

A Cue for Happiness Chapter 23-30

Chapter 23 The Chairman

Ross was stunned as he could not believe what he had just heard.

“You are the chairman of Dream Company?”

Dream Pharmaceutical was quite a new company. Though it was only established three years ago, it quickly became one of the biggest pharmaceutical companies in Chanaea due to its effective anti-inflammatory drugs.

Everyone knew that Yandel only held fifteen percent of Dream Company’s shares. The other seventy percent was in the hands of the chairman.

However, the chairman’s identity remained a mystery. Many speculated that the chairman might be an old man who could not show himself in public.

Never in his dreams did Ross imagine that the founder and chairman of Dream Company was none other than the beautiful young woman in front of him.

“That’s right. She’s my boss and the chairman of Dream Company, Natalie Nichols.” Yandel made the introduction with a straight face as he brushed his hair away from his eyes.

Natalie disregarded Yandel’s brown-nosing and looked at Ross.

“You can continue hiding in rock bottom or climb back to the top. It all depends on you.”

In the setting sun, Natalie was covered in a layer of soft light. However, her almond eyes showed a firm look.

She was gorgeous, but it did not matter in that moment.

The power she exuded was enough to make anyone become a loyal follower.

“I want to get up. I want revenge.”

Natalie’s lips curled up in a smile when she got the answer she was hoping for.

“The first step to getting back on top is to dress the part.” She glanced at Yandel and said, “Take him and dress him up. Lend him your clothes for now.”

With that, Yandel led Ross to the lounge in the chairman’s office.

After a while, the men reappeared. Seeing Ross with his new look, Natalie nodded with satisfaction. Indeed, clothes make the man.

Even though he was only wearing a simple white collared shirt and black pants, Natalie could see a glimpse of his former handsome self as he stood there with his hands in his pockets.

“Not bad at all, Dr. Trevor.”

Ross was no longer resistant as he was before. “Thank you.”

Noticing how Natalie had all eyes on Ross, Yandel felt left out. “Boss, how about me?”

“You? Good enough.” Natalie pursed her lips and continued, “You’ll start flying if I praise you more.”

They looked at each other and smiled.

Afterward, Natalie began discussing their latest strategies and their research and development direction with Yandel and Ross.

Yandel had long been used to Natalie’s thought process. As Ross listened and pondered quietly, he could not help but feel newfound respect for her.

As they were about to finish, Natalie’s phone rang all of a sudden.

Natalie got up and went to a quiet corner to pick up the phone while Ross and Yandel discussed quietly.

“Hello, is this Ms. Nichols?”

“And you are?”

“I’m Mr. Bowers’ butler, Gavin.”

Natalie was not expecting that phone call.

Even though she had agreed to help with Sophia’s aphasia, the appointments were supposed to be held once a month. The call came fifteen days too early.

“Gavin, what is it?”

“Ms. Nichols, I know that I’m calling at a bad time, but Mr. Franklin and Ms. Sophia are on a hunger strike.”

“Why are they on a hunger strike?” Natalie was confused, especially since Sophia was so obedient.

“Because... they want to see you. However, Mr. Samuel said he would not arrange a meeting since it’s still too early. That’s why they’re throwing a tantrum. Mr. Samuel got angry and confiscated their phones. The kids couldn’t do anything else, so they decided to go on a hunger strike.”

Natalie was stunned.

Those little cuties went on a hunger strike because of me?

Chapter 24 Hunger Strike

Natalie was surprised and worried at the same time. “Gavin, how long has it been since they went on the hunger strike?”

“They started yesterday afternoon and didn’t have dinner. It’s almost been a whole day now. They haven’t had a bite to eat. They didn’t even drink much water...” Gavin’s voice was filled with worry.

How could they go a whole day without eating?

Natalie furrowed her brows and asked, “How about Samuel? How did he react to his children refusing to eat?”

“Mr. Samuel is aware, but he...”

“What is it?”

Gavin said helplessly, “He said they have a standing appointment to see you once a month, so they have to follow that agreement. Since he doesn’t want to spoil the children, he’s letting them go on hunger strike. He thinks that they will eat when they get too hungry. If they faint from hunger, he will get a doctor to give them some nutritional shots.”

Natalie was dumbfounded. All she could think of was how cold-blooded Samuel was.

Franklin and Sophia are still so young. How could they go a whole day without eating? He even plans to give them shots only after they’ve fainted? I have no words. How can a father like him exist in this world?

