

TMBA 551

[Chapter 551 I Can Stand The Heat](#)

Wesley fixed his eyes on Blair and sneered, "You think I'm bullying Talbot? Are you trying to protect him from me?"

"Talbot cooked for us, cleaned the house and washed the dishes. Are you not moved at all?" Blair asked in return.

Wesley was about to say something when the room went dark. The electricity had gone off.

"What happened?" Blair asked as she unlocked her phone.

Wesley stood up from the sofa, fished out his phone and opened the flashlight application. "You sit here. I'll go take a look."

"Okay." Blair had her phone light on to light Wesley's path.

The two of them lived in the same housing estate, so their main power switches had been installed likewise. He found it soon enough, and after checking it, he didn't find anything wrong.

At that moment, they received a text message from the State Grid. It said, "Dear resident, sorry to inform you..." It turned out that all the apartments in the housing estate were out of power and they were not sure when it would come back on.

Blair was at a loss for words. It was summer!

"I'll go buy some candles," Wesley offered.

When he arrived at the door to change his shoes, he saw Talbot and Blair chatting under the flashlight. He immediately changed his mind. "Blair, you are more familiar with the housing estate. You go buy the candles."

Blair agreed without hesitation.

She walked towards the door, but when she turned back to look at the dark apartment, she figured it was an excellent opportunity to bond with Wesley. She didn't want to miss this chance, so she told Talbot, "Talbot, will you go buy the candles? I'm scared of the dark."

Talbot nodded. Blair told him the location of the grocery store cheerfully. When he was about to leave, he turned back to look at his superior and his dream girl. 'Something is not right,' he thought.

Talbot shook his head and went down the stairs.

Blair fixed her eyes on Wesley without looking away. He felt aroused by her gaze, so he got up from the sofa quickly. "I need a smoke," he said, as he turned towards the balcony.

But a soft, warm hand

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To take her revenge, she married the man, and used him.

"As long as I'm alive, I'm still his legal wife, while all of you are just his mistresses."

She remained adamant even when he was involved in scandals with other women.

Eventually she stormed off after she learned that he had betrayed her again. But life brought her back to him a few years later, to his astonishment.

"I know. But the light show has nothing to do with—"

The light shot towards them again, the shadow of which looked exactly like a man's figure.

'Oh! It was just a shadow from the light show!' Blair thought to herself.

Embarrassed, she tried to explain to him, "Usually, the moment I get home, I turn on the lights. So, I've never seen this before. Please don't get me wrong."

She was telling the truth. Every time she entered her bedroom, she would turn on the lights and close the curtains. It was the first time that the electricity of her apartment had been cut off.

Wesley looked at the girl before him and raised her chin to force her to look into his eyes. "Were you trying to seduce me?"

He didn't believe what she had said. He thought that she had done it on purpose to lure him into the bedroom. 'She doesn't even mind using her body to seduce me.'

Blair was stunned by his question and clenched her fists. 'Is this how he sees me?' Blair didn't think it necessary to clear her name. She flashed a charming smile, held his waist and pressed herself against his strong body. "Bingo! How about we spend the night together?"

Wesley gave her an evil smile as he moved forward, which made her automatically step backward. Bang! Her back hit the wall and she gave a choked cry, her grip on his waist loosening. 'What a jerk! He doesn't know how to treat a girl properly!'

[Chapter 552 I Have No Time For Love](#)

Wesley pressed Blair against the wall and put his hands there as well. She was boxed in, with his hands on either side of her head.

He lowered his head, leaned in, and said in a low voice, "You want me to act like this, huh?"

"Wh-what?" she stammered. His face was inches away from hers. She caught a whiff of some scent or other; it smelled like grass—it must be his shower gel. There was no electricity, and Blair's phone was the only source of light. It shed enough light for her to see his waist.

Romance was in the air, there in the bedroom. Her heart raced, her mind running wild with visions.

'You've shown me what you want, so I'll play along.' A scornful smile flashed across Wesley's face.

Before Blair knew it, he lowered his head and kissed her red lips, sending her into a blissful trance. The brush of his lips against hers was everything she imagined it to be—gentle, passionate, perfect.

