

My Unexpected Marriage to the CEO by Pumpkin Witch Chapter 411

Chapter 411 Wedding Dress

Chapter 411 Wedding Dress

When I finally agreed, Derek was as happy as a child.

He expressed his sincerity by giving me a wedding that I fully deserved, so I decided to give him one last chance.

If something like this ever happened again, I would never go back to him again no matter how much he pleaded.

However, I still hadn't told Derek that I was pregnant, for I wasn't sure if he would be happy to hear it or not. At the very least, I figured it would be okay to not tell him about it for the time being. Each time that he tried to make out with me, I refused him with all sorts of excuses. Fortunately, he never once tried to force me to do it.

About a week later, Derek had almost recovered. He took me down to a wedding dress store, so that I could pick out a dress that I wanted.

Each wedding dress was designed by one of the top international designers. There were a variety of styles, and I thought each dress was beautiful in its own right.

In the past, I thought that I'd never have the pleasure of wearing a wedding dress this beautiful. The shop assistant recommended several dresses to me based on my figure. It was hard to make a decision, so I turned to Derek for help.

Carefully, he compared the wedding dresses and picked out the one he liked best.

“I believe this will look best on you,” he said. Thus, I decided to try the dress he chose and went to the fitting room. The hemline was too long, so I had to carry it and the shop assistant was following behind me and helping me carry it. Meanwhile, Derek was reading a magazine on the sofa. Upon seeing me, he suddenly put down his magazine, walked towards me, and straightened out my veil. His wide-eyed gaze showed every bit of affection he could muster.

“Honey, you are so beautiful!”

I turned to the mirror to see my reflection. It almost felt like I wasn't looking at myself.

Later on, Aaron came in, followed by Eric and Felix. Felix seemed a little reluctant to come in, so Eric had to drag him in.

It was then that Felix looked at me, and then at Derek, with an awkward smile on his face.

“If they hadn't forced me to be here, I wouldn't have come here.”

I knew that he and Derek didn't hate each other.

As a matter of fact, they'd already cleared up their misunderstandings the last time they drank together. It was easy to tell that Felix was just a little embarrassed right now.

Naturally, nobody would be rude enough to expose his pretense.

Derek said that these three were going to be his groomsmen, so he asked them to pick their suits today.

There should be a bridesmaid at our wedding, but sadly, nobody could be my bridesmaid. Louise was already married, and she wasn't in the mood to attend my wedding.

Seemingly having read my mind, Derek said to me, "Don't worry, honey. I'll find you a bridesmaid." Aaron wasn't a picky man, so after trying on a suit, he already made a decision. On the other hand, Eric and Felix couldn't find anything that suited their tastes.

Meanwhile, Derek also went to change his clothes. So, now, only Aaron and I were sitting in the lounge.

"Why do you look unhappy?" asked Aaron. 1

I didn't think that they knew what happened that night, so I never told them anything about it. I just shook my head in response to his question. "Unhappy? Not really."

"Every arrangement needed for the wedding will be handled by your wedding planner. You just need to do as they say. Relax, Eveline. There's no need to be nervous."

His words were a comfort to me, so I nodded. Aaron smiled at me again. "It's an honor to be the best man at your wedding."

"Thank you!" I exclaimed with glee.

At last, Derek had finished changing his outfit and came out of the fitting room. He was wearing a white suit now.

"Does this one look good on me?" he asked, looking at me.

I had never seen him in a white suit before, though I must admit that he was like a model that would look great on all clothes that he tried on. “It looks gorgeous on you!” I said.

After coming out of the fitting room, Felix looked at himself in front of the mirror. “What do you think about this one?”

Eric gave him a thumbs up. “Looks great on you, bud!”

Now that they had selected their suits, they went on their way.

Derek and I were going to take pre-wedding photos in the biggest studio in Souden.

Normally, customers would need to make an appointment to take pre-wedding photos, but as the most famous person in Souden, Derek had no need to place a reservation.

On our way to the studio, he just made a phone call, and the makeup artist, stylist, and photographer were arranged right off the bat.

“It’s winter right now, so it’s pretty chilly outside. Let’s take indoor set first. When it gets warmer, we can pick another place to take more photos,” Derek said to me as he drove us to the studio.

I never thought that he’d arranged all of these in secret, and it seemed that he had planned it all out carefully.

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Chapter 412 Layne’ s Daughter

Chapter 412 Layne's Daughter

We arrived at the studio, got changed, and put on makeup. Many people were around, helping us get the pictures right.

The heating was on in the studio, so it didn't feel cold.

Under the photographer's command, we tried all kinds of intimate postures.

I was exhausted after posing for the pre-wedding pictures.

"Come on! Let's take the last shot," the photographer announced with a smile.

He instructed Derek to put his arm around my waist and kiss my forehead and asked me to close my eyes and flash a smile to show how happy I was.

I didn't think my smile conveyed any happiness. Fortunately, the photographer approved the picture and said we were done.

Derek didn't let go of me but took the opportunity to kiss the tip of my nose and finally pressed his lips against mine.

He didn't care about the photographer. But I felt a little shy, so I didn't respond to him. Fortunately, he let go of me.

When I turned my head, I found that the photographer had captured the moment.

Derek booked the wedding venue at the Glamor Hotel in Souden. It was one of the most opulent hotels in the city.

