

My Unexpected Marriage to the CEO by Pumpkin Witch Chapter 311

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Chapter 311 Louise's Stomachache

Derek drove to Louise's residence at full speed. I opened the door and rushed to the elevator. Felix followed us inside. "Isn't she married? Why does she still live here?" Although Felix looked calm, seeing the way he frantically puffed on his cigarette told me how nervous and anxious he was. I shook my head. I didn't know either. The door to Louise's apartment was open. I pushed the door further and saw Louise curled up on the floor, hugging herself. Her face was pale, and her bangs were soaked in sweat. "Lulu, what's wrong with you?" I was so scared that my body began to tremble with fear. I squatted down and rocked her. Louise struggled to open her eyes. "I... I have a stomachache," she croaked. Before I could react, Felix picked Louise in his arms and ran outside. Louise's face looked ghastly pale under the bright elevator light. I worriedly held her hand. "Lulu, hold on. We'll take you to the hospital right away." Felix's jaw tightened. "Don't you have a husband?" he hissed through his gritted teeth. "Where is he? Where is he when you need him?" Louise curled up in his arms and winced in pain without answering. We immediately took her to the hospital. The doctor said she had acute gastroenteritis and needed immediate surgery.

The doctor took out the forms and looked at us. "Who is going to sign it?" "Let me do it," Felix offered. "Are you a family member?" the doctor asked, sizing him up. Felix was speechless. "We require a member of the family to sign the consent form for the procedure. You better call the patient's family and ask them to come as soon as possible," the doctor explained. Felix angrily kicked the wall, leaving a shoe print on the white expanse. "What bullshit is it? It is urgent. Fuck the rules! Can't you go ahead with the surgery? I could sign it if you want." The doctor awkwardly shifted on his feet. "We are responsible for the patient's surgery. We have our own problems to deal with. Please try to understand."

I remembered Louise calling me from Layne's phone the other day. I took out my phone to check the call log. Fortunately, his number was still there, so I immediately called him.

In less than twenty minutes, Layne appeared at the end of the corridor. He strode over and glanced at Felix before looking at me.

"Where is Louise?" "Lulu is in the operation theater. She has acute gastroenteritis and needs an operation right away. The doctor wants you to sign the consent form. Hurry up." "How are you related to the patient?" the doctor asked. Layne straightened his back and looked at him. "I'm her husband." The doctor immediately handed him the Operation Consent Form. "You better sign it now so that we can get started with the surgery." Layne took the pen and signed the form. "Can I go to see her?" he asked, handing over the paper. "I'm worried that she might freak out about the surgery." The doctor nodded in understanding. "All right. Hurry up." Layne followed the doctor into the operation theater. Felix leaned against the wall; his chest was heaving with anger. I could see he was burning inside but couldn't vent his emotions. I could totally understand his pain.

If it hadn't been for that issue, he would have become Louise's husband and signed the form for her. But he had no right to care about Louise now. Felix lowered his head dejectedly and left before Layne came out of the operation theater. He thrust his hands into his pockets, and a cigarette stuck out between his lips. Although he tried to look like he didn't care about anything, his slumped shoulders betrayed him. About an hour later, the nurses wheeled Louise out of the operation theater. The anesthetic hadn't worn off yet; she was still unconscious. I couldn't stop worrying about Louise even though Layne was there to take care of her. I told Derek to go home first, but he insisted on staying there with me. My friend looked like a fragile doll. I had only seen her as a vigorous carefree woman. She had never looked this weak and helpless before. I sat on the edge of the bed and clasped her palm. I winced as her icy fingers touched my skin.

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Chapter 312 Am I still alive

After a full thirty minutes had elapsed, Louise finally woke up. When she initially opened her eyes, she was slightly bewildered. "Eve, am I still alive?" she queried wearily. I felt sorry for her but it was also a little humorous. "It was just a small, routine operation. It wouldn't take your life." When Layne heard her voice from the place he was sitting not too far away from her, he immediately rushed to her side and tenderly touched her face. He said gently but with a tone of assertive confidence, "Don't you worry. As long as I'm here, the God of Death wouldn't dare to take you away." Louise smiled weakly at him. When she turned in her bed and saw Derek, she immediately reached out and pushed me away. "Eve, you can go home now. It's so late. I'm fine. I don't need you to stay with me any longer," she said considerately. Although she woke up with a feeling of fatigue and her voice was still weak, it was apparent that she was doing significantly better. "I'll come to visit you again tomorrow," I said. By the time we reached home, it was already one o'clock in the morning. The next day, Derek dropped me off at the hospital gate before he went to the company. I saw Layne exit the elevator. He told me that he was going out to buy some breakfast. As soon as I stepped into the ward, I noticed that another figure had stealthily and quickly slipped in behind me. When I turned around to see who it was, I was met with the sight of Felix. He stood a few meters away from the bed and watched Louise as she was lying on the bed with a fixed gaze. It seemed like he either didn't dare to get any closer to her or he knew that he had no right to do so. Whatever the case, he just watched her from afar. Louise was awake and also looked straight at him. Both of them were at a complete loss for words. He had probably come in at this opportune moment when he saw that Layne had left. The feeling that I had walked in at the worst possible moment suddenly washed over me. "I... I'll go out for a walk," I said gingerly. Then I turned around to leave the ward. "No, Eve. Come here." Louise stopped me dead in my tracks. I turned again and walked over to her slowly.