Blair widened her eyes, not knowing how to respond. His kiss was demanding yet soft. She felt like hundreds of fireworks had exploded simultaneously in her mind.

She remembered a song all of a sudden—Jane Zhang's "Finally I Have You."

One line from that song in particular said, "Finally I have you. I'm glad I never gave up."

And that song was so perfect, describing exactly what she was feeling. She was ecstatic that he finally showed his feelings for her. She had worked hard for his love—she deserved it.

She was so moved her eyes reddened from tears. She closed her eyes, stood on tiptoe and cradled his neck, kissing him back. She poured every bit of her heart and soul, her hopes and dreams into that kiss.

After what seemed like an eternity, the doorbell of her apartment rang, breaking rudely into the couple's romantic moment.

Wesley let her go and regarded the girl in his arms. Blair was finally able to breathe again, her face as red as a ripe tomato. She broke free from him, moving to open the door for Talbot.

Before she could leave her bedroom, Wesley pulled her back and pressed her against the wall again. "I've seen so many women like you. Katedo

ng bolts were shooting through her, this sweet tingling in her heart, her body trembling. Wesley held her waist and warned in a low voice, "Don't move."

Her scent made him lose his cool.

His body was heavy on hers, and Blair was suffocating. "Get away from me... Mmmph..." Her lips were blocked again.

Just as Blair thought Wesley was going to make love to her right here and now, he suddenly stopped. Holding back all his emotions, he asked in a hoarse voice, "Scared?"

"Mmm Hmm..." Blair nodded. No one had ever done what Wesley just did to her.

Wesley was done with it. "I don't think it's a good idea to come around anymore. I don't really want a woman in my life, as a friend or lover. I'm a soldier, and I have no time for any of that."

Blair bit her lips, body shaking. After she heard what he said, she bit his shoulder hard.

She wanted to make it hurt, so she bit down with all her might.

Wesley clenched his teeth, refusing to make a sound.

Blair felt like she was biting a brick. Wesley didn't respond at all. Instead, she felt her teeth aching.

When she let go, Wesley left the bed and the apartment.

The sad woman heard the door to her apartment close. She didn't move or do anything else, other than sit there and think, miserable.

She had planned to get a hotel room, but there was no need. The electricity came back on about a half hour after he left.

[Chapter 553 A Gala To Welcome The Freshmen](#)

For the next two days, Blair and Wesley didn't see each other at all, not on campus or in the elevator.

Blair was afraid that once the freshmen's military training was done, he would get reassigned somewhere else and she'd never see him.

Although they were neighbors, they didn't spend much time together. As he said, he was usually gone. She hoped that the military training would never end. She wanted to at least see him, even if he didn't say hi. Her eyes were full of affection when she saw him.

Joslyn sighed in her heart, 'Bless, I hope you get what you want someday.'

Time flies! Two weeks flew by, and the military training program came to an end. The annual gala to welcome the freshmen was also fast approaching.

The gala was held on the training ground. The date was the night before the last day of training. The guests were the teachers and students at the university, as well as the soldiers who hadn't left yet.

One of the hosts was a girl in a red evening dress, a senior, and the other was a handsome junior in a suit and leather shoes. To the audience's surprise, after their opening, the first program was neither a song nor a dance performance.

The male host declared in a charming voice, "Now let's welcome Blair Jing, a junior majoring in Business English, to give us an English speech to kick this thing off. Let's give her a warm welcome."

The students started screaming and whistling in excitement. The din was deafening. As that was going on, a lovely girl in a sky-blue knee-length dress and a pair of white high heels stepped onto the stage. She was very naturally made up, to accentuate her best features, and looked as if she had no make-up on at all. She wore some pink lip gloss as well.

Talbot patted Wesley's shoulder excitedly and yelled, "Chief, it's Blair! Wow! What a hottie!"

Wesley, who sat upright, rolled his eyes at him and then looked at the girl on the stage. Then he looked away, as if he were not impressed.

Mouth wide open, Lenard looked at the boys screaming and whistling for Blair, and murmured in disappointment, "Blair has

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boys had confessed their love to her. What was more, none of them were men worth having. She was on the brink of a nervous breakdown.

