

## **N Destiny 2281**

### Chapter 2281

“Does your boyfriend know that you’re working for me?” Zacharias suddenly asked out of curiosity. Shirley paused her chewing and looked up. She said, “Mr. Flintstone, we agreed not to discuss my relationship.”

“I’m just worried he might get jealous.” He raised an eyebrow.

“He won’t,” Shirley replied. Cole had no idea she was working here.

“If one day he finds out that you and I spend all day and night together, wouldn’t he misunderstand?” He smiled. He was even more interested now. Shirley was momentarily stunned.

“A man and a woman living under the same roof-it’s hard not to give people the wrong idea!” he continued. She cleared her throat. “We have a professional relationship. There won’t be any romantic involvement. Mr. Flintstone, enjoy your meal!”

Zacharias felt bored. He picked up a piece of food and looked at her with his dark, mysterious eyes. Shirley lowered her head to eat and felt that he looked normal on the surface but had a somewhat unscrupulous mind.

Did all men like to flirt?

“Accompany me somewhere tomorrow.”

“Where to?”

“To visit my mother’s grave,” Zacharias said. She nodded. “Okay. Do I need to prepare anything for the memorial?”

“Roy will handle it. We will stay overnight on the mountain, so pack a few sets of clothes.” Shirley didn’t expect him to stay overnight after paying respects to his mother. She nodded. “Okay!”

In the middle of the night, thunder rumbled, and it woke Shirley from her sleep. She saw lightning flashing and heavy rain pouring down outside the window.

She wondered if Zacharias would cancel the trip tomorrow. It wasn't suitable to go up the mountain in such weather!

The next morning, it stopped pouring, but it was still drizzling. Shirley packed a simple bag and brought it to the door, only to find that Roy was already there.

"Roy, do we really need to go up the mountain in such heavy rain?" she asked quietly. Roy nodded. "Mr. Flintstone insists on going"

She didn't say anything more. At this moment, Zacharias came downstairs. She handed him a warm windbreaker. He took it but saw her wearing a suit. His eyebrows furrowed. "Go change into something warmer."

Shirley shook her head. "It's okay. I'm not afraid of the cold."

Zacharias turned to Roy. "Get some warmer clothes for her."

"Understood." Roy nodded. Shirley didn't know which mountain they were going to, but she had to follow the team.

After departing from the Flintstone Residence, the convoy drove through the rain. Zacharias remained silent, and his whole being exuded a melancholic aura. She wondered what he was thinking, but he seemed to be immersed in some kind of sorrow.

They left the city and entered the outskirts. The road in the suburbs was broad but sparsely populated. In the distance, the mountains were misty and the rain turned the entire land into a misty state.

As the convoy continued to drive up the mountain, Shirley noticed that the security team's driving skills were excellent. Coupled with the high-performance vehicles, the ascent was effortless.

She counted silently in her heart; they had driven up at least four mountains. Finally, they arrived at the top of one mountain. It was desolate, with no signs of human presence.

Someone had built a courtyard here. It was surrounded by high walls and barbed wire to ensure a high level of privacy.

Only Zacharias' car entered while the convoy parked outside. There were several cottages outside for them to rest in..

Chapter 2282

A force pressed her tightly against his chest and his warm windbreaker covered her head. At this moment, about 30 feet away, Roy and three subordinates heard the commotion. They immediately turned around and even drew their weapons when they heard the noise. However, when they only saw bats flying around, they quickly put their weapons away.

As a few subordinates prepared to investigate, Roy reached out and stopped them when he saw Shirley pressed in Zacharias' arms. At this moment, they would better not disturb Zacharias. The subordinates quickly understood and followed Roy away.

Shirley pushed Zacharias away. Her pretty face was a bit red and her breath was slightly uneven. She took two steps back while staring at the man with a hint of annoyance. Did he make a mistake?

He was the protected one and she was his bodyguard. Did he not consider her a bodyguard just because he was more skilled?

"Mr. Flintstone, I hope such a situation won't happen again. You need to understand that I am your bodyguard." She calmed down and then spoke with a hint of warning in her tone.

Zacharias' reaction had been instinctive and even he was surprised for a few seconds. However, he understood his own feelings once he realized it. Unknowingly, this girl's life was now more important to him than his own.

After Shirley spoke, she noticed that the man was just looking at her without saying anything. She couldn't help but feel angry. "Don't you know that your life is more important than mine?"