Felix stood as still as a statue for an inordinately long time. It seemed that he had to muster up a lot of courage before he could walk over to the bed. "How are you feeling after the operation?" he asked evenly. Louise lowered her head and didn't

look into his eyes. "I'm fine. But the incision is a little painful." Then, they both fell into an awkward, embarrassed silence again. Louise suddenly smiled and said, "In fact, I do feel slight pain in my abdomen. I wonder if the doctor left any surgical instruments in there when he performed the operation." Her joke broke the ice. Felix bit his lower lip and turned his face away. He wanted to laugh but he tried to hold it back. Finally, he couldn't help himself and let out a short burst of laughter. "You must have the luck to win the lottery to make what you said happen. You think very highly of yourself." Louise and I exchanged knowing looks and smiled at the same time. After some time had passed, the doctor came to check up on Louise. She told him that she was still experiencing some pain and discomfort in her abdominal area. The doctor asked her to point out exactly where the pain was on her abdomen and made a preliminary diagnosis. "A likely cause is inflammation in your uterus. I'll give you a prescription, and you will also have a transvaginal ultrasound a little later," the doctor advised. When Louise heard the words, she instantly blushed a rosy pink. She lowered her head and whispered under her breath, "I won't do it." The doctor paused for a moment and then explained the options. "Generally speaking, that examination result is much more accurate and conclusive than a common B-ultrasound. Unmarried women usually choose to have a common B-ultrasound. You are married, isn't it? Pardon me, but that would mean you are not virgin, isn't that correct?" The doctor seemed to have forgotten that there was a man standing right next to him. His question was too direct in the circumstances. Louise blushed bright crimson. Felix stared at Louise, anxiously awaiting her answer. There was a slight tinge of hopeful expectation in his eyes. Louise lowered her head and murmured bashfully, "Yes, well, I actually am virgin. Words couldn't describe how astonished I was at that moment. The doctor was also quite shocked. A reason for it came to his mind and he looked at Louise with sympathy. "I see," the doctor replied. It seemed like the doctor had perhaps come to the conclusion that her husband must have problems in the bedroom. When Felix heard this, his expression was a mixture of surprise and excitement. Soon, however, he managed to control his emotions and calm down. Layne had just gone out to buy breakfast and would be back shortly. Without any further ado, Felix said to Louise, "Take good care of yourself." He couldn't move on yet.

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Chapter 313 This Is Fate

Once Felix had left, I asked Louise, "Why aren't you living with Layne?" Louise flashed me a smile. "You know, it's kind of weird. I used to think that Layne was just like any other gangster; rude, ill tempered, and obnoxious. I mean, I thought he was not exactly easy to deal with, but now that we're married, I realized that he's actually a very patient man. Even though I told him that I wanted to live apart, he didn't get mad or object to the idea." "If he's that nice to you, you should cherish him," I suggested. Louise looked up, letting out a sigh of relief. "Sometimes, when I'm thinking about the subject, I feel bad for Layne, because I can't bring myself to sleep with him. I feel uncomfortable about the idea." "Because you're still in love with Felix," I commented. After a moment of silence, Louise said, "So what I still love him? Do you know how many people who love each other end up separating? That's a reality that we all have to live with; myself

included.” Right after she finished her sentence, Layne returned, so we stopped talking about it. Layne helped Louise sit upright, intending to feed her. However, she felt embarrassed, so she insisted on eating by herself. From what I could see, he was so good to her. In every aspect, he was very considerate about her, especially about how she felt. After Louise finished breakfast, I left. When I got to the elevator, Layne stopped me. I stopped in my tracks and watched him approach me. “Listen, Eveline. I know that you’re Louise’s best friend, and you know her best. If you have some spare time on your hands, would you mind going to the supermarket with me?”

