grandfather, I get what you mean about a pure mind and a clear eye. In that case, how about Blanche instead? It also means pure white." Blanche Crawford. "Sounds good!" The old man immediately looked at his great-grandchild's face in his cot. "You have a name now, Baby Bea." Old Master Crawford was not going to interfere with his great-granddaughter's name because her father felt that daughters should be pampered like princesses. She would be allowed to choose her own official name once she could decide for herself. ... Time passed in the blink of an eye. Soon it was time for them to go overseas. Bianca did not leave the country with Marie, because Jennifer had arranged for Marie to go to the UK one month in advance, so she could get used to life there. "Where you get over there, I'll be relying on you to take care of Bianca and Marie," Kevin said solemnly to Jean Langdon at the airport. Jean

was over 180 centimeters tall and quite the perfect looker. He was Nina's older brother, and he had long since intended to go overseas for his studies. He just could not decide which country he wanted to go to. When he heard his younger sister say that Bianca was going to the UK, he immediately made up his mind to go with her. Every man might have a girl in his mind, a girl as wonderful as his first love. For Jean, that girl was Bianca. "Take care of Bea." Nina hugged her older brother and whispered into his ear, "You can forget about that Marie Lee, though. Her stink might rub off on you." Jean, "...". When the two of them lined up at the immigration checkpoint, Bianca kept turning around, hot tears in her eyes as she waved her aging father goodbye.

Chapter 5 Return, Five Years Later

When Bianca next set foot in the busy A City once more, five years had passed. She had been away for almost two thousand days and nights. It was not a very long time, but it was not nothing either. Back then, she had been pushed about mercilessly by destiny. She had been completely powerless! Now, she just wanted to use her own strength to take control of her life with her own hands. It was morning. "Bea, over here—" Nina wound down her car window and waved at Bianca, who was walking out of her suburb. Time had passed. Five years later, the two of them were no longer clueless girls of eighteen or nineteen. Bianca and Jean had returned to the country together yesterday, and Nina had been the one to pick them up from the airport. That night, Jean had taken Bianca back to the Langdons' place for dinner. Mr. and Mrs. Langdon were more than happy with Bianca as their future daughter-in-law. That morning, Jean had wanted to go to the interview at the company with Bianca, but something came up and he could not join her. Bianca got into Nina's car and sat in the passenger's seat, wearing her seatbelt. "Do you know what my mom said last night after you left with my brother?" Nina asked. "What did she say?" Bianca was worried that Jean's parents would not like her. "My mom

said, ‘Look at Bianca! She’s fair and beautiful, gentle and sweet. Now look at you! Why are you two different? You lay about at home, you’re rough like a man, and you swear like a sailor!’ Nina could not help but touch her friend’s soft face as she said that, clicking her tongue. “The air out there sure is good for your skin.” “As if! You’ve never left home before, so you don’t know how tough it is.” Bianca smacked her naughty hand away. “Focus on the road.” The two of them chatted on the way. It was more than forty minutes past eight when they reached T Corporation. “I hope my brother isn’t late. The boss is a heartless tyrant, you know!” Nina muttered to herself as she lowered her head and hurried her brother on WeChat. A heartless tyrant? Nina was making Bianca nervous now too. She turned on her phone and went online, searching up information on the boss of T Corporation again. She was hoping that she might find something that could help her during the interview. Most of the stuff she found online was nothing more than baseless rumors about the rich and famous. The president of T Corporation, part of Crawford Industries, was a man called Luke Crawford. He was 29 years old this year, but no one knew if he was single or married. No members of the press had yet to find out anything about his private life all this time. Actually, the Crawford name still held a little significance for Bianca. However, those were just her innocent childish fantasies from her past. By now, she had long since buried those dreams in the deepest corner of her heart. The news also reported that there was a huge incident five years ago when the two Crawford sons fought over the family business. Louis Crawford, the legitimate heir that the outside world had acknowledged, was suddenly removed overnight. On the other hand, Old Master Crawford suddenly adopted another unknown heir to the Crawford name, Luke Crawford, and the latter successfully took over the family business, eventually inheriting the dying Crawford Industries. An unknown heir to the Crawford name... The author of the article was subtly hinting that

Luke Crawford was, to put it bluntly, an illegitimate son of the wealthy family. Bianca looked at her phone thoughtfully. ... The T Corporation tower was so tall that it immediately intimidated anyone the moment they stepped into it. Jean was in a rush to get here. He had read up on the company's history before, and when he saw how huge the building was now, he grew inevitably worried. He did not want to embarrass himself in front of Bianca. That was why he was not allowed to fail this interview! In a workshop somewhere in the tower, there were five executives on the interview panel. One of them was none other than the highest-level boss here at T Corporation— Luke Crawford. After yet another graduate from a famous school completed their interview, one of the other interviewees glanced at Luke, trying to read his expression for some of his thoughts. However, he soon noticed that the boss' attention had somehow shifted to the surveillance camera screen. What was he looking at? "Next," said one of the other interviewees. The camera was showing the footage outside, where all sorts of men and women looking for a job were waiting for their interview. By watching how they behaved outside, the interviewees could clearly deduce how the candidates were like in private. Luke's gaze was deep and complicated as he stared at one of the girls. No, she was a woman. Bianca was twenty-three now, and she no longer had her initial childlike innocence. She had developed spectacularly well, be it in her figure or her small smiles. Everything about her exuded a unique femininity. Luke's mind was abruptly brought back to that time five years ago, when this woman moaned and cried out as he made love to her every night. ... "My brother will be here soon." Nina nudged Bianca outside in the corridor. Bianca came back to her senses and kept away the phone she had been looking at for so long. Was it because so much time had passed, and that was meddling with her memories? When Bianca looked at a picture of the boss, Luke Crawford, she found him somewhat familiar. He really did look a little like that upperclassman who

played basketball back in that high school. They had the same last name too. Just then, Jean ran up to the stairs and walked up to Bianca, rubbing her hair fondly. "Sorry I'm late." "It's fine. It isn't our turn yet, anyway," Bianca said to Jean, perfectly understanding. Next to them, Nina pouted. "You're blinding me with your PDAs, guys. Have some pity for this single pringle and tone it down, please! I still have use for my eyes!" "You're only delaying the inevitable. Should you dig your eyes out before I marry Bianca and bring her home, then?" "Do it! Marry her!" Nina's eyes were practically shining as she told her brother, "Mom and Dad were more than happy with Bea last night. Once both of you settle down with your jobs, you should just hurry it up and get hitched." Jean nodded and could not help but glance at Bianca next to him. Bianca was feeling a little troubled. She was very happy with her life right now. In fact, she had to thank Jean for his tireless care and guidance over the past five years. He was the reason she had managed to overcome the trauma of her past. Before Jean confessed to her, she had noticed that he had feelings for her. Her past experiences had left her feeling small and worthless, so back then, she had instinctively avoided Jean. She even avoided all men who tried to approach her. During all those days that held not a hint of light for her, Jean never once stopped pursuing her and caring for her. Finally, he even managed to uncover her painful past. To Bianca's surprise, Jean did not abandon her. He did not even think that it was her fault for 'bearing a stranger's baby'. Bianca thought she was very fortunate in that sense. "Next up, Jean Langdon!" "I'll be off now." Jean squeezed Bianca's hand. "Go on," Bianca said with a nod. When Jean pushed the door open and walked into the room, he immediately felt a sharp gaze on him. He followed it and traced it back to the famous young boss of T Corporation. Luke had seen everything Jean did with Bianca outside. The interview was very formal, solemn, and professional. Jean was very capable himself, so he answered every single one of the interviewers' questions

calmly and composedly. The way he carried himself earned him plenty of brownie points. Luke's eyes turned back to the camera screens again. On the screen, Bianca was staring intently at the door, biting her lip softly and squeezing her fingers. She seemed to be very concerned about a certain someone's interview results inside the room.

Chapter 6 Heart Racing

Ten minutes later, Jean was done with his interview. He pushed the door open and walked out. Bianca immediately got to his feet. "How was it?" "The interviewers ask some tough questions, but it isn't anything we can't handle." Jean could not help but kiss Bianca on the forehead, saying calmly, "Overall, it's not bad." Bianca heaved a sigh of relief. "Next, Bianca Rayne," the female secretary called out. Bianca hurriedly straightened out her clothing and went inside anxiously. The second she walked into the room, Luke looked at her with a complicated gaze. Bianca sat down properly and raised her head, meeting each interviewer's eyes, one at a time. After that, she introduced herself briefly. "Good morning, everyone. First of all, thank you for giving me this opportunity to attend this interview. My name is Bianca Rayne." Since she decided to return to this country and find a job here, she had come up with plenty of interview openers in her mind. It may not be the most creative way to begin, but it was solid enough and faultless. The interview continued on. Luke assessed her with his cold gaze. Perhaps his stare was just too piercing. While Bianca responded to all of the interview questions expertly, she felt extremely uncomfortable all over. It did not just feel like someone was glaring daggers at her. Instead, it felt like a peculiar type of thorn pricking her all over her body. In truth, Bianca had glanced at Luke too when she first walked into the room. Nevertheless, this was a formal interview, and she had to treat it seriously. Although she had plenty of questions in her heart, she did not dare to let her guard down and become distracted. "Miss Rayne, are you married?"

Luke's cool voice suddenly interrupted the interviewers, asking a question that left all the professional interviewers speechless. All the interviewers stopped their formal exchange with Bianca, turning to look at their big boss in unison. He was part of the panel too. "No, I'm not," Bianca said, trying to calm herself down. Her heart was actually already racing. "In that case, do you have someone you intend to marry?" Luke frowned and asked again. Bianca paused for a moment before she nodded and replied, "I do." The interviewers were all feeling quite lost. Why was their boss asking this question? Their short conversation allowed Bianca to get a better look at Luke's gorgeous features. Now that she had seen him in person, he did look a lot like that upperclassman from the high school next door back then. This successful businessman was vastly different from the boy that had celebrated his youth in school, though. Be it in his presence or the expression on his face, Luke Crawford seemed to her like a cold and ruthless man. ... The interview was finally over. Bianca walked out of the room, feeling weak in the knees. "How was it? Tell me!" Nina was the first to run up to her and ask. Bianca was stumped, so she said, "The interviewer asked me if I'm married, and if I'm not, if there's anyone I intend to marry." Jean frowned when he heard that. What kind of a stupid question was that? It was infringing on her privacy. However, Nina said, "Oh, that's normal here in this country. In fact, they're being polite by not asking if you have kids." "But why would they ask something like that?" Bianca asked in confusion as they went downstairs. "Because kids will get in the way of your career," Nina replied, looking at her brother and Bianca. "Most local companies discriminate against married women with children. You only recently got back here, so you just gotta get used to it." ... That afternoon. Bianca and Jean both received calls informing them that they would have a two-month probationary period. If they passed all the tests during the next two months, they would be able to stay at T Corporation permanently as official

staff members. The next day. Jean and Nina picked Bianca up, and they went to work together. “I plan on buying a car so we won’t have to take my lil sis’s car after this,” Jean said to Bianca before they walked into the design department’s work area. “What, you don’t want me as a third wheel?” Nina teased, purposely walking between the two of them. Bianca smiled and said, “Neither of you has to pick me up starting tomorrow. It’s too much trouble for you to make such a long detour to my place, and it’s very convenient for me to take the subway anyway.” ... It was the first day of work. Bianca was unnaturally serious at work. That afternoon, Jean was suddenly dragged out on an outstation trip by one of their designer seniors in the department. Before he left, Jean grabbed the laptop he designated solely for work and gave Bianca a hurried heads-up before he had to go downstairs. Actually, Jean was feeling pretty confused himself. What was the design department playing at? Seriously, taking a rookie out on a business trip? What if he worked too slowly and dragged down the team’s overall efficiency? Bianca did not have the time to wonder about that, though. She quickly familiarized herself with the nuts and bolts of her job. When it was about time to get off from work, Nina walked up to Bianca and said, “You done? Come to my place for dinner. Your future mother-in-law’s invitation.” Bianca was just getting used to the company’s best building blueprints over the years. When she heard that, she raised her head and said awkwardly, “I just got told I have to stay for overtime...” Nina’s eyes widened, and she hurriedly ran back to her workstation to check her emails. Dang, there really was overtime! It was true that designers had to stay overtime quite often, but Bianca and her brother were especially unfortunate here. One was sent outstation on the first day on the job, while the other had to stay back. The team ate takeaway together for dinner before continuing to bury their heads in their work. At half-past ten that night. The supervisor finally allowed Nina and the other two girls to go home. Bianca had to keep going,

though. Her biological clock was going haywire, so Bianca was actually quite exhausted by now. She stood up and took her cup to get herself some coffee. When she returned with her coffee, though, her supervisor saw her and said, “The big boss wants this blueprint. Hurry up and bring it to her.” Bianca immediately put her cup down and took the blueprint, leaving the design department. There were only three people left in the design department, a supervisor, a senior designer, and her, a glorified intern. Take the blueprint to the boss, huh? As Bianca walked into the elevator, Luke Crawford’s delicate features appeared in her mind. The elevator went up, all the way to the top floor. Bianca ventured around and finally found the presidential office. She knocked on the door. “Come in.” The man’s voice was completely lacking warmth, but it was deep and rich. Bianca went in, walking toward the large desk in the office with the cold color scheme. She placed the blueprint on the desk, saying, “This is the blueprint you wanted, sir.” Luke was also focused on his work, so he just reached out his hand to accept the blueprint before holding it up for examination. When Bianca was about to leave, he suddenly raised his head to look at her. Bianca did not want to seem rude, so she had to keep standing there. Could there be something the president wanted with her? Luke’s gaze lingered on her for a long while. After five years, this woman had become even fairer and more voluptuous. Both her looks and her aura were her exquisite. “You can call it a day now. Go home and get prepared, because you’ll be going on a business trip with me tomorrow.” Luke pulled his gaze away from her and turned it back onto his work. Bianca wanted to say that she was not capable enough to bear such a huge responsibility as of yet, but Luke had given those orders quite coldly and stiffly. His tone brooked no argument. All she could do was nod and leave the room. Luke turned to look at her again. Her back was beautiful, particularly her slender and flexible waist. It was only

a long while later when the man realized that everything from his throat to his chest had gone numb.