He responded with a soft scoff. "Who said your life isn't important? If something happens to you while I'm with you, your dad will kill me." After speaking, the man walked into the hall. Shirley was rendered speechless and found herself momentarily unable to argue with him.

But as she followed him, she spoke again. "You can rest assured. I can take responsibility for my own life. If I die in front of you one day, I—"

The words that followed were silenced by a palm, and her eyes widened once again. This man had unexpectedly covered her mouth with his hand.

Her soft red lips pressed against the palm of his hand and his gaze gradually darkened. He warned her. "Don't mention the word 'death' in front of me. It's unlucky."

Shirley obediently nodded, then pointed to the big hand covering her mouth and mumbled, "Can you let me go?"

As Zacharias released her, his big thumb rubbed against her lips.

She noticed it but couldn't say anything. She immediately looked around and realized that this was a mountain villa built on the cliffside. From the window, one could see lush green forests and distant rolling mountains.

The sound of rain hitting the wooden structure outside was surprisingly melodious. It was not annoying at all but rather soothing. "Whose house is this?" Shirley asked.

"Mine," the man answered.

Shirley was speechless; she had asked a needless question. Although this place was surrounded by mountains and forests, it was surprisingly dry. Clearly, someone had come here early to clean it up. It looked spotless, and there was a fireplace with two bundles of firewood beside it. Sitting by the fire, sipping coffee, listening to music, and holding a book in this cold winter would be the happiest things to do.

“Can you start a fire?” Zacharias asked. Shirley nodded. “Yes. Are you cold? I’ll light it for you.”

The man agreed to it and she squatted by the fireplace before starting to light the fire. The warmth spread and she felt warm all over.

She had always wanted a cabin like this in the mountains, a place to find peace away from the world and undisturbed by anyone. Now, her dream had come true here with Zacharias.

As the fire burned, the whole villa seemed to exude warmth. Next to the fireplace was a couch. Zacharias brought things in from outside.

Shirley watched as he skillfully retrieved items from the cabinets. He was extremely diligent. It was as if everything in the room had become incredibly useful in his hands.

Chapter 2283

“Is there anything I can help with?” Shirley asked.

“It’s okay. Just enjoy the fire,” the man said. She could only sit on the couch while staring at his kettle and listening to the rain outside. At this moment, she felt an unusual calmness and tranquility. The bodyguards outside wouldn’t come to disturb them and this place felt like a forest cabin from a fairy tale. It felt magical.

“Can I go upstairs and take a look?” Shirley asked.

“Sure.” She went upstairs. There was also a living room with a coffee table and two leather couches upstairs. In the distance, the misty mountains undulated and exuded a profound beauty.

She entered the first bedroom. It was not too big but cozy and clean. Even the bedding emitted a faint fragrance. The wooden floor had no dust, and she could already imagine how heavenly it would be to sleep here at night. Even the dreams here must be beautiful!

She moved on to the second bedroom. It was larger and obviously the master bedroom. The bed was deep gray, with deep blue sheets and quilts. In front of the floor-to-ceiling window was an exquisite tea table accompanied by two simple couches..

Shirley felt like she was in a painting. Perhaps this was the kind of artistic conception that online influencers pursued!

After spending some time upstairs, she went back downstairs. Suddenly, she smelled the rich aroma of coffee in the air. She saw the man in front of the table, who had already brewed two cups of coffee.

She came to the table. The coffee with sugar and milk was hers. The man took the other cup and walked to the fireplace before leaning lazily against it.

She seemed to be looking at a painting. The firelight cast a faint glow on the man's face, giving him a gentle radiance.

She also picked up her coffee and sat across from him. The wood crackled with a soothing sound that could calm anyone.

The rain outside showed no signs of stopping, but the whole room was warm and dry. Even the coffee in her hands tasted exceptionally nice.

"Do you come here often?" Shirley asked.

"Sometimes, Zacharias replied. She had checked his family history, he came from a wealthy family. His father was originally an international lawyer. At the age of forty, her became an official, prospered in his career, and hid from the business world. His assets were no longer known to outsiders.

"This is a nice place," she said as she smiled.

"Do you like it?" he asked. "Of course! I love it. It's like my dream house." She became relaxed and lively.

“I’ll give it to you,” he suddenly said.

She was stunned and then asked in a serious tone, “You must be joking!”