His question left me stunned. Layne smiled at me, and patiently explained, “Lately, Louise’s appetite hasn’t been at its best. I haven’t known her for that long, so I’m not sure what she likes to eat yet.” Knowing what he meant, and considering that he was so considerate to Louise, I immediately agreed to his request to go to the supermarket with him. There, we spoke while walking. “Actually, Lulu isn’t that picky about food. But out of the rest, she likes broccoli, mushrooms, and other vegetables the most. She also enjoys having plain soup. If you prepare some soup for a meal, I’m sure it’ll whet her appetite,” I explained. Layne listened carefully to every word I said, nodding along. “I’ll keep that in mind.”

Previously, I was on Felix’s side. But now that I was slowly getting to know Layne, I found myself taking his side at the moment.

In the past, I couldn’t picture Layne would be a good husband. But now, I could see that he was trying his best to be a good

- husband to Louise. Perhaps he truly loved her. After buying the ingredients, Layne told me that he had to go home and cook. He also bought some fruits and asked me to bring them to Louise. Layne drove me to the hospital, and then I went to Louise’s ward and brought her the fruits. After washing the fruits for her, I left. When I reached the elevator, I wanted to press the button for the first floor. However, I hesitated and pressed the fifth floor’s button instead.

The moment I reached the fifth floor, I went straight to a particular ward. The door was left open. Upon entering, I noticed that there was nobody on the bed, and the quilt was lifted aside. I remembered that Alvaro’s leg had to be plastered. He shouldn’t be walking, so I was confused on where he could’ve gone. And the moment I turned around, I was startled by the person standing at the door. Alvaro had a cigarette in his mouth, propping himself up with a crutch and staring at me with interest. “I was craving for a smoke, so I went out to buy a pack of cigarettes. What’s up, Eveline? Did you come here to see me? Is it because you missed me?” he asked jokingly. I stared at his leg for a few seconds before saying, “It looks like you’ve almost recovered. You’ll be able to get out of the hospital in a day or two. Anyway, I’ll be leaving now.” I was just about to walk past him and leave, but he stood in my way. The door wasn’t that wide, so he could prevent me from leaving the room just by standing in the middle of the doorway. “What do you think you’re doing?” I asked, glaring at him. Alvaro smirked at me. “Well, you’re here to see me, right? Why are you in a hurry to leave?” He took a step forward and pressed me against the wall. Not long after, he slammed the door shut behind him.

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Chapter 314 Panic

I was so anxious that I used all my strength to stop Alvaro from approaching me. "Don't move, my leg." He frowned. His reaction frightened me. Thinking I had touched his wound, I stood still without moving an inch. He used the opportunity and pressed his body against me. I tried stopping him, but his weight trapped me in place. I couldn't fight him. "Alvaro, behave yourself!" I glared at him. "I think I'm behaving myself," he said, grinning mischievously. He suddenly lifted his hand and raised two fingers. "How many fingers here?" "Are you insane?" I shouted.

Alvaro was a thick-skinned man. He would always smile when I scolded him. He stepped closer and touched my head. "I just wanted to see if you were having any sequelae after the head injury." I snorted. "You better worry about your leg first." "I'm not worried. If something happens to me, I'll make sure you take care of me for the rest of my life," he said, deliberately stressing the words "the rest of my life". "No way!" I rolled my eyes at him. His smile vanished, and he pouted at me. "I got injured because I saved you. How could you forget that? I didn't think you'd be a heartless woman."

I was concerned for him and decided to visit him because he had saved me. Otherwise, I wouldn't have bothered to even look at

him.

Just then, the voices of men outside the door caught my attention. I could clearly recognize Lean's voice.

I looked at Alvaro as I felt the panic building up within me. He looked at me, and a gentle smile stretched across his lips as if he knew what I was thinking. Before I knew what was going on, he suddenly opened the bathroom door, pulled me in, slammed the door, and locked it. "Alvaro!" the men shouted as they walked into the ward. "He is not here." "His leg is injured. Where will he go?" Alvaro pushed me against the cold wall. I was so nervous that I could barely breathe. "Let's give him a call," said Lean.

- My eyes widened in horror. Alvaro's phone rang in the bathroom before he could turn it off. I broke into a cold sweat as the phone continued to ring. "Alvaro is in the bathroom," someone said. Moments later, someone knocked on the door. "Alvaro, are you taking a dump?" The phone continued to ring, but Alvaro didn't answer. If he admitted he was taking a dump, everyone would wait for him outside.