“Gavin, I’m coming over now.”

After hanging up the phone, Natalie turned around and looked at Yandel and Ross.

“Something came up. I have to go. Yandel, Ross just joined Dream Company. Give him the support he needs to begin his research.”

Without waiting for Yandel's reply, Natalie rushed off and left the office building. She hailed a taxi and headed straight toward the Bowers residence.

After arriving, Natalie paid for the fare and got out of the car. She had barely got to the ornamental gate when she saw Gavin pacing back and forth with an anxious expression.

When he saw that Natalie was finally there, his face lit up.

"Ms. Nichols, I'm so glad you're here. I was afraid that you wouldn't come after a phone call from a butler like me..."

"Don't worry about it. Bring me to the children and ask the kitchen to prepare some oatmeal porridge that is easy to digest."

"I got it."

In a bedroom on the second floor, Franklin's stomach was growling with hunger.

Sophia was not doing any better. Her little belly was now hard and tight with hunger. Even her expression had become sullen.

"Sophia, hang in there. We are Daddy's children. I'm sure he won't let us starve to death."

Sophia nodded in agreement.

"We need to let Daddy know how determined we are to see that woman. If we give up now, our efforts will go to waste."

Sophia nodded once more.

"But, Sophia... I'm starving..."

Sophia could not talk, but she rubbed her stomach with her little hands as tears welled up in her eyes.

The two children were having a hard time, but as they looked into each other's eyes, none of them wanted to be the first to give up on the hunger strike.

In each other's eyes, they found the strength and determination to keep it going.

Just when the two children were about to faint from hunger, there was a knock on the door.

Franklin knew it was Gavin trying to get them to eat again, so he began whining, "We're not going to eat. Don't you dare bring food in here to sway me and Sophia. We won't eat a bite! We'll only eat when you let us see that woman!"

At first, Natalie was still doubtful of what Gavin had told her on the phone. After hearing how determined Franklin sounded, she knew that Gavin was not exaggerating earlier.

At that moment, she felt a knot in her heart.

She did not know why those kids were so attached to her, but she felt the exact same way about them.

After hearing about their hunger strike, she dropped everything and left Yandel and Ross to come here.

Perhaps, she had started to think of them as the pair of twins she had lost long ago.

After gathering her thoughts, she knocked on the door again.

"Are you really not going to open it? I'll leave then."

Chapter 25 Closer Than A Biological Mother

Franklin glanced at Sophia and said weakly, "Sophia, am I hallucinating from missing her too much?"

Sophia shook her head. Her eyes were filled with joy as she got up and ran toward the door.

She stood on her toes and unlocked the door.

As the door clicked open, Natalie saw Sophia wearing a yellow tutu skirt.

She was holding a teddy bear in her arms. It had a pair of dark eyes that glistened as beautifully as Sophia's.

"Sophia..."

As Natalie uttered those words, the tears in Sophia's eyes rolled down her little cheeks.

Not only that, the little girl hugged Natalie's leg as tightly as she could.

With that, she let everything out and cried.

Natalie's heart melted immediately, and her mind was in a mess.

She immediately knelt down and held Sophia in her arms to comfort her. "Don't cry. I'm here now."

There was no stopping Sophia. Even though Natalie was comforting her, she kept on weeping.

Natalie felt a sting in her heart as she held the sobbing little girl.

Meanwhile, Franklin put up a tough act before walking over to Natalie.

"What took you so long? Don't you know how hard it was for me to wait for you? Why must I be the one to call you all the time? Can't you call or visit us voluntarily?"

Natalie was at a loss for words.

"There won't be a next time! Don't let me do this again. It's a struggle to starve."

Natalie looked at Sophia and then at Franklin. She could feel her heart swell with love and sadness.

These two kids... They're so silly. How could they starve themselves like this just to see me?

Natalie said softly, "All right, I understand. You two must be so hungry. Let's go and eat now, okay?"

The children were having a hard time sticking to the hunger strike. Now that they got what they wanted, they went downstairs with Natalie obediently.

In the dining room, Gavin already had the housekeeper prepare all sorts of delicacies for the children.

Gavin might just be a member of the staff, but he genuinely loved Franklin and Sophia. Tears welled up in his eyes as he watched them walk into the dining room.

He also found himself getting more and more impressed by Natalie.

Even though Natalie and Yara have the same last name, it seems like the children are closer to Natalie than they are to their mother.

The three of them then took their seats at the dining table.

