

Chapter 1411

They waved the party crackers in their hands, whistled, and shouted to welcome their savior.

Hector was stunned for a moment and finally gave off a helpless smile. He lowered his head, and his eyes turned a little bloodshot. "The person that everyone should thank is Mr. Lewis. If it weren't for him, I might've..."

As soon as Sean's name was mentioned, everyone became quiet for a moment.

No one could forget what happened to Sean.

A male employee walked out of the crowd and placed his arm on Hector's shoulder." Hector, we don't blame you for Mr. Lewis' encounter. It's not your fault but theirs instead."

"Yes, it's those b*stards' fault!"

Hector chuckled and seemed to be able to blend in with the atmosphere and everyone else..

Lucy passed through the corridor of the department and suddenly heard several female staff members discussing Zestar. She did not pay much attention to it at first, but they mentioned Hector at that moment.

"Is this true? So, Mr. Goldman's cousin-in-law is Zestar's new owner?"

"It's absolutely true. I have a friend who works for Zestar. She told me that the current owner of Zestar is Hector, Ms.

Vanderbilt's cousin. So, doesn't that make him Mr. Goldman's cousin-in-law?"

Mr. Goldman's cousin-in-law is way too bold. Rumors have it that he singlehandedly tore Zestar's higher-ups apart. Didn't it appear in the news not long ago? If it weren't for him, we would still be deceived by Zestar and know nothing about the crap that's happening within the company!"

Lucy slowed down, smiled, and seemed to feel happy for Hector.

As soon as she entered the office, she was startled by Jenna, who was already sitting on the couch, waiting for her..

"Mom?" Lucy put her bag on the desk and walked up to her. "Why didn't you tell me in advance that you're coming over to see me?"

Jenna put down the cup of tea in her hand. "Lucy, that friend of yours, whose name is Hector... Is he Mr. Goldman's cousin?" Lucy turned around and sat down on the couch. She had already seen through her mother's thoughts. "So what if he is? Mom, our relationship isn't what you think it is. We used to be colleagues, and he's currently my neighbor."

Jenna lowered her gaze. "Lucy, you haven't spoken to me properly since you left the Xaviers. I know you still blame me for my failure of not being able to provide you with a complete family." 1.

Lucy did not say anything.

Jenna stroked her slightly bulging but not very obvious-looking belly. "You once asked me whether I regretted my choice. I do regret it, but at the same time, I can't help it either. I'm not a saint, just an ordinary woman.

"After your father passed away, all our household burdens fell onto my shoulders. I had to work alone and earn money to support you, and I've always wanted to give you the best. But I couldn't do it alone. No one in this world can get what they want just by working hard. Lucy, I truly hope you can understand my hardship."

"I didn't say that I don't understand you." Lucy got up, walked to her desk, and turned her back on her. "But I hope that you can understand me too."

Jenna stared at her. "Don't I understand you well enough?"

Lucy turned around. "If you truly understood me well enough, you wouldn't always think about arranging everything for me."

Jenna was flustered. "I just don't want you to face so many hardships!"

You have your thoughts, but I have mine too." Lucy's emotions were getting a little out of control too. "No matter who I get together with, you're always there, intending to cut in. You must think that you can rest assured as soon as I get to marry a great man, right? Okay, but have you ever thought about whether that's the life I desire?"

Jenna was rendered speechless.

Her original intention was good. She only wanted to help her daughter out, hoping she would not have to work as hard as herself, but she had been ignoring her daughter's willingness all this while.

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The conversation could no longer go on, so Jenna bade Lucy goodbye and left.

Jenna ran into Maisie in the corridor as Maisie came out of the elevator. "Mrs. Goldmann."

Maisie smiled at her and approached her. "Mrs. Xavier, are you here for Lucy?"

"Yeah, I originally wanted to come and talk with her, but communication seems to be getting increasingly difficult as she gets older." Jenna gave off a wry smile as she could not help but feel extremely distressed deep down.

The barrier between our relationship seems impossible to remove. "Lucy is already an adult. And adults have their own thoughts and plans. Although parents' worries are necessary from time to time, children will have their own lives when they grow up. You're worrying too much, Mrs. Xavier."