Alvaro stared at me; I didn't know what he was thinking. After a while, he slowly put his crutch aside, rested his hands behind my head, and leaned toward my ear. He then began breathing heavily and groaning. I was shocked. I heard muffled sounds of laughter from outside. "Well, I think we have come at a bad time." "Let's go. Don't disturb him. Alvaro has been lying on the bed for so many days.

He has to satisfy his needs." They were all gossiping. I prayed for them to leave because I couldn't stay in the bathroom with him. There were two knocks on the door before Lean spoke, "Alvaro, don't move too much. Take care of your injured leg." Hearing that, the others burst out laughing. After a while, I heard the sound of footsteps before the room fell silent. I pushed Alvaro away. He lost balance and stumbled against the wall, holding it for support. Although he was only acting a moment ago, I could see his eyes blazing with desire. I gulped and hurriedly grabbed the door handle. However, Alvaro pulled me back and pressed me against the wall again. He hooked his fingers between my chin, forcing me to look at him. His eyes flicked to my lips before they met my eyes. Plain lust was written all over his face. His hot breath blew across my face as he leaned toward me.

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Chapter 315 You Can Leave Now

I felt like my heart almost leapt to my throat, and Alvaro stopped at a very close proximity to me. I turned my face away, and removed his hand from my chin. Then, I noticed him laughing at himself. "I really fucking want to kiss you!" The way Alvaro spoke made it seem like he was about to reach his boiling point. I bit my lower lip and stayed quiet. My body was stiff, and I couldn't move a muscle. After a few seconds of silent confrontation, Alvaro slowly stepped back. "Don't leave so soon. Lean and his pals are cunning. They may be quietly standing outside to see the fun. If he were to see you here, he could set tongues wagging. If you don't want Derek to find out, just stay here a little longer." His voice was calm. He turned on the faucet on the sink to its maximum level. Then, he cupped a handful of water and splashed it onto his face. For a moment, he just stared at his wet face in the mirror. Afterwards, he put down the lid of the toilet and sat on it. After lighting a cigarette, he said to me, "Maybe by the time I'm done with this cigarette, they'll be gone." Moments later, I heard voices coming from outside. "It seems like it's not done yet. Alvaro, you're incredible!" "Let's just leave them alone." Not long after that, it became dead silent outside. While I stood against the wall, Alvaro was still sitting on the toilet, smoking. It was so awkward inside the narrow space.

Suddenly, he looked into my eyes through the thin layer of smoke. "Why do you look so nervous? If I had wanted to do something to you, you wouldn't have been able to escape on the mountain that night." When Alvaro mentioned what happened on the mountain that night, I suddenly remembered everything that Lean had said about me, and it made me feel suffocated. He fetched his crutch, stood up, opened the toilet's lid, and threw his cigarette butt into the toilet. Afterwards, he flushed it away. "You can leave now," he said with his back to me.. Right after he said that, I bolted to the door and opened it, leaving the room without hesitation. Once I was out of the ward, I ran a few meters away from it before I stopped. It was then that I touched my face. I wasn't sure what I looked like right now, but I could feel that I was blushing. Then, I went back to Louise's ward. When I reached the door, I was shocked to see who was inside. Derek was also in the ward. Shouldn't he be in Dere International right now? Upon hearing

my footsteps, he turned his gaze towards me. "Where did you go?" I felt a little guilty, so I couldn't bring myself to look him in the eye. I was scared that my face would expose my lie. Thus, I went to the nightstand, took a disposable cup, and poured water for myself. Once I had drunk water, I felt much calmer. This time, I looked at Derek and said, "Layne asked me to come with him to the supermarket to buy some ingredients and groceries. He said that he didn't know what food Lulu likes to eat, so he asked me for advice." When I locked eyes with Derek, I felt a little flustered. Fearing that he would catch on to my lie, I turned my attention to Louise. "Layne told me that he wanted to cook something for you, because you've not been eating well nowadays." "Oh, I see," muttered Derek. He didn't seem to doubt anything that I said. Only Louise was staring at me with suspicion. Naturally, she knew I was lying. Before I brought the fruits to her, I had already finished buying groceries with Layne. Fortunately for me, Louise was sensible. She didn't expose my lie in front of Derek. I guessed that she would just ask me about it afterwards. Derek and I sat in Louise's ward for a while, and later on, we left together. The moment we walked out of the hospital, I saw an acquaintance at the entrance. It was Denzel. He must've heard about my accident. He glanced at my direction a few times to confirm that it was me he actually saw. Once he was sure, he strode over to my side. "Is that you, Eveline?" "Mr. Byrd, it's so good to see you," I muttered. Denzel laughed. "Like they always say, 'Don't judge a book by its cover.' You're usually timid. I never pictured that you'd be so bold given the right circumstances." Embarrassed, I lowered my head. "As your student, I'm sorry that I embarrassed you, Mr. Byrd." Upon seeing that Derek was by my side, Denzel no longer had the courage to speak ill of me. He just let out a sigh and smiled. "You're lucky to be alive, Eveline. Believe it or not, everyone has done a few stupid things in their life." I was at a loss for words. Based on his words, I could tell that he was mocking me for being stupid and reckless. I couldn't bring myself to talk back while I was being scolded. "But you can't just give up halfway, Eveline! You still need to pass your driving test," Denzel added. I nodded like a primary school student being lectured by a teacher. If it weren't for the fact that he was in a hurry to see his friend in the hospital, he probably would've teased me for a long time.