“I never joke,” Zacharias answered her seriously. Shirley immediately waved her hand. “Thank you, but I’m already happy to stay here with you for one night.”

Zacharias also smiled. He found that this woman always made him feel comfortable and relaxed.

“It’s still raining outside. I don’t know when it will stop.” Shirley sighed and asked, “Is your mother’s grave nearby?”

“It’s a ten-minute drive from here,” Zacharias answered before sipping his coffee.

She pursed her lips and didn’t dare to ask more. She hoped the rain would stop soon so that he could properly pay tribute to his mother.

At that moment, his phone rang. He glanced at it and didn’t answer. Instead, he said to her, “There’s a small bookshelf upstairs. You can go and take a look.”

Shirley nodded and went upstairs. His call must be important and it wouldn’t be convenient for her to overhear.

She sat on the second floor near the window and pulled out a book to read. The rain outside had a hypnotic quality and the words on the pages were equally entrancing, so she didn’t hesitate to embrace the book and closed her eyes to relax.

Zacharias stood by the floor-to-ceiling window and said in a low voice, “I warned him, but he insisted on acting recklessly and didn’t know when to stop.”

Chapter 2284

“Now he has found me and asked me to seek your forgiveness.”

“There’s no need to spare such a person. Deal with him as needed.”

“But he used to be your supporter and admirer. If we take action against him, will it affect your reputation?”

“There’s no need to consider my reputation. Clean out the pest.” Zacharias’ gaze was resolute and cold.

“All right. I’ll do as you wish.” the person on the other end said and hung up the phone.

Zacharias tossed his phone onto the couch and then went to the open kitchen counter. He took out some fruits from a box and washed and sliced them before carrying them upstairs with the coffee.

When he reached the second floor, he saw a girl sleeping with a book in her hands. He smiled lightly before placing the fruits and coffee on the table. Then, he entered the master bedroom and brought out a blanket to cover her.

Shirley was still very alert. She immediately opened her eyes and tried to sit up, but the man’s big hand pressed her back onto the couch. “You can continue sleeping.”

Although she had only slept for about ten minutes, she felt rejuvenated. She sat up while holding the blanket he covered her with. Upon seeing the fruits on the table, she felt a bit embarrassed. “I’m sorry. I should have been the one serving you.”

“We’re friends here. Not superior and subordinate. Zacharias raised an eyebrow.

“I’m honored to be friends with you,” Shirley said sincerely. “I’m also honored to be friends with you, Miss Lloyd.” He sat on the couch lazily.

Today, he didn’t style his pompadour hair. He appeared relaxed and his hair hung over his forehead. Combined with his laid-back expression, he resembled a lazy but majestic lion. Shirley picked up a book. “Let’s read for a while!”



Life in the city was fast-paced, but in the mountains, time seemed to slow down. Evening approached slowly. The entire wooden villa lit up with gentle lights. It was not too bright but very comfortable.

Shirley came over to watch him cook dinner. He insisted that she let him do it, and she couldn't intervene. She stood by and watched him skillfully pan-sear the steak, asparagus, broccoli, and mushrooms.

"The red wine is in the box. Go open a bottle," the man said to her. She went over to open the red wine and set the table. It seemed that they would have a romantic dinner tonight.

Just as she was thinking about this, she suddenly froze. Wait a minute. How could she have a romantic dinner with Zacharias?

Even if it were a romantic dinner, she should have it with Cole! Soon after, he brought out two well-plated dinners. It was simple but full of ceremonial flair.

The man got up and went to the cabinet to find something. Shirley hadn't reacted yet when she saw him coming over with four candles.

Was it going to be a candlelight dinner tonight? She felt her heart beating faster. The atmosphere seemed a bit off now!

Zacharias lit the four candles. He walked over and turned off the lights, making the entire room pitch black. There was only the sound of rain hitting the eaves. In the dining room of the wooden house, the candlelight flickered, giving life to a small, bright world. On the other side of the stove, there was still a fire burning, creating a romantic atmosphere.

Upon seeing that she hadn't poured the red wine yet, Zacharias took the initiative to pour half a cup for each of them. He raised his cup to the girl across from him. "Cheers."

Shirley picked up the red wine glass and clinked it against his. "Mr. Flintstone, thank you for making dinner for me."

“You’re welcome.” Zacharias smirked and added, “I am very willing to serve you.”

She pursed her lips while avoiding his gaze. She thought to herself that she shouldn’t be the one sitting here at this moment!