Chapter 7 Jean Acting Strange

Bianca left. Luke suddenly put down the blueprint he had been holding. He stood up and left his workstation, walking toward his wine cabinet instead. There, he took out a glass and filled half of it with wine, draining the whole thing with a frown. This cursed lust! It was already quite late when Bianca left the company, but thankfully there was one last subway to take her home. Once she reached home, the first thing she did was reply to Jean's messages on WeChat. After that, she pulled out her luggage and started to organize the things she needed for her trip tomorrow. Just then, her phone rang. The caller ID said it was Jean. "Aren't you asleep yet? I thought I told you to rest early instead of calling me," Bianca said in concern when she picked up. "I'm not done with work yet, so I brought the stuff back to the hotel room to continue overtime." Jean continued, asking her, "I saw your text earlier. Why are you going outstation too? Who will you be going with?" "I don't really know who yet. I'll have to wait until tomorrow morning to find out," Bianca replied. "If there are men going with you, remember to stay away from them," Jean reminded her. "After all, we just started working, so you don't know them well enough yet." "Alright, I got it," Bianca said. Immediately after that, she suddenly heard a hammering sound on the other end. It sounded like someone knocking on the door. No, rather than knocking, it sounded more like someone trying to beat the door down! "What's the matter?" Bianca asked nervously. "N-Nothing." Jean was stuttering all of a sudden, but then he said quickly, "Talk to you later? I'll check on what's happening outside and then report back to you." He hung up before Bianca could tell him to be careful out there. She lowered her head to look at her luggage and then at the phone she was holding, its screen dimming after the call ended. Bianca was worried now, concerned

that Jean would encounter trouble out there too, with unfamiliar people in unfamiliar places. Nothing happened that night. The next day, Bianca received a call from her colleague first thing in the morning. She waited for her colleague outside her compound, her weariness showing on her face. She had stayed up until the wee hours of the morning last night, waiting for Jean's call to assure her everything was fine, but he never called. She tried calling him, but his phone was switched off. More than ten minutes later, a black Bentley stopped in front of her. A man and a woman got out of it. They introduced themselves and got to know each other. The three of them then got into the car again. It took seven hours by car to get to the city they were assigned to. Since they would need a car there, the higher-ups had arranged for a male colleague to drive one of the company's Bentleys over there, for convenience's sake. Bianca chatted with her colleagues along the way. They got along quite well, laughing and joking with each other. It was afternoon by the time they reached H City. When they checked into the hotel, her female colleague Sue told Bianca, "Let's go back to our respective rooms first and get changed, get some rest. We'll be in contact again when it's time for dinner." "Sure," Bianca said with a nod. Bianca brought her medium-sized luggage upstairs and went into her room. She took a shower and changed into her nightclothes before taking out the clothes she needed for work, ironing them carefully. Once done, she hung the clothes up in advance. Having completed all her preparations, she glanced at the time. It was already four o'clock exactly. Jean had not called her even once since last night until now. He had not even sent her a single message. Now that she finally had time, she gave Jean a call. His phone was finally on this time. However, the dial tone went on for a while without anyone picking up. Bianca was even more worried now, so she called him again. This time, her call was outright rejected. "Sorry, I'm busy right now and I can't pick up. Will call you when I'm free." Soon, she received a text from Jean on WeChat.

Bianca lowered her head and replied, “Okay, I’ll leave you to your work.” It seemed like he was safe on his end, at least. The person hammering on his door last night might have been a random drunkard going to the wrong hotel room last night. After she replied to his message, Bianca put her phone down, looking for something else to do. As soon as she turned, though, her phone vibrated again. She had barely turned away when she had to turn back and check the message on her phone. It was a WeChat message, but it was a complete mess. “Hahahaha you guessed it fiber mesh I started an entrance fee iFeng...” The sender was Jean, who was supposedly “busy” right now. Bianca frowned. “?” She sent him a question mark. After more than a minute, Jean finally replied. “I was drawing something and my arm accidentally touched the screen.” That was why he sent her such a random string of words. Bianca did not think much of it. “Doot... Doot... Doot...” Someone rang her room bell. “Who is it?” Bianca was very cautious since she was in an unfamiliar place and an unfamiliar city. A middle-aged man’s voice came from outside. “Miss Rayne, I’m Jason Doyle, Mr. Crawford’s special assistant. I’m afraid I’ll have to trouble you to open the door for me.” Luke Crawford’s most trusted special assistant, Jason Doyle, was quite well-known. Almost everyone in the company knew about him, and that included Bianca, a newbie. She opened the door. “Nice to meet you.” Bianca had barely greeted him when she lowered her head and saw that there were two tiny children standing at the door as well. One was a baby boy and the other a baby girl, their eyes bright and their teeth brighter. They looked like two perfect dolls. Jason Doyle was standing in a suit, his spine straight as an arrow. Exasperated, he said, “These two are Mr. Crawford’s children. Their father is busy with work and can’t care for them, so...” Bianca had a bad feeling about this. She was not particularly averse to taking care of kids for others, but it just felt so strange to her. After all, she was here to work, not to be a babysitter. Another major reason she did not really

want to take care of the children was because she was worried that seeing someone else's kids would keep reminding her of her own. "I-I'll be good, I promise," the little girl said softly. She raised her head to look at Bianca, blinking her innocent black eyes. "Big Brother—" The little girl saw that her brother, the little boy, was not saying anything, so she pouted angrily and tugged at her brother's clothes, trying to make him talk. Bianca turned to look at the boy instead. The older brother was slightly taller than his sister, but though he kept a cool expression, he was clearly fond of his sister. That was why he raised his head and told Bianca, who was beyond the door, "I'll be a good boy too." Jason glanced at his watch and said, "I'll leave the kids to you, Miss Rayne. There's something else I have to do, so I'll take my leave now." Bianca did not have the chance to refuse. Jason quickly left, and Bianca looked down at the two children, saying, "Come on in, the two of you." The younger sister reached out her short little hand to grab her brother's, then they walked into the room together. "Do you want anything to drink?" Bianca did not know how to handle kids, especially kids with such a special status. "I want milk," the girl said, sitting on the couch properly. Bianca hurriedly dug out some milk. The milk in the hotel room was extremely expensive; the same milk that was sold for 3.50 yuan in the market was sold for 89 here. Bianca sucked in a breath when she saw the price tag, then she opened the carton and found two glasses, pouring each of the kids one glass. The haughty and cold-faced older brother did not drink any of it. The little sister sat on the couch, swinging her legs as she drank half of the cup and then finishing all of it, even licking her lips to make sure she got every bit of it... Bianca sat on a chair awkwardly, looking at the little darlings on the chair and trying to find something to talk about. "Are you two twins?" "Of course," the haughty older brother said. He even rolled his eyes, his gaze filled with contempt at Bianca. 'Idiot,' he seemed to say, 'my sister and I look so similar. Of course we're twins!'

Chapter 8 Bianca? Rainie?

Bianca did not dare to say anything more after the little boy turned his nose up at her. The time ticked past. The boy said, "It seems pretty awkward, huh." The girl nodded. Bianca, "... "Lady, you can call my father right now and tell him that you don't want to care for us," the boy said. He was quite the hostile little boy. "I never said I don't want to take care of you." She had to make that clear. How could she dare to say she did not want to care for her boss' kids? The boss would eat her for lunch. "Since you want to take care of us, then you should act like you do." The boy clearly did not like this cold atmosphere. This lady was much dumber than the other ones. Bianca, "... "It was her fault for not checking the almanac before she left the house. "Come with me, Big Bro." The little girl could tell that the aunty's expression was turning unpleasant, and she dragged her brother away angrily. Bianca let out a long breath, watching as the two children disappeared through the bathroom door. Inside the bathroom. The younger sister asked, "Big Bro, why are you so mean to the pretty lady?!" "She has a motive." The older brother felt bad for his silly little sister and said solemnly, "These pretty ladies are only willing to take care of us because they wanna marry our dad." "They wanna marry our dad?" The younger sister did not understand. The older brother added, "And the other ladies at least know how to pretend to like us. Look at this one!" If this lady were to marry their father, she would never treat them well. His sister insisted, "Great-grandpa always says we can't judge a book by its cover!" However, her brother said angrily, "I don't care what you think. In any case, I'll only ever have one mother, and that's the woman who gave birth to me!" His sister was ignorant but equally as angry, saying, "Great-grandpa said we were planted in the garden!" "Stupid!" Her brother was so furious that his little face turned red. Without another word, he pushed the bathroom door open and walked out. Bianca was alarmed. They had such tempers! "Sorry, it's my fault. I don't

know how to handle kids, that's why it's all so awkward." Bianca was quite apologetic. The younger sister raised her head and said, "It's all Big Brother's fault!" Bianca looked at the older brother and tried to say sweetly, "Do you wanna watch cartoons?" She picked up the remote control as she said, "Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf, or Babloo Dabloo?" "That's so childish!" The older brother could not help but call out her stupidity again. Bianca was left feeling awkward. There was another long pause. "Miss, why don't you ask us how old we are?" Bianca found an excuse to get rid of the awkwardness. "So how old are you?" "I'm five, and so's my brother." "Have you guys started going to school?" If they were schooling... Today was Thursday. "We do go to school, but we have a private tutor. This time, Dad was the one who said he wanted to bring us out to play. He said there's a really tall Ferris wheel here." The younger sister spilled everything. "Oh, I see," Bianca replied. "Lend me your phone, I wanna call my dad," the older brother said. Bianca blinked and immediately gave the older brother her phone. Blanche searched through Bianca's phone for his father's contact number, but he could not find it. He then looked for his father's WeChat contact, but he could not find that either. "You don't have any way to contact my dad?" he asked, raising his head to look at Bianca. She shook her head. "Nope." The older brother did not seem to believe her, frowning as he said, "Are you sure you don't?" "I told you, she isn't a mean lady who wants to be our stepmother!" The younger sister gave her brother a look of contempt from where she sat. The brother looked at his sister a little guiltily, and he did not dare to even look at Bianca. Bianca finally understood! So that was why the boy was so hostile toward her. "I have to explain something to you." Bianca looked at the boy and then at the girl. "Your father handed you two to Jason, and Jason is busy with work, so he handed you over to me for a while. There's nothing between your father and me. We're just employer and employee." The little boy looked at Bianca thoughtfully.

Bianca admitted straight-up, “Your father and I are from different worlds. Some people are born special, and some are born normal. They’ll have different needs and different social circles, so they can’t be forced to mix. Do you understand that?” “No...” The younger sister shook her head blankly. Bianca turned to look at the older brother instead. He said, “I get it. Dad’s bourgeoisie and you’re proletariat.” Bianca burst out laughing. “That stings, but you’re exactly right. There’s a huge gap between your father and me. You don’t have to worry, even if your father is the only man left in the world, I still won’t become your stepmother. Do you understand that much, at least?” The younger sister looked at Bianca and nodded somewhat confusedly. “Alright, let’s be better friends.” Bianca introduced herself, saying, “My name is Bianca Rayne. You can call me Miss Rayne or just Bea.” “I’m Rainie Crawford, like a nice rainy day.” The younger sister introduced herself. “I’m Blanche Crawford. You can call me Blanca or Lanie.” The older brother introduced himself too, putting away his hostility. Rainie? Like a rainy day? Blanche Crawford? Blanca? Blanca? Rainie? Bianca suddenly felt as though she may be fated to meet these children! Once they settled the misunderstanding, the two kids opened up to her happily. She canceled her dinner plans with her colleagues. Her two colleagues went to work after dinner, whereas her current mission was simply to take care of the boss’ children. Bianca was extremely careful at first, terrified that any knocks or scratches the children might sustain would cost her her job. Eventually, though, she ended up rolling all over the carpet with the kids, her heart filled with a painful satisfaction. Her child would probably be about Lanie and Rainie’s age now. When she looked into their happy faces, she could almost see her own baby. How was that child doing? Was she happy? That night, Bianca had dinner with the two little darlings. They had every possible service at the hotel restaurant. Rainie sat in the restaurant and ate her food for a bit before she started drooling over the fried

chicken some other children were having. “Wipe your drool, it’s filthy!” her brother scolded her, frowning. Bianca hurriedly grabbed a napkin, wiping the drool from Rainie’s mouth. “Does your father forbid you from having fried chicken?” Bianca felt so bad for Rainie. If her daughter was drooling over fried chicken this badly, she would probably make an exception, just this once. Rainie nodded, but her eyes were still glued on the fried chicken the next table over. She was so distracted that she even dropped her chopsticks onto the floor. “Hello, waiter?” Bianca waved her hand. Ten minutes later. The fried chicken was served. There were two pieces. The older brother did not have any, though, giving both to his sister. Although he really wanted to taste some too, he went against his heart and said, “Have all you like. Dad says men must stick by their principles.” Bianca did not say anything, but she was quite surprised inside. At the same time, she was pretty in awe of this five-year-old boy and his self-control in the face of temptation. Some people could achieve extraordinary success after they grew up, but their journeys were not as smooth as they might seem on the surface. No one knew how much they had to hold themselves back, how much they had to sacrifice. Was Luke Crawford one such example? This little boy was cold and wary of everyone. Bianca could not help but remember what Nina said back then— that the boss was a heartless tyrant in the world of business. This little kid was a miniature version of his father!