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Chapter 316 Let Me Teach You How To Drive

Even when we were already in the car, Derek was still laughing. Upset by what had happened, I said, "You do realize that I'm traumatized by that incident now, don't you? I can't even bring myself to touch a steering wheel, let alone take the driving test!" Derek had already turned on the car's engine, but he suddenly stopped it. Suddenly, he wrapped his arm around my shoulder and pulled me into his arms. The following moment, he kissed me, and soon, his tongue entered my mouth. His kiss was so arousing that it quickly took my breath away. A moment later, his gentle kiss became more passionate. I could sense that both of us were feeling more and more aroused by this. His rapid breathing was intoxicating, and I could tell that we were on the verge of losing control. ' . After kissing for a long time, he finally let go of me. As we caught our breaths, we stared into each other's eyes. "Let's continue later," he muttered, seemingly flirting with me.

Once my hands were released, I hurriedly sat upright. He-lit a cigarette and took two drags.

Then, he cracked a window open to let out some of the smoke. Soon, the cold wind seeped into the car and it made me shiver." "You..." I stared at him, blushing. He leaned his head back, turned his face to me and stared at me with burning eyes. It was then that he placed his cigarette in his mouth, sat upright, and started the car again.

Understanding what he meant, I looked out the window with blushing cheeks. He touched my earlobe and chuckled. "Are you feeling embarrassed?" I decided to ignore him and not dignify the question with a response. He laughed at me again and deliberately blew a smoke ring in my direction. "I like the way you blush, Eveline. You look just like an innocent high school student." I waved away the smoke in front of my face and punched his arm. "You're so annoying." We had only gotten home, but he already threw me onto the sofa and showed me just how good he was at sex.

A few days later, Louise was discharged from the hospital. The doctor advised a few more days of bed rest for her after she got discharged from the hospital, but she just couldn't lie still. One weekend, Louise and I went to the Music Square in the evening to celebrate her recovery. It was obvious that neither Derek nor Layne was interested in this. They were only here to accompany us.

station. Despite the fact that their wives were best friends, they still couldn't bring themselves to be friends with each other. After all, Layne snatched away the fiancée of Derek's best friend. At the very least, they weren't hostile to each other, and just ignored the other person's presence. The square was packed with people tonight. As I looked over at the dense crowd, I noticed a stage in the center of the square. The music was quite rhythmic, and the staff were busy preparing the equipment on and off the stage. It seemed that there would be a show on the square tonight. There were many people playing on the square, and some were busy selling things. Many of them wore masks. Most of the people who had fun here were youth. They were enjoying the day, and the entire ambiance of the square was so festive. Louise and I squeezed into the crowd, each carrying an inflatable toy. Moments later, we were squeezed apart. It was fortunate that she and I held onto each other's hands, so that we wouldn't get separated. I stood on tiptoe to look for Derek, but there were too many people around, and it prevented me from finding him. All of a sudden, Louise let go of my hand. When I looked back, I was shocked to see what was happening. Behind the big inflatable SpongeBob SquarePants, Felix was embracing Louise as tight as he could, and kissing her like a madman. Louise shoved him away. "Felix, stop it, okay?" Based on how red his face was and the fact that his eyes were bloodshot, it seemed that Felix was inebriated. With reckless abandon, he pulled her into his arms again. "I missed you, Louise! I missed you so damn much!" As Louise struggled in his arms, Felix held her even tighter. The moment I turned around, I saw Layne on his way to me. He was looking around while marching over here. Obviously, he was looking for Louise. It made me wonder what would happen if he were to see Felix harassing Louise. I wanted to go over there and tell Louise that Layne was on his way, but there was a large crowd separating us, so I couldn't get to them at once. In a moment of desperation, I raised the inflatable toy in my hand, praying that it could prevent Layne from seeing what was happening, and that Felix would let go of Louise as soon as possible.