It should be his future girlfriend. She cut the tender grilled steak into pieces and unexpectedly found it delicious. She made sure to finish everything.

Zacharias did the same. Shirley got up to clean the plates at the sink. The water here was from a mountain spring and was very cold. He got up and brought a kettle of hot water over. “Here’s some hot water.”

Chapter 2285

Shirley found that this man was really considerate and smiled gratefully. “All right. You rest for a bit. I’ll clean up here.”

At this moment, Zacharias’ phone also rang. He picked it up and headed upstairs. After washing the dishes, she waited for him downstairs. Before long, he came back down.

She stood up to greet him and he sat down opposite her while holding a glass of red wine. He asked softly, “Do you know how my mother passed away?”

Shirley blinked as this was the question she wanted to ask but didn’t dare to. Upon seeing that he brought it up on his own, she became a serious listener. She shook her head. ‘I don’t know.’

“She hanged herself on this mountain.”

Shirley was shocked. She didn’t expect that Zacharias’ mother had died in such a way. Had she experienced some kind of trauma?

“She had severe depression and passed away suddenly. My father buried her beneath that tree and created a grave for her. When I miss her, I come here to stay for a few days and keep her company,’ he said calmly.

However, Shirley felt a wave of sadness. His mother must have been gentle and caring toward him, which allowed Shirley to better understand the hidden sorrow behind Zacharias' calm demeanor.

She wasn't skilled at comforting people and even though she wanted to say a few comforting words, she didn't know how to start. Suddenly, Zacharias snapped back to reality and said, 'I shouldn't have told you all of this.'

"If you need someone to accompany you, I can be there for you," Shirley said. At this moment, he seemed like a wounded wild animal in need of someone to help him heal.

He finished his glass of red wine and got up to pour himself another half glass. He didn't sit down but stood by the floor-to-ceiling windows. His voice was low, and his emotions were unclear. "Miss Lloyd, you already have someone you like. How can you accompany me?" She was momentarily taken aback. "You can think of it as companionship between friends."

He smiled a half-smile, then took another sip of the red wine in his glass. Upon seeing that he had already consumed half a bottle by himself, she got up and advised him. "Mr. Flintstone, please drink less."

Zacharias turned around while playing with the wine glass in his hand and locked his gaze on her. She felt that he was emitting a dangerous aura. It was a kind of aggressiveness, but she still chose to trust him. She walked over to him and said, "Give me the glass."

He handed her the glass and she walked over to place it on the table. Just as she turned around, she was surprised to find a figure behind her and she was pressed against the edge of the table. The next moment, he held the back of her head.

Shirley raised her head in shock and the man pressed his lips against hers. His dominant and fiery breath enveloped her, causing her beautiful eyes to widen as her red lips were pried open, and the man's tongue invaded her mouth.

She could only feel an unfamiliar sensation coursing through her body. Her usual agile reactions seemed to have disappeared at this moment. Her body was pressed against the heavy wooden table and his kisses were as intense as the rain outside.

Her mind went blank. They had been kissing for a while. It was only when she suddenly woke up from the daze and reached out to push him away that she realized what had happened. She leaned against the table while breathing heavily and stared at the man as she said, "Mr. Flintstone, you're drunk."

Zacharias' gaze was clearly filled with reluctance and he couldn't help but take a step closer to her. His dominant eyes were still fixed on her rosy lips as if he wanted to come closer once again.

However, Shirley pushed him away firmly this time and it was her turn to assertively warn him. "Zacharias, stay away from me."

He seemed to be taken aback. He took a shallow breath and apologized. "I'm sorry. I crossed the line."

Shirley's first kiss had just been stolen by this man moments ago, and that was indeed an offense.

"You're drunk. Go to your room and rest." She turned away and attributed the kiss to his drunken state so she didn't need to pursue this matter further.

Was Zacharias really drunk? Of course not. He had a good tolerance for alcohol and the wine he was drinking wasn't very strong.

"All right. You should get some sleep too," Zacharias said. Then, he turned and went upstairs.

Shirley let out a sigh of relief. Her heart was still pounding. Her mind was filled with the sensations of the kiss and the unfamiliar response that had surged through her body just moments ago.

Chapter 2286

What was going on? She liked Cole. If she kissed Cole, it was normal for her to feel something. Why did she feel something too when Zacharias kissed her?

Shirley shook off these thoughts. In any case, this was not right..