The news that the CEO of Dere International was going to have a wedding soon spread in Sousen. I felt Derek must have instructed the media people to spread the news.

The wedding day was approaching. As the bride, I was jittery and nervous.

Louise also heard the news and came to congratulate me.

“Eve, Derek is willing to give you a grand wedding, which means that he loves you a lot.”

But I didn’t think so. He never mentioned anything about loving me when he was sober.

“What did the lawyer say about Layne’s case?” I asked.

The smile on Louise’s face vanished in an instant. She looked dejected.

“The lawyer is not sure.”

My heart sank when I heard that.

Seeing Layne spoil Louise with all the love and care in the world, I thought my friend had finally found happiness. Unfortunately, it didn’t last long. Just then, Louise’s phone rang.

“Hello, Mr. Gavin Channing!” Louise said.

Her face turned grim as she hung up the phone. “What’s wrong?” I asked.

Louise looked at me, fear evident on her ashen face. “A college freshman met the lawyer I hired and told him that she was Layne’s daughter.”
“What?” I couldn’t believe my ears.

Later, I] went to Gavin Channing’s law firm with Louise and saw the girl.

She looked frail. Her hair was tied to a ponytail, making her petite face look bonier. She looked adorable.

As soon as we entered the law firm, the girl stood up. Louise looked at her, and their eyes locked. “You don’t look like Layne at all.” Those were my friend’s first words.

“You’ve misunderstood me,” the girl hurriedly explained.

We stayed at the lawyer’s office the entire afternoon and listened to her talk about Layne and the relationship she shared with him.

Only then did I realize that Layne wasn’t a local resident.

It reminded me of what happened in the resort last year. Derek also mentioned that Layne was not like a local. Perhaps his analysis was sharper than mine.

The girl’s name was Gina Thurman. She had grown up in an orphanage. She got her surname “Thurman” after Layne adopted her.

Layne had been a sponsor of the orphanage. Every child in the orphanage knew him and liked him a lot because Layne would bring gifts every time he visited them.

When Gina was thirteen, she was diagnosed with acute renal failure. A kidney transplant was the only cure for her ailment. Therefore, they were looking for a suitable donor.

When Layne heard about that, he went to the hospital and found their kidneys matched well. However, the Donation law stated that Layne and Gina had to be related, so the two went through the adoption process. Layne successfully donated his kidney and saved Gina's life.

After listening to Gina's narration, Louise was in a daze. Finally, she blinked and said, "I did see a surgical scar on his abdomen. He told me he had undergone an appendicitis surgery."

Gina also mentioned that Layne had signed an organ donation agreement after the kidney transplant, hoping to donate his body for medical research after his death.

Gavin grew excited when he heard that.

"These materials are enough to prove that Layne is a kind and responsible person. I think it's possible to reduce his punishment."

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Chapter 413 Say Goodbye Again

Chapter 413 Say Goodbye Again

Louise grabbed Gina's hands excitedly.

"Thank you, Gina!"

Gina shook her head and smiled. “No, I should thank him. If not for him, I wouldn’t be alive today. He gave me a second life.”

Louise hugged me excitedly and said she would attend my wedding at ease.

“Oh! I have an idea.” Louise snapped her fingers as she seemed to remember something. “If I can’t be your bridesmaid, my daughter can.”

Soon, Louise assumed the role of Gina’s foster mother.

Later, I left the law firm with Louise. Gina was still talking with Gavin in his office.

I tugged at Louise’s sleeve and said, “Lulu, you’re so lucky to have a daughter of this age.”

Louise smiled proudly. “Of course, I’ll be good to her, too. I’ll be a good mother to her.”

I could see Louise’s face beam with pride. She was not only proud about having a daughter but also proud of Layne for doing good deeds. It gave her the confidence that he wasn’t a bad guy.

But Gavin reminded us that the law was the same for everyone. One had to pay the price for their mistakes. Everyone would have a justification for their crimes. But anyone who violated the law deserved punishment. We just hoped and prayed that the law would release Layne with a light punishment.

I thought that Louise would bring Gina to my wedding. However, on the day before our wedding, she called me and said that they were going to leave Souden because Layne was transferred back to his hometown. The trial would be held there. Timmy drove me to the airport.

I hugged Louise and felt very sad.

Louise was about to board the flight, and I didn't know when I would see her again.

"Lulu, I hope we win the case," I said.

Louise seemed more optimistic than I was. "I have faith in him. Although Layne should be punished for his crime, one should applaud his charitable deeds as well."

I nodded in agreement. "Call me once the case is over. You must come and visit me often."

A lump formed in my throat when I saw tears well up in her eyes. But she wrapped her arms around my neck and smiled at me.

"Don't worry. I'm going to be your child's godmother."

Although she said so, I knew we didn't have many chances to meet each other in the future.

The airport staff announced the final call for boarding. Finally, I said goodbye to Louise and Gina.

After entering the security checkpoint, Louise turned around and waved at me.

Seeing her beam with happiness, I forced a smile and waved at her.

Although she looked happy, I knew she was hurting inside.

We reluctantly said our goodbyes with smiles and saved our tears until we turned around.

People would make a lot of friends in their lives, but true friends were rare to find. But no relationships were permanent. Regardless of the happiness and hardships they shared, people would eventually drift apart.

When I turned around to leave, I saw Felix standing at a distance.

His hands were in his pockets. He was biting his bottom lip, staring at the security checkpoint, looking dejected.