Feeling famished, the children immediately began devouring all the food.

Natalie kept reminding them to slow down while peeling shrimps for them. She paid attention to distributing them evenly.

This was a habit she had gotten from taking care of Xavian and Clayton.

The brothers got along well usually, but they would fight if one of them felt that she was spoiling the other a little more.

After Franklin and Sophia finished eating, their bellies were round and full of food.

However, Sophia still had room for dessert. She made a gesture at Gavin, who brought over a chocolate mousse cake right away.

With that, Sophia tugged on Natalie's sleeve.

Natalie turned her head and saw Sophia's sweet little smile. She was holding a spoonful of cake to Natalie's mouth.

Chocolate mousse cake was also one of Natalie's favorites.

Besides, who could say no to such a little cutie? Natalie did not give it much thought and took a bite.

At that moment, a man's low and magnetic voice came from the entrance.

"Are Franklin and Sophia still on their hunger strike?"

Chapter 26 Worried About The Bully

"Mr. Franklin and Ms. Sophia have already eaten..." Gavin's voice was racked with worry as he had acted on his own accord to invite Natalie over.

"Where are they?"

Unable to lie, Gavin answered, "In the dining room. They have just finished eating."

The man's footsteps got closer.

As Samuel walked into the dining room, his gaze fell upon Natalie.

Samuel was wearing an all-black outfit. It was quite common for men to dress like that in the corporate world, but he looked like he just walked out of an international fashion magazine.

His sleeves were rolled up, showing off his muscled forearm.

"Why is she here?" Samuel questioned Gavin, a cold glint flashing through his eyes.

Gavin lowered his head with guilt as his face turned green. No matter how long he had served the Bowers, he was still just an employee after all.

This idea of his had obviously displeased Samuel.

As Gavin was about to admit his fault, Natalie spoke up. "I was missing the children, so I came over to visit. Gavin saw me and couldn't help but divulge their hunger strike. I begged him to let me coax them to eat something. He couldn't say no to me, and at the same time, he wanted the children to eat. That's why he let me in."

With that, she helped Gavin out of the mess and took all the responsibility upon her own shoulders.

Samuel's gaze went from Natalie to Gavin. It only took him a moment to figure out that she was lying.

He looked into her eyes, but she did not back down.

She stared right back at him, her eyes full of stubbornness.

For some reason, Samuel could not stop thinking about his encounter with the woman at the cafe as he stared at her eyes.

Am I going crazy? How could I associate this flawed woman with the beautiful and perfect Yara?

A scorching dark light flashed across his eyes.

"Daddy, you are not to be mean to Natalie. You'd have to go through me first if you're going to do so."

As Franklin said those words, even Sophia came and stood in front of Natalie. She held onto his leg as if she was afraid Samuel was going to do something.

Samuel lowered his head and looked at the two children hanging onto him. He frowned and said, "They're really pulling out all the stops for you."

Hearing that, Natalie felt a bit awkward.

After all, the children were going against their own father in order to protect her.

If Samuel really put hands on her, there was no doubt the children would not let him get off that easily.

Samuel easily brushed the children off and sat down at the dining table.

“You’ve seen her and had some food. Now, it’s time for you two to head upstairs. I have something to discuss with her in private.”

Franklin and Sophia refused to leave.

Samuel knew what they were worried about. He sighed and said, “Don’t worry. I won’t bully her.”

After hearing the promise from Samuel, the children left the dining room reluctantly and went back to their room.

At that moment, Samuel and Natalie were the only people left in the dining room.

“Why did you lie for Gavin?”

“You knew, but you didn’t say anything,” Natalie retorted. “Gavin did it for the children, so don’t be too hard on him. Even if he’s willing to be punished, your staff would be dejected to see that happen.”

“Aren’t you good at reading people.”

“Same as you.”

Samuel placed his hand under his chin and asked, “So you came because Gavin asked you to?”

At the mention of that, Natalie could not help but feel angry.

“Children aren’t the same as adults. We can skip a meal or two, but they can’t.”

As she recalled what had happened at the cafe the other day, she felt her chest tighten.

She blurted, “Besides, Sophia and Franklin are your children. Can you spend more time with them? It’s one thing to be busy with work, but isn’t it too much to be entangled with a woman on top of that?”

Samuel looked at Natalie meaningfully and asked, “Woman?”

Chapter 27 You Seem Dissatisfied

Who else? Yara, of course!

However, Natalie could not bring herself to utter that name. She could only bury it deep in her heart.