Chapter 9 Open The Door, It's Me

Little Rainie was unbelievably happy now that she had sneakily eaten some fried chicken behind her father's back. On the way back to the room, Rainie kept sticking to Bianca, hugging her leg like a koala to a tree. It was quite hard for Bianca to walk with a baby hanging off her leg. She had to limp all the way back upstairs. "It's really late now. I'll send you back to your room so you can get to sleep." The adult and two children watched cartoons in the room for a while before Bianca turned to the pair of siblings. The older brother looked up

at her and said, "We don't have the room card." Rainie was hugging Bianca with her plump white hand, her eyes tightly closed. She was almost completely asleep now. Still, how could they get back without the room card? Bianca was feeling conflicted. She had no idea when the president would be able to finish his work for the day and return to the hotel. "Lemme call Mr. Doyle." Bianca looked at Rainie, who was already falling asleep. She could not move, so she had to ask Lanie to grab her phone. Lanie picked up her phone and passed it to Bianca. Bianca called her colleague and asked for Jason Doyle's work number. Jason picked up soon enough, but he said, "I'm sorry to trouble you, Miss Rayne, but Mr. Crawford is having a meal with a few provincial leaders. I don't think he'll be able to get away for a while yet. How about this? Can you let the two kids sleep with you for the night?" Bianca, "...". It was past ten in the night by the time Bianca managed to lull the children to sleep. Lanie slept on the left side of the large bed, while Rainie took the right side. They were fast asleep. Bianca cleaned up the bathroom as quietly as she could, then she folded the children's clothes and placed them on the couch neatly. Finally, she tucked Rainie in before carefully stepping into bed herself. Thank goodness the bed was big enough. There was plenty of space for one adult and two kids to sleep comfortably. Within five minutes of lying down, Bianca could barely keep her eyes open anymore. ... Sometime in the earliest hours of the morning. Bianca's phone vibrated under her pillow. She was so sleepy that her eyes hurt, and she had to force them open blearily. She propped herself up slightly and reached for her phone. There was an unknown number on her screen. 139-0909-9999. It was a spam call in the middle of the night, but the number itself was a pretty nice one! Bianca picked up, saying directly and somewhat rudely, "Who is this?" "Open the door, it's me." It was a deep and hoarse voice, sounding especially mesmerizing so late in the night. "Open the door? Who are you?" She was so sleepy. There was silence on the other end of the phone. All she

heard was his breathing. Bianca spent a few seconds clearing her mind, then she saw the two kids sleeping on the bed under the moonlight. Lanie, Rainie... "Mr... Mr. Crawford?" she ventured. "Open the door!" The man's voice was growing deeper. Bianca was so shocked that her heart skipped a few beats. She hurriedly scrambled out of bed and made sure that her nightclothes looked presentable before she opened the door. Her boss was here to get his kids back, but she had fallen fast asleep and kept him waiting for so long. Dang it! Bianca scolded herself in frustration! The two children were fast asleep on the bed. They showed no signs of waking up whatsoever. Bianca opened the door. Luke was standing tall outside the door, his eyes closed and one hand resting against the door frame. He held his coat and the black phone he had been using to call her in one hand. It was obvious that he had been waiting here for quite some time. "M-Mr. Crawford..." Bianca called his name, too afraid to approach him. Luke raised his head suddenly, weariness written all over his face as he frowned at her. Even stinking heavily of booze like this, the man still radiated confidence and dominance. His surroundings did nothing to hide the air of nobility exuding from deep within his bones. Luke gave her a look, but that look felt like it lasted forever. Neither of them said anything. Bianca tilted her body and stood to a side, letting him go in so he could pick up the kids. When the man walked past her, she could clearly smell the alcohol on him, mixed with a strong and hypnotizing scent of nicotine. Bianca stood at the door, too afraid to move or stare. The lights at the doorway were very bright. She was completely awake now, standing at the open door like a guardian god, waiting for her boss to carry his kids out of the room. The time ticked past. Bianca did not even hear the two children waking up. Confused, she closed the door quietly and crept back into the bedroom. There was only a single lamp illuminating the bedroom. It was not nearly as blindingly bright as it was outside. The scene in the dim lightning was incredibly heartwarming. The large

bed that was meant to be hers had been completely taken over by that family of three. The father who had finally returned from a long day of work was now sleeping silently with his son and daughter. Should she wake him up, or not? If she did, would her boss fire her in a fit of fury? If she did not, where was she supposed to sleep? She thought it over and eventually decided that she could not wake this mistaken drunkard up and chase him out. If she did, there would probably be very serious consequences. Hence, she grabbed a coat, put it on, and left the room. Holding her room card in her hand, she called the female colleague who had come here with her. "Sorry, the number you called is unavailable..." A mechanical voice spoke over the phone. Bianca leaned on a corridor wall, exhausted. She had forgotten to ask for her female colleague's room number. After some thought, she called Jason Doyle instead. She was stuck on the dial tone for a very long time, but no one picked up. He was probably drunk too! Bianca had no choice but to go to the hotel counter and ask for another room. However, the hotel receptionist said, "Sorry, Miss Rayne, but the hotel is fully booked. The rooms here have to be booked at least a week in advance." "Oh, okay. Thanks." Bianca went back upstairs, her mind a mess. Was she supposed to stand outside the door overnight? At slightly past one o'clock in the morning, the elevator doors opened. A man and two women walked out. The two women were heavily made-up, and the man was dressed in denim, his head covered with intimidating scars. He kissed the two women he was hugging, laughing and chuckling as they talked. When he saw Bianca, the man's eyes immediately lit up. He let go of the two women and approached her, saying, "Ooh, I found a pretty little damsel-in-distress! Where are you from? Come on, wanna have some fun with me? I guarantee it'll feel great!" "You're mad!" Bianca instinctively yelled at him. She was so startled that she immediately opened the room door with her key card, ducking into the room like a little bunny. She then leaned against the door, taking countless deep

breaths. It sounded like someone outside was knocking on the door. It was not too heavy nor too soft. The fear chased every other thought out of Bianca's mind, and she did not dare to lean against the door anymore since they were knocking on it. Instead, she turned and headed for the bathroom door. She was always quite timid, and now she was so terrified that her heart was pounding madly. However, before she could even digest that encounter outside, she felt a pair of large warm hands reach under her coat from behind her. They rubbed her body and reached upward. She turned in horror. She did not know when, but the wooden bathroom door behind her had been slowly pushed open. She lost her balance, falling into a man's solid embrace. "Ah..." She cried out softly in surprise, but the rest of her words were swallowed up. All she could do was moan suggestively... It was pitch-black in the bathroom, and she felt a moist breath blowing into her face. There was only one grown man in this hotel room, and that was the big boss, Luke Crawford. It was therefore obvious to see who the man hugging her was. Bianca frowned and tried to push him away, but he would not budge. Out of the frying pan and into the fire. She was scared, but her mouth was sealed off and completely useless. The man kissed her in the dark, shadowy night. Bianca held her breath, her words of protest morphing into vague whimpers.

Chapter 10 Bad Man

For a few seconds there, Bianca's mind went blank! She frowned and inwardly berated herself for being so weak-willed. 'Bianca, don't forget, you have Jean! 'Jean is the only man you can feel anything for!' "You're with me now. How could you get distracted?!" The man forcefully pushed her white coat aside. There was a moist and warm sensation on her lips. He then lowered his head and kissed her hair. After a long time, his low voice spoke into her ear seductively. Bianca was about to explode when she heard the man's low voice! Luke had a really nice scent of shower foam on him, just like she did. That

meant that this man had just used her shower foam when he took a shower earlier. Bianca knew just how dangerous it would be if she did not put up a desperate fight right now. Just plain struggling was not going to work. All she could do was apologize in advance for disrespecting her boss. At least that would be better than whatever was going on now! Bianca's eyes grew used to the darkness, and now she could vaguely see the man's delicate features. The dim lighting shone on him, making him look surreal. His thin lips seemed especially tempting. Anyone who did not know better might think that this man here was the undisputed king of porn videos. His every movement was shot full of pheromones. Bianca applied pressure into her fingers as she squeezed the man's body. She then gathered up her courage and raised her leg. Bending her knee, she rammed it forcefully into the man's nethers! "Ugh—" There was a muffled groan, and the man frowned deeply, swallowing that pain back into his throat. "Let go of me!" She shook her body left and right, putting up a fight. The man grabbed her wrist suddenly, hurting her. No matter how she tried, she could not break free from his grasp. For a second there, Bianca thought it was all over for her. This was where she would fall. A second later, though, the man abruptly let go of her. Her mind had gone blank. The first thing she wanted to do was run away from her as soon as she could. She did not exactly close the door quietly. The noise made the two little children stir in bed, slowly waking up. ... It was late at night, and Bianca wandered the hotel corridors. She did not dare to linger for too long, but she could not go back to her room, and she definitely could not go to a dead end like the washroom. Eventually, she took the elevator and went down to the ground floor. The lights were brightly shining in the hotel lobby. There were two receptionists at the counter and four security guards standing watch outside. It did not matter who walked by; no one would be able to harass her. Even if they tried, the guards would be just two meters away. It was very safe here. "Here you go, miss." One of the

receptionists kindly poured her a cup of hot tea. “Thank you.” Bianca accepted the tea and took a few sips. It warmed up her cold body. It was destined to be a long night. The wait was torturous, but at least it would eventually come to an end. ... Bianca was woken up by the cold the next morning. Although she had a blanket over her, she realized that her nose was stuffed anyway, and her body was trembling. There was a high chance she had come down with a cold. Now that she had woken up, she had to deal with the consequences of what happened last night. Bianca hugged her arms and thought, ‘If the boss sincerely apologizes for what happened last night, I might consider accepting his apology. If he does not seem remorseful at all, I’ll resign without a second thought.’ She knew that it was perfectly cliched for male superiors to sexually harass their female subordinates. That did not change, be it locally or internationally. If she left this company, the same thing might happen again at her next workplace. To men, women were weak, but that did not mean every woman would do what the men expected of them. It was not quite possible for her to take this lying down. ... Of the two colleagues who came to H City on this trip with Bianca, the woman was Sue Carter and the man Tom Lewis. At eight o’clock, they went downstairs. “You sure are early, Bianca.” Sue was about to have breakfast with Tom when she turned around and spotted Bianca. Bianca also felt a slight sense of security now that she had seen her colleague. She was about to stand up and leave with her colleagues. Just then, she saw the elevator doors on the left open. The great boss was walking out of the elevator with his son and daughter in tow. Bianca looked at them, her face pale. Luke’s gaze was also accurately trained onto Bianca, who looked rather worse for the wear. “Go with your Uncle Doyle for now,” Luke said to his children, lowering his head. Jason Doyle held Rainie’s hand, and when the two of them walked past Bianca, Rainie even made an adorable little face at Bianca. Seeing Rainie made Bianca’s heart soften for some reason. Jason brought the two children

away for breakfast, gesturing at Sue and Tom to go with him. As for Luke, he never once looked away from Bianca. When he finally approached her, his eyes took in her fair cheeks as he said, “Why was I sleeping in your room last night?” Uh... Bianca blinked, raising her head to look at her boss. She had not expected this. Was this man an amnesiac drunk? Did he really not remember anything after sobering up? Their eyes met, and Bianca suddenly felt this was all so unfair. The man in front of her was almost a hundred and ninety centimeters tall. He was really tall and slender, his shoulders broad and his hips narrow. His pure-white shirt wrapped his well-toned torso perfectly. He looked all classy and gentlemanly now, as though the bad man who had pinned her down violently last night, hugging and sucking on her skin hungrily was another person altogether. “You were drunk last night, Mr. Crawford,” she said. “Yes, but I do remember some fragments. Were you that woman last night?” he asked coolly. Bianca’s breathing turned a little ragged, his gaze making her flustered. Did he think that she... purposely pulled him into her room last night so that she could have a fling with her boss...? Bianca hurriedly waved him off. “It wasn’t me! I don’t know what happened last night. After you took over my room last night, sir, a room service lady went inside, but she only stayed inside for five minutes before coming out again.” The man was still staring at her, his gaze fixed on her face. He stared at her brow, her eyes, the tip of her nose, her lips. She actually only wanted to make light of the matter. Since her boss had forgotten all about it, she had no intention of accusing her boss of anything. Dang it, though, why did she say five minutes? She should have said it was an hour! “What happened? Did she steal something?” Bianca asked. The man frowned and said sarcastically, “She didn’t steal anything, but I think she touched that part of me.” Bianca’s face instantly reddened slightly, but she was not aware of it. “Are... Are you okay? Do you need to go to the hospital?” Bianca asked, startled. The man’s sharp

eyes met her flighty gaze. “I’m more worried about her knee, actually.” Bianca, “...” “Whatever. Since she’s in charge of room service, I’m sure she’s used to getting a few knocks in the line of duty,” the man said mildly. He then lit a cigarette with a frown and ignored Bianca, taking a drag as he left. She stayed right where she was. It was only now that she felt a tinge of pain in her knee... Lanie and Rainie’s mother must have been out of the picture for a long time now. Why else would the boss act so crazy?