When I walked up to him, he looked at me and smiled bitterly.

“She has gone too far away from me now. There is no way I can meet her again.”

I could tell he was in too much pain and was trying his best to remain strong.

I, too, was heartbroken. But I knew my pain was different from his. Although I was sad about parting with my friend, I knew I'd meet her again. Unfortunately, his despair had no silver lining.

I walked past him without saying anything.

He stood still.

I felt he needed the space to heal. After all, only time could repair some wounds.

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Chapter 414**

Chapter 414 I Lost The Necklace

Chapter 414 I Lost The Necklace

After leaving the airport, Timmy drove me home. Just as we passed by the supermarket, I asked him to stop, and I bought some fresh ingredients.

I had stopped cooking since my morning sickness. Now that I had finally decided to be with Derek, I thought I should try my best to be happy and live a good life.

I couldn't stomach heavy, greasy food. Therefore, I made two pots of soup and a few cold dishes.

It was only four in the afternoon when I finished cooking. It felt good to be back in the kitchen, doing the things I loved. I felt enthusiastic.

I quickly placed the cold dishes on the table and the soup in the kitchen. I could heat the soup as soon as Derek came home.

I was bored, so I turned the TV on. Entertainment news was playing, and just as I was about to change the channel, a photo displayed on TV caught my attention.

It was a photo of a man and a woman kissing in a hotel.

The headline of the news read, "The CEO of Dere International is fooling around with a new rising star on his wedding eve."

Although only the back of the woman was shown, I could tell it was Becky.

One was a famous entrepreneur, and the other was a rising star. So their relationship was bound to garner people's attention. Everyone in the city knew that Derek was going to have a grand wedding tomorrow.

Therefore, seeing him with another woman would undoubtedly shock everyone.

Not just the wedding, but I, too, would end up being a laughing stock. It was humiliating.

My vision grew blurry.

Just then, I received an audio message from an unknown number. I clicked it with my trembling hand and heard Becky's cocky voice.

"Derek, do you love Eveline?"

"No."

"You still love my sister, don't you?"

"Yes, I love her with all my heart."

His mellow, magnetic voice broke my heart. I would never mistake anyone else's voice as his. He had given succinct answers to both the questions. His every word was like a sharp knife stabbing my heart.

I admitted I was too greedy. I couldn't fathom when I began to expect him to love me and give his whole heart to me.

After all, it had been a long time since I fell in love with him. How I wished he could reciprocate my love. But it had only been wishful thinking.

He was right. Love and marriage needed nurturing, and both parties should just try their best for the other person. However, our relationship only involved repeated hurting and forgiveness.

The constant hurt and devastation exhausted me.

I couldn't take it anymore.

The audio message was the last straw.

That one message shattered all my hopes. I had no reason to hold on.

I went upstairs like a lifeless zombie and packed the U disks Lavinia had given me, some clothes, and the tape Seagull had given me in a suitcase.

Soon, I returned downstairs, wrote a note, and placed it on the table.

“I'm tired of everything. Since you can't make a decision, I'll help you.”

I picked up my suitcase and took a last look at the magnificent villa.

I had lived here for almost a year, thinking it was my home—my safe haven.

But the reality told me that nothing here belonged to me.

I was the unluckiest girl in the world. The past year felt like a dream, and I had finally woken up to reality. I shouldn't have yearned for love or thought I deserved a happy family. I was doomed to suffer all my life.

I went to the city hall first.

Now was the time to accept the compensation for demolishing my old house. The future was unpredictable, so I had to be financially stable and independent.

Everything went smoothly. But when I saw the stamp on the document before signing it, I paused and took a close look at it.

“Dere International?”

The young lady in charge of the formalities smiled at me. “Yes, Dere International has invested a lot of money in the demolition and reconstruction of this area.”

I put down the pen and pushed the document back to her.

“I don’t want the compensation.”

The young lady looked startled. She perhaps thought I was crazy.

But I didn’t care because I wanted to hold on to the last shred of dignity and self-respect.

I returned to my old house.

This place was special, and I wanted to take everything with me but couldn’t. Finally, I only took pictures of my parents.

I hailed a taxi, hoping to go to the train station. But I suddenly remembered that I forgot to take something with me, so I asked the taxi driver to take me to the villa.

Just as I was about to get off, I saw Derek’s car. He got out of the car carrying a bouquet of bright yellow roses and then he walked into the villa. “Forget it. Please take me to the train station,” I said to the taxi driver.

All of a sudden, my phone rang. The word “Honey” popped up on the screen.

I turned off my phone and took out the SIM card. I endured the soul crushing pain in my heart, and finally decided to throw the SIM card out of the half-opened window.

It was better to cut off all ties with Derek. That way, I wouldn't have to expect anything from him, nor care about him again.

This time, I knew that it was better to start over. The wallpaper of my phone screen was the one he took when he stole a kiss from me back when we were watching fireworks on the rooftop of his grandfather's house. Later on, I asked him to send me a copy of the photo, and I set it as my phone wallpaper, too.

After pondering about it, I was still hesitant to delete the photo.

I might be able to delete everything about him, but I could never delete my feelings for him. Perhaps I'd never forget him for the rest of my life, but I would someday get used to living a life without him.

The taxi driver dropped me off at the train station. I went to the ticketing booth, but I still had no idea where to go, so I just bought the earliest train to Lensy.