Farris Tong didn't know what Blair had said in English, but Wesley could. He curled his lips, and felt lucky that he had obtained the TEM8 certificate.

Farris Tong got angry and threw the flowers he held to the ground. "Hey, don't play the holier-than-thou card with me! I have money, and I can buy as many TEM8 certificates as I want."

'Money? I really don't have money, ' Blair thought and sneered. 'But I don't give a damn about it.' "I admit that the TEM8 certificate is nothing. I also passed the TOEFL and IELTS exams. And now I'm studying for my GRE. Tell you what, buy me those test results and I'll be your girlfriend. Oh, and the CATTI certificate for translators too. Level 1, 2, or 3, doesn't matter."

The boy's face turned red with embarrassment as he listened to her. He couldn't get all that. It would cost a small fortune. Besides that, it wouldn't matter. His grades weren't up to snuff.

He felt he would burst with anger and shame. "Just tell me yes or no. Quit jerking me around," he spat. "My bros are here. I have a reputation to uphold!"

Blair looked behind her and saw several boys following closely.

'Is he trying to threaten me?' she thought. "Look, I'm flattered, really. But the answer is no. Goodbye," she said firmly.

[Chapter 554 Then We Can Sleep With Each Other](#)

"Stop!" Farris shouted and grabbed Blair's arm to stop her from leaving. She hated being touched by strangers and shook him off with all her might.

Caught off-guard, Farris staggered backwards and tripped over a stone, which sent him plummeting to the ground. He rolled over to a sitting position, trying to get his bearings.

Blair couldn't believe her eyes. 'Am I that strong? Or is he that weak?'

She immediately helped Farris to his feet and apologized to him. "Wow! I'm sorry. Are you okay?" Many onlookers couldn't help but giggle at what happened.

Farris was pissed off. When he stood up, he grabbed Blair again with both hands and reprimanded, "Don't pull away from me when I'm talking to you! Who do you think you are? You should be grateful to me for liking you. You play goody-two-shoes when you're just a cheap-ass ho! Last chance! You can either agree to it, or I'll just do what I have to."

'Be grateful to him for liking me? Ha-ha! That's hilarious, ' Blair thought. She regarded the discussion as over, so she turned to leave.

Farris, however, pushed her to the ground, him on top. "Everyone's at the gala. If I fuck you right here, there won't be anyone riding to your rescue."

Blair panicked. "Lay a finger on me, and I'll paint the walls with your blood," she said through gritted teeth as she struggled to free her hands. He had them pinned on either side of her head.

After a short pause, Farris said, "Then agree to be my girlfriend."

Blair clenched her teeth and struggled against his weight. "Not a chance!"

Farris' friends saw this and ran over. "Dude, not cool," one of them said.

"You know her uncle's—"

"I don't give a shit who her uncle is!" Farris cut him off. "I'm gonna fuck this bitch, and no one's gonna stop me."

Birds of a feather flock together. Some of Farris' friends were also from well-off families, and they acted as if they were above the law. One of Farris' friends lit a cigarette and stared at them coldly. "Yeah. Teach this bitch a lesson so she'll know her place."

"Exa

ing, and whispering. They thought Wesley was super-handsome.

Wesley's eyes met Blair's, but in the next second, he looked away as if she were a mere stranger.

Talbot was in the third vehicle. He asked the driver to stop and waved at Blair. "Blair, we're taking off. Don't be a stranger, okay?"

Blair waved back. "Sure. Bye!"

Lenard, Bowman, and others who knew her also waved goodbye.

After they left, she went inside, feeling frustrated.

Somehow, she was suddenly struck with a deep sense of loss.

Hartwell's birthday was just around the corner. Joslyn asked Blair along on a shopping trip to buy him a gift. Blair herself had to give her cousin a gift too, so she didn't turn Joslyn down.

When Joslyn took her to the Shining International Plaza, Blair's eyes widened. "Joslyn, did you win the lottery? Prices are sky high here!"

Joslyn sighed and said, "I know. But your cousin's worth it. What can I do?" She felt her heart ache at the thought of buying something in here.