After extinguishing the fire in the fireplace, she blew out the candles and went upstairs. The light on the second floor was dim, and she thought Zacharias had gone to sleep in his room, but he was still sitting there. Moreover, it was cold at night, and he was only wearing a vest, without a coat..

Shirley went downstairs responsibly, picked up his coat from the couch, and handed it to him. "It's cold at night. Put on the coat!"

Zacharias took the coat from her, and he apologized again. "I'm sorry for what happened just now."

"Don't drink so much next time." She reminded him. She still treated that kiss as a mistake made under the influence of alcohol.

She turned to go in the direction of the guest room, but just after a few steps, the man behind her suddenly asked, "Was that your first kiss just now?"

Shirley's steps paused, and she instinctively refuted, "Of course not."

If this man found out that it was her first kiss, would he be very pleased?

She was a girl who didn't want to be underestimated, so even in matters of love, she had a bit of a strong-willed attitude.

Zacharia fixed his gaze on her. Her awkwardness and reactions just now told him that it was indeed her first kiss.

"Get some rest," he said. Upon seeing that he stopped asking, Shirley didn't know why, but she felt frustrated.

"I really like my boyfriend. Mr. Flintstone, please be more restrained in the future." Her cold gaze turned to the man on the couch.

“Miss Lloyd, I also quite like you.” Zacharias raised an eyebrow, and the spotlight above his head was reflected in his eyes. They were straightforward and candid.

Just as Shirley had just sorted out her emotions, they were now in disarray again. She swallowed before saying, “Thank you for liking me, but my heart already belongs to someone else. Please like someone else to avoid wasting your feelings!”

After saying this, she walked quickly toward her bedroom, closed the door, and clutched her rapidly beating heart. The image of Zacharias’ face was still in her mind.

She took off her coat, changed into the pajama hat she had brought, lay down in bed, and decided to sleep. If she slept, she wouldn’t overthink..

However, she couldn’t sleep no matter what, especially after taking a nap in the afternoon and drinking coffee. Every time she closed her eyes, the scene of Zacharias forcefully kissing her on the table would appear in her mind.

It felt like his tongue, with the scent of alcohol, was still exploring her mouth. The feeling of being forcefully held in his arms made her suddenly feel thirsty.

Ten minutes later, Shirley re-emerged from under her covers speechlessly and opened her eyes while looking at the light on the ceiling. She didn’t know how to forget that kiss just now.

She replayed it over and over in her mind. It felt like Zacharias had kissed her repeatedly. This feeling was truly annoying, and she didn’t know what to do.

If it weren’t raining outside, she could go for a run on the mountain. After enduring for half an hour, she was really thirsty. She wanted to go downstairs for some water.

She gently pushed open the door and found that Zacharias was actually sleeping on the couch. He was covered with his trench coat as he lay on the couch.

This was the mountains, and the temperature in the room was below 50 degrees. Wasn't this man afraid of catching a cold or getting sick?

Upon thinking of his noble identity and her being his personal assistant, it would be inappropriate if she didn't take care of him. Shirley walked over. She wanted to wake him up and ask him to go back to his room to sleep.

"Mr. Flintstone," Shirley called him softly. Zacharias didn't wake up, so she had to take action. She reached out and patted his shoulder. "Mr. Flintstone, wake up. Go back to your room and sleep!"

He only opened his eyes then. His dark pupils were covered with a glow as though the galaxy suddenly descended into his eyes. They were very charming.

Shirley looked at him and said, "It's cold in the living room. Go back to your room and sleep."

Chapter 2287

Zacharias sat up, but as soon as he stood up, he sat back down. "My legs are numb," he said while looking up. "Help me up."

Shirley didn't suspect anything because the couch was a bit cramped for his six-foot-two-inch frame. She reached out to support his arm and escorted him to his master bedroom. Zacharias started getting some ideas and smiled.

When they reached the bedside, she helped him sit down. However, in the next second, everything flipped and overturned. She was pulled and pressed down directly onto his bed and his sturdy body pressed tightly against hers.

"You..." Shirley realized that she had been fooled again and her pretty face turned red.

"No kissing-" Before she could even finish warning him, the man had already pried open her red lips and sealed them tightly with his.

"Umm..." Shirley's mind exploded. She had been repeatedly thinking about the kiss downstairs and now she was once again feeling the powerful sexual tension from this man. He was absolutely despicable.