Lensy wasn't that far away from Sousen, and it was only two hours by train.

By the time I got off the train, it was nearly eight in the evening and the sky had turned completely dark.

Lensy was but a small county, and it wasn't as prosperous as Sousen. The train station in Lensy was located in the suburbs, where the environment didn't look that safe. There were many bystanders looking around the train station, as if they were hunting for a target.

I figured it would be best to look for a hotel first and then come up with a plan tomorrow morning. There were several hotels near the train station. I had no idea which one I should book a room in, so I just walked around aimlessly.

“Miss, do you need a hotel to stay in? Ours is clean and affordable, and we have supply of hot water twenty-four hours a day.”

“Ma’am, please stay at our hotel! We have a promo right now, so it’s very cheap to stay with us.”

Many hotel staff tried to invite me to their hotel. And the more enthusiastic they were, the more I felt like something was wrong with their hotels.

I didn’t respond to any of them, nor did I tarry any longer. Instead, I quickened my pace to swerve them off.

I wasn’t familiar with this place, so I had no idea where I was going.

When I realized that it was getting darker and darker, it was too late.

Just then, I noticed that there was someone following closely behind me. I was so nervous that my palms were sweating and I could feel my heart almost leaping out of my chest. Unable to withstand the fear, I began running away.

The moment I ran, those who were following me also ran.

After running only a few meters, someone pulled me into a dark alley and covered my mouth with his hand.

As a matter of fact, there was a row of stores nearby, and several of the store owners saw what happened to me, but none of them interfered. It was as if they were used to seeing this sort of thing.

There were three people who had held me hostage. One of them took out a knife to threaten me. I didn’t attempt to struggle nor scream.

They searched my suitcase for anything valuable, but found nothing. Thus, they searched my body and took away all my money and my phone. Another man glanced at my ears down to my neck before flashing a grin and taking my necklace from me.

“You can’t take my necklace! Please!”

I grabbed the necklace, unfazed by the dagger being pointed at me.

But the more I] cared about the necklace, the more they seemed interested in it.

“That necklace must be valuable. Take it away,” one of them whispered.

Still, I refused to let go of the necklace.

“Please, you can take my phone and all my money, but leave this necklace to me. It’s very important to me.”

One of them kned my lower abdomen, dealing me an indescribable pain. It hurt so much that I was forced to loosen my grip. Then, I felt them forcefully pulling my necklace away from me. Once they were finished mugging me, the three men ran away. I ran as fast as my legs could carry me in an attempt to go after them.

However, I was stopped by two policemen with batons before I could even catch up to those hooligans.

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Chapter 415 Victim

Chapter 415 Victim

“It’s her. She stole my wallet!”

A short man caught up with me, furiously pointing his finger at me as if to insist on the truth.

I shook my head at his accusation and looked at the two policemen.

“I didn’t steal anything,” I defended myself. “I had just been robbed by some people too.”

One of the officers eyed me with suspicion before asking, “We need your ID.”

Obediently, I took out my ID card and handed it over. He looked at it, quickly scanning through the information.

“You’re from Sousen?”

I nodded.

“What are you doing all the way here in Lensy?” he continued.

I had no idea how to answer his question.

“Sir, my wallet must be in her suitcase,” the short man from earlier interrupted. His face was as presumptuous as his words as he looked at the policeman.

“Ma’am, we would need to check the suitcase. Please cooperate. It’ll save us all the trouble,” the officer holding my ID card said.

I was left with no choice but to do as I was told.

I opened my luggage, and the short man's hand shot out to take a wallet from inside.

“Sir, this is mine! Here. My ID is in here, along with a couple of hundred bucks. You can check it.” That moment, I felt a cold shiver run down my back. I knew I had been set up. This man had everything planned from the start.

One of the policemen took the wallet from his hand and opened it to take a look at the contents. After a brief scan, he returned it to the short man and turned to me. “Ma'am, you are under suspicion for robbery. You'll have to come with us.” Nothing I said now could possibly defend my innocence.

“I didn't steal anything from anyone. I was set up,”
I said weakly, my voice coming out with low tremors.

“There will be an investigation to find out the truth. If you're innocent, you have nothing to worry about. But you have to come with us for now. Otherwise, things would be a lot harder for you.” With that, I found myself being dragged along to the police station. I was held there for questioning, and I gave them my statement, recounting the events from earlier.

When the formalities were over, one of them asked if I wanted to call my family.

Once again, I was at a loss for words. There was no one I could think of, and if I told the officers that I did not have any family, it would only make my identity seem more questionable.

The only phone numbers I remembered were Louise's and Derek's. Louise had gone to a far-off province, so I couldn't call her. But phoning Derek would be impossible too.

I thought long and hard before finally dialing the emergency hotline center of Wonder Hospital. The answer had come quickly. "Hello, this is the emergency line of Wonder Hospital."

I recognized the woman's voice instantly. "Brenna, it's me. Eveline."

"Eveline? What's wrong? Why are you calling?" There was a telltale shakiness in Brenna's voice from the other end of the call. It must have come as a shock, especially since it was an emergency line.

"Brenna, I have something urgent to tell Dr. Hudson. I lost my phone and I don't remember his phone number. Could you help me?"

Brenna heaved a sigh of relief. "Oh. Is that all? Wait a minute. I have his number."

The next moment, she was giving me Aaron's contact over the phone.