Blair grabbed Joslyn's hand and led her to the entrance. "Look, he's not that kind of guy. You can't buy his love. One dollar or a thousand, he'll just be happy you got him something."

Joslyn stopped Blair. "Don't worry. Although they don't give me any pocket money, I've got some money saved from my part-time job. I have enough to get him something special."

[Chapter 555 He Doesn't Even Like You](#)

The "they" Joslyn was referring to were her father and stepmother. Apparently, they treated her badly.

Joslyn and Blair entered the Shining International Plaza and were dazzled by a superb collection of beautiful things inside.

Standing outside a clothing store, Joslyn admired a beautiful dress in the shop window. "Wow, that dress is amazing. The price is amazing too—29,999 dollars. There was a time you could have afforded that."

She was right. When Blair's parents were still alive, her mom was rich, even though her dad was a poor professor. However, after the accident, Blair had to pay her neighbors back for their losses. The huge fire had caused a great damage in the villa zone.

Her uncle and cousin offered to give her pocket money many times, but she turned them down every time. She got a scholarship every semester, enough to cover her living expenses.

"Hey Blair, why not try it on?" Joslyn asked and pinched her arm.

Blair shook her head. "Why bother? I don't have the money. It'll tick off the salespeople."

Her words made sense to Joslyn. "All right. Let's go."

While walking, Joslyn put a comforting hand on Blair's shoulder. "I'll find a good job and work hard after graduation. And I'll give you a dress as expensive as this one as a birthday gift," Joslyn promised.

"Really? Then I'm looking forward to it." Blair kissed Joslyn on her cheek.

Joslyn laughed out loud. "No problem. That's me, studying hard for your future. However, I think maybe you should buy me the dress. You are a straight-A student. You'll be a postgraduate one day. Or even a doctor. You'll probably make a ton more money."

Looking at the clothes in the mall, Blair answered absentmindedly, "I hope so. But I'm really burned out. I feel like all I do is study." Actually, she didn't want to be a strong, self-made woman. She just wanted to marry Wesley and be a housewife, taking care of her husband and children every day. That was hard, because he didn't like her.

Joslyn leaned in a

Wesley saw the post, and after a short pause, he simply said, "I don't know."

"Isn't she Lieutenant General Ji's niece? He has money, right?"

"I have no idea," was Wesley's answer.

Talbot rolled his eyes and went to talk about Blair with others.

Blair had forgotten to block her relatives when she sent the post. Soon, Natalia Deng, Adalson's wife called her. "What do you mean, Blair? Are you complaining that we don't give you money? You want others to look down on us?"

"It's not like that, Aunt Natalia. I was just kidding. I've got a scholarship. And Uncle Adalson paid for my rent. I'm really grateful to you and him," Blair answered softly.

Natalia Deng spat, "I don't care what you were thinking. I'll wire you some money tonight. When you get a job, remember to pay us back."

"There's really no need to—" She was going to get a scholarship soon.

However, before she could finish, Natalia Deng cut her off. "Just shut up! What can you do with less than 1, 000? Do you want to starve? We'll feel bad if you starve. How will we ever face your mother in heaven if we let that happen? You refuse to live with us, and that's bad enough. Now you don't have the money to support yourself. You want people to think we're mean?"

Natalia Deng was starting to yell. Blair had to take the receiver away from her ear.

[Chapter 556 The Days When I Don't See You](#)

Natalia was, in fact, a nice person. It was just that she had a sharp tongue.

She sounded harsh over the phone, but she was only calling Blair to tell her that she was going to wire her some money.

After Natalia had scolded Blair for five minutes, her throat dried up. She drank some water and continued, "I'm too tired to say anything more. Just hang up. You didn't even spend the night here on your cousin's birthday. Do you ever think about me? What will your grandpa think of me? He might think that I mistreat you or something."

Even though she had asked Blair to hang up, she didn't stop talking. Blair didn't dare hang up while she was still scolding her. "Aunt, Grandpa knows how nice you are to me. He will only think that I am the luckiest girl in the world to have an amazing, caring aunt like you."