Maisie's advice caught Jenna off guard and stunned her for a split second, but she felt a little embarrassed after returning to her senses. "Mrs. Goldmann, you have three children, don't you?"

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“Yes, but don’t be fooled by their age because I’ve always listened to their ideas. No matter what the child wants to do, I’ll always support it as long as it’s morally correct.”

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Jenna was surprised. “The children are still young, so what ideas would they have?”

Maisie lowered her gaze and smiled.” Everyone has ideas. Children may be children, but they’re also living human beings who have emotions.

“Every parent’s upbringing is different, all of which are out of consideration for their children. However, as parents, we can’t

always ask our children to be the ones who take care of our feelings. We should at least take care of their feelings too, shouldn’t we?

“Parents are actually their children’s best listeners. So, if we as parents are unwilling to listen to our children’s thoughts, then isn’t it natural for our children to become unwilling to communicate with us?

“Many parents place a lot of hope on their children, hoping that their children can achieve this and actualize that in their lives, but it’s very easy for them to forget about their children’s thoughts. Especially when they’re confused and bothered, we should let go of the superiority that we feel as parents and try to communicate with them with a peer-to-peer attitude so that our kids won’t be under too much pressure. It’s not unreasonable to say that a parent’s words and actions will affect a child’s life. Being strict can be considered a form of love, but being too harsh and selfish will only create pressure.

‘Every parent was once a kid too. When we were young, didn’t we hope that our parents would understand us too? So why can’t we think from a different perspective now that we’re parents?’

Jenna did not utter another word. She bade Maisie goodbye and left.

Pushing open the door of Lucy’s office, Maisie saw her sitting on the couch with her back facing the door

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Lucy immediately wiped her tears when she heard the door opening and then turned her head. “Ms. Vanderbilt!?”

Maisie leaned against the door and laughed. "Did you just argue with your mother and are hiding here and crying secretly?"

Lucy was caught on the spot and felt utterly embarrassed.

Maisie walked

over to her, propped her arms against the back of the couch, and mocked her, "If your eyes get swollen from all the crying, how can you attend the celebration with us tonight?"

"A celebration?" Lucy

was astounded and asked, "What are you celebrating, and who are you celebrating it with?"

"Hector," Maisie smiled, "We're celebrating his achievement of becoming Zestar's new owner. Blackgold and Soul have sent representatives to attend the party. You're one of the major backbones of our company, so you're definitely coming with me."

Lucy was a little overwhelmed. "—Then what do I need to prepare?"

"What else do you want to prepare?"

"Uh..."

'It's just like attending an ordinary dinner party. I think there's no need for me to prepare anything... But it's not appropriate to attend the party empty-handed!

Maisie saw through her thoughts in a second and smiled even more merrily. "If you want to prepare a gift, then I won't stop you. As for the gift, a small but meaningful one would do the job just fine." Lucy nodded with a smile

Chapter 1413

After getting off work, Lucy went to the mall to pick out a gift, but she really did not know what she could buy. Thus, she took out her cell phone, typed a message, and sent it to Elaine.

However, the suggestions she got were all expensive luxury items she could not afford.

'I've definitely gone to the wrong person for advice.'

Lucy looked around the mall, and her gaze landed on a souvenir store.

She suddenly thought of Hector's mecha figure collection in his house.

'He should be interested in these, right?'

Lucy went into the store to look for a gift, and the salesperson came up to her and introduced a few models to her enthusiastically. She told him it was a gift, and the salesperson instantly understood her needs. "Are you buying a gift for your boyfriend?"

Lucy choked on her reply and became incoherent out of anxiety. "Of course not. He's just an ordinary friend."

As if he did not hear her explanation, the salesperson brought her to the shelf on the other side of the shop. "Anyway, he's just a man. And as long as he's a man, no matter how old he is, he'll have the playful mind of a full-grown boy. These figurines are the best sellers in our store."

Lucy looked at the various figurines displayed on the racks—there were anime characters and mechas.

She took a glance at the price tags and was surprised. "Are all these toys so expensive?" The salesperson gave off a helpless smile. "Toys and figurines are different. If you were to go out there and ask around, you'd realize that it's absolutely normal for figurines to be sold for hundreds of dollars or even a few thousand dollars.