“Mr. Bowers, you know who I’m talking about. There’s no need to ask me.”

Samuel lifted his gaze lazily and looked at Natalie.

“Ms. Nichols, it seems like you are very dissatisfied with me.”

“I wouldn’t dare,” lied Natalie.

Her face turned red as she thought of the time he had kissed her until she was dizzy. Even her heart started beating quickly.

Samuel could tell that she was frustrated, yet he still spoke indifferently.

“Franklin and Sophia went on a hunger strike just because they wanted to see you. Now that you’re here, they’re obedient again. What if they break the rules or their agreement with someone one day? Should I just let them act out like how they did today? It’s not that I don’t care about them. I just don’t want to encourage their irresponsible behavior.”

It wasn’t until Samuel finished his sentence that Natalie realized that the concern he had for Franklin and Sophia was more than what she saw.

As the children’s father, he was trying to teach them to abide by agreements and avoid solving problems using extreme ways that were harmful to their own bodies.

After a while. Natalie finally spoke. “They are still kids. You can try to educate them in a more gentle way...”

“The only gentle way was to have you come over while they were on hunger strike.” Samuel pursed his lips and asked, “Would you come over anytime I asked you to?”

He furrowed his brows as his dark eyes gazed deep into Natalie’s soul.

Although Natalie was wearing a hyper-realistic mask, she somehow felt as if he could see through her mask and her real face.

“If Franklin and Sophia need me, I’d come.”

“I will hold you to that since you’re the one who made the promise.”

“I know.”

Samuel picked up Sophia’s little spoon and took a piece of chocolate mousse cake. He then proceeded to eat it.

“You...”

“What is it?”

Samuel's lips curled up as he looked calmly at Natalie.

Her eyes flickered. What should I say? That I also used that spoon just moments ago?

Her face heated up, and she avoided his gaze.

"I'm going to the bathroom."

As Natalie turned around to leave, Samuel leaned against the back of the chair casually. His lips were slightly curled up in an arc.

That night, Sophia and Franklin asked Natalie to tell them a bedtime story.

Even though Natalie had experiences in putting Xavian and Clayton to sleep, she only knew of the story of the three little pigs.

Upon starting the story, she saw the uninterested gaze of the two children.

What do I do now?

Natalie cleared her throat and said, "I don't have any good stories. How about I sing you a song?"

Franklin and Sophia's eyes lit up as they nodded enthusiastically.

With that, Natalie began singing a folk song from Loang. Her voice was not as beautiful as the sounds of nature, but it was light and soft.

After a short while, the children shut their eyes and fell asleep.

Natalie did not get up right away. She stayed and watched the children.

If my babies didn't die because of Yara, they would be as adorable as these two, wouldn't they?

As she thought of how she had carried her babies to full term but failed to protect them in the end, tears welled up in her eyes.

After a while, she tucked the children in and turned to leave. However, she noticed a figure standing by the door.

Before Natalie could wipe away her tears, she felt Samuel's gaze upon her.

Chapter 28 Suspecting Her Real Identity

Natalie was stunned to see the man looking at her.

“How long have you been here?”

Samuel’s lips curled up, and he replied in a deep voice, “Since you started the story about the three little pigs.”

Feeling like a prey under his gaze, Natalie turned her face away.

He’s been here since I started telling the story. That means it’s been at least half an hour. Is he really that worried about me hanging out with Franklin and Sophia?

“Mr. Bowers, I came to accompany Franklin and Sophia only because I like them.” Natalie glanced at him calmly, a mist of tears still visible in her clear eyes. “Since you asked me to help treat Sophia’s aphasia before, you don’t need to keep an eye on me. This is your home. I wouldn’t be so dumb as to do something bad here.”

Natalie’s eyes were already red, but she continued to wipe away her tears heavily with the back of her hand.

Five years ago, the pain of losing her children was an unprecedented blow.

It was a secret that she kept deep within her heart. Even Clayton and Xavian had no idea about losing their brother and sister.

At that moment, she did not want Samuel to see her tears, let alone her weakness and embarrassment.

“Don’t rub it like that. You’ll hurt yourself.” Samuel frowned as he watched her rubbing her eyes. He grabbed onto her wrist and said, “Your eyes are the most beautiful part of your face.”

Natalie held her breath as she stared blankly at Samuel.

“I would have asked Gavin to keep an eye on you if I had any suspicions.”

“Then why...”

He caressed the corner of her eye with his slender fingers and gently wiped away her tears.