Natalia's gloomy face broke into a smile. To conceal her happiness, she feigned an annoyed tone and said, "Whatever. Bye."

After ending the phone call, Natalia saw her younger son, Wacian Ji, come down the stairs in a neat suit. "Now I know why your father likes Blair so much. Girls are indeed more lovable. Neither you nor your brother brings me any form of comfort. You both worry me all the time. Hartwell is in his thirties, unmarried, and you are 29 years old, without even a girlfriend. When am I going to have a grandchild? In my nineties? Maybe it's my fault. I should have given birth to two girls."

Wacian Ji felt wronged. He hadn't even said a word since that morning. He wondered how he had gotten on his mother's nerves.

Natalia walked past him and urged, "Don't spend all your time and energy on work. Go on a blind date or something. I will go with you and select my daughter-in-law."

Wacian Ji tucked his hands into his pockets, looking at his mom, stone-faced. "Hartwell brought his girlfriend home last time. Since you are so anxious to see him get married, why haven't you paid her family a visit yet?"

"I don't need you to remind me of that. I'll visit Joslyn's parents as soon as she graduates."

To get his mom off his back, Wacian Ji brought up Blair's secret. "I heard that Blair has a crush on someone. Don't you want to know who it is?" His mom was always so

t lifting his head. "Granted. You have been working for three months in a row. You do need to get some rest. Just remember to submit the note for leave."

"Yes, sir."

Blair counted the days as they passed by without Wesley's presence. Five days after their brief meeting in the hallway, she once again saw him. When she was waiting for the elevator to go to her apartment, Wesley walked over with a few bags of food in his hands.

The elevator arrived and he went straight in. Looking at his figure, Blair lost her nerve to walk into the elevator. For some reason, she was afraid to be near him.

Wesley turned around in the elevator and pressed the button. The doors closed.

But soon after, the doors opened again. He looked at her.

She blinked in bewilderment.

Seeing that she wasn't moving, he asked with a frown, "Are you coming?"

'He is talking to me.' It was a ray of hope. Blair was happy. She scampered into the elevator.

The doors closed again. Confined in the little space, neither of them made an attempt to start a conversation.

It was normal for Wesley to remain quiet, but Blair had to tell herself to shut up.

She was afraid that he didn't want to hear her speak. If that was the case, she would only push him away by talking too much.

The elevator arrived at the sixteenth floor, and Blair walked out first. She was about to say goodbye to him when a girl in a blazer standing in front of the door to his apartment caught her eye.

[Chapter 557 Dinner For Three](#)

The girl was Megan.

When she saw Blair and Wesley walk out of the elevator together, she was taken aback at first, and then she squeezed out some tears and ran into Wesley's arms, weeping.

Wesley was concerned. "What's the matter?" he asked tenderly.

"I think someone is still stalking me."

Wesley turned towards the other side of the hallway. Seeing what he was doing, Blair turned her head too. Two bodyguards stood there. Noticing Wesley was staring at them, one of them walked over. "They were gangsters, Mr. Li. They followed us all the way here. Mr. Huo is still out of the country."

While they were talking, Blair placed her finger on the fingerprint scanner. With a beep, the door was unlocked, and she pushed it open and walked in sullenly.

When she closed the door, she could still hear Wesley discussing the stalkers in the hallway.

She turned the lights on, changed into slippers, and walked into the kitchen.

It was only when she opened the fridge that it occurred to her that she had forgotten to go to the grocery store. The fridge itself was pretty bare. There were only a few tomatoes sitting in there. She checked the cabinet and could only find two packages of instant noodles.

It seemed instant noodles would be the only thing on the menu tonight.

She tossed a packet of instant noodles onto the top of the counter and walked into the bedroom to get changed.

Just then, the doorbell rang. Who could that be?

It couldn't be Wesley. He was comforting his sad, terrified niece.

Blair peeked through the cat's eye and saw Wesley standing outside, looking a little impatient. She opened the door quickly and asked, "What can I do for you, Mr. Li?"

Wesley always got to the point. "I have stuff in my fridge. You're a better cook than I am, so why not come over and cook? We can eat together."

'We?' "By 'we, ' do you mean you and me or the three of us?" asked Blair. That was an important distinction. She wanted to get Wesley alone.