Chapter 11 Her Husband’s Clothes

Bianca went back upstairs. The cleaner lady was tidying up her room. Bianca nodded at the cleaner politely and then walked to her closet, opening it and taking out one set of the clothes she had ironed last night. After that, she went to the bathroom to change into it. The cleaner worked very quickly. By the time Bianca was done washing her face, the room had been wiped more or less clean of every trace of Luke Crawford. She heaved a sigh of relief. Ten minutes ago, Jean had sent her a message. “Bianca, my team is done with the project. I’ll go to H City in the afternoon and visit you at your hotel. We get the day off tomorrow.” Bianca had replied with, “Sounds good. I’ll send you the hotel address.” For some reason, as she looked around the room Luke Crawford had spent the entire night in, she felt a little guilty. When the cleaner was done with her cleaning, she found Bianca staring at the bathroom, frowning and distracted. “I’m done,” the cleaner said with a smile, holding a garbage bag as she stood at the door. Bianca hurriedly came back to her senses. “Thank you so much.” The cleaner added. “I put the used underwear in the small drawer in the closet too.” “Underwear?” Bianca was confused. She did not recall throwing aside her used lingerie like that. “The men’s underwear. It’s your husband’s, right? I found it in the laundry basket in the bathroom!” The cleaner informed her with a smile before turning around and leaving the room. Bianca was stunned. Men’s underwear? Her husband...? Her face was bright red as

she took a few breaths and pursed her lips. Her head felt hot, and she did not know how to handle this underwear. She could not just return it, could she? Forget it... It was probably best to toss it. It was not like her boss would miss a single pair of underwear like that. Bianca shook her head. Seriously, what was she thinking? Thankfully, that was when her phone rang. The caller was Sue Carter. "Hey, Sue," Bianca picked up and replied. "Have you eaten, Bianca? Remember to eat if you haven't. We'll meet downstairs at ten after breakfast. There's a meeting that you should attend too." "Alright. See you downstairs at ten." Bianca had been worried that she would be relegated to babysitting duty again today. She was very fond of Lanie and Rainie, yes, but work was still work. Since she was receiving a salary from T Corporation, she wanted to be able to contribute her part to the company accordingly. At the same time, she wanted to learn and better herself. That was what her father always wanted for her too! When she thought of her father, Bianca's expression suddenly darkened. Jennifer Lee was quite beautiful, and this was despite the fact that she was almost fifty years old now. She must have been veritably gorgeous when she was younger. Bianca's father really loved his second wife deeply. Now, he was pouring all of his heart and soul into Jennifer's wellbeing. Bianca felt a little lost. Her memories of her childhood told her that he had loved her mother deeply too, and that was why he had drowned his sorrows in alcohol after she left. His slump had lasted eight whole years. When he lost her mother, it was as though he had lost his will to keep living. ... At ten o'clock. Bianca went downstairs. "Get into the car," Sue told Bianca. Those in their line of work tended to dress simply and professionally. Bianca was dressed similarly to Sue. She had a formal outfit, wearing a plain-colored top with two open buttons and an A-line skirt. It made her look smart without obscuring her feminine gentleness. This time, they took two cars to the meeting. Sue and Bianca took the car in the front, while Luke and Tom took

the luxury vehicle at the back. “Why isn’t Mr. Doyle coming with us?” Bianca was not very familiar with these things, so she had to ask while she had the chance. “What are we supposed to do when we get there, Sue?” “Mr. Doyle is taking the boss’ kids to the Ferris wheel,” Sue said to Bianca without holding back any information. “You don’t have to do anything when you get there. Just listen carefully. Right now, your main job is to learn.” “Okay.” Bianca nodded. They arrived at the hotel. The famous hotel had attendants providing great service in every aspect. The meeting was to be held on the 99th floor. This was Bianca’s first time attending a face-to-face business meeting. When successful men shook hands firmly and solemnly, it was indeed quite charming and eye-catching, especially to women. Luke Crawford looked like a completely different person when he was negotiating a contract. That man could handle any problem with ease. No matter how accomplished his opposite counterpart was, he could carry himself in a way that won their respect. Bianca listened in on the whole thing, making sure not to lose focus. Eventually, Director Shaw, who was sitting on the right, looked at Luke and smiled brightly, his wrinkles showing all over his face. He said, “My darling daughter insisted on following me here, and she even pressured me into making a promise. See, she wants me to persuade you to bring her around A City for a bit, and she said she would disown me as her father if I can’t get it done! What do you say, Luke? I’ve totally spoiled my daughter, haven’t I?” Just like all the other bit characters at the conference table, Bianca kept her expression carefully blank. Anyone could tell that the topic had wandered into the boss’ private matters. ... It was half-past one in the afternoon when they left the renowned hotel. Bianca took her laptop with her as she got into the car. Sue followed suit. Outside the hotel entrance, Director Shaw and his beloved daughter were shaking hands with Luke, bidding him goodbye. “Do you see that? That Director Shaw wants to have his daughter marry the Crawfords,” Sue said with a laugh. Bianca did not

know how to respond to that, so she said vaguely, “If it really works out, I wonder if Director Shaw’s daughter would be marrying below or above her station.” That was actually quite hard to tell. Sue chatted with Bianca casually, saying, “It looks to me like Director Shaw and his daughter are the only ones into this idea for now. No one can really tell what Mr. Crawford’s thinking. If you ask me, any woman that Mr. Crawford doesn’t personally intend to marry would be trying above her station. Doesn’t even matter if she’s the Jade Emperor’s daughter—” True, that did make sense. Bianca raised her head and gave Director Shaw’s daughter a nonchalant look. She thought to herself calmly, ‘If the boss is willing to marry her, then that woman will become Lanie and Rainie’s mom.’

Chapter 12 Luke Crawford Has No Right To Interfere!

The two cars left the renowned hotel and headed back to the hotel they were staying in. Once they reached the hotel, Bianca got out of the car. Sue soon followed suit. At the hotel entrance, they saw Jason Doyle waiting, dressed in his smart suit and leather shoes. “Good afternoon, Mr. Doyle.” Just like Sue and the others, Bianca greeted Jason as she went in. Jason nodded at Bianca too, but his gaze changed when he looked at Bianca. After Bianca walked into the hotel lobby, Jason was still frowning slightly as he looked inside. Luke got out of the car and noticed that there was something off about Jason’s expression. As usual, he turned his dark gaze directly at Jason. When Jason realized something amiss, he hurriedly turned around too, looking at his boss perfectly professionally. Standing tall and straight, Luke strode into the hotel, his voice icy cold as he stated, “You were looking at her.” He was addressing Jason, who was behind him. Jason seemed to be deliberating if he should say certain things out loud. After a while, he decided to keep his thoughts to himself, saying, “No, I wasn’t.” What a poor pretense! Luke’s expression

turned dark. Just then, Jean got out of a cab and walked into the hotel, his laptop under one arm. When he saw his boss and Special Assistant Doyle standing in front of the elevator, he blinked. He had no choice but to greet them, though. “Hello, Mr. Doyle, Mr. Crawford, sir.” Luke’s gaze was sharp as he looked at the newcomer. “I’m a new employee with the design department, Jean Langdon.” Jean introduced himself and suitably added, “I won’t get in your way, Mr. Crawford, so I’ll go upstairs now.” Luke’s expression did not change, but right here and now, his entire body seemed to be covered in a layer of frost that kept everyone away. Once he returned to his room upstairs, Luke undid the exquisitely-designed buttons on his sleeves as he glanced at the two children. They had tired themselves out playing and were now fast asleep on the bed. He then walked toward the bar in the suite and uncorked a bottle of red wine, pouring himself a glass. Frowning, he downed the whole glass, the cool liquid flowing into this throat. Not long later, the two children woke up. The older brother was the first to wake up, brushing his teeth and washing his face. Once done, he obediently came back to the room and helped his sister pick out her princess dress. “What’s up with Dad, Big Bro?” Rainie asked in a whisper. Her brother shook his head. He did not know what was wrong with their father either, but he did know that “kids shouldn’t ask about adult things”. ... Downstairs. Jean put his laptop bag down and gave Bianca a hug. “What’s the matter?” Bianca was not used to the sudden hug. The two of them had been officially dating for a year now, but they were rarely ever intimate. Bianca had an aversion to physical touch, and Jean respected that, so he never overstepped his boundaries. This time, though, Jean was acting all out of sorts. “It’s nothing. I just missed you, so I wanted to hug you,” Jean said wearily. Bianca did not reply. That night, the two of them had dinner together. After that, Jean suggested that they go shopping to buy a set of clothing to change into. He had been dragged out on a trip on very short notice, so he did not have anything to

change into. It was half-past nine at night by the time they bought everything they needed and returned to the hotel. "I want a room, thanks." Jean took out his ID and handed it to the receptionist. Bianca was waiting for him at the side. She could not help but remember how the receptionist had said that there were no rooms available last night. The receptionist searched through the database, and just as Bianca expected, she looked up and said, "Sorry, sir, but we don't have any empty rooms right now." Jean frowned and thought it over before turning to look at Bianca. The two of them went into the elevator and headed upstairs. As they walked toward Bianca's room, Jean said, "Can I stay in your room for the night? You can take the bed and I'll take the couch." Bianca blinked. "I'm your boyfriend, Bea. It's been five years. Are you saying you still don't trust me?" Jean looked at Bianca with disappointment and sadness in his eyes. She instantly felt guilty. Over the past five years, Jean had taken very good care of her. It did not matter if he was pursuing her, because unlike other men, he did not woo her just to get into her pants. In that sense, Jean treated her very respectfully. "Alright, you can take the couch," she said, worried that she would hurt him. ... At the same time. In the suite dining room. The Crawford family of three was sitting together. Rainie held her fried chicken, burying her face in it as she ate away. There were still tears hanging from her lashes; she had clearly had to cry her way to her fried chicken. Jason had been summoned here all of a sudden by his boss, and right now he was feeling quite lost. "Does that design department rookie have anywhere to stay?" Luke said without any emotion in his voice. Jason did not know why the boss was suddenly concerned about a design department rookie's accommodation, but he replied honestly, "The hotel doesn't have any more free rooms, and he did not go to any other hotel either. I think he plans to stay with his girlfriend for the night." After he made that report, Jason noticed a clear look of "extreme unhappiness" in his boss' eyes. Jason was always quite

good at reading others' expressions, but he could never really read his boss. This time, though, he could. After giving it some real thought, Jason figured he should rethink his opinion of Bianca Rayne. Rainie was still pouting after she finished her fried chicken. "I don't wanna be with mean Daddy!" "Don't be naughty, Rainie," her brother said. "Mean Daddy, mean Daddy, mean Daddy! Mean Lanie, mean Lanie, mean Lanie..." Rainie harrumphed. Jason could tell what was happening, but he did not expose them. Instead, he said, "How about this, Rainie? Shall I take you to that lady from last night? You can stay with her." Rainie did not say anything, but she immediately got up from her chair, seemingly determined to have Jason take her to Miss Bea. Jason glanced at his boss, who remained wordless. Since there were no objections, Jason took Rainie out of the dining hall and left the suite, sending her over to Bianca's place instead. The elevator headed downstairs. Before Jason could reach Bianca's floor, his phone rang. "Mr. Crawford," Jason said when he picked up the phone, surprised. After the call, Jason frowned but had to carry out his orders anyway. Late that night, Sue sat in the car, sleepy and exhausted as she ranted to Bianca, "I think that Director Shaw's daughter is a blight to us all. I mean, she just showed up for a day and we're all suffering the consequences. Why else would the boss be so mad that he orders us to leave A City overnight? Like, oh my goodness! This is going beyond heartless, the boss is practically insane! We already spent the money on the hotel rooms, but he won't let us stay in them? Does he enjoy watching us suffer on the road like this?!" Bianca was mentally exhausted too. She had no idea what the boss was thinking. Jean sat in the passenger seat, whereas Tom was driving. It was extremely late at night now. At the H City hotel. Luke stood alone on the hotel room balcony, taking his time with a cigarette. When he blew out the smoke, he frowned deeply, letting his emotions show. Anyone who had ever dealt with him in the world of business knew that he had no weaknesses whatsoever. It

was like he was covered in solid armor everywhere. He had a few glasses in his room earlier, and the alcohol made him look slightly intoxicated. When he remembered how she moaned five years ago and how she put up a vicious fight last night, he could not help but laugh at himself coldly, lowering his head and extinguishing the cigarette in an ashtray. Early the next morning, Jason Doyle and his boss plus the latter's kids headed for H City International Airport. Luke's handsome face was covered in clouds the entire time. Jason followed behind him, but he could not help but think to himself, 'Boss, you might be able to stop the two of them from sharing a room in an H City hotel, but you might not be able to stop them from going back to their love nest in A City! 'After all, who are you to interfere? You can't butt into their lives too much.'