"Figurines are expensive not only because some of them are limited but it's also because figurines are very fragile and require a certain amount of maintenance cost. Most of the raw materials used to create figurines are very sensitive to ultraviolet rays and will undergo irreversible changes under irradiation, such as degradation and decolorization. The figures shouldn't be heated

either. Otherwise, they'll age very easily and reduce their lifespan."

Lucy took out her cell phone, checked her account balance, gnashed her teeth, turned her head around, and asked, "Then do you have a limited edition version here?"

Lucy cruelly burned a hole in her purse and bought a limited-edition robot figurine that cost \$2,500.

She buried her face in the steering wheel when she returned to the car with the figurine.

'Impulsive purchase is truly the devil!'

However, Lucy was relieved upon thinking that he should like this gift.

When the night arrived, clusters of neon lightbulbs lit up and appeared under the night sky. The Grand Hotel of Bassburgh, located in Bass Wave Port, looked like a shining pearl that was standing near the overpass.

There was a long table covered with a blue and white cloth in the splendid banquet hall, and all kinds of wine and delicacies were placed on the table. The waiters weaved through the brightly dressed crowd, pouring wine for the guests.

Maisie and Nolan stood in the crowd. Most of the businessmen who came to talk to them were collaborators of Blackgold." Apart from Royal Crown, even Zestar is now operating under Blackgold's banner. Mr. Goldman is indeed an exceptional and resolute entrepreneur."

Royal Crown and Zestar were among the top agencies in the entertainment industry. Zestar had only messed up their serious operation because of their management style.

Another businessman said with a smile, "Blackgold has acquired Zestar, so it'll become an even more powerful player in

the entertainment industry from now on.

"Yo, Mr. Hannigan and Mr. Boucher are here too."

Seeing Tanner and Helios appear, several owners of companies walked toward them with wine glasses enthusiastically,

Tanner was one of Blackgold's business partners, and as for Helios, he had gone behind the scenes and become a director after quitting the entertainment industry. Naturally, his connections in the circle had become even stronger than before.

Everyone knew that Nolan had acquired Zestar for his cousin-in-law, who hated the previous Zestar higher-ups. The cousin-in-law had just taken over Zestar, so there must be a need to strengthen his connections in the industry. The purpose of holding this banquet was to give the cousin-in-law a chance to set a foothold in the circle.

Helios' appearance was him showing Nolan a lot of respect

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Lucy walked toward the hall with Hector, and the moment the doors opened, she looked down to avoid their glances.

The crowd looked toward them, and the scene froze.

Maisie walked toward them and smiled. "Where did you go?"

Lucy played with her fingers nervously. "Ms. Vanderbilt, I... I think I've brought trouble."

"There's no trouble." Maisie was going to take a sip when she suddenly saw the flower at the bottom of her skirt. "This flower looks beautiful."

"Hector used it to cover the wine stain. He just sewed it in." Her face turned redder and looked like an apple under the light

Maisie laughed and turned to look at Hector. "Hecky is brave yet careful. He would probably spoil his future girlfriend!

Lucy's heart skipped a beat, and she wouldn't look up.

Barbara

suddenly walked over and placed her hand on Maisie's shoulder. "You're already picking a cousin-in-law?"

Maisie denied it. "I want to pick daughters-in-law for my sons too but they're still young."

Barbara moved her hand away. "Beatrice is not an option. Your sons will be too old by the time she's grown up."

Maisie laughed. "People say that men age like fine wine." "Don't even think about it! She's not even in kindergarten yet."

"Can I book her?"

"How many daughters-in-law do you want to book, you evil mother-in-law!?"

Their bickering made it less awkward between Lucy and Hector.

At that moment, Edward walked in.

When he saw Lucy, he paused. He then glanced at Hector, standing next to her, and they seemed to know each other.

“Lucy, you—”

“Oh, Lucy is here too.” Elaine walked over with a wine glass, cut her father off, and grabbed Lucy’s arm. “Dad, see how Lucy is working hard. It’s time.”

Lucy looked at them curiously.

Edward knew what his daughter meant.

She wanted him to acknowledge Lucy’s identity.

He looked at Lucy, and even though she wasn’t his own and wasn’t as outstanding as his daughter, she had a mother who could endure everything. Not every woman would be able to handle the humiliation that Jenna had. She begged him to take her daughter in and didn’t even consider abandoning her.