I dialed his number next, waiting with bated breath for him to pick up. I was in dire straits. He was the only person I could turn to for help.

After the call, the policemen went out, leaving me alone in the interrogation room.

The seconds seemed to stretch torturously into infinity. I had lost track of time in my anxiousness, waiting for much-needed help. Finally, the door to the room opened again. My breath caught in my throat, half-worried and half-expectant.

"Eveline, you can go now."

Aaron was waiting. I caught sight of him as soon as I walked out of the interrogation room.

He gave me a nervous once-over, as if checking for himself that nothing terrible happened to me. The smallest drop of kindness would feel like a torrential shower to an anguished and vulnerable heart.

I gritted my teeth, willing myself not to cry.

“Let’s go out first,” Aaron said softly, no doubt sensing my struggle.

Just as we were about to leave the police station, several people were taken inside.

My heart started to pound in my chest in quick measures of incredulity and realization. I recognized, at first sight, the faces of the people who had robbed me.

Before my mind could catch up to my body, I was already rushing forward—my hands closing at the collar of the man who had taken my necklace. “Give me back my things!”

“What’s wrong, Eveline?” Aaron asked, concern written on his face as he caught up.

I felt my anger burn hot on my skin as I answered, “They robbed me!”

These bastards refused to admit to taking my things.

I was near hysteria as I kept demanding the truth. “I don’t care about the money. You can take the phone too. Just give me back the necklace. I won’t ask for anything else. I] won’t even press charges. Just please give it back.”

Several policemen subjected them to stern questioning for the next moments. Soon enough, none of the crooks were able to bear the pressure any longer and finally cracked.

“We’ve sold the phone and the necklace,” the man said, his head drooping as he avoided my eyes.

I surged forward and grabbed his clothes in fury. I wanted to tear him apart, if only to have a place for all my anger. But despair quickly took over my rage, and there was nothing I could do against my tears as all of my strength fled from my body. Aaron took me by the arm and quietly led me out of the police station.

“Was it Derek who gave you the necklace?” he asked once we were outside.

I nodded, unable to speak from grief.

The photo was gone, and now, so was the necklace. I had lost the last remnant of his existence.

I wanted to blame fate. These small accidents were all turning out to be like some sort of cruel joke to erase Derek from my life.

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Chapter 416 I Love You

Chapter 416 I Love You

Aaron didn't ask any more questions. Perhaps he probably knew what was going on. Presumably, the gossip about Derek and Becky had already spread throughout the city.

"We should stay in Lensy for tonight. We'll talk about the rest tomorrow," said Aaron.

He then drove to Lensy's downtown, and there, we found a restaurant to have dinner at.

After ordering some dishes, he also ordered a bottle of liquor.

I wasn't in the mood to eat, so I barely ate anything.

"Try not to think too much, Eveline. Just enjoy your meal."

Aaron tried his best to comfort me, and he drank the liquor on his own.

Later on, he finished the entire bottle. He had his hand on his forehead, and his face was red. Clearly, he was already inebriated.

I owed Aaron a lot.

This was already the third time that he came to help me in the middle of the night.

The first time was when I went to Shane's hometown, and he showed up like timely rain to save me.

The second time was when I was at the bus station of Qinben. After receiving a phone call from me, he drove there for hours without even a second of hesitation.

And today, I had no idea how I would express my gratitude to him.

“Thank you, Aaron.”] had no idea what else to say. Aaron put down his hand, and smirked at me.

“You don’t need to thank me. But... you’re welcome.”

After we left the restaurant, we went to a nearby hotel.

There was only one room left in the hotel. Just when I was about to turn around and leave, Aaron grabbed my hand and handed his ID card to the receptionist.

“One room is enough for us,” he said.

His words left me stunned.

As Aaron held my hand, he led me inside.

“I don’t think you’ll be able to fall asleep tonight. I probably won’t, either, so let’s just get a room and talk, shall we?”

I fully trusted Aaron. To me, he was a person that could stick to his principles and he was a man worthy of trust.

Though the room we got was small, it was fully furnished. There was an independent bathroom in the room, a TV, a double bed, a sofa, and a small round table by the window.

And most importantly, it looked spotless.

The walls were lined with khaki wallpaper, and the lighting was warm.

Aaron went to the balcony to smoke, and I followed him there.

Under the balcony was the bustling night market. Fortunately, we were on a high floor, so the noises sounded distant.

“Eveline.”

He looked like he was about to say something, but he bit back his words.

“You don’t have to persuade me to go back. The current situation isn’t just because of one or two things. This happened because of accumulated contradictions between me and Derek. And I’ve mentally prepared for this,” I said.

Aaron placed his hands on the railing, staring into the distance.

“Where do you plan on going? No matter where you go, you’ll have to start over. It won’t be easy for a woman to start from scratch,” he said.

I smiled bitterly and replied, “I never had anything in the first place.”

“You have another option, Eveline. You can stay.” He rubbed between his eyebrows, seemingly affected by the liquor that he drank earlier.

I shook my head in response. “But I’ve got no reason to stay anymore.”

Aaron let out a sigh, reaching for his cigarette box in his pockets.

Actually, I saw him throw the empty cigarette box into the trash can earlier.

It appeared as though he remembered it now, so he gave up looking for cigarettes and just put his hands in his pockets.

The wind on the balcony was stronger than usual and felt cold to the touch; with it, I smelled the faint odor of alcohol pervading in the air.