Chapter 13 Jean's Expressionless Taunt

By the time they returned to A City, it was already morning. Naturally, Tom drove the company Bentley back to the company. Sue alighted from the car. On the other side, Jean brought Bianca's luggage down from the trunk as he said, "I'll send you back home first so you can rest. Sleep well, and I'll come find you at night." Bianca nodded. They pushed their luggage along as they said goodbye to Sue and Tom. After that, they walked to the roadside and hailed a cab. Jean was thinking he should go buy a car tomorrow. It was too inconvenient without a car. Bianca was both tired and sleepy. She had slept for slightly over two hours in the car last night, but sleeping in the car was by no means comfortable. Before they could find a cab, Jean's phone rang. "Let me pick this up." Jean looked at his phone and gave Bianca's a heads-up before accepting the call. Bianca looked at him and saw that he was frowning. He said "okay" into the phone a few times before adding, "Alright, I'll be there." "Is something the matter?" Bianca asked after he hung up. "Yeah. Our team leader said all of us have to be there before lunch for a meeting. They want to strike while the iron is hot and discuss the next steps," Jean said, looking like he had

a headache coming on. That was when a cab drove around the corner. Bianca looked at the cab and took his luggage from him. "Go on, then. I can go back myself." Jean felt really guilty. As her boyfriend, it was only natural for him to send his girlfriend home after she returned from an exhausting business trip. Yet now he had to eschew that responsibility because of his work. Bianca got into the cab. It began to drive slowly away. Bianca drifted in and out of sleep. After some time, the cabbie turned around and told Bianca in the backseat, "We're here." Bianca opened her eyes and saw she was outside her neighborhood. Clearing her mind, she got out of the car. The cold was making her feel very uncomfortable. In the five years since she left A City, she had lived independently and gotten used to toughing it out alone whenever anything went wrong. A cold or fever was nothing to her anymore. Still, no matter how strong she was, she was still just a girl. She still wanted care and concern. However, Jean did not seem to notice that she was sick at all, and that left her a little disappointed. It had been two days and one night since she left home, and now she was back. She was so exhausted that Her brain was heavy. She might have fallen asleep for a while, but when she next woke up, she felt as though she was breathing fire. She propped herself up and went in search of medicine for her cold and fever. Her hand was halfway through taking a glass of water when her bell rang. Bianca hit the intercom and asked weakly, "Who is it?" She was renting this room. Aside from Jean and Nina, no one else knew about it. "Good day, Miss Rayne. I'm from the neighborhood hospital, someone ordered a home call for you. Something about giving you a shot?" The visitor was a girl dressed in a white lab coat and carrying her medicine kit. Bianca thought it over. Who called them? Was it Jean? So Jean did notice that she was sick. Perhaps it was because she was ill and weak, but Bianca's heart was fragile and sensitive right now. Forget a house call, even a simple prescription cold medicine would have been enough to touch her heart and

move her. After she had that drip, someone delivered some food to her too. Bianca's whole body was aching when she went to open the door, but then she realized it was no ordinary delivery. There was a veritable feast there, the kind that she only saw in idol dramas. "Please sign here." The man and woman who had brought the food looked at Bianca, their gazes complicated. Bianca felt rather awkward. She lived in a very average neighborhood, and no matter how you looked at it, she was just a regular salary worker. There was no way she was used to luxurious spreads like this. She signed the bill and the two delivery people left. Faced with such a fancy meal, Bianca was actually a bit lost. Jean came from a middle-class family, and he was not all that wealthy. She could accept it when he spent a bit of money on movies or restaurant meals usually, but something this crazy gave her a bit of a headache. Still, he already ordered it. Although she did not have much of an appetite because she was sick, she still tried her best to eat a few more bites. The meal was mostly mild in taste and easy to eat, as though it was meant specifically for sick patients. After lunch, she cleaned up her house and sent Jean a message on WeChat. She just wrote two words. "Thank you." "For what?" Jean replied. Bianca blinked for a second before she thought it through. Maybe he thought that it was too formal to thank him, since he was her boyfriend after all. That was why she responded with, "I still think I should thank you." Jean's response came after a long pause. "Why are you acting all sappy all of a sudden?" Bianca knew that she was not being sappy, she was just moved. She lost her father's love to another mother and daughter, and she had not been in contact with her aunts and uncles for a long time now. They barely counted as her family anymore. In other words, she was probably the loneliest of them all. Now, the only ones who could give her any warmth were the siblings, Jean and Nina. Jean had said in the morning that he would come visit her at night. However, he called again in the afternoon and said that something had come up, so he could not make it. Bianca looked

at the three dishes and one soup that she had made for Jean. She said nothing. After she covered all the food with cling wrap, she put it all into the fridge. The next day. In the morning, Jean drove over to pick Bianca up. Bianca got into the car, her cold making her voice sound thick and nasally. Jean looked at her. “Oh, do you have a cold?” Bianca paused in the middle of putting on her seatbelt, turning to look at Jean in the driver’s seat. “Was it cold?” Jean reached out his arm in concern and touched her forehead. It was really hot to the touch, so she immediately took off her seatbelt. “Wait for me. There’s a pharmacy fifty meters away.” Bianca watched him as he left the car to get some medicine. That made it plenty obvious. What he was saying told her without a doubt that he had known about her cold before this. So that house call and fancy feast for patients yesterday afternoon... There was no way it could be Nina! Nina was busy with work. She barely had time for herself, and Bianca did not even dare to chat Nina up since she returned to A City, lest she disturbed Nina in the middle of her drafting process. Just then, the phone in her bag vibrated, buzzing. Dazed, Bianca took out her phone and looked at the caller ID. It was an unknown number. “Hello? Who is this?” Bianca was confused now. “There’s a present for you, Miss Rayne, but I rang your doorbell and you don’t seem to be at home,” the delivery man said loudly. “A present?” Bianca looked out the car window. “I’m at the entrance to the neighborhood.” When she accepted the call, she undid her belt and opened the door, getting out of the car. Two minutes later, a delivery man with a green vest approached her with a smile, immediately giving her a bouquet of flowers. “Flowers for you, Miss Rayne. They were flown in here this morning itself. Please sign here!” “Who gave me these flowers?” Bianca asked solemnly. That was all she cared about. They were flown in here! How much money must that cost? The delivery man shook his head, laughing. “Sorry, the client paid, and all we have to do is deliver it.” The huge bouquet of flowers fell into her hands. The delivery man

drove away. Bianca was left frozen on the spot, moving not even an inch. The flowers were beautiful and their fragrance faint yet pleasant, but she was in no mood to savor the moment. “Bianca.” Jean’s voice came from behind her. He sounded a little less than pleased. Bianca turned around. The beautiful flowers formed a stark contrast against the dark expression on Jean’s face. “I... I don’t know who gave me these flowers.” Bianca was worried Jean would misunderstand. “You don’t know?” Jean looked directly at her, the panic in his eyes slowly turning to an accusation. Expressionlessly, he said with sarcasm dripping from his voice, “Flowers flown in specially for you. How romantic, how extravagant!”

Chapter 14 Bianca’s Face Instantly Reddens

“I don’t know who they’re from,” Bianca repeated. She did not want to see Jean’s hurt gaze. She did not want any more stains in her life. However, there was a fury burning in Jean’s eyes as he said, “You don’t know who they’re from? Are you kidding? Do you take me for a fool? Bianca Rayne, it’s barely been a week since we came back, and you already have another man in your life. If it’s strictly platonic, which man would spend so much money flying in fresh flowers for you?” Bianca could not stand the way Jean was staring daggers at her. She knew she did no wrong. Her conscience was clear. It was true that she did not know who sent her the flowers. “I’m going to work.” Finally, Bianca just said those words to Jean calmly, turning around and throwing the flowers into a rubbish bin nearby without giving them another glance. Jean watched her back as Bianca walked over to the opposite side of the road calmly. Instinctively, his hands clenched into fists. She walked toward the subway station and out of sight. Jean was still standing by the roadside, feeling a knot of fury in his chest that he could not swallow down. He then turned around and smashed his fist into the lamppost, his teeth clenched. It hurt terribly, like his bones had shattered, but it still did not calm him down. So it

seemed like he would only feel secure after he married her. ... At the company. Bianca could not focus on anything she did. On the way here by subway, she had given it a lot of thought. Now, she had a suspect in her mind. Still, it was all so absurd. When they were at H City, Luke Crawford had called her phone. That meant that, as her boss, he had a way to get her contact number and address. It was ridiculously easy for a boss to obtain all of his subordinate's personal details. Bianca was lost in thought when her phone rang. It was just one notification beep, telling her she had WeChat messages. "Sorry, I was too rash. "I'm too afraid of losing you. "Don't be mad. Let's sit down and talk it over." Jean sent a string of messages. Bianca did not reply to a single one at first. No one liked being suspected of infidelity for no reason. At noon. Nina brought her lunch over to Bianca at the cafeteria, saying, "My brother asked me to help him get back in your good books. He says he got jealous and ticked you off." Bianca lowered her head and kept eating without a word. "C'mon, Bianca, stop torturing my brother." Nina could not help but burst out laughing. "He just cares about you that much. His jealousy is also a sign of his love for you. Seriously, I don't think you know how much he likes you! I'm pretty sure you're more important to him than me or my parents. You're the apple of his eyes, his greatest treasure." Bianca thought it over and felt significantly less upset. Actually, when she thought about it from another angle, she would probably fly off the handle and throw accusations everywhere too if she bumped into a girl secretly sending Jean presents... ... That afternoon. The head of the design department kept his door open the entire time. Bianca passed by quite often when she went to get herself water. "Who wants to run an errand?" the head of the department asked without looking up. "I'll do it." Bianca was passing by again, and she replied with a gleam in her eyes. Her colleagues looked at her gratefully. Everyone was busy with their work, so it would be great if Bianca could help them settle some menial tasks. There was

something she had to bring to the president's office this time too. That was exactly the opportunity Bianca had been waiting for. She went to the top floor. Then she went into the presidential office. Once there, Bianca put the blueprint down, but she did not leave immediately. "Anything else?" Luke did not even look up, so she could not see his expression. His pretty and slender masculine fingers moved across the large blueprint spread across the office desk. He looked so solemn and serious when he was working. "Thank you, Mr. Crawford," Bianca ventured. Her heart began to race uncontrollably as she threw out the bait. 'You're so dumb, Bianca. If you guessed wrong, changing the subject will be so awkward!' To her surprise, Luke's hands on the blueprint suddenly paused, and he raised his head to look at her, his gaze overbearing as he said, "Not bad, you know the master who fed you. At least you're not as stupid as I thought." "..."/> Bianca was speechless. How was she stupid? And what did he mean by "master"? She was a living, breathing human being here, and he talked about feeding her like a pet... Of course, the president's choice of words did not really matter. Bianca asked, "I don't know you did all that, Mr. Crawford." "You took care of Lanie and Rainie. That wasn't easy," Luke said matter-of-factly. "And I slept in your bed when I was drunk. I'm truly sorry for that. If it weren't for me, you wouldn't have fallen sick." Bianca was stunned. She had barely interacted with Luke Crawford for more than five minutes in H City after she fell sick, so how... could he tell that she was ill? "Thank you." Bianca stayed where she stood, a little embarrassed. In order to prevent any future complications, she added, "That 'compensation' is already more than enough. Please don't give me anything else, Mr. Crawford. As your employees, it's only natural for us to help you out." The way she spoke was distant, as though they were complete strangers. Luke suddenly chuckled. It was only once, and his expression was unreadable. Like a high-and-mighty prince, he raised a brow and said, "You sure are confident, aren't you?"

Thinking that I'd give you anything else." Bianca's face instantly reddened! She was just worried that her boss would suddenly decide to send her something else. If he did, there was no way she would be able to explain to Jean. "If there's nothing else, I'll be going downstairs now." Bianca nodded politely and turned around. She was running away with her tail between her legs. "Stand right there." The man spoke suddenly behind her. Startled, Bianca stopped. "You said it's only natural for you employees to help me out, right?" Luke's voice was as deep as usual, so she could not tell what he was feeling at all. Bianca was properly panicked now. Still, she nodded anyway. Luke pointed a finger at a few books stacked on top of the coffee table. There were cartoon sheets there too, and he gave her an order. "Stay here and wrap those books for my kids." "Wrap their books?" Bianca looked at the books. "You had better be quiet as you do it, too. Don't get in the way of my work." With that, Luke went back to focusing on his work, frowning as he devoted himself to his task at hand. Bianca had no choice but to head over to the coffee table. It had been many years since she last wrapped books... There were four books in total, with Rainie Crawford written on two of them and Blanche Crawford on the other two... Bianca relied on her memories from elementary and middle school. She cut up the cartoon sheets and wrapped them around the books, but as she went on, she realized that it had been too long since she last did this, and she had grown extremely rusty. She was probably going to waste one of these sheets... "I..." Bianca clearly remembered that the boss told her not to disturb him, but she really had a question this time. Luke raised his eyes to look at her. Bianca raised her little face and met his deep gaze. She quickly lowered her head again and said, "I... ruined one of the cartoon sheets. There aren't enough anymore..." Her voice was soft, quiet, and gentle as she talked to him. She did not even dare to look at him, looking so timid and scared that it made the man tingle from his chest to his groin. Luke's voice was hoarse. "It's alright.

There's more." There was more! Bianca heaved a sigh of relief and went over to take more. She did not need the man to guide her. Bianca immediately saw the stack of cartoon sheets under the office desk; Jason had bought all of them for Rainie and Lanie. Bianca crouched down to choose a few, and she caught sight of a Spongebob wrapper.