Zacharias also found that he, who had always been calm and self-controlled, had lost control twice for this woman.

At first, he kissed her with a hint of exploration, but it quickly turned intense. He couldn't get enough of her. Shirley's mind had never been so blank and her reactions were extremely slow. After being kissed by this man for almost a minute, she finally realized that he was taking advantage of her.

She pushed him with her hands. Although she was rather strong, her pushing against his solid chest didn't even make him budge, as if he had taken away all the strength from her body.

"Zac... Zacharias!" She called his name in a warning tone amidst the entanglement of lips and teeth.

Zacharias finally let her go. Their two faces were close under the dim light. Their breaths entwined and their eyes were locked together. His proud and straight nose almost touched her nose.

Shirley's chest rose and fell; her breath was chaotic. She was gazing at him with eyes that were like fiery roses as if accusing him of his behavior.

"Let go of me." She warned in a tone laced with anger. Zacharias' gaze was deep and gentle, like an ocean enveloping a person. Shirley turned her face away before pushing him aside. This time, he cooperatively lay on the bed while watching the girl tidy her pajamas. He said hoarsely, "I'm sorry."

She bit her red lips and turned to look at the man, who was like a lion, on the bed. "If you lack women, ask your subordinates to find them for you. Don't set your sights on me."

After saying this, Shirley pushed the door open and closed the man's door on her way out. She returned to her room while regretful and lay on the bed, burying her hot face in her hands.

She was also rather vexed. Why didn't she feel very angry even though Zacharias kissed her twice? She should have scolded him thoroughly just now. Regardless of his identity and status, he shouldn't take advantage of a girl.



However, Shirley found that there was simply no anger in her besides nervousness and confusion.

She had to endure it! She would endure it for three months, and then it would be over. At that time, she would leave his side and wouldn't need to see him again.

Moreover, this man had dirt on her, so falling out with him was not beneficial to her. After all, Imogen's future was still in his hands.

Shirley lay on the bed, and the emotional balance suddenly tilted back to the feeling she had just experienced.

She clearly didn't want to be kissed, but when his lips touched hers, she felt electricity course through her whole body. Even her will was invaded by his kiss. Several times, she had the feeling of not wanting to push him away, not wanting to refuse, and wanting something to happen between them.

She closed her eyes and felt sorry for Cole. How could she develop feelings for someone else?

No. She firmly believed that she liked Cole. During these three months, Cole's handsome figure, his serious yet gentle gaze toward her, his care for her in life, and his concern for her after she was injured- all these were deeply imprinted in her heart.

Chapter 2288

The warmth of those little moments made Shirley's heart beat uncontrollably for Cole. Despite the hardships of daily training, they would seem as sweet as eating sugar as long as she could catch a glimpse of him. She would rush to the field just to see him. Wasn't love supposed to be like this?

Her heart was in chaos. In the end, she shook off everything that happened tonight. She firmly believed that she absolutely could not have any intimate behavior with Zacharias in the future for the sake of being with Cole.

This was out of respect for love and Cole. Zacharias must be lacking a woman around him, which led to such actions.

The sound of rain outside diminished. Shirley suddenly remembered something and immediately sat up before going to the door to lock it from the inside.

Zacharias was like an out-of-control wild beast who was ready to attack at any moment. She had to be on guard against him.

Zacharias lay on the bed in the master bedroom, thinking about the two consecutive kissing incidents. In the end, he concluded that he truly liked this girl.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have put so much effort into caring for her.

Although she had warned and rejected him twice, he was not in a hurry. He would slowly make her understand his feelings..

His eyes flickered with a determined light, like a hunter locking onto the prey he liked. He wouldn't give up no matter what.

That night, the bodyguards outside had no idea what had happened in the villa. In the early morning, Shirley got up and looked at the mist-shrouded sky outside. The rain had turned into a drizzle.

She remembered that Zacharias would go to pay respects to his mother today. Should she go with him? She went to the independent bathroom to brush her teeth and wash her face, preparing for the day.

Shirley wore professional trousers and tied her long hair behind her head. She exuded a refreshing and heroic aura.

She opened the door and coincidentally heard the main bedroom door opening as well. The two people who stepped out faced each other directly.

Shirley had figured it out last night. She shouldn't offend this man during her internship. Even if she was taken advantage of, she could only count herself unlucky.