Soon, I shivered because of how cold it was.

“Are you cold?”

Aaron asked, seemingly having noticed that I was quivering.

“A little.”

I nodded, intending to go back inside the room. But all of a sudden, Aaron pulled me into his arms. “Eve, I’m in love with you.” 2

The sound of his voice was hoarse, yet affectionate. I could tell that he was a little drunk. I tried to move away from him, but he was holding me so tight that I could barely nudge him.

“There’s no need to be afraid, Eve. I won’t do anything bad to you. I’m so afraid of seeing you get hurt, so how can I ever wish to hurt you?”

Upon hearing that, I stopped struggling. “Aaron, you’re drunk,” I whispered.

It was then that I heard him chuckling bitterly. “Yes, I am drunk. I wouldn’t have the guts to tell you that I love you if I wasn’t drunk.”

The aroma of alcohol lingered in the air. And little by little, I was overcome by the sadness of this moment.

My Unexpected Marriage to the CEO by Pumpkin Witch Chapter 417

Chapter 417 Leaving Secretly

Chapter 417 Leaving Secretly

“Eve, I love you. I’ve loved you all my life. I have always wanted to say this to you but never had the courage to open up my feelings. You can call me a coward, but I didn’t want to disturb your life. But it breaks my heart to see that you are unhappy. Eve, give me a chance to take care of you. Whether you leave or stay, I want to be with you.” 1

I slowly struggled out of his arms and stared into his eyes. His words moved me, but I couldn't do it."Aaron, you have been nice to me ever since I was a child. Nothing has changed, and I'm grateful for everything you have done for me. But..."

"You don't have to say anymore. I understand what you're trying to say."

He took a few steps back, leaned against the railing, and stared into the night sky.

"I knew you'd say this, and that's why I didn't dare to express my love for you. As long as I didn't express my feelings, I could always protect and take care of you as a friend." He smiled bitterly and turned to look at me. "Eve, you know what? The wound in your heart is no different from mine. It's scary. What would have happened to you if you didn't call me tonight? You have nowhere to go. Where would you have gone? What are you going to do? I'm really worried about you, Eve."

His eyes glistened under the moonlight.

His love and care made me feel special. I was truly grateful to have someone worry about me. However, that wasn't love.

"Aaron, thank you for being so kind to me. But everyone will grow up. I can't rely on others forever. Even if the path ahead is full of thorns, I will somehow find a way out. I'm an independent woman, and I can take care of myself. Please stop worrying about me. I just hope you don't tell Derek that you saw me."

Aaron waved his hand helplessly. "Okay."

After staying in the cold wind for some time, he became sober and patted my shoulder.

“It’s cold here. Let’s go inside.”

After entering the room, Aaron took off his coat and lay down on the sofa.

“Okay. Forget everything and sleep. You rest on the bed, and I will sleep on the sofa.”

I saw two quilts on the bed, but neither was thick enough to shield me from the cold. Fortunately, the room had a heater. Aaron wouldn’t feel cold even if he slept on the sofa. Therefore, I went to bed and lay down without taking off my clothes but couldn’t fall asleep.

Aaron was also wide awake; he was staring at the ceiling.

This was the first night after I left Derek. My mind was a mess.

But it was just the beginning of a long, bitter journey, and I still had a long way to go. Regardless of how painful and lonely it was, I had to muster the strength for the sake of my child.

I checked the clock: it was four in the morning. I heard the sound of even breathing and looked at Aaron—he was fast asleep, I quietly got out of bed. Aaron’s wallet was lying on the table. I took some cash and my suitcase and left the hotel. Then, I hailed a taxi to the train station.

It was my first time at Lensy. The place was no good; it only brought me bad memory. I wanted to leave the place as soon as I could.

The station was strangely bustling with people and it didn't look safe. I got out of the taxi and quickly walked to the ticket booth. The earliest train to Chinston was at half-past five.

“How far is Chinston from Sousen?” J asked.

The ticket seller looked at me in surprise. “It will take ten hours to get to Chinston by train.”

That was pretty far.

Leaning against the window, I watched the beautiful sunrise. The train shuttled through the fields and hills. The somber snowy lands were replaced with colorful grasslands teeming with vibrant flowers.

Chinston was on the southernmost side of the country. Spring came early here.

As soon as the train stopped at Chinston, I saw flowers blossoming everywhere.

I ate in a breakfast bar in Chinston. Just as I was about to pay the bill, I saw a note among Aaron's stack of cash.

“Eve, take good care of yourself. Call me if you are in trouble. No matter how far away you are, I will come to you.”

He had written his phone number, e-mail, and other contact information below the message. The note made me feel warm in my heart, yet I felt guilty for rejecting Aaron.

**My Unexpected Marriage to the CEO by Pumpkin Witch
Chapter 418**

Chapter 418 Support Myself

Chapter 418 Support Myself

Now that I was in a strange city, the first and foremost thing that I must do was to find a job in order to support myself.

After I could find a way to make a living, I should consider my spiritual needs and dreams next. Fortunately, my baby bump wasn't visible yet, so nobody could tell that I was pregnant.

“Thank goodness!” I exclaimed when I found a recruitment poster at the door of a private clinic. They were looking for a nursing graduate with knowledge in traditional medicine.

I believed that I was a good fit for the job.