Chapter 15 Hanging Off Of Luke Crawford

Bianca thought that Rainie would like this Spongebob wrapper. She put the others aside and picked up the Spongebob one before getting up to leave. "Ah—" When she stood up, she was fully focused on how she would best maximize the effect of the Spongebob wrapper on the book. As a result, she had completely forgotten about a certain man standing next to her. Bianca wore a brooch on her work clothes, and now it was caught onto the man's leather belt... "S-Sorry, I..." Bianca stared at the two items stuck together, feeling extremely awkward. The man lowered his head. When he looked at her, there was something unreadable deep in his eyes. "Hold on, I'll be done in a second..." Bianca scrambled around, grabbing the man's belt frantically. In all of her years, this was the first time she had grabbed a man's belt of her own accord. On those nights five years ago, Bianca had not touched the man's clothes or anything like that. Nothing like that had happened in the years she had been with Jean too. She did not know what was going on here. Why did all these weird things happen when she was with Luke Crawford? It was like a chemical reaction she could not avoid. The brooch had quite the complicated design and plenty of gaps in it. One of the branches had hooked onto the man's belt buckle. Unfortunately, the brooch was completely stuck! The more flustered Bianca grew, the harder it was to undo. The air around her was starting to heat up... "How much longer will this take?" the man asked. Bianca raised her head and looked at him. Luke was very tall, and he was wearing a black suit today. He wore a white shirt, and usually he only left two of the

buttons undone, but he was in his office perusing the blueprints today, so he threw caution to the winds and undid three buttons. Bianca could almost see his well-toned pecs, even if she did not want to. The man had a narrow waist and almost perfect proportions. If he did not have body warmth to prove that he was an actual living person, someone might mistake him for a male mannequin lovingly carved by fashion experts. "I... I don't care about the brooch." Bianca tried to come up with the right words to say as she avoided his gaze. "But if I want to undo this, I'll probably end up scratching your leather belt, sir." When she had been studying overseas, she and her friends had looked into all sorts of famous brands to elevate their understanding. Still, all they ever did was try to get to know the brands better. That was why she knew that this belt was really expensive. It was so expensive that she would not be able to make it up to him. "Getting a scratch on my belt buckle would still look better than having you hanging off of me like this." Luke looked down at the stupid woman who had been bent down at his waist and scrambling for a long time without managing to undo the brooch. It was already evening now. The twilight rays shone onto the man, giving him a surreal sense of beauty. Since he had given her the green light, Bianca kept her head down and pursed her lips, continuing to work on her brooch. Luke looked down at her like a king at his subjects. Bianca grew ever more frustrated as she failed to undo the brooch. Her soft lips were slightly parted and her warm breath blew on the man's taut abdomen. Something was filling up his stiff body before he knew it. There was a clack. Just then, the belt buckle and brooch were finally separated. Bianca was elated, her smile spreading across her fair rosy face. She cupped the ruined brooch on her chest as she stood up. However, something seemed... off. She instinctively looked down. Just one look was enough to shock her into backing away from him involuntarily. Her body gave a slight jolt, and when she looked up at the man again, her gaze was full of terror and uneasiness... The handsome

man was at least 180 or 190 centimeters tall, perhaps more. He stood up straight, his expression hard and solemn, like a teacher judging a female student who had done something wrong. When she met his bottomless black eyes, Bianca felt so awkward that her mouth went dry. All she could do was apologize. "Sorry! I'll go back to wrapping the books, Mr. Crawford!" After she apologized, Bianca picked the Spongebob wrapper from the floor next to her and went back to wrapping the books. After that, all the way until she finished wrapping the books and left, Bianca acted extremely unnatural and stiff. Every minute and every second felt as long and torturous as a millennium. The man's status, appearance, and mature, noble bearings were like walls built around him, forbidding entry. Bianca went downstairs and took a long time before her pulse returned to normal. She had decided that she was going to stay far away from that man on the top floor from now on. Nothing seemed to go right when she was around him. Since wrapping those books had taken her a long time, quite a lot of work had piled up on Bianca's desk. There was one advantage to being so busy, and that was she could forget about all those awkward moments in the presidential office on the top floor. "Come have dinner at my place tonight. My brother's coming to pick us up." Nina was holding a stack of documents when she managed to find a chance to bend over and whisper into Bianca's ear. Bianca glanced at her and nodded. Nina's gaze incidentally swept across the brooch on Bianca's chest. "Oh? What happened to it?" Nina asked in surprise. Although it was not a very expensive or branded brooch, it was an item Bianca had treasured since high school. Nina did not know who gave Bianca that outdated accessory, but she had known Bianca since her first year in high school, and she used to go to Bianca's place all the time. That was why she knew Bianca always had a box. The only thing in that box was this very brooch. Bianca looked down at the ruined brooch on her chest and lied, "I bumped into a kid. When I crouched down to talk to him, he

grabbed my brooch and wouldn't let go, so..." "Ugh, I hate brats like that." Nina figured that Bianca must be heartbroken about it. After all, she had treasured that brooch for so many years, and now it was all warped out of shape. Nina shook her head and returned to her work station. Bianca lifted a hand dazedly and softly cupped the ruined brooch. Finally, it was time to leave work. Jean had the day off today. It was the company's way of making it up to them for the business trip. He spent the day buying a car, handling all the documentation in a hurry and then driving the car to the company. "Sorry—" Outside the company building, Jean looked at Bianca passionately, opening the car door for her as he apologized and watched her get into the car. Nina drove her own car away in advance. Bianca got into Jean's car, and the two of them headed toward the Langdons' place. On the way, Jean was focused on driving, so he did not say a thing. He frowned, seemingly lost in thought. Bianca did not say anything either, merely looking at the street outside the car window. The car drove into their neighborhood. Jean's parents had even come downstairs to personally welcome Bianca in. "Mr. and Mrs. Langdon, why are you two here?" Bianca was feeling quite bad for making them come out here. Mrs. Langdon patted Bianca's hand enthusiastically. "Because I missed you!" "Mom! You're even sappier with Bianca than Jean is!" Nina teased her mother. Jean walked behind his family members, one hand stuck in his pocket. There was a high-class black silk accessory box tightly grasped in his palm right now. This marriage proposal was like the flip of a coin to Jean. He had no idea if it would land on heads or tails. Other couples might not feel this way, but that was his situation with Bianca right now. Of course he would be nervous.

Chapter 16 Visit By The Father And Son

Jean knew that Bianca loved him, but he also knew that she did not love him as much as he loved her. That was why, in order to make sure the proposal succeeded, once he decided to propose that noon, he asked his parents to invite

his grandparents, aunts, and uncles over. All in all, there were more than a dozen of his relatives, young and old. After Bianca followed the Langdons upstairs, she was stunned in place the second they opened the door... Similarly, Nina stared at her relatives crowding the house, looking at them like they were ghosts. "You're here, you're here!" The one who spoke was Jean's father's second sister. When she saw the girl standing at the door, looking just like how she looked in the photo, the older woman immediately grabbed her mother's arm and said excitedly, "That's Jean's girlfriend, Bianca Rayne. She's right there at the door! Oh, what a beauty. Come over here and check her out, Mom..." Bianca was rendered speechless. "Come on in." Jean looked at her tenderly, tugging at her hand. Out of politeness, Bianca had to force herself to smile at all of Jean's relatives. Jean's grandmother never once let go of Bianca's hand, holding it in her palm and patting it gently every time she said anything. Bianca was getting a premonition of something that felt neither good nor bad. Her gaze sought Jean out and found him smoking on the balcony, his hands in his pockets. He looked stressed, as though something was weighing heavily on his heart. Dinner was especially fancy that night. Nina said, "This food is better than anything we've had, even during New Year's..." Jean's grandparents and parents sat at the main table. Jean and Bianca took their seats there as well. Everyone else sat at another table. As they ate, they only chatted about trivial things. Bianca was almost done with her meal and was about to put down her cutlery when Jean suddenly looked her in the eye and said, "Come with me." The two of them went to one of the smaller bedrooms. It was Jean's room. "What's the matter?" Bianca's voice was very soft and gentle as she asked, like the sweet warm sunshine in the mid-morning between dawn and noon. Jean's gaze on her was determined and tender at the same time. He took her hand, his voice trembling slightly as he said, "I have to apologize to you. What happened this morning was my fault." "Oh, don't worry. I'm not angry about it anymore."

That was Bianca's reply. "Thank you. Thank you for understanding my fears and worries." Jean reached out and pulled her into his embrace, closing his eyes as he said weakly, "You don't know how scared I am of losing you." Bianca fell silent. Jean continued, "You know, I fell in love a long, long time ago, from the moment you first set foot in my house. Back then, you were a high school freshman... I really felt like I was sinning for loving such a young girl. I tried turning my affections to other girls, but I never felt anything for them other than annoyance. Eventually, I realized that you would grow up someday. All I had to do was wait quietly. "Finally, you grew up, and we had the chance to study overseas together. "You have experienced harrowing events in the past. When you came clean and told me everything, to be honest, I was devastated..." When she heard that, Bianca's body could not help a tiny shudder. So he did mind, after all! "Hear me out." Jean hugged her even tighter and continued, "I wasn't upset because you were unclean. I was upset at myself. I hated myself for not walking into your life from the start. I hated myself for not taking care of you well enough, for allowing you to suffer like that. "Bianca, you must understand. No other man in the world has loved you longer than I have, with more conviction than I do..." Perhaps it was because he truly was terrified of losing her, but Jean's voice gradually went from slight trembling to choked sobs. Of course Bianca was moved. Her heart felt like a puddle of warmth in her chest. Finally, her prayers came true. There really was someone who loved her sincerely. She was trying her best to forget everything in the past. That rich and powerful man from back then had wanted that too, after all. She still remembered what that lady butler said to her. "I hope you have a good life from now on." After that incident, Bianca had wondered to herself. Would she really be able to have a good life after what she went through? Still, that was the path she had chosen, and she was not going to regret walking it. If she did have a good life after that, she would consider herself

fortunate. If she did not, she would have no one else to blame. Bianca figured that a good life did not need to be one filled with wealth and power. She just wanted someone who loved and understood her, someone with similar values in life. All she wanted was to have someone like that to cherish, and to cherish her in return, so that they may share a peaceful and uneventful life until they turned old and contented. This someone was, without a doubt, Jean Langdon. Bianca stepped out of his embrace and looked at him as she said, "Don't be so insecure. You're making me feel really guilty. I'm not all that special at all; no man would notice me." Jean could not help but remember that bouquet of fresh flowers, flown in especially for her. "Even if someone did, I know I'll be able to hold myself back," Bianca said solemnly. Jean's confidence was restored now, and he held her hand again. The two of them left the room. Bianca wanted to walk toward the couch, but Jean forcefully kept her in the middle of the living room with a hug. "What are you doing?" Bianca looked up at Jean with a questioning gaze. His expression had suddenly turned strange. Just then, in front of all his relatives and elders, Jean pulled a black silk jewelry box from his pocket and opened it toward her! "Whoa, that's so sudden!" Nina could not help a gasp, her hand flying to her mouth. No wonder he called all these relatives over. He had been planning to propose all along! Jean fell onto one knee in front of Bianca. In front of his entire extended family, he beseeched her, "Marry me, Bianca Rayne. Join my parents and relatives as part of my beloved family. Become my closest lover..." Bianca, "...". She had never even imagined the day she would be proposed to. She always thought that marriage was a long way away for her. "Say yes, dear!" Jean's mother could not help but grow anxious when Bianca failed to respond. Nina nudged Bianca as well. She had no other choice. From the day she nodded and agreed to date Jean, Bianca had known that, barring unforeseen circumstances, it was only a matter of time before she married Jean... ... Bianca stayed and chatted with Jean's

grandparents until it was past 9pm before she finally managed to escape. Jean drove her back to her neighborhood. Bianca got out of the car. "You can just leave me here. I want to have a little walk on my own." Too much had happened that day, and it had been a veritable rollercoaster. She needed some time to herself to get her mind sorted. "Okay. Sleep early." Jean did not push her too hard. After they bid each other goodbye, Bianca watched him drive his Audi Q5 away. The streetlights in the neighborhood were on, so it was not dark at all. Some people were still walking around the area in a bid to strengthen their bodies. Bianca walked back toward her block. When she reached the door and put her hand into her bag to find the keys to the block, a little boy's voice called out to her, sweetly and full of anticipation. "Lady!" She turned around and followed the source of the voice. What she saw made her pause. Behind the streetlamp, there were two people standing straight and solemnly. One was an adult and the other a child. Luke Crawford's defined features were hidden in the shadows where the light could not reach. His expression was less than kind when he stared at her, his cold gaze harboring a nasty temper that was on the brink of an outburst. Meanwhile, the boy was biting his lip pitifully, with nary a trace of his previous arrogance at the hotel. He looked at his father and then at Bianca. "Why... are you two here?" Bianca was absolutely stumped.

