

Love Like You Never Loved Before Chapter 151-160

Chapter 151

I stared at the text message for a long time and couldn't believe my eyes. Since when did Christopher and Crystal become acquainted? To my knowledge, they had nothing to do with each other. However, it seemed to me that they were meeting up with each other behind my back.

I held my breath as I continued to stare at the text message. I tried to keep calm, but my breathing was becoming erratic, and my emotions were running wild.

What kind of relationship do they share?

Countless wild thoughts ran through my mind, almost overwhelming me. I inadvertently ended up looking at the notes on the table and my gaze settled upon the flamboyant handwriting.

I took a deep breath and calmed myself down. These romantic gestures from him definitely took him a lot of patience and care to make it happen.

How could I suspect Christopher based on a vague text message? I knew that it would be unfair to him if I were to judge him without listening to his explanation first.

I approached the couch slowly and sat down before taking a deep breath. It was only yesterday when Crystal came to look for me with the intention of provoking me. She probably found out about my relationship with Christopher and decided to provoke me in this manner.

I froze when that thought flashed through my mind. I slapped myself in the face and tugged at my own hair as punishment for doubting Christopher. I chuckled out loud, for I couldn't believe how foolish I was. If Christopher was interested in Crystal, then why would he come and play with my feelings? There was absolutely no need for him to do that.

It was also impossible to think that perhaps he fell in love with Crystal, and as such, was only doing her bidding by approaching me with the end goal of dumping me once I was in love with him. That kind of scenario only exists in dramas.

I did not know how long I was stuck in my thoughts, but the next moment, the doorbell started to ring incessantly. Before I could get up to open the door, the door swung open by itself. Christopher scrambled in, dressed in his suit and leather shoes. When he saw me sitting on the couch, he strode over and sat by my side. "You're up early. Why didn't you sleep longer?"

I waved the phone in my hand and said with a smile, "You left your phone. Did you miss your flight?"

"It's no big deal. I'll just get another ticket." Christopher took the phone from my hand and put it in his pocket. When he saw that I was neatly dressed and there was a bag next to me, he asked, "You're heading out?"

“Yes. I’ve got to go to work.” After seeing the text, I didn’t believe that he had a plane to catch now. Otherwise, Crystal wouldn’t have asked to meet up with him. There had to be something going on between Christopher and Crystal, and it probably had something to do with me. The thought of that was making me a little unhappy.

I felt uncomfortable knowing that my man was approached by a woman that I disliked. As such, I made a bold decision that I would get to the bottom of this.

“What work? You must be dazed with sleep. It’s Saturday. Do you have to work extra hours with your kind of job?” Christopher tapped on my nose lightly, exasperated.

“Uh...” Hearing that, realization dawned on me that it was the weekend. D*mn it! I must have lost my mind after being provoked by Crystal yesterday. Of course, the main reason that I lost my mind was definitely the man who was smiling heartily in front of me.

I glared at him before getting up from the couch and pushed him out of the door. “Go and catch your flight. You’re terribly late now. Don’t complain if you missed an important meeting.”

“I’ll just blame it on my insatiable libido.” I caught on to what he was implying at once.

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I pushed him out the door and into the elevator. Then, I pressed the button for the first floor and said, “Stop with the nonsense, or I’ll get a courier to ship you abroad.”

“You’re so cruel. Aren’t you going to give me a goodbye kiss before I leave? I...” His sentence was left hanging as I pressed my lips to his.

I kissed him the way he had kissed me—passionately and domineering. When he wanted to kiss me back, I took a few steps and exited the elevator. Just as Christopher was about to reach out to pull me back into the elevator, the elevator doors began to close. Before the doors were completely shut, I stuck out my tongue at him and smiled cheekily.

Christopher gritted his teeth in exasperation and annoyance. Right before the doors shut, I saw him raised his hands and made a gesture of grabbing my bosoms.

I understood what he meant. He was telling me that when we reunite later, he was going to ravage me and cover my fair body with red love marks. Hence, the nickname red bunny.

“You used to call me a little calf. And now I’ve turned into a red bunny,” I muttered to myself.