With a steely heart, I walked into the clinic and saw that the chief doctor was a man in his late sixties to early seventies. He checked my graduation certificate, asked a few simple questions, and decided to hire me.

I was so thrilled that I was hired on the spot.

This was a good start.

The doctor's surname was Swain. The building he ran the clinic in was his own property. There was a three-story building in the backyard, which was probably his residence.

All of Doctor Swain's children studied medicine. They were all working in big hospitals and had their own houses already. Thus, only Doctor Swain and his wife were living here.

When he learned that I came from another city, he offered to provide me with accommodations and let me use an idle computer at his home.

I used to be a nurse, so I did a great job. Personally, I believed that I was a good assistant to Doctor Swain. He also taught me his broad knowledge of the field of traditional medicine. These were the kind of things that I had been craving to learn. But even as I worked day in and day out, I still couldn't stop thinking about Derek.

Whether I was at work or not, eating or sleeping, I just couldn't stop missing him.

When I saw a car that had a similar design as his, my heart raced.

Thus, I tried my best to get busy.

I remembered that Seagull once told me that if I was brave enough to say goodbye to the past, life would reward me with a new beginning.

And someone who dwelled in the past would never bring out their most wonderful self.

Ever since I came to Chinston, I contacted Seagull more often.

I told him about my current situation, and often shared my personal life and work with him. During the day, I spent my time working and most of the night learning from the U-disks that Lavinia gave me.

I had no idea why she gave me this gift at the beginning of the year. But now, I thought that she had some sort of foresight.

Doctor Swain generously offered me four thousand dollars per month because I was professional and experienced. But during the payday, he insisted on paying me five thousand dollars. However, I refused to accept

the extra pay. For me, four thousand dollars per month including food and accommodation was good enough. But Doctor Swain insisted upon it, and told me that I more than deserved it.

Soon, spring came to an end and summer had begun. I started to wear fewer clothes and my baby bump gradually became visible.

I lived under the same roof as the Swains. There was nothing I could hide from them, so I told them everything. I told them that I had to rely on myself now, since I had broken up with the father of my child.

And ever since they found out that I was pregnant, they took great care of me. In addition, they hired another person to share the workload in the clinic. Mrs. Swain would often cook nutritious food for me.

I wasn't sure when it started, but I no longer disliked greasy foods. For the sake of my baby's growth, I tried to eat as much as I could.

I couldn't remember who told me that when everything seemed like it would take a turn for the worse, fate would be reversed. Once one's bad luck had ended, it meant that good fortune was coming. The day I met Derek was a life-changing moment for me. And now, I had left him and met the kindhearted Doctor Swain and his family. This was also a turning point for me.

I now fully believed the old adage that "when God closes a door, he opens a window".

One day, I communicated to Doctor Swain and his wife my idea of combining traditional medicine with beauty products.

Doctor Swain seemed to appreciate my idea. “I admire young people that have big dreams. The youth should work hard and pursue their dreams. Eveline, I will support you however I can. I’ll invest in your idea.”

Thanks to his encouragement, my confidence grew by the day.

I rented out a small commercial space, decorated it, bought some basic equipment, and recruited a clerk.

Now that everything was ready, the next step was to figure out how to attract customers.

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Chapter 419 The Wine Party

Chapter 419 The Wine Party

I heard that Dragon Club, the largest club in Chinston, would hold a wine party at the end of May. All the attendees of the party were local celebrities.

It would be a great opportunity for me to attract more customers.

Alice Morris, Doctor Swain’s granddaughter-in-law, received an invitation to the party. After hearing about my ideas, she gladly agreed to take me along to the party.

Dragon Club was located in the most prosperous area of Chinston.

I followed Alice into the club.

There were many people in the grand hall, and they were chatting in groups.

As soon as Alice brought me in, her acquaintances came to greet her. She patted me on the shoulder, attempting to encourage me. It was then that she walked aside to speak to her friends.

After taking a few deep breaths, I approached a particular group of women. They were all my prospective customers.

“Good evening, ladies. May I have a word with you?” I tried my best to calm my nerves as I spoke to them.

It was then that the chatting ladies cast me sharp glances.

People of the upper class didn’t chat just to make friends. Oftentimes, they socialized with others to gather more connections with people of higher status, influence, and wealth.

I wasn’t wearing any clothes from famous brands, nor did I have any valuable jewelry on me, which was probably why they assumed I was poor and decided to ignore me.

“I’d like to introduce a traditional medicine beauty service to you. Is anyone interested in it?”

A young lady wearing a black evening dress and exquisite makeup scoffed at me with contempt. “This is a high-end club. You shouldn’t try to peddle your crappy goods to us.”

Another lady eyed me up and down until her gaze landed on my baby bump. She seemed even more judgmental when she saw it.

“You don’t seem to have an invitation. How did you even get in here?”

“You’re right. I’ve never seen her before.”

Their aggressive remarks and derogatory swipes against me left me agitated.

I couldn’t dare to tell them that Alice was the one who brought me there, for it worried me that it would only cause her trouble.

Suddenly, a waiter approached me.

“Hello, ma’am, our boss wants to speak to you.” “Me?” I pointed at myself in disbelief.

The waiter nodded in response.

Despite my reluctance and uneasiness, I followed him to the second floor.

Once there, he pointed to a VIP waiting area near the handrail on the second floor.

“Please wait here for a moment, ma’am. Our boss will be with you soon.”