He remembered all that.

He had married Jenna because she was great at taking care of his family and a good wife. She was better at this than his ex-wife. He was busy with work, so he couldn’t take care of his family and wished his wife would be a homemaker.

However, his ex-wife was a career woman and didn’t want to let go of her career for him. Their daughter, Elaine, had inherited her personality.

He preferred the traditional marriage and thought a woman should only be in charge of her family after getting married. There was no need for her to be so strong.

He couldn’t understand why his ex-wife couldn’t understand that all his hard work was so that he could provide for the family.

When he met Lucy’s mother, he was frank and said he hoped his wife, would give up her career and take care of the family. In return, he wouldn’t let her worry about anything.

She immediately agreed. He was surprised and asked about her condition.

Jenna’s response was; “Mr. Xavier, to be honest, I have a child of my own, and you might not like that, but she will be alone is

leave her. I hope you will agree to bring her along, even if you don’t accept her as your own.”

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"I just hope that she will have a place to stay before she finishes her studies. She's a poor girl, so I have to be responsible while she grows up. I hope that you can help. After she grows up and is able to live 'by herself, she won't ask for anything from your family anymore."

Edward was surprised when he heard that.

Women who remarried would usually want the man to accept their children, but she was thinking about this from his perspective. He didn't like the idea of Jenna bringing her daughter along. He was a businessman, so he would be worried that a woman who married him with a child would have bad intentions, and on top of that, he already had a daughter.

After Jenna said all that, he asked if she was alright if he didn't announce their relationship with the Xaviers, and she agreed.

Edward snapped out of that and looked at her, "It's time to address me."

Lucy was surprised. Seeing that she was just standing there, Elaine nudged her. "Why are you just standing there? Call him Dad."

The 'Mr. Xavier' that she was calling him, turned into 'Dad'.

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Edward nodded. "Come back anytime you want. Our home is your home too! Our home is your home too" made Lucy tear up.

Even though Lucy was a part of the Xaviers, she had always reminded herself that that wasn't her home but just a temporary place.

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Elaine hugged her by her shoulders. "You're my sister from now on."

Lucy lowered her head and wiped away her tears while smiling.

Maisie was happy for Lucy.

After the event, Lucy and the Xaviers walked to the door.

Edward stopped and turned to look at her. "Lucy, your mother cares about you a lot. When she first married me, she was worried that I wouldn't accept you, so she begged me and agreed not to announce to the world our relationship. She did all that for you."

Lucy was stunned.

Edward patted her shoulder. "Go home and talk to her when you have time. She's a good mother and wishes you will understand one day."

Edward got into the car.

Elaine turned back to look at her and whispered, "We're going the opposite way, so we can't drive you. You have a ride anyway." She then looked behind Lucy.

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Lucy stood there until the car drove away.

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She turned around, saw Hector walking down the stairs, and paused. "Y-You're not back yet?"

"No, I was talking to Maisie and Nolan." Hector stopped in front of her and looked at his watch. "Want to take a walk?"

Lucy paused. "You want to take a walk?" "Yes, I've had a bit too much to drink. I need to sober up."

"I'll go with you then."

The neon lights at the pier looked beautiful. Cars drove on the wide streets, and the headlights shone. The two of them walked along the bridge as a dim yellow light shone on them.

Hector looked sideways at her, "Are you happy that your stepfather finally accepted you into the family?"

Lucy smiled, "Yes." She then looked down because it was unbelievable, "I never dared think that he would one day accept me, and I didn't know that my mother begged him for me to stay with them."

She had been under the impression that her mother never wanted to admit who she was and was afraid she would mess up her

new life.

Chapter 1418

Hector looked at Lucy and slowed down his pace.

Lucy stopped and turned to look at him, her face smiling brightly, "But I want to thank you for tonight. I think that you're my lucky star."

He was surprised. "Lucky star?"

"Yes, you bring good luck to me, lucky star." Lucy smiled wider.

Hector chuckled. "Really."

He turned his face away. "I wish I really could bring good luck."

He hadn't managed to bring good luck to Sean.

Seeing how he drifted away, Lucy walked over to face him and waved her hand in front of his face. "If you could bring good luck to everyone, you would be an angel.