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Chapter 317 Sending Flowers

"Eveline, have you seen Louise?" A voice resonated in my ears that left me startled. After putting down the inflatable toy, I shook my head. "I didn't see her." "Louise!"

Layne frowned and strode towards where Louise was. Oh, shit! They were screwed. Layne was going to catch them! But when I looked back, I realized that Felix was gone. Louise was grabbing a woman's hair and continuously hitting her. Layne pulled Louise away from the woman. "Hey, hey! Be careful, Louise. You're still injured. Allow me to do it for you." After he winked at the two men beside him, they charged towards the woman and began beating her up. As the woman rolled on the ground, I finally saw her face. It was actually Linda. – Though there were many people on the square, most of them just watched it, and none had the courage to stop the fight. Louise frowned, covering her belly with her hands and gasping for air. I thought that she must've reopened her incision. "Lulu, are you okay?" In silence, she stared daggers at Linda as the latter writhed in pain on the ground. "Are you satisfied now?" Layne asked, placing a hand on her shoulder. Before she could answer, he continued, "If you're not feeling any better, I'll think of another way to help you vent your anger. This place isn't suitable for that." It was then that I noticed that more and more people were watching the scene unfold. Soon, the security guards on the square would be alerted about this, and then the matter would escalate. "Let's go," said Louise. With that, we fled the scene. After a while, I turned around and saw that Linda was still on the ground, unable to get up. But when she looked through the strands of her disheveled hair, her eyes appeared fierce and frightening. When I turned back around, I noticed a masked man observing us from nearby. Louise also noticed him. Based on what he was wearing, I recognized the masked man to be Felix. "I'm not in the mood to be here anymore. Let's just go home," Louise said to Layne. He nodded in response and wrapped her up with his windbreaker. "Okay, let's go." I patted her shoulder and said, "You've only just recovered. It won't do you any good to be playing outside for too long. It's best that you go home early."

for him. All of a sudden, I felt someone tug on my clothes. When I lowered my head, I found a little girl holding flowers. As she tugged at the hem of my coat, she said, "Someone asked me to give this bouquet of flowers to you." I didn't accept it yet, because it was a bit suspicious. "Who gave them?" I asked. The little girl put the bouquet into my hand and ran away. I followed her with my gaze. Suddenly, I felt something rubbing against my back. And when I turned around, I saw a mascot of a bear. The second the mascot got close to me, many children gathered around me. At first, the mascot just danced around me and appeared very friendly. I was startled when he hugged me and rubbed his face against mine. Feeling awkward, I struggled to break away from him. However, he held me tightly and took a selfie using his other hand. I was becoming more and more suspicious of his identity, but when I saw the ring on his finger, I was certain that the mascot was Alvaro. More and more people began to watch, and many of them were laughing. Struggling from Alvaro's grasp, I shouted, "Let go of me!" Just as I

was feeling flustered, I was pulled into another man's arms. When I turned around, the mascot was already on the ground and holding onto his legs. Alvaro's leg was already injured and now he had fallen down. In all honesty, I felt a little sorry for him. Derek put his arm around my shoulder and led me away. "Who sent you the flowers?" he asked. I looked down at the bouquet of flowers in my hand and shook my head. "Honestly, I have no clue. A little girl gave it to me." This time, Derek didn't ask any more questions, and just protected me while we made our way through the crowd.

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Chapter 318 I Don't Feel Motivated Anymore

I saw two acquaintances on a bench on one side of the square. Sitting at a distance from each other, Aaron and Charlene were quietly watching the people on the square. We greeted and sat beside them. All of a sudden, a few men in roller skate shoes appeared in front of us. I looked carefully and found that one of them was Lean. They were skating so fast that the crowd parted to make way for them. Several girls clapped and screamed, mesmerized by their expert moves. They circled the square several times. I knew Lean must have seen us, but he deliberately ignored us. All of a sudden, my nose itched, and I sneezed. "Are you cold?" Derek wrapped his arm around my shoulder. Aaron turned to look at me. "Let's go to a cafe and get something to drink—it's on me. It's really cold outside." He took us to a cafe beside the square. As soon as we stepped inside, the people in the cafe greeted Aaron, and he responded with a smile.

We found a table by the window, took off our jackets and sat down. The air conditioner was on.

I sat next to Charlene, while Aaron and Derek sat opposite us.