“Good morning, Mr. Flintstone.” Shirley stood straight and greeted him. Her expression was no longer nervous and flustered like last night; it was calm and rational.

Zacharias looked at her and there was a slight disappointment in his heart. This just showed that he didn’t matter much to her.

“Let’s go downstairs,” he said and took the lead. She followed him downstairs. It was still early, so they had time for breakfast. He stood in front of the kitchen and started to prepare breakfast. The coffee machine on the side had already been turned on.

Shirley lit the fireplace. The morning chill filled the wooden cabin. She wasn’t concerned about herself but rather about Zacharias, who was usually in an environment with constant temperature. She didn’t want him to catch a cold.

After all, many national matters were waiting for him to handle. The sizzling aroma wafted over; he was making scrambled eggs. Given the limited conditions, they had to do whatever was available.

After about fifteen minutes, the man came over with breakfast, saying, “Eat while it’s hot.”

Shirley sat down, and he brought her a cup of coffee and a cup of warm milk. She avoided eye contact with him as much as possible. His gaze lingered on her face several times, yet she pretended not to see it.

“Do you need me to accompany you?” Shirley finally lifted her head and asked. If he didn’t, she could stay here and wait for him.

“Don’t you want to accompany me?” Zacharias looked over. Did she already start to dislike him?

“All right. I’ll accompany you.” She realized she had asked a redundant question again. After finishing breakfast, she washed the dishes. It was already 9.00AM when she was done.

He went upstairs and she found that when he came downstairs, he was holding a windbreaker and a scarf. The coat he brought this time was still hanging on the rack.

“Wear this. It’s cold outside,” Zacharias said to her.

Chapter 2289

I don’t need it. I’m not afraid of the cold.”

” Shirley shook her head and refused his kindness. However, Zacharias ignored her refusal and directly draped the windbreaker over her shoulders. “If you catch a cold, I’ll send you to the Royal Hospital and expose your identity.” He draped it over her while making a threat. She hesitated for a moment and then obediently slipped her hands into the sleeves. He turned around and buttoned it up for her. “This is my windbreaker. Use it for now.”

Having said that, he also wrapped a scarf around her neck. She finally mustered the courage to refuse him. “I don’t like scarves.”

Zacharias furrowed his brows and asked, “Why?”

“They make it hard to breathe, Shirley replied, as she genuinely did not like scarves. He had no choice but to remove the scarf and place it on the couch. Then, he went to get his own windbreaker.

Both of them were wearing black windbreakers. Shirley surprisingly didn’t look out of place in his oversized windbreaker; instead, it highlighted her delicate charm.

Zacharias opened the door. The convoy outside was ready. Roy came over in the cold wind and said, “Mr. Flintstone, the fog is quite thick.”

“Drive slowly,” Zacharias instructed.

“Understood. We’ll be careful.”

The three-car convoy began to break through the fog and entered deeper into the mountains. Shirley started to tense up because the weather conditions weren’t very good. Just then, the tires of the vehicle pressed against something hard, causing the car to tilt slightly.

She instinctively reached out to support Zacharias. However, the hand she stretched out was firmly held by a large palm.

An electric current surged from his palm into the depths of Shirley's heart. Her beautiful eyes widened and at this moment, the car's body steadied. She forcefully withdrew her hand from his grip. Fortunately, the bodyguards in front didn't notice.

Finally, they arrived under a giant tree. Zacharias looked out the car window at the tree and there was a slight moisture in the corners of his eyes.

The convoy stopped and he opened the door. Shirley also got out of the car and looked under the tree. There was a grave. It seemed to have some age and due to the lingering mist around the giant tree, it appeared lonely and desolate.

Zacharias stood in front of the grave, which was surrounded by mist. His tall figure seemed cold and lonely.

Something stirred in Shirley's heart. She had an impulse to go and accompany him. Just then, Roy handed her candles and a bunch of lilies. "Imogen, go and accompany Mr. Flintstone."

Shirley held the basket, carried the bouquet, and walked toward Zacharias. Zacharias was squatting down, picking up branches and dried leaves before the grave. She put down the basket and placed the bouquet on the ground. Then, she went to help him.

He looked up at her and her gaze was comforting. "Let me help you pick them up."

"We can do it together," Zacharias said gently. For more than ten minutes, they picked up the fallen leaves and the ground looked clean after that. The rain from last night had washed away the dust on the grave, making it look tidy.

Roy came over with a candle and lighter.