“I’m not good with children,” Samuel admitted softly. “I wanted to see how you interact with them and understand why they are so attached to you.”

Natalie wanted to avoid his touch, but as she took a step back, he kept a hand on her waist to prevent her from moving back further.

She tried struggling. However, he just held onto her more tightly.

Natalie bit her lip.

“Samuel...”

“You’re a grown-up, but you’re even worse than Franklin and Sophia. Don’t you know how to wipe away your tears properly?”

As his warm and deep voice rang over her head, she stopped struggling and stayed put.

The distance between them was so close. All Samuel could smell was the faint fragrance of herbs from her. It was such a familiar scent.

He pushed her hair behind her ear as his gaze fell slowly upon her earlobe.

It’s not there.

The bite mark he had anticipated was not there.

Could it be that I have the wrong person?

A trace of confusion flashed in Samuel’s eyes. He gradually loosened his grip on Natalie’s waist before turning to leave.

Looking at his back, Natalie heaved a sigh of relief and patted her chest.

Samuel is indeed fit to be the head of the Bowers family. He’s savvier than I thought. Is he beginning to suspect me even when I’m wearing a hyper-realistic mask?

Fortunately, she had used the anti-inflammatory medicine she made. Otherwise, he would have seen the bite mark he had left and taken off her mask.

After checking on the children one last time, Natalie got ready to leave the Bowers residence.

As she was on her way downstairs, she heard the sound of pouring rain outside the house. The rain hit the floor-to-ceiling windows, looking like a curtain of water.

Chapter 29 Interrupting Her Phone Call

Natalie was dumbfounded to see that it was raining cats and dogs outside.

Even if she managed to hail a cab, it would be too dangerous for the driver to drive on a rainy night like this.

Then... How am I supposed to go home?

She circled the living room on the first floor to look for Gavin, but the man was nowhere to be seen.

“Eh? Where is Gavin?”

Feeling confused, she took a step backward. Unknowingly, she bumped into someone with a firm and broad chest.

The sudden impact caused her to lose her balance. Just when she was about to fall to the ground, she was grabbed by the waist and pulled into someone’s arms.

Upon smelling the faint scent of tobacco, she lifted her head to see who the person was.

In a trance, she saw the man’s flawless features appear in front of her. Moreover, he was staring at her intensely with his captivating eyes.

“Ah...”

Pursing his lips, Samuel took back his hand after helping her up.

“Do I look that frightening, Ms. Nichols?”

“How is this possible? You’re not frightening...” Avoiding his intense stare, she murmured, “Is he a ghost? He didn’t make a sound at all...”

“Are you saying something?”

Quirking her lips into a smile, Natalie replied, “I said, thank you for helping me up, Mr. Bowers.”

“You’re welcome.”

Then, she glanced at the window and noticed that it was still raining heavily. Additionally, it seemed like there would be a storm soon as dark clouds began to gather in the sky.

Seeing that he was about to make his move, she said hurriedly, “Hold up!”

“Is there anything else?” Samuel stopped in his tracks.

“Um... Yes! Well...” She shook her head and said in embarrassment, “Samuel, c-can I stay over tonight?”

The man was taken aback by the sudden request. It sparked his interest instantly, and he stared at her with a profound gaze.

It was then Natalie finally realized that her words sounded like an ambiguous request. Hurriedly, she explained, "It's not safe to drive in this weather. May I spend the night in the guest room? I'll leave first thing in the morning."

"Mm," he replied.

Feeling relieved, she nodded. Then, he showed her the way to the guest room on the second floor.

When Natalie arrived at the door, she received a phone call from Xavian, whose contact name was saved as "Sweetheart."

Knowing that it was her son, she answered the phone without thinking twice.

"Hi, Sweetheart. I'm putting up at a friend's house for the night because I'm stuck in the rain. I'll be back tomorrow morning. Remember to check if the windows are shut. Don't kick the sheets away when you sleep, okay? Give me a kiss, all right?"

Just as she was waiting for Xavian to kiss her goodnight, she heard the man next to her clearing his throat.

Not knowing how to explain the situation, she chose to remain silent.

At the same time, Xavian, who was on the other end of the line, was startled by the sound.

After a few seconds, realization struck him. He asked in excitement, "Are you staying at a man's house, Mommy? Have you found us a stepfather? How is he? Is he handsome? Is he rich? Does he treat you well?"