"Do you often come here?" asked Charlene. Aaron put his coat on the chair and rolled up the sleeves of his beige sweater. "I used to work here." Both Charlene and I were surprised. He smiled as if amused by our reaction. He rested his hands on the table and interlocked his fingers. "Well, I was a young boy. Although I didn't get paid well, I enjoyed everything about my job. I was motivated all day long." "You are still young," Charlene said as a blush painted her cheeks. She looked away. Aaron smiled. "A lot of things have changed as time passes by. Although I earn more now, I don't feel motivated anymore. Working has become mechanical." Derek handed a cigarette to Aaron, but he didn't take it. He thrust his hand into his pocket and took out his packet of cigarettes. "I'll smoke my own cigarettes. I can't get used to yours." Derek lit his cigarette and smiled. "We eat and sleep every day. That's also mechanical behavior." Aaron also smiled. "But that's different. Although it's mechanical, you have to do it to survive." I looked out the window and saw many people bustling outside the square but couldn't hear the noise. The glass was like a large TV that played a silent movie. About an hour later, we left the cafe. As soon as we walked out of the cafe, I noticed some people gathered around a spot of the square. They were watching something with rapt attention. We stepped closer and heard a faint cry from inside. "How

cruel he is! Call the police! Call the police!" a middle-aged woman in the crowd shouted, shaking her head. I didn't intend to see what was going on but stopped when I saw the familiar face in the middle of the crowd.

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Chapter 319 Domestic Violence

I squeezed through the crowd to get a closer look at the scene. A man was beating and kicking a woman mercilessly. As he repeatedly hit the woman, the man showered her with insults. "How could I marry someone so stupid? How can you be fooled by counterfeit notes? You are so useless!" The woman cowered, unable to fight against this man. She tried as best as she could to block the violent kicks with her hands. However, the kicks still hurt badly and made her cry out in pain. Despite her cries and pleas, the man kept hitting her. "Stop it!" I shouted, unable to stand such a barbaric scene any longer. They were none other than my cousin Abram, and his wife, Rachel. Hearing my voice, Abram suddenly stopped and looked at me. A strange gleam passed through his eyes when he saw Derek standing behind me. It was only then that he finally suppressed his anger and stopped hitting his wife. "Rachel, get up." As I spoke, I held out my hand to help my cousin-in-law up. Rachel was wearing a thick coat, so I couldn't see the extent of her bruising. However, her face, which was not covered by the coat, was very swollen and her hair was messy. On top of that, the back of her hand was bleeding profusely. I always knew that my cousin was an authoritarian and violent man. However, I never had thought that he would have the audacity to beat his wife in public.

I didn't want to talk to my cousin at this moment. He didn't try to stop me and we left. We got into Derek's car. Rachel and I sat in the back seat as Derek drove us to the hospital. Along the way, Rachel couldn't stop crying.. I didn't know what to do at the moment and I tried to comfort her somehow. I gently rubbed her back and asked her in a soft voice, "Rachel, is Abram fond of beating you?" With trembling hands, Rachel wiped the tears from her face. Her voice trembled when she spoke. "Whenever he's in a bad mood,

with the freezing cold the past two days, our son had pneumonia, so he had to be hospitalized and it was very expensive for us. As it was the weekend today, Abram decided we should go sell some Christmas items to raise money. It was my first time trading so I didn't expect to receive counterfeit notes. When he noticed that I had been cheated, he was so angry that he hit me again and again until you intervened and saved me. It seemed that I was no longer a human being in his eyes, but a worthless object. He didn't care that there were a lot of people staring at him. No one could persuade him to stop hitting me no matter what they said." When I heard that the baby was hospitalized, I decided to go see him as soon as we arrived at the hospital. After all, he was my nephew. When I arrived in the ward, I saw my aunt Ruth at the bedside of the little boy. She was the one taking care of him these days. She jumped a little when she heard footsteps in the room and a look of surprise appeared on her face as soon as she saw me. However, she quickly regained her composure and began complaining to me. She