“Both of you are so sweet and loving to each other. Just watching the two of you fills me with envy. Not to mention he’s so handsome.” A middle-aged woman, who had been watching us a few feet away, spoke to me with a kind smile.

Feeling rather embarrassed, I quickly waved my hand and said, “You’ve got it wrong. He’s not my husband.”

“He must be your boyfriend then. I’m a good judge of character, and I can tell that he’ll be your husband in the future.” The woman patted me on the shoulder and continued earnestly, “But next time, do keep it down a little at night. My granddaughter kept questioning me last night about a cat meowing away. I lied to her saying that it’s just some cats fighting. She then told me she wanted to get up to look for the stray cat and give it a home. I can’t go on lying to her now, can I?”

I was taken aback by her remarks, and I quickly apologized before rushing into the elevator and pressed for the doors to close. I was beyond embarrassed to know that my moaning was heard by somebody else other than Christopher.

This is all Christopher’s fault! It was so embarrassing that I began to scold him inwardly. When I got out of the building, I caught sight of Christopher’s car leaving. Wasting no time, I quickly hailed down a taxi and ordered the driver to follow his car.

Not long after, the car stopped at the entrance of Moon Village Restaurant. I took my time paying the taxi driver, waiting for Christopher to get out of his car and enter the restaurant. Once he disappeared behind the restaurant’s entrance, I quickly got out of the taxi and followed him.

The taxi driver’s voice came from behind me. “By the looks of it, I’m guessing you’re here to catch your husband in the act of cheating, huh. You have my sympathy, Miss.”

Caught by surprise, I lost my balance and almost fell flat on the floor. Fortunately, the valet caught hold of me just in time and helped me to my feet.

I crouched down and snuck into the restaurant like a thief. The place was crowded with people, but I was able to spot Christopher in no time. He was sitting at a cubicle next to a window, and Crystal was seated opposite of him. They appeared to be in the middle of browsing through the menu.

Seeing that, I had the urge to storm over, plop myself down on Christopher’s lap, and sneer at Crystal before telling her to keep her hands off my man. But I kept myself in check because I was curious about their conversation.

Moon Village Restaurant was an Oriental restaurant, and they were renowned for their breakfast that was made by chefs from all over the country. Thanks to Sharon, I was able to patron this restaurant twice.

I pretended to look for a table and inched my way toward them. Just when I was halfway there, Christopher turned and looked in my direction. I quickly grabbed a menu on the table and used it to shield my face. After a while, I waited for him to turn away before starting toward them.

When Christopher turned in my direction again, our eyes met. When I saw that he had spotted me, I quickly turned and ran out of the restaurant. With my heart thumping, I stopped at the entrance and looked back. Surprisingly, Christopher didn’t come after me, in fact, he was still looking in the direction where he spotted me. I followed his gaze and saw that there was a painting on the wall. I finally breathed a sigh of relief when I realized that he had been staring at the painting instead of me.

Christopher was staring at a painting on the wall. I was relieved he didn't notice me.

"Miss, can I have the menu? You can't take this away." A waiter came up to me and reached out his hand.

I didn't want to attract any attention, so I murmured some random dishes and hid behind a partitioned table. I immediately slumped down into the seat and kept my ears open.

The waiter turned a blind eye to odd behavior. Soon, he returned with my first order. I ate and eavesdropped as they talk.

Since there was a small gap in the partition, I peeked. Christopher gracefully took a few bites of the exquisite bun before he sipped his soup as Crystal fidgeted in her seat.

"Christopher, why did you send those to me?" she asked anxiously.

"Let's talk after we eat. I'm starving," he replied nonchalantly. "Well, if you can't wait, you can leave now. And what I do with them will be none of your business."

It was rare to see her in shock. He had gotten hold of her Achilles' heel. I somehow felt contented to see her cornered.

"Fine.. I haven't had my breakfast as well, so let's eat." She shared some of her food with him and flashed an innocent smile. That b*tch! How dare she flirt with him!

However, Christopher left hers untouched and continued to eat his meal. When he'd finished, he drank another spoonful of soup before he gazed up at her. "I think you know how significant that thing is."

"Of course! That's why I'm sitting here with you now. What can I do to have it back?" Crystal set her fork down. Then she traced a finger seductively from her chin to her neck, stuck her tongue out, and licked her lips.

"Please, I will do anything. You have my word," she said with a breathy voice that could make men go wild.

I rolled my eyes and cringed. To distract myself, I ate. Suddenly, I coughed and spluttered my mouthful of food.

"Miss, are you okay?" a passing waiter asked politely. "If you can't handle the spiciness, try it with bread."

My mouth and throat were burning. It was too painful to speak, so I signaled her for a glass of water. She gazed at me with pity for a moment, then immediately did as told. I gulped the drink in one go. Eventually, I calmed down and thanked her.

“Haha!” Suddenly, I heard Christopher’s laughter. How dare he smile! I’m going to teach him a lesson when he gets home. I pricked up my ears again and paid attention to their conversation.

“I can’t do that. I’ve put so much effort to be a part of Vilas Art Exhibition. I can’t give up my spot to someone else.” Crystal declined.

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“You’re very right. In fact, your effort is obvious in the piece of evidence which I have in my hands.” Christopher smiled nonchalantly and continued, “But you need to be eligible to participate in the competition. If the rumor about you framing your senior reaches out to the public, do you think you can survive in the art industry?”

Crystal’s expression changed drastically. After taking a deep breath to calm down, she pulled down her low-cut dress slightly and exposed breast cleavage. She sashayed over to him and planted herself on his lap.

Christopher had no choice but to wrap his hand around her tiny waist so she wouldn’t fall. With a sexy smile, she raised her hands to touch his face, but he immediately grabbed her wrist. She then took advantage and pulled the back of his hands on her cheek. She made flirtatious eye contact with him.

“Christopher, is there something else I can do for you? I really can’t agree to this. Please. You see, I’ve worked so hard for the spot in the competition. I’m sure you won’t take it away from a weak girl like me?” she pleaded with her hand on his chest.

My heart was racing. At that moment, I vowed to leave him if he ever touched Crystal, who was the reason for my miserable life.

Anyway, why would he want her spot in the competition? Does he have an artist friend?

While I was battling my inner anxiety, Christopher shoved her to the ground. She let out a muffled groan as tears formed in her eyes.

He took out a handkerchief to wipe his hands and outfit. After he had done, he threw it into the trash can.

It infuriated Crystal. She got up onto her feet and bellowed, “What on earth do you want from me?” Her seduction had failed. “I can’t just give you the qualifying ticket. Only the notabilities can join the competition. If your friend is an unknown artist, they won’t even let him enter the exhibition. Are you still insisting on it?”

Crystal’s words hit him. She’s right. I have to change the condition. “Alright, then. I’ll sell the information to the reporters. I bet I can make a great deal from it.”

She burst into tears. “Please. You don’t have to do this. What did I do to deserve this?”

Christopher watched her pretty face, soaked with tears. After a long while, he suddenly slammed his hand on the table and said, "Oh, yeah! There's something else you can do for me."

"What is it?"

"I want you to make Lyle divorce Yvonne divorce within two weeks," he drawled.

For a few minutes, Crystal stood in stunned silence. "I've been trying, but Lyle can't decide between me and her," she said through gritted teeth.

"I don't care. If you can't do it, I'll pass the evidence to Sabrina. She is interested in you, after all."

Her face was distorted with rage. "Fine, I'll do it. But first, hand over the video."

"Sure!" Christopher sent the file to her and deleted his copy. "I hope you don't fail me. You don't want to test me."

"I won't!" When I saw Crystal turned around, I immediately hid behind the menu. Just as she was about to leave, she asked him, "By the way, why are you doing this?"

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"Well, I just can't stand the sight of you. Besides, I want to see you make a fool out of Lyle. Seriously, you two make a great couple." Christopher had a wicked grin as he narrowed his eyes.

Although Crystal was livid, she dared not confront him, so she stomped out. Her high heels echoed in the restaurant. He watched her until she walked out of sight before he stood up and left. He paused at the door and looked in my direction.

Oh, no! Did he see me? While I was in a panic, he left. I watched him drive away and for the waiter for the check.

"Miss, someone has paid your bill. He also wanted me to pass you this digestive tablet because you'll need it."

Confused, I asked, "Who?"

"You're not mute?" She was stunned. No wonder she gave me a pitying look when I was choked. Again, I asked, "Who do you mean? Is he the handsome guy in the black suit?"

"I'm sorry to let you down, but it was actually a lady," she faltered. I was dumbfounded.

Outside the restaurant, I slowed my pace to focus on my thoughts. He pretends he doesn't care about my divorce in front of Crystal. I know his motive. He wants her to pressure Lyle into it.

I was a little moved. Christopher had assisted me in so many things without my knowledge.

Did he know I was at the restaurant? I was still confused.

I must be down on my luck because I bumped into Yvette and Scarlet at a shopping mall when I was picking a shirt for Christopher. They pulled a mocking grin.

“Yvonne, are you shopping for Lyle? Oh, my. Do you still remember his size? By the way, does he have time to meet you at night? I mean, he basically lives in Tanner residence now.”

“Yvonne, don’t be so rude. Although your sister is not talented or pretty, you have to applaud her love for your brother-in-law. Okay?” Scarlett was a wolf in a sheep’s clothing. Every time I was accused, she would make me suffer more by pretending to back me up.

“I know Yvonne loves him so much, but she is no match for Crystal. That woman said she was not feeling well this morning and was craving deer liver. The next moment, Lyle returned with the food to satisfy her. His unconditional love for her is real! Yvonne, you better divorce him before you ruin your own reputation. You certainly don’t want to be left without a single cent.” Yvette had a hint of smugness in her voice.

Scarlett chimed in. “Yvette, don’t be so blunt. Your sister won’t bear a grudge, but she will get upset.”

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“Oops! I didn’t think of that.” Yvette covered her mouth with her hands as if she were aware of her mistake. Then she pleaded pitifully, “I’m sorry, Yvonne. I didn’t mean to offend you with the truth. I mean, everyone knows Lyle loves Crystal. I didn’t expect you to be so slow-witted. Sorry.”

“Are you done talking? Should I treat you to some coffee to take a break for a moment? I feel bad to put you on a drama like this, you know.” I refused to let them bully me anymore. I asked the shop attendant for my shopping bag and turned to leave.

As expected, Yvette dashed forward and blocked my way with her hand on my shoulder. “Yvonne, I’m not done yet. We’re sisters. How could you just leave when I’m trying to be nice to you?” she fumed.

She was inches from my face, so I pushed her away. She lost her balance and fell.

“You brat! How dare you push my daughter! I’ll teach you a lesson!” Scarlett immediately raised her hand to slap me.

Expecting her reaction, I grabbed her wrist. “Don’t go overboard. Remember, karma exists.”

Scarlett pulled her hand back. Perhaps my stern glare intimidated her. She helped her daughter up while she swore at me. “Yvette, are you okay? Gosh, that witch just pushed you slightly. How could you fall so easily?”

Yvette stood up and massaged her knee. “Yvonne, stop being so stubborn. You’ll need our help someday. When that day comes, I might not agree to help you even if you beg on your knees,” she chided.

She reminded me of Crystal. However, I was no longer afraid of both of them.

“Don’t worry. I won’t. So please, never show up in front of me again. I’m so sick at the sight of you.” At that, I walked past them and left.

I was hesitant to return inside to buy Christopher’s shirt and tie because I didn’t want to bump into the wicked mother-daughter duo again. However, I just couldn’t go home without it, so I went back in and headed to the third floor.

I chose a silver tie that I thought would highlight his deep and crescent-shaped eyes. It was expensive, but perfect for him.

I used my savings with no hesitation. I have a job anyway, I can still save again. This is nothing.

I entered an elevator and stood silently as the door closed. Suddenly, I regretted my purchase. It’s really expensive! I spent my youth saving up all this money. Most of my outfits are hand-me-downs.

At that moment, I realized I had fallen so deep in love. I decided to spend the rest of my life with him and he would be my major support.

A shop attendant squeezed herself between the closing doors and hit me by accident. She immediately apologized profusely at my frown. “It’s okay.” I waved at her, and we rode in silence.

With the tie in my hand, I walked to the cashier counter to settle the bill. Suddenly, two police officers stopped me.

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When I considered paying with a credit card or cash, two policemen blocked my way and said impolitely, “Miss, we have received a police report that you stole something from a jewelry shop. Please cooperate with our investigation.”

“What? Who called the police? How ridiculous! Can the informer talk to me face-to-face?” I was bewildered, for I only passed by the jewelry shop just now and didn’t enter it. Although I always loved jewelry, it didn’t mean that I had to buy and wear it. To me, jewelry was ostentatious but didn’t serve any other purposes.

“Miss, please don’t think of denying it with mere words. Allow us to inspect your handbag.” As one of the policemen got impatient, he stretched out his arm and wanted to grab my handbag directly.

I couldn’t help but feel furious. As I handed over my handbag, I said disgruntledly, “Go ahead. However, remember to apologize if you can’t find anything inside.”

I was confident that it was a mistake. However, once the policemen found two rubies, which were wrapped nicely, my face turned pale. I had no idea why there was jewelry in my handbag, for I had checked my belongings before I left the house.

“Miss, would you mind explaining?” One of the policemen put the rubies in his hands and awaited my response. They would bring me back to the police station if I couldn’t explain myself.

Meanwhile, another policeman had already taken out a pair of handcuffs. Since I knew very little about the law, I wasn’t sure if police officers had the right to handcuff me without ascertaining the truth. However, I could imagine how shameful I would be if they handcuffed me.

“How is it possible? I never took these. Moreover, I didn’t even enter the jewelry shop,” I yelled anxiously.

“Miss, please come with us to the police station,” One of the policemen said impatiently, “We don’t mind resorting to force if you refuse to cooperate with us.”

After cursing them silently, I bellowed, “I said I didn’t take these. How can you hastily conclude your investigation? Besides, you don’t even allow me to meet the informant. In that case, how would you know if I’m framed?”

“Yvonne, I suggest that you should admit to it. You see, the policemen have already found the stolen goods. Also, since many people are watching, denying it won’t help you in any way.” Yvette showed up out of nowhere and said to me maliciously. I couldn’t help but feel that she was like a lingering ghost.

“My goodness! How shameful! Who would have thought our family member stole things? I’m sorry. This lady is my stepdaughter, and she loved stealing since she was young. Even though I used to teach her a lot of times, she is still pig-headed. So, it’s all my fault as a stepmother. Please forgive us. Sir, we are willing to cooperate with your investigation. Can we follow you to the police station as witnesses?”

Scarlett apologized to the people around them while smearing me. As such, I was infuriated upon hearing it. Also, I finally understood why they let me leave back then: they waited for this opportunity to set me up.

“That will be great. Since you’re the wrongdoer’s family members, please come with us to the police station,” one of the policemen agreed.

“Wait a minute!” I yelled. I definitely wouldn’t go to the police station. Once I went to the police station, my name would make the headline tomorrow. Moreover, Yvette and Scarlett would grab the chance to defame me to the core.

At that moment, I was surprisingly calm. Perhaps because I was with Christopher for a long time, I became a lot more resourceful. As a crappy explanation flashed through my mind, I grabbed the rubies and said, “The labels are attached with the rubies. If I were to steal, the anti-theft alarm would detect the items once I leave the counter. Anyway, I merely put them in my handbag and haven’t paid at the counter. Therefore, wouldn’t it be far-fetched to accuse me of stealing?”

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“Well...” The policeman was rendered speechless. “It’s not wrong for you to do that. Are you sure you’re buying the items? If yes, you must pay at this counter. Otherwise, you’ve to follow us to the police station.”

“Yvonne, why did you come up with such a lame excuse? I mean, where on earth can you get so much money? These rubies are worth more than thirty million! It’s futile to make excuses. By the way, it’s fortunate that we don’t have the same mother, or else I dare not meet my friends from today onward.” After Yvette finished, she covered her mouth to chuckle and winked at me provokingly.

“If possible, I wouldn’t even share a father with you! What a filthy woman