Natalie was at a loss for words. When she turned around, she met Samuel's intense stare and lowered her gaze with guilt.

"Don't talk nonsense. That's not what happened. I'll explain once I get back. Do you want to kiss me over the phone? Otherwise, I'm going to hang up."

Hearing that, the boy had no choice but to kiss his mother goodnight and hang up the call.

After ending the phone call, Natalie turned around to face Samuel, who looked as if nothing had happened, and stared at him.

"What do you mean by that?" she asked.

Chapter 30 The Nickname Is Cheesy

Samuel lowered his head and stared at her.

“My throat doesn’t feel too good,” he replied in a cold and calm tone.

“Why can’t you bear with it? You knew that I was on the phone.”

His gaze turned cold all of a sudden upon hearing her words. “Why should I?” he asked in return.

“You... Are you trying to cause a misunderstanding? What if he thinks that I’m spending the night with a man?”

Wearing a grim look, Samuel approached her slowly. “Isn’t it true that you’re staying over at a man’s place? Moreover, that’s none of my business.”

“You...”

Natalie usually possessed the upper hand in fights as she was a good speaker.

Yet, she could not find a word to refute him at the moment.

“Your standards in naming are truly questionable. The nickname you come up with for your boyfriend is cheesy enough.”

She bit her bottom lip tightly as Samuel’s words sparked a flash of irritation in her instantly. Deep down, she could not help cursing him a million times.

Boyfriend? That’s my lovely son! What’s wrong with calling him “Sweetheart”?

Looking at his back, she was about to explain who Sweetheart was. However, a thought came to her all of a sudden. He was no one to her, and it was not necessary to explain herself at all.

It’s my freedom to call anyone Sweetheart!

After taking Natalie to the guest room, Samuel returned to his bedroom and went through some documents before going to bed as usual.

However, half an hour later, all he managed to read was a single page.

After the incident earlier, it was impossible to work efficiently anymore.

In the end, he gave up. After throwing the documents on the bedside table, he massaged his temples gently.

This woman... Is it really not her?

Although she looked different from what he remembered, he was sure that she was the woman, judging by the scent of herbs and her cheeky gaze.

Reminiscing about her tender lips, he felt a gush of warmth flowing through his veins at once.

Though he had taken a bath, he still went into the bathroom to take another cold shower.

With the help of the cold water, it extinguished the fire in him gradually.

Turning off the tap, Samuel twitched his lips.

“Sweetheart?”

The image of the woman’s excitement while on the phone flashed in his mind. At once, his face turned immensely frosty.

Meanwhile, Natalie fell asleep while listening to the sound of raindrops.

In the middle of the night, a bolt of lightning flashed across the dark clouds, followed by a clap of rumbling thunder.

“N-No!”

She stared at the storm anxiously after being woken up by the sound of thunder.

Feeling short of breath, she placed her hand on her chest while breathing heavily.

The thunder brought back those unpleasant memories, for her mother had passed away on a stormy night. Before her passing, she had asked Natalie to go to the Nichols residence to find Yara, wanting to see Yara for the very last time.

Alas, despite standing at the door in the storm, Natalie did not get to see Yara at all.

In the end, her mother’s last wish remained unfulfilled.

Moreover, Natalie had missed the chance to say her final words to her mother because she was waiting blindly outside the Nichols residence at that time.

When she finally rushed to the hospital, it was too late—her mother had taken her last breath.

From then on, an insurmountable amount of pain would strike her on every stormy night. It was so painful that it hurt every time she breathed.

Curling up into a ball, she hid in the corner of the bed and trembled with fear.

All this while, she would hug her sons when she was afraid of thunder. However, both Clayton and Xavian were not by her side that day.

S-Should I go to the two kids of the Bowers family? Perhaps they are afraid of thunder as well! Then, we can cuddle together for the night!

At the thought of it, she rushed to the kids' room without any hesitation. To her disappointment, Franklin and Sophia were sleeping like a log, completely undisturbed by the storm.

Am I the only one who's afraid of thunder?

Left with no choice, she closed the door and headed back to her room. All of a sudden, a bang of thunder broke the silence. Panic-stricken, she quickly squatted down and covered her ears.

In a flash, the searing pain flooded her heart once again, filling her eyes with emptiness and despair.

Suddenly, a pair of slender legs appeared in front of her.

Startled, she moved her gaze from the pair of slippers to the legs, waist, chest, and finally, her gaze landed on the man's stunning face.

"What are you doing here, Ms. Nichols?"