was so saddened by her grandson's condition that she didn't notice Rachel's bruises, though they were very visible. I walked over to the bed and looked at my little nephew who was lying there. He was in a deep sleep with gauze on his forehead. Since he was still a baby, it was very difficult to find his blood vessels and that was why the doctors had to resort to sticking the needle in his forehead. I felt terrible for the poor kid. However, I was totally indifferent to Ruth's crying and complaining. While talking to me, she glanced at Derek from time to time. It was only after a long time that she finally shut up. At that time, I looked at her calmly and said lightly, "Aunt, everyone has to overcome many difficulties in life. I was still a child when I lost my father and my mother was in a vegetative state. At that time, I had to fight to get out of it, and I finally survived. Unlike me who was alone at the time, you have so many adults to help you take care of this child. So that shouldn't be a big problem." Ruth was far from being stupid and I guessed that she had understood very well what I meant. She was now too embarrassed to look at me. I then turned to Rachel and asked her to get me some warm water. I told her that my hands were frozen and I wanted to bathe them in hot water. In fact, I mostly wanted to get Rachel away so I could have a serious talk with Ruth. "Aunt, why didn't you ever stop Abram when he hit Rachel? Again today, he hit her without restraint because she was tricked with counterfeit bills when she was selling. Look, since she married your son, she's part of your family now. You should protect her like your own daughter. Everyone has a limited tolerance threshold for anything. If Abram continues like this, Rachel will end up filing for divorce. Young and beautiful as she is, she will have no trouble remarrying. However, it will be difficult for a single father to remarry." Ruth didn't say anything. Judging from her expression, I believed that she was very clear about Abram's domestic violence. Soon after, Rachel came back with the water. Ruth immediately pulled her to the bed and sat her down. Then she looked intently at Rachel's face and showed great concern. She cursed her son, "What a bastard! Don't worry, Rachel. I'll teach him a good lesson for you. You know, the child's illness is quite serious. Abram is certainly anxious to raise funds to treat the child. Please forgive him this time." I was stunned. When I entered the room, this woman kept talking about money over and over. Hearing her talk about money again, I felt anger rise in me. I didn't want to stay another second here, so I got up and left with Derek. However, this woman was determined to ask me for money at all costs. When I left the room, she hurriedly came out after me. I could hear her footsteps click loudly behind me in the hallway. In my memory, during my father's lifetime, she had never been so enthusiastic towards me. I quickened my pace and left the hospital almost at a run. One would have thought that I had the devil at the heels.

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Chapter 320 Go To The Middle School

I got into the car and blew out a loud breath. My relatives always embarrassed me in front of Derek every time I met them. On the way, I received a call from Charlene.

She told me that her father was organizing an event with his students. They were in need of people, so she asked if I could help. We didn't have anything else to do anyway, so I asked Derek to drive me to the middle school that Charlene mentioned over the phone. As I was in a daze when she mentioned the name of the school because I studied there. My stomach fluttered as I set foot into the familiar territory. A range of emotions consumed me. It had been more than ten years since I went to school here.

The school wasn't the same as it was ten years ago. They had renovated the building, transforming it into a whole new place. The entire building was dark except for one classroom. I could hear the faint sound of laughter from there. The desks and chairs were pulled to both sides in the spacious classroom. Students were playing in the middle as a middle-aged teacher bent forward, concentrating on folding the paper cranes. Some students stood beside the teacher's chair, watching him with rapt attention. "Dad!"

The teacher raised his head. Excitement bubbled in my heart when I saw him. "Mr. Eaton!" Charlene's father stood up slowly. It looked like I was watching a slow-motion film. He pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose and looked at me. "Eveline?" A lump formed in my throat. Charlene's father, Kevin Eaton, was not my teacher. I was in first grade, and he taught third grade. But perhaps he had heard the tragic story of my family that he paid attention and care to both my academic and personal life. He often helped me with my studies and taught me one-to-one. He would always bring eggs for me to eat so that I got ample nutrition. "Dad, Eveline, do you know each other?" Charlene looked at me and back at her father. Kevin looked over my shoulder and I realized he was looking at Derek. After a moment's pause, he answered, "Yes." More than ten years had passed. Kevin looked much older. There were strands of grey hair among his black tresses. But his amiable eyes, although framed with subtle wrinkles, were the same as before. I ran forward and wrapped my arms around him as he gently patted my back. "You have come at the right time. Please do me a favor." Kevin said that one of his students was diagnosed with leukemia and was on leave for treatment. The girl's classmates had planned to give her a thousand paper cranes as a surprise, hoping she could recover as soon as possible. Several girls were at the desk, engrossed in folding the paper cranes. I glanced around at the classroom. Although the place looked different now, it brought back memories of my school days. Kevin smiled at me. "Eveline, I remember you were good at this. Would you like to join us?" I looked at him and grinned excitedly. "Sure!" Derek walked to me and whispered in my ear, "Can I help you?" "Of course." I handed him a piece of paper. He held the paper and looked at me sheepishly. "I don't know how." I resisted the urge to laugh and looked at him. "I'll teach you." He watched me do it once and began folding his paper. I couldn't help but admire his talent. After a while, Kevin suddenly called me as he walked out of the classroom. I quickly finished the one in my hand and followed him outside.