Chapter 17 As If They're Unrelated

"We're here to..." Before the boy could finish that sentence, he saw an older lady walking toward them. Was this grandma Miss Bea's mother? "Hi, Grandma!" Lanie greeted her politely. Grandma...? Bianca followed Lanie's gaze and looked behind her. There was an older woman in her fifties, wearing a white-and-pink Adidas tracksuit. She was just passing by, but then she suddenly stopped in front of the three of them. Luke knew that she was not Bianca's mother, so he did not greet her. "Is something the matter, ma'am?" Bianca was confused by the woman's intense stare. The woman then frowned

and began to sincerely advise her, “Once you’re married, girl, you gotta learn how to take care of your family. You can’t let your husband and child go hungry. I mean, look at you! It’s already this late, and you’re only back now?” By “your husband”, she clearly meant that man with the poker face behind her. Bianca felt quite embarrassed and awkward. She was about to explain when the woman looked at Luke instead and turned on him mercilessly as well. “You’re not being a very good husband either. You can’t go throwing a tantrum at your wife just because she ticked you off. What kind of an example are you giving your son? These days, men have to learn how to cook too. You can’t ask your wife to take care of all the housework alone. You married a wife, not a maid!” Bianca was starting to think that the woman was going too far. How could she misunderstand something like this?! After all, anyone should be able to tell at a glance that the two of them were from vastly different worlds. “Ma’am, you’re mistaken. He’s just my boss, and I’m just his employee,” Bianca explained hastily. After a pause, the woman opened her mouth again, but she did not manage to say anything. She just appraised the man, woman, and child once more... As if they were unrelated. Did they take her for a fool? ‘It’s clear as day that you have something to do with that handsome man! ‘Seriously, what has the world come to these days? To think that there’s a sugar baby living here in this area...’ Bianca was misunderstood for no apparent reason, and she pursed her lips as she watched that woman leave. She had no idea what she should say to the father and son if she turned around now. After all, she was not really familiar with the man or the boy. She knew very well what an unmarried girl should and should not do. It was fine for her to interact with other men for work, but it was wholly unsuitable for her to meet with another man in the middle of the night privately. Luke suddenly looked down at his son next to him and said in a low voice, “You have something to say, right? Get on with it!” Bianca turned around. Blanche Crawford blinked at the

two adults. He had no idea what he was supposed to say... but Dad said that he had something to say... and he wanted him to say it now! Oh, Lanie remembered now! He was only here because his dad wanted a sidekick, though. The little boy walked over with his short legs and carried two huge boxes from a dark corner with his short arms. It seemed to take him some herculean effort. One of the boxes was light blue, and the other was white. They even had silk ribbons on them. "Miss Bea, these presents are for you." Lanie even turned around to look at his father after he said that, worried that he had said something wrong. Blanche was still a short little kid, after all. Bianca could hear what he was saying, but she did not see his face. Although she did not want any more gifts from Luke Crawford, Bianca decided to accept them for now when she saw how hard it was for the boy to hold the gifts up. At least that way she could see his face... Bianca met the boy's eyes as he looked up at her, and they exchanged a friendly smile. "Why did you give me this?" Bianca asked the boy at her feet, but she was waiting for his father to answer. What she did not know was that the icy-cold man happened to see the diamond ring on her left ring finger right at that moment... The ring meant that she was already engaged. "Hmm... I don't know either..." Blanche was not guarded around Bianca any more. His expression was pure and innocent, befitting his age, and he scratched his hand as he turned around to look at his father in confusion. "Since you've done what you had to do, let's go home!" Luke told his son. His dark deep black eyes gave Bianca, her arms full of the presents, one more glance before he turned and left. Bianca and Lanie both looked at the man who had left all of a sudden. "My dad, he..." Lanie wanted to say something, but he shut his mouth again halfway through the sentence, looking disappointed. Bianca was exasperated. "I really can't accept these presents, though." "Why?" She could not explain the real reason why to a five-year-old boy. He would not understand anyway. That was why she had to come

up with a reason a child would understand, saying, “I can’t accept a reward that I didn’t earn.” With that, she put the presents back in Lanie’s arms with a smile. “You should catch up to your father before he goes too far away. Take these presents back to him for me.” ... There was a white Porsche stopped by the curb at the entrance to the neighborhood. The man’s expression was dark as he sat in the driver’s seat, one hand on his steering wheel while his other hand was raised. There was a cigarette between his fingers, and he brought it to his mouth, taking a drag from it viciously. “Do you see the trash can behind you? Throw it in there!” Luke said coldly, staring at the presents his son had carried back to the car. ... When they were back at the Crawfords’ place. Luke had barely pulled the car to a stop when he saw his son take off his seatbelt and leap out of the car. The boy had not said anything the entire way back. Old Master Crawford was having tea in the yard. When he saw his little great-grandson rush out of the car and into the car, going upstairs without a word, he was quite shocked. “What happened to my little great-grandson? Who made him that upset?” For one, Luke and Lanie had never once argued with each other in the past five years. Luke loosened his tie slightly and strode into the mansion. “Did little Lanie bump into another woman trying to make a move on you again?” Luke’s mother, Allison Tanner, came out to take her son’s coat and hazarded a guess. Luke shook his head. Just like that, Allison was stumped. What else could have happened? That was usually the only thing that would get to Lanie like that. Lanie and Rainie had been very protected growing up, and they did not get to meet many other people. When they were younger, they did not even understand the concept of a mother. It was only when they got to know other children that the two of them found out. Other kids had a mother as well as a father. The moment Lanie got home that day, he asked, “Where’s our mother?” Old Master Crawford continued lying to the children, saying they had no mother. However, Lanie understood a lot of things at five years old,

and his great-grandfather's lies could not fool him this time. The sheer desire in his eyes had the old man defeated, and the latter sighed. "Your mother went somewhere very far away. If she comes back one day, I'll ask your father to introduce you to her." Only Lanie heard and remembered those words, taking them to heart. Allison passed her son's coat to the maid, who took it away. Going to the window, Allison looked downstairs. As Luke's mother and the two children's grandmother, it was impossible for her to not be curious about the children's mother's true identity. Still, five years had passed since then, and it would be very difficult to find out the details of the deal back then now. As his mother, it was not as though she had never asked Luke before. He simply did not say a single word about it. As for Faye Thomas and Charles Finn, the ones who had once served by her son's side, they had long since retired due to illness. Allison thought that she might pay them a visit one day if she was in the area. Maybe they might let something slip...

Chapter 18 You Won't Find A Wife

The next day. Bianca only left the house at eight o'clock. It only took her twenty minutes to get to work via subway. At times like these, Bianca was really glad that she managed to rent a cheap place this close to the company. When she walked out of her unit, Bianca could not help but raise her hand to try and shield her face from the rising sun. She had not managed to sleep last night, so her eyes were really tired when she got out of bed this morning. The sunlight was enough to make her eyes very uncomfortable. Last night, Bianca had spent a lot of time mulling over it and analyzing all the possibilities. Why was the almighty president giving her so many gifts like this? Were the house call and healthy feast back then really a sign of his appreciation because she helped take care of the kids for a while? Were the imported flowers really a friendly greeting to her since she was ill? Nevertheless, that man did not look friendly in the slightest. She was even more stumped about the two gift boxes

from last night. Regardless, be it the lavishness of the deliveries or the surprise gift from last night, all of it made Bianca quite uneasy. What kind of a person was Luke Crawford? What kind of a person was she?! The former was the one-and-only president of T Group. He was not your average Joe; in fact, he was one of the kings in the business world. Most importantly, even if he was a normal guy on the streets, he would still be a man among men. He had a body that served as the envy of many, and handsome features to boot. It would be no exaggeration to say that he was the man of every woman's dream. On the other hand, Bianca was nothing. If there was anything she had going for her, she could only name two things. One was that she was a woman, and the second was that she was alive. Luke's actions were giving Bianca a crazy idea, but it was so absurd that it made Bianca feel like she was vastly overestimating herself... If he wanted to find a mistress, Luke would be able to find any kind of woman he liked, right? Why would he ever want a plain Jane like her? That made no sense. ... Outside the neighborhood. Bianca was about to cross the road as usual, but when she was looking across the street for cars, she saw an old cleaner wearing a yellow vest clear the trash from the rubbish bins. The old man pulled out a box. It was followed by another box. One was blue and the other white. These were the two boxes Lanie brought last night, right? The old man crouched down and opened the boxes. Just then, the two trendily-dressed women walked out of the neighborhood. "Old man, did you find that?" One of the women looked like she was in her mid-twenties. She rushed over to the old man and asked him about it. To the old man, clothes were not all that worth picking up. Even his old wife could not really wear these clothes. A car passed by Bianca. When Bianca next looked at the trash can, she saw that the two women had already struck a deal with the old man, asking to buy the items the old man had found. "Here's two hundred bucks, old man. Hang on to it!" Once they paid the money, the two women exchanged a look before pouncing at the

other box the old man was holding. “Hold on.” Bianca walked over to them and looked at the boxes, telling the old man, “I want the clothes and this blue box. I’ll pay you ten thousand for them.” The two women immediately looked at Bianca with some hostility. Where did this busybody come from?! Bianca did not feel like she was being glared at for no reason. After all, she did come here with relatively hostile intentions. These items did not belong to her because she had rejected Luke’s gifts, but now, they belonged to this old man. These Ralph Lauren clothes were one of the highest-end outfits a working woman could ask for, and even female celebrities wore these when they attended events. The Tiffany brooch was worth even more than that. These items cost at least a hundred and fifty thousand together, but these two women were trying to get them for two hundred? They were way too greedy here... “Ten... Ten thousand?” The old man was struck dumb. Bianca nodded, looking very sincere. “Old man, I’ll give you fifteen thousand!” The woman who had paid the man earlier glared at Bianca again and then lowered her head to look for her bank card. She was planning to go get some cash nearby right now. It did not look like the old man had Alipay or anything like that anyway. “Twenty thousand.” In the face of the old man’s disbelieving look, Bianca said, “I’ll give you twenty thousand.” The old man’s expression clearly said, “I know I’m old, but I hope you’re not taking me for a ride here.” “Could they be fake?” said one of the women to her friend with the bank card. “They could be scammers working together to deceive us. Think about it! Who would ever find luxury items like these at the entrance to a small neighborhood?” The woman with the bank card gave it some thought and backed away, worried that it was a con. “True. I nearly got carried away by a scam! It must be fake!” The woman put the bank card away and harrumphed, turning to leave with her friend. The old man returned to his senses and grew angry. “Who are you calling a scammer?! I think you three are the scammers here. You’re trying to work

together and con me of my money!” ... Twenty minutes later, Bianca brought the old man to a luxury store. With the receipt and the brooch, she easily exchanged the item for money. Bianca handled everything herself. The old man did not understand anything at all, and he was still feeling uneasy when he held the money in his hands. “I... I...” “I’m not a scammer, sir. Since you found the things, they’re yours.” Bianca had not accepted these goods last night, so she was not going to ask for them now either. They were branded goods, brand new with the receipt intact. There was no way they would not be able to exchange the things for money. “What kind of a lucky fortune is this?” The old man hugged the bag of money, on the verge of tears. He was both ecstatic and terrified. “This is five years’ worth of my medicine right here! No one will come sue me later, will they?” Bianca assured him that would not happen and then glanced at the old man’s lame leg. ... By the time Bianca reached the company, it was half-past ten. A chat with the old man told Bianca that he lived alone with his old wife, since they did not have any kids. In his first year as a cleaner, however, the old man had his leg injured in a car accident with a clumsy young man. The culprit ran away, and they had yet to find him even now. The old man had to bear the costs of the leg surgery and follow-up medication by himself. He even said he wanted to die and get it over with, but he could not leave his old wife all alone. Bianca was suddenly grateful toward Luke Crawford. The wealthy did not care about a few hundred thousand, but this poor old man would be able to turn his life around with this money. That meant Luke had indirectly done a good deed. Bianca was late now, but what she had completely failed to notice was that it was Saturday today. When she arrived at the company, she saw that there were barely any people around aside from a handful working overtime. She finally realized that today was Saturday... ... It was Saturday, and the father and son were facing off against each other. Luke sat in a black imported Land Rover, wearing a black shirt.

His expression was especially scary as he asked his son outside the car, “Are you sure you don’t want to come with me?” “No. You really disappointed me!” Lanie hugged his bag tightly with his two chubby little hands, pouting as he looked up at his father in the car. Puffing out his cheeks, he said, “I wanted to put in a good word or two for you, so that she might like you better, but then I realized I have no idea where to start because you have no good points whatsoever! You have a bad temper, and you’re not gentle at all. See, I can find so many weaknesses.” Luke frowned his delicate brow. He was starting to think that his son had something else in mind. To his surprise, the boy added a finishing blow. “You’re not gonna find a wife like that...”

Chapter 19 Still, This Was Her House...