"The three of us." Megan hadn't eaten either. Wesley intended to give her a lift home after dinner.

"Oh. It's no fun being the third wheel, so I'll have to say no. Bye." With that, she shut the door in his face.

Staring at the closed door, Wesley felt frustration rising in him. But he didn't give up. A moment later Megan asked, "Uncle Wesley, your English is excellent. She couldn't be better than you, could she?"

Wesley admitted, "You bet she is. She's passed the TEM8, TOEFL, and IELTS tests." He sounded firm.

Megan's eyes were filled with admiration when she looked at Blair. "Wow! You're smart!" she said. The next second, the expression on her face changed. She grabbed Wesley's arm and pleaded, "But I like the way you teach me. I'd have to get used to a different style if she helped me. It's better if you do it. Please..."

Blair noticed the way Megan leaned on his shoulder and the way she talked to him. Wesley wasn't annoyed at all. "Okay, fine. I'll be there in a minute."

Megan scampered away. Wesley walked over to Blair, turned on the faucet and washed his hands. "What was in the bag?"

Blair's heart hurt as she watched the way Megan was with him. She pushed the sadness away and answered, "Nothing. Just seasoning."

He could tell at a glance whether she was telling the truth or not. Now that she didn't want to let him know, he didn't press the issue. After turning off the faucet, he left the kitchen and walked into the bedroom where Megan was doing her homework.

He didn't leave the room, even when dinner was ready.

Heart sinking, Blair carried the dishes out, placed them on the table one by one. She kept shifting her gaze to the bedroom. The door was closed, so she had no idea what was going on in there. When all the dishes had been served, she shed the apron and left Wesley's apartment without a word.

[Chapter 558 Why Did You Eat My Food](#)

Hearing the noise in the living room, Wesley looked at his watch to check the time. 'It's about time for dinner, ' he thought. He stood and told Megan, "Come and eat. You can do the rest after dinner."

"Okay,"

They walked out of the bedroom to find that Blair was nowhere to be found. The table was set, chock-full of various dishes. The smell reached Wesley's nostrils, and his stomach growled obligingly.

Megan jogged over to the table excitedly and said, "A six-course meal and soup. Man, I'm starved! Let's wash up, Uncle Wesley."

Wesley pondered for a while and said, "Wait a sec. I'll be back."

Then he turned and left the apartment. The smile on Megan's face vanished as she watched him leave.

Wesley rang the doorbell a few times, but Blair didn't come to the door. Anxious and impatient, he keyed in the password to her apartment and slipped inside.

The apartment was dark. It seemed no one was home. "Blair," he called. But no one answered.

He believed Blair wasn't home.

'She cooked dinner, but left my apartment. She didn't eat, she didn't even say goodbye. What the hell?'

Because he couldn't find Blair, Wesley grew anxious.

He took out his phone to call her, only to realize that he didn't have her number.

Blair had once tried to friend him on WeChat, but she changed her mind in the end.

Looking around her empty apartment, Wesley grew more irritated by the minute.

After leaving his place, instead of going back to her own apartment, Blair took the elevator, went downstairs and walked out of the apartment complex.

'Oops, I left the gift I bought for Wesley in the cabinet, ' she remembered, not long after she had left the building. 'Never mind. I'll grab it some other time.

If he finds it, then I won't have to go through the trouble to give it to him.'

Night had fallen. They were in deep winter, and you could see your breath in the air, but Blair only wore a thin coat. The cold wind chilled her to the bone. Roaming the streets, she had no destination in mind. She had to take a walk and try to make herself feel better.

Seeing Wesley again after so many days had put her in the best of moods.

But they were not a

her to his place.

Blair looked at his hand holding her wrist. Suddenly she put her right hand on it and said, "Wait a minute."

The softness of her hand made his heart flutter. "Go ahead. Go in."

"No, not before getting this straightened out." She didn't want to see the weird girl inside.

Realizing that it was inappropriate to hold each other by the wrist, Wesley withdrew his hand. "Go inside and eat."

"No, thanks. I already ate."