I nodded in response. The moment I sat down, my palms began to sweat.

Moments later, a man in a suit stopped in front of me.

I stood in attention, cleared my throat, and said, “Sir, I apologize for promoting my beauty service without your permission. If I’m causing problems, I’ll leave right away.”

The man in front of me cleared his throat. “Actually, I’m the boss’s assistant.”

Stunned, I looked up at him.

“Our boss said that he’d be willing to lend you our stage for a ten-minute sales pitch,” he said.

I couldn’t believe what I was hearing.

There was no such thing as free lunch in the world, so I figured there would be something the boss wanted in return.

Seemingly having read my mind, the assistant smiled at me and said, “Don’t worry, ma’am. The boss said that he won’t charge you an advertising fee.”

Now that I was given an opportunity, I figured it would be best to seize it.

To calm my nerves, I clenched my fists and loosened them.

I repeated this method a few times to summon enough courage to step onto the stage.

Upon walking to the center of the stage, all the spotlights locked on me.

The people who were chatting off the stage were now staring at me.

This kind of opportunity was for those who were well-prepared.

And I had been preparing for this moment for a long time.

**My Unexpected Marriage to the CEO by Pumpkin Witch
Chapter 420**

Chapter 420 Letting Me Off The Hook

Chapter 420 Letting Me Off The Hook

After my speech, the assistant of the club's boss standing on the edge of the stage started to applaud, and the others followed suit.

Just then, someone from the audience shouted, "Do you think you can get our money by merely talking nonsense?"

I turned to the direction of the voice and saw the same young lady in a black evening dress who disdained my idea earlier. She didn't think my program was presentable.

I looked at her and smiled. "If you don't trust me, come to my beauty salon and try our program. It's free."

"Do you think I care about money?" she retorted. I understood she was deliberately trying to pick a fight. "Why don't you take a mirror and look at yourself? When you don't look presentable, how can we expect you to make us look good?"

I had stopped wearing makeup after I got pregnant. My face looked plain in comparison to these pretty women who were all wearing exquisite makeup.

The woman's comment caused an uproar. The people who had initially trusted me began to waver.

"I trust you."

A familiar voice caught everyone's attention. The audience turned to look at him.

My body stiffened, and my mouth became dry when I saw who it was.

Alvaro walked toward me with a smile.

Someone in the crowd called him Mr. Barton, and some women fondly called him Alvaro. Everyone was cheering and shouting his name.

He strutted to me and asked, “Do you accept male clients?”

“Of course,” I replied, swallowing loudly.

“Mr. Barton, you are a handsome, charming man. Do you still need a beauty service?” someone teased.

Alvaro licked his lips and smiled.

“All right. From now on, all the staff of my club can go to Ms. Stone’s beauty salon for any beauty service. It’s my treat.”

The crowd cheered with joy.

One of the men clapped his hands excitedly. “That’s a good idea, Mr. Barton. I’ll also buy this beauty service for my employees.”

That way, Alvaro took the lead and obtained new customers for me. My hands were full right now. I didn’t expect such a booming business. However, the size of my humble salon made me feel embarrassed.

However, I couldn’t turn down my customers. Therefore, I took their bookings in advance.

The young woman who had argued with me earlier stood aside, with her hands across her chest, glaring at me. She was pissed off.

At that moment, I didn’t know why she went against me. Later, I found that she, too, owned a beauty salon, and the women present here were

her regular customers. My presence obviously threatened her business. That was why she wanted to put me down.

The wine party was over. Alice probably knew that Alvaro was a friend of mine. So she didn't wait for me and left.

I was sitting in front of a round glass table to sort out the customer information and appointments. I roughly calculated and found that the revenue tonight had reached eighteen million.

My eyes widened as I stared at the number on my phone calculator. It felt surreal.

Just then, I saw a glass of milk in front of me. I looked up and saw Alvaro staring at me with interest.

“Do you own this club?”

Alvaro pursed his lips wickedly.

“What? Don't you believe it?”

I propped my chin on the palm of my hand and thought about it.

“I'm just surprised. You are at Souden pretty much all the time. How do you manage to run a club here?”

Alvaro smiled. “You were also at Souden. Why did you come here?”

I felt he must have known why I left Souden, so I didn't answer him.

All of a sudden, he pulled his chair closer to me, and stared into my eyes. “Do you want to have the largest beauty salon in Chinston?”

I glanced at him and smiled bitterly. “Of course, I do. But I don’t have the energy for it now.”

Alvaro grinned and nodded. “Don’t worry. I can help you.”

In the following days, Alvaro accompanied me to choose a place, decorate it, and recruit people. “This will be the most luxurious beauty salon in the whole Chinston!” I exclaimed, staring at the opulent space in awe.

“Yes. This place belongs to you. Pick a name,” Alvaro said.

“Do you have any suggestions?”

All of a sudden, his eyes lit up. “Let’s call it Jolly Beauty Salon.” 1

I, too, liked the name. It had a nice ring to it.

I had been working day and night like a machine, so I felt exhausted. 1

One day, as I stood outside the beauty salon and looked at the workers hanging the LED signboard, my head began to spin.

My legs gave away, and I felt dizzy.

Fortunately, Alvaro was standing beside me. He grabbed my hand and held me in time. “What happened?”

I slowly blinked my eyes open and waved my hand. “I’m fine. I think I am burned out.” 1