Blanche watched as his father drove away grumpily. The boy knew that he had definitely hurt his father this time, stabbing his words right into his father’s frigid heart. Rainie came down the stairs and walked out of the house, asking her brother, “Where did Dad go?” “He just left. I think I might have hurt him.” The boy lowered his head guiltily, sounding really upset as he admitted to his younger sister. “Big Bro, I miss Miss Bea!” What about Dad, you ask? What about him? He was not tasty or fun, and he always looked at her so fiercely. She liked him even less than her annoying chatterbox of a teacher. Rainie Crawford never really cared if her father was around on the weekends. Miss Bea was different, though. She was pretty and smelled good too. “Rainie, do you want me to take you to Miss Bea’s place? I know where she stays!” Blanche said, picking up his sister’s hand. Rainie nodded. The twins immediately came to an agreement. They left the house, hailing a ride on an app. Once they told the driver their destination, the car headed straight for Bianca’s neighborhood. However, one of the Crawfords’ drivers followed behind the cab in his car too. When the cars reached a neighborhood called Regal Capital, the driver called Luke and reported, “Sir, the young master and

young lady are at a neighborhood called Regal Capital. They're standing outside now, and it looks like they're waiting for someone. "Yes, sir. I'll keep an eye on them." Upon hanging up, the driver went back to keeping a close eye on the children, not daring to look away for even a second. "Big Bro, shall we call Miss Bea?" Rainie raised her head and looked at the other men and women going in and out of the neighborhood. They were looking at her, too, and she was a little scared. Her brother only knew that Miss Bea lived here and which block was hers, but he did not know which floor she stayed on. Blanche frowned and looked at the Crawford car parked by the roadside. He just knew that Dad would have someone follow his sister and him. He was about to bring his sister over to the "public telephone" to make a call, but they had no sooner looked away when they saw Miss Bea! When Bianca saw the two children walking hand in hand, looking out for each other, she was struck speechless once again. Why were her boss' kids always running to her place...? Yes, Bianca really liked these kids, but it was still not a good idea for her to spend too much time with them or become too close to them. If anyone else found out, she could not imagine what they might say. In the worst-case scenario, she might even lose her job. Bianca walked up to them, exasperated. Looking into their innocent little faces, she asked, "Why are you two here?" "I-I brought my sister here in a cab. We got into a fight with Dad, and he yelled at my little sister. He even made her cry. We... We don't have anywhere to go." Blanche made the first move. They wanted to stay, so he had to push the blame onto his father for now, making him out to be some sort of tyrant. Bianca crouched down and reassessed the two kids' pitiful looks. She reached out to touch Rainie's face, saying in concern, "Be good, children, and go home, okay? Parents don't stay angry with their kids for long, and I'm sure your father just lost his temper for a while there. I bet he really regrets being mad at you." Bianca felt sorry for the poor kids since their dad yelled at them. But they were

still someone else's kids. No matter what, she did not have the right to interfere in their family matters. Their reason to stay had been shot down. Helpless, Blanche squeezed his sister's hand. As though she received some holy decree, Rainie immediately lowered her head and pouted her lips. She looked like she was on the verge of bursting into tears. "Alright, then. We won't disturb you anymore. Come on, let's go..." Blanche put on a strong face as he pulled his sister's hand, making to leave. However, Rainie would not move. Her brother yanked at her hand again, and she even fell. Her skin was thin and soft. When she fell onto the coarse road in the neighborhood, covered in stones, she instantly skinned her knees. "Sob..." The girl began to cry. Bianca threw everything else aside and immediately pulled Rainie from the floor into her arms. She patted little Rainie on her back, consoling her, "It's alright, it's alright. Don't cry, don't cry. I'll take you to my place and give you something nice to eat." "Sooob..." Rainie had been crying, but the moment the nice lady said she would take her and Lanie back home, she stopped crying in an instant. Instead, she nodded firmly and leaned into Bianca's embrace. "Okay! Miss Bea, I really love you the best..." Bianca sighed soundlessly. Blanche followed behind her. When they reached her place, Bianca put Rainie down and found two pairs of new slippers for the two children to put on. Blanche and Rainie stomped around the house in their huge slippers, but there was not much to explore. The place had one bedroom and one living hall, making it infinitely smaller than Crawford Manor. Still, they really liked it. "Rainie, come here and sit down." Bianca took out her first-aid kit. Rainie obediently sat down. "Hang in there, okay? Tell me if it hurts." Bianca took out some ointment, cotton, and gauze. There was a bruise the size of a fingernail on the girl's knee. Blanche stood to a side, patting his sister's shoulder with a small hand. As expected, his sister stayed strong and did not complain about the pain. She just frowned and held it in until her knee was properly bandaged. "This looks really pretty."

Rainie looked down at her knee, as though she had never seen a bandage and gauze tied into a bow before. Bianca patted her head with a smile. When she glanced at the time again, she saw that it was already eleven. “Have you had lunch yet?” Bianca asked them. Blanche shook his head. “Well then, you two can watch the TV for a bit and I’ll make you lunch. What do you want to eat?” Bianca turned on the TV and found them a cartoon to watch before rummaging through the fridge for ingredients. Blanche looked at Rainie and said, “Rainie wants fried chicken. I’m okay with anything... I’m not picky.” Rainie instantly said. “I’m not picky either.” She was really easy to handle. All she wanted was something to eat so she did not go hungry. Bianca was planning to feed them well before sending them home. It took twenty minutes to cook the rice. Bianca had never saved Luke’s number. All she vaguely remembered was that the number was eleven digits long, and that it was easy to recall. However, the owner of the number was too cold and distant, so she cast it out of her mind as soon as she could, afraid to memorize it. To tell the truth, even if she had saved the number or remembered it, Bianca did not really dare to call him over to pick up the kids either. Since the kids had taken a cab here, they could also take a cab back. At the most, she would secretly see the kids back to their doorstep before leaving. That was what Bianca was thinking, anyway. She made three dishes and one soup, all of them mild but healthy. Bianca had some faith in her cooking skills, definitely. After telling the kids to stay put, Bianca took her keys and went downstairs to buy fried chicken. It just so happened that there was a fried chicken chain store downstairs. It looked pretty clean and sanitary too. Having bought the chicken, Bianca rushed back to her home, worried that the dishes she had made would go cold. Putting the key into the keyhole, Bianca opened her house door. At first she thought that Rainie would be waiting at the door in anticipation when she heard the key turning, but when Bianca opened the door, she saw a mature man’s face instead. Her smile froze

on her face, and she was too scared to even go into the house. Still, this was her house...

Chapter 20 Daddy Will Spank You!

Luke did not even look at her. He just reminded her, “The food’s growing cold.” With that, he turned around and went to her narrow little balcony, less than two meters squared, as though he knew the place like the back of his hand. Bianca stayed frozen on the spot. Luke acted like he owned the place, pulling out his box of cigarettes as he walked. After that, he tapped a cigarette out of the box and put it in his mouth, lighting it. His every action was so smooth and cool. This was her house, but the two children sat at the table with their spoons, looking at their empty bowls and waiting to be fed as though she owed them food. Still, they were obedient and very adorable. The only problem was the adult over there. He was completely disregarding her as the owner of this house. Anyone else would at least be polite enough to explain how they got inside. ... Bianca first served the children food, but she did not eat anything herself. Instead, she hid in the kitchen. She had done basically everything Blanche and Rainie’s mother should be doing, and she was not getting paid for this either. This was not sustainable. Bianca thought that the kitchen would be her little safe haven, but she was wrong. The unique smell of tobacco assaulted her nostrils. When she looked up, she was surprised to meet a deep and complicated gaze. All of a sudden, Bianca was frazzled. It felt like even the air around her had gone still because his body was in the way. He had her trapped in a corner with her body... This suffocating feeling left Bianca extremely anxious. She just wanted to leave. When she took a step forward, though, she was blocked even more vehemently! Bianca raised her head abruptly and looked at him, warning him not to push things too far! At the same time, Luke’s gaze fell on her soft-looking lips. His look made her turn her head away in an instant. “Miss Bea, why aren’t there any onions in the food you make...?”

Rainie's voice reached her eyes, accompanied by the sound of her spoon clinking against the bowl. Bianca's face heated up, and she replied, "...I don't eat onions." While she spoke, Bianca tried to leave. It was much safer to interact with the kids than stay in the kitchen. However, she had barely taken a step forward when the man pressed his hand on her shoulder, pinning her down. "Are you crazy—?" Bianca could not help but exclaim out loud. Her heart racing, she raised her head and met the gaze of the man looking down at her from above. There was something in Luke's cool gaze, an inexplicable, indescribable suppression of her masculine desires. He looked at her but did not say a thing. "What are you doing?!" Bianca struggled in terror. The deepest depths of Luke's eyes were like an abyss. When she looked into his eyes, Bianca felt like she was slowly getting sucked into them. It was a petrifying feeling. At the same time, she just could not break free. She was this close to crying out of frustration. "Please be aware of yourself, Mr. Crawford!" There were kids here, so Bianca did not dare to make it too explicit, lest she pollute the flowers of the future. Still, Luke was the children's father. He was going too far here! "Be aware of myself?" Luke leaned his tall and slender body over her, feeling the woman's heart pound under his touch. He stared at her silky-smooth and supple skin, his thin lips saying, "Being aware of myself means being aware of my words, actions, and principles. It means paying attention and putting importance on myself. Right now, I'm definitely aware of myself." His ridiculous explanation had left her wordless... As he spoke, the man trapped her tightly between his arms. Their bodies were pressed close together, without any gap between them... "Mr. Crawford... I have a boyfriend, and I'm even engaged now! What you're doing is really inappropriate, and it'll be very harmful if this gets out. It might even affect your reputation outside, Mr. Crawford!" Bianca looked at him without moving. If she moved, she was worried her chest would brush against his taut body underneath his shirt. She

had not forgotten how the man had reacted the last time when her brooch got entangled in his belt... Bianca's declaration of her relationship status had a profound effect. For all intents and purposes, she already belonged to another man. Luke looked at her calmly, as though he did not really care if she was taken. Outside, Lanie suddenly remembered something, and he said loudly, "Miss, you're being picky if you don't eat onions!" "Yeah! Daddy will spank you for that!" Rainie added with childlike innocence. When she heard the word "spank", Bianca instinctively looked at Luke. He just snorted for a second. After that, Bianca instantly felt a large hand on her waist, slowly sliding downward... In truth, for all the years the children had grown, Luke had never once actually hit them. However, he was used to keeping a strict expression, and that made the children a little scared of him. After a while, Old Master Crawford began using the possibility of a spanking from their father to scare them. Being picky with food was one of the discouraged bad habits. Both Rainie and Lanie remembered that, so they never dared to be choosy, lest their father spank them. "Rainie, Lanie, come over here." Bianca could not help but call for help. Luke was not going to do something like that in front of the children, right?! "Okay!" The kids agreed. Bianca heard them padding toward the kitchen. "Blanche and Rainie Crawford, go back to the dinner table and sit there," Luke commanded them coolly through his thin lips. The children heard their full names being called, and they instantly froze on the spot, too afraid to take another step toward the kitchen... Lanie wanted to go to the kitchen, but his sister pulled his hand and shook her head. Bianca heard the silence outside and could not resist giving the stern-looking man an exasperated stare. She knew that she was not getting out of this by force, so Bianca tried a softer approach. "You can have any woman you like, Mr. Crawford, so why must you trouble me?" Luke's expression was dark, his voice hoarse from his suppressed desire. "Someone once said that when love comes in through the

front food, rationality goes out through the back door. Today, I'm proof of that. I can't wait to see... Just how long will you keep me hanging?" Bianca could sense the man's hot breath on her, her face and ears turning beet red... All she felt now was the slight resentment of suffering a false accusation. Since when had she ever left him hanging? Just then, there was the buzzing of a phone. "Your phone's ringing..." Bianca heaved a sigh of relief, reminding him involuntarily. She was saved! While he was distracted, Bianca instantly wanted to run away from the battlefield that was this kitchen. The moment she pushed him away, though, the man grasped her wrist tightly and pulled her back. With another flick of his hand, her tiny body was completely wrapped in the man's embrace. "Mm... Mgh..." Bianca was forced to raise her head, Luke's strong hands squeezing her thin shoulders firmly. She felt like he was going to break her. Her struggles and protests had no effect whatsoever. Instead, she only infuriated the haughty Luke Crawford. He showered her with kisses from her brow to her eyes, from the tip of her nose to her lips, kissing her delicately yet wildly.

Chapter 21 He May Have Examined Them

Luke's warm and sexy lips moved down to Bianca's collarbone... There was a whoosh. Bianca felt as though her brain had exploded. Hot tears flowed from her eyes unbidden. Her thoughts had been forced back to those unspeakable nights five years ago. She could hear nothing but a man's heavy and rough panting. Bianca remembered what happened back then after she gave birth. She and Nina had been on a video call when she accidentally saw the rich tycoon on the TV news. A deal was a deal. It did not matter what kind of a man he was; Bianca had no right to refuse. Now that she was being forcibly kissed, though, Bianca could not help but remember that middle-aged man. A wave of nausea surged over her, and she felt dizzy. Luke could tell that she was distracted. Holding her chin with one hand, he lifted her head slowly, his lust-

filled eyes staring intently at her. “What are you thinking about? Why are you crying?” Bianca followed his voice, looking at him dazedly. Luke was too tall, and

Chapter 22 The Two Voice Slowly Overlapped

That night, at Crawford Manor. The whole family was having dinner, but Luke Crawford was not there. Allison Tanner put a piece of cucumber into Lanie’s bowl and then one into Rainie’s bowl. “Grandma just wants what’s good for you. You have to eat some even if you don’t like it. You’re growing kids, and you don’t want to stay short forever, do you?” Everyone else at the table was eating. Blanche looked at the cucumber in his bowl and put it into his mouth, eating it obediently. After that, he raised his head and looked at his grandmother. “Grandma, why don’t you eat onions?” There was a platter of stir-fried onions on the table. Blanche and his sister both loved them, as did Great-grandpa. Uncle Louis and Grandma Susan liked onions too. Only Grandma did not like them. She would always push the stir-fried onions far, far away from her. Grandma always said that the stench made her lose her appetite. Before Allison could say anything, Susan Armstrong subtly harrumphed. “That’s a h