"What did you eat? You mean a piece of fish tofu? A mouthful of oden soup?" Wesley argued. His hands started doing the talking for him.

"Not just that. Before you got there, I also had some sausage." It was true. She had been so hungry that when she was standing in line for her order, she bought a sausage to ease her growling stomach.

Wesley's face turned gloomy again. "So you are telling me that you ate junk food for dinner?"

'Why is he so cranky? What a jerk.' "That's not junk food! It's comfort food." A smug smile spread across her face. "And you ate it too," Blair retorted.

"You coming in or not?"

"No. I'm going home." If Megan wasn't there, she would have gone inside his apartment without him inviting her. She hadn't seen much of him at all lately. She would seize any opportunity to be with him. But she drew the line at seeing him with another woman.

Wesley ran out of patience. Before Blair knew it, he squatted down and draped her over his shoulders in a fireman's carry.

[Chapter 559 The Gift](#)

Blair's head was spinning. When she could finally think clearly, she found herself sitting at the table already.

The dishes on the table remained untouched. Megan sat on the couch, playing games on her phone. Seeing Wesley and Blair were back already, she put her phone away and stood up.

"Where did you go? I'm starving. Let's eat," Megan said pouting as she sat opposite Blair.

Blair smiled. "I took a walk." She was surprised to know that Wesley and Megan hadn't eaten yet. 'Was he waiting for me, then?'

Wesley took the seat next to her and threw her a pair of chopsticks. "Here. Eat."

Blair picked up the chopsticks and tried a couple pieces of tofu. The dinner was already cold.

"I'll heat these up," she said as she stood up.

Wesley dragged her back into her seat with one hand. "It's not too cold. Don't go to the trouble. Just eat."

The heat had been turned on, so the dishes were just room temperature. Blair sat back.

After taking a couple bites, Megan complained, "The beef bone broth is cold. Uncle Wesley, can you warm it up for me? It might cause a tummy ache if we eat it cold."

"Okay." Wesley dropped his chopsticks and walked into the kitchen, carrying the beef bone broth.

Blair gaped at him. 'He just said the dishes weren't that cold.'

After dinner, the three of them left Wesley's place together. Wesley was going to drive Megan home, and Blair went back to her own apartment.

When the doorbell rang, Blair was relaxing, reading on the bed after a comfortable shower. She jogged to the door. It was Wesley. He had just come back home.

He was holding his phone in his hands. "What's your WeChat account?"

Before Blair could say anything, he added, "I'll be pretty busy from now on. So I might need help taking care of my place."

"Oh..." Blair grabbed her phone from the bedroom, and they friended each other on WeChat.

His username was Wes, and hers was Bless.

The two names rhymed and even looked similar. Blair couldn't help thinking that judging from

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Eventually she stormed off after she learned that he had betrayed her again. But life brought her back to him a few years later, to his astonishment.

something was on her mind. "What's in it? You look conspiratorial."

Unable to make up her mind, she felt frustrated. In the end, she took the bag out of the cabinet and handed it to Wesley. "I saw it last time when I was shopping. I thought it suited you, so I bought it. I haven't found an opportunity to give it to you until today."

Wesley took the bag and opened it. Inside was a black embroidered box containing a lighter.

He tried the lighter. A flame whooshed out, about as tall as the lighter itself.

"Looks expensive." Wesley smiled, extinguished the flames and put the lighter back into the box.

'She isn't rich. Then how did she afford it?' he thought.

Blair shook her head and said, "It's okay. I bought it with my own money. I hope you like it."

Wesley put the box into the bag and handed it to her. "Return it. You're a student. You shouldn't have bought something so expensive."

"But I already paid for it." Blair didn't take the bag. 'Is he rejecting me?'

Wesley stuffed the bag into her arms and walked out of the kitchen. "Then give it to your uncle."
Adalson also smoked.

Blair's heart broke into little pieces.

She had been so excited to give it to him. At this moment, her heart was filled with disappointment. After glancing at the bag in her hands, she asked, "You really hate me, don't you?"

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When Wesley heard what Blair said, he suddenly stopped in his tracks, paralyzed by her words. "No, I don't," he replied.