He smiled.

Lucy suddenly smelled something and looked toward the source of the odor. "I think I smell kebab."

Hector put his hand on her shoulder and made her stand up straight. "They're selling street food there."

"Yes, they are!" Lucy felt like having some, but something came to her mind, and she suddenly looked Hector up and down.

Hector asked, "What's wrong?"

She couldn't help but laugh. "You're dressed so formally. I'm not going to ask you to go get street food with me."

Hector removed his jacket and rolled up his sleeves. "Would this work?"

Lucy suddenly grabbed his arm and pulled him along. "Let's go then!"

Hector was stunned, but all Lucy could think about were the kebabs and nothing else. He didn't put his arm away and just let her hold it.

At midnight, at the Lakeview Apartment...

Hector parked his car and removed the seatbelt. "We're home."

He turned around and saw that Lucy was fast asleep.

He put his hand out and lightly shook her shoulder. "Lucy."

She mumbled something, frowned, then her head lolled and dropped on his hand, pinning it.

Hector froze. He could feel her skin on the back of his hand, and it was smooth like butter.

He didn't remove it but stared at her while she slept.

When Lucy finally woke up, she was surprised because Hector's jacket was covering her, and she treated his hand as a pillow.

They were still in the car.

There was no way of knowing how long Hector had his arm out to maintain that position.

When she woke up and moved, Hector opened his eyes, turned his head, and smiled. "I thought you were going to wake up in the morning."

Lucy looked at him, and her nose soured while she turned away. "You should have woken me up."

"I didn't want to wake you up because you were sleeping so soundly." "You call me silly," Lucy's eyes teared up, but she smiled and as she said, "But you're sillier."

Hector wiped her tears away, and Lucy froze while she looked at him. He said, "I just want to spend more time with you."

Her heart skipped a beat, and her chest heaved while she looked at this face that was inches away. His nose touched her cheek. "You—"

He kissed her before she could speak.

Lucy batted her eyes and put her hand on his shoulder but didn't push him away.

Neither of them had kissed someone before, so they bumped a little. They realized that it was awkward, so they laughed together.

Hector looked at her. "I'm sorry, I've never kissed a woman, so..."

Lucy's ears turned red while she looked down. "If... If it was your first kiss, then... We should treat it as practice."

Her face turned red after saying that.

Hector cupped her face. "Do you want to be my long-term practice partner then?"

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"Long-term..."

Lucy's heart was skipping so hard that she nodded without thinking.

Hector kissed her again while she slowly closed her eyes, and a jolt of electricity ran into her heart, making it feel numb.

After a few days, at the Xavier residence...

Lucy rang the doorbell, and the maid opened the door. She asked, "Is my mother home?"

The maid confirmed she was there, and Lucy walked into the living room. When Jenna heard that someone was downstairs, she went down and was surprised to see that it was Lucy, "Lucy?"

Lucy pressed her lips together and smiled.

Mom.

Jenna walked to the couch, poured her a cup of tea, and slowly said, "I was in a bad mood the other day and didn't pay attention to your feelings. I apologize, Lucy."

She placed the teacup in front of her. "I know you're all grown up now, but I can't help myself. I won't blame you if you think that I'm naggy. I just hope that you will be happy."

"Mom, I don't blame you."

Jenna paused, then looked up at her.

Lucy smiled. "Dad told me that you've always cared about me."

Jenna was surprised. "What did you call him?"

Dad." Lucy looked around. "I... can call him Dad from now on.

Jenna covered her mouth while happy tears fell. "Is that true?"

Lucy nodded.

Jenna started balling, but not because she was sad. She was happy.

Lucy got up, went next to her, and hugged her. She felt bad when she saw her mother crying. "Mom, don't cry. You're making me cry too."

"... I'm just overwhelmed." Jenna wiped her tears and held her hand with a smile. She tapped it, and they smiled while looking into each other's eyes. No words were exchanged, but they understood each other.

Lucy stayed there for a while and left the manor after saying goodbye to Jenna. She got a message when she got into the car. (What do you feel like having tonight? [I bring you anywhere you want to go.]

She knew that Hector had just taken over Zestar and would be busy, but he never forgot to message her despite that.