Shirley handed the flowers to Zacharias before asking him to place them in front of the grave. He turned to her. "You do it."

She hesitated for a moment as it didn't seem appropriate. However, she couldn't refuse at that moment when she saw that he didn't take the flowers. She bowed three times in front of the grave before placing the flowers in front of the tombstone..

Zacharias squatted down and started to light the candle. He used old-fashioned matches, but the wind was too strong, blowing it out several times. Shirley immediately came over and made a wind-blocking motion, allowing him to light the fire.

The fire started and Zacharias seemed lost in thought while holding the candle.

He didn't pull it away even when his hand was almost burnt by the flames. Shirley quickly reached out and grabbed his hand to check if he had been burned.

Zacharias returned to his senses and looked up at her. She took the initiative to hold his hand and he felt a burning sensation on his fingertips.

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"Does it hurt?" Shirley asked with concern.

"Yes," the man replied. She immediately blew on his fingertips. "Be careful not to burn your hand." She thought to herself that he must be overwhelmed by grief and sorrow for his mother..

"Do you need me to help you light it?" Shirley asked. Upon seeing four sets of candles beside him, she was worried that the man would burn his fingers again. Zacharias pursed his lips and smiled. "Sure. Let's do it together."

After saying that, he handed her the candle and then looked toward the direction of the tombstone. In his heart, he was communicating with his mother. "Mom, I brought your future daughter-in-law to visit you. Are you happy in the afterlife?"

The girl lighting the candle next to him was completely unaware of his emotions.

After lighting the candle, the smoke was scattered in the wind and quickly disappeared as if blowing toward another world.

When Zacharias stood up, he bowed his head in silence for a few seconds toward the grave, then turned back to the car with Shirley following him.

The car drove back toward the direction of the mountain villa. Shirley tidied up, and Zacharias received several phone calls in succession. It was time for them to return. At 11.30AM, they set off back to the city.

Due to his prominent identity, they couldn't stop for a meal, even if restaurants were on the way. When they arrived at the Flintstone Residence, it was already almost 2.30PM.

Just as Shirley got out of the car, she saw someone coming out of the Flintstone Residence. It turned out that their lunch had already been delivered.

Zacharias was once again busy with the phone calls and Shirley stood by the dining table waiting for him. After finishing the call, he found her standing there, like a straight tree.

It was almost 3.00PM now. Zacharias couldn't help but frown. He walked quickly to the dining table and said, "Let's eat."

Shirley nodded and sat down, but Zacharias' mind was clearly not on the meal. His eyes were full of emotions.

She couldn't eat much either, probably because she was too hungry. She took a few bites casually, and at that moment, she received a message on her phone. She picked it up and glanced at it, after which a hint of surprise flashed in her eyes.

The message was from Cole. He asked if she was free to meet up this weekend. Zacharias noticed her expression and even though he was thinking about important work, he still took a moment to observe the girl in front of him.

Instead of immediately replying to Cole, Shirley put her phone back in her pocket and calmly asked Zacharias, "Mr. Flintstone, tomorrow is the weekend. Can I take two days off?"

Combining her surprised expression just now and the fact that she wanted to take a day off, he deduced that it wasn't because she wanted to meet a relative but probably the person she liked. He also wanted to know who she secretly admired, so this was a perfect opportunity.

"What do you need a vacation for?" Zacharias didn't immediately agree.

"I... I want to go home and visit my grandmother." Shirley also knew that if she said she wanted to meet a friend, this man might not grant her leave. However, paying respects to elders was something he might allow. He raised an eyebrow. "You need two days off?"

"One day is fine too. How about Saturday? Can I take a day off on Saturday?" Shirley carefully observed his expression and hoped he would agree. "All right. I'll give you half a day off. Visit your grandmother and come back immediately," Zacharias said stingily.

How could he allow her the chance to spend the night with that man? So, he was only willing to give her half a day off.

Although she was not satisfied in her heart, having a half-day off was better than nothing. Besides, she could try to ask for an extension later.

"Okay. I'll be back to work after 3.00PM. Is that okay?" She wanted to treat Cole to a meal!

"Sure," the man replied. Shirley pursed her lips and was unable to hide her joy. Zacharias, on the other hand, became more certain that she was going to meet her crush.

She had no appetite for food anymore, and he was also not in the mood. He put down his fork and said, "I'll hire a housekeeper to take care of the housework in the future. You don't need to do it yourself."