Blair wouldn't let the matter drop. She hurried over to him and asked, "Then why won't you take my gift?"

After giving it some thought, Wesley grabbed the bag in her arms and took out his phone. "How much was it? I'll pay you back. WeChat Pay okay?"

"No, you don't have to. I—" She wanted to tell him that she had money now; her aunt had floated her some funds.

But Wesley interrupted her. "It's not easy to win a scholarship. You're taking the GRE test, right? Studying abroad is expensive. You shouldn't be spending money on stupid things."

Blair said dully, "My uncle will help me out."

Since she would have to ask her uncle to help her with living expenses and schooling once she was overseas, she didn't think the meager thousands of bucks she had spent on the lighter would make much difference.

"In that case, let me buy your ticket. It's the least I can do."

Blair was disappointed seeing how persistent he was to pay her back. "Seriously, guy? Why can't it just be a gift? No strings."

Wesley had never gotten a present from a girl before, so he had no idea how to handle this. He gave her an infuriating answer, in his single-word style: "Because," he said eventually.

For a moment, Blair didn't know what to say, nor did he; the apartment fell quiet. After a while, she smiled, "Okay. I'll remind you to book a flight for me before I leave."

Her smile was so sweet, but Wesley wasn't fooled. The sadness behind her expression was obvious. "No problem," he said.

Blair decided she needed to get out of there, but needed a way to make a graceful exit. She didn't run away.

She walked straight to the door and then stopped. Without turning back, she asked, "Wesley, the kisses we shared...were those...just punishments?"

That question caused him to think of so many things—his future, her future, their future...

Blair left his place without waiting for an answer. If that were true, she didn't want to hear it. Being rejected again and again would finally break her heart. She might be a confident, skilled woman, but underneath she was just a girl with a fragile heart, after all.

Wesley eventually had to go back to work. Once he was back on base, the hellish days for his soldiers began. He was merciless—the slightest mistake meant a harsh punishment. Meanwhile, Wesley wasn't easy on himself either. He put himself through strenuous training exercises: hiking up mountain trails with a loaded backpack, kicking a tree to toughen his feet until he could barely walk, thrusting his fists into ice-water, and lifting weights until he dropped from exhaustion, shuddering from muscular failure. Se

Drugged one night by her ex-boyfriend, a mysterious man took advantage of her in an ecstatic night filled with sex.

To take her revenge, she married the man, and used him.

"As long as I'm alive, I'm still his legal wife, while all of you are just his mistresses."

She remained adamant even when he was involved in scandals with other women.

Eventually she stormed off after she learned that he had betrayed her again. But life brought her back to him a few years later, to his astonishment.

traffic jam. Hearing the sirens, they fell silent. Since the emergency vehicles had come, they realized that someone must have been hurt. Something serious had happened.

Blair was soon able to see what was going on. There was a car accident. One car had plowed into another, caving in its back end. A military vehicle was also there.

That section of the road had been cordoned off. A crowd gathered, as well as the usual EMTs and police. There were three emergency vehicles. The police and the firemen were all actively working. A few of them were out with signs and flashlights, trying to redirect traffic and keep it flowing.

Right then, another car pulled up. A woman got out of the Porsche and walked over to a man who was lying in the street and drenched in blood. "How did this happen? Why is he dead? Who did this? And you! You are soldiers. You save people. How could you let this happen?" she yelled like a crazy person, obviously distraught.

People attempted to calm her down, but to no avail.

Blair and Wesley were doomed to meet at random.

Like right now.

The scene unfolding before her eyes made her sad. Blair was going to walk away when she heard a familiar voice. He said to the grieving woman, "We know this is a difficult time for you. Sorry for your loss. Your husband died during the accident. We wanted to save him, but we couldn't—"

The woman let go of the man in her arms, and shouted at Wesley, "Bullshit! You didn't do your jobs! Is this how you operate? It's a wonder you're still alive."

The onlookers couldn't stand her wild accusations anymore. A murmur traveled through the crowd. But since she was grieving, none of them came forward to confront her.

Talbot and Bowman, who were standing next to Wesley, took one step forward, intending to reason with the woman, but Wesley stopped them.