She smiled at her screen and replied jokingly: [You're my meal.] She didn't plan to send it, yet accidentally pressed 'Send'. Her smile immediately faded.

'Oh no!

She immediately deleted the message.

He probably didn't see it?'

Unfortunately, she didn't expect Hector's eyes were always on his phone. Thus, when she sent that message, he saw it as clear as day.

He couldn't help but chuckle before replying: (I'll go home earlier today then.)

Lucy lay on the steering wheel. It was so shameful. He must think that she was clingy!

At the Soul Jewelry branch...

Lucy had been busy buying meals for everyone over the past two days.

The few female employees curiously discussed this.

"Did she strike the lottery? She wouldn't even splurge on meals previously, but now she's buying our meals too."

Lucy was the definition of a miser.

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She was different because other misers were just very careful at spending money, while she just downright refused to let her money go to someone else.

When she had first gotten promoted, everyone wanted her to buy them a meal, but she had said she needed to save money.

It was weird that she would suddenly be so generous.

“Not the lottery. I think she’s in love.”

“In love?”

The few colleagues were suddenly curious and huddled together “With who?”

That one girl replied, “How would I know? I just saw someone picking her up two days ago, and the driver was a man.”

Chapter 1420

That evening, Lucy walked to the garage and saw two colleagues standing there. She looked away. “You’re still here?”

One of them walked to her and held her arm. “Lucy, my friend opened up a shop, and I’m buying dinner. Do you want to join us?”

“Yes, let’s go together. You’ve been paying for our meals in the past two days, so we need to do something in return.”

Lucy was a little befuddled by their friendliness, but she didn’t want to reject it. Thus, she had to be careful about what she said, “I’m sorry, I have something on tonight, so I won’t be able to join you.” ‘Are you going on a date?’

“Lucy, tell us, who is it?”

“Bring your boyfriend along.”

Lucy was going to say something when she heard a honk nearby. She looked around and seemed to be worried that the person in the car would be seen, so she hurriedly bade farewell. “I need to go, I’m sorry. Let’s do this another day.”

The two women stared at the driver.

Unfortunately, it was too dark inside, and they couldn’t see clearly until the car drove away.

One of them crossed her arms. “Why is she being so secretive? Do you think her boyfriend is ugly, so she doesn’t want us to see him?”

The other woman shook her head. “I don’t think so, maybe... it’s a secret relationship.” Lucy’s heart pounded in the car, and she could only look forward. “You’re off early.”

‘Was it because of the earlier message?’

Lucy shamefully turned her head and looked at Hector through the reflection in the window.

Hector held the steering wheel while smiling. “It’s not that early. What do you want to have tonight?”

Lucy smiled and replied, “Anything works.”

When the light turned red, he turned to stare at her. “What about me?”

Lucy’s face was flushed and almost started smoking.

Hector laughed out loud when he saw that.

When they returned to the Lakeview Apartment, they brought the groceries out of the elevator and said at the same time, "Let's go to your place."

Hector smiled. "We'll cook at my place tonight then."

Lucy was going into the kitchen and started opening up the cabinets when Hector changed and walked toward her. He stood behind her and leaned forward, placing his chin on her shoulder. "Do you need help?"

She paused and smiled. "No, I'll be fine." She then turned around and pushed him outside, "Wait for me outside."

Hector suddenly turned around, and that made her fall into his arms. She was going to say something when he leaned down and kissed her.

Lucy held onto his shirt, and he let her go after a long while and ran his fingers over her lips. "I'll be waiting then."

Lucy's face turned red again. That was a violation!

After dinner was ready, the portion was perfect, and they had a bottle of wine in the cooler. They took it out and casually poured it into their wine glasses.

Dinner, wine, and each other.

The room was cozy and romantic.

Lucy picked up the glass, clinked it against Hector's, took a deep breath, and gobbled everything down.

Hector smiled. "Take it slow. Don't get drunk."

Lucy blushed but not because she was drunk. "What's wrong with being drunk?"

He looked up at her face. "You'll feel terrible the next day."

Lucy paused. "Oh."

She thought he would say that he would get a chance if she were drunk.

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Hector chuckled, "What else?" He put out his hand and flicked her forehead, "What's going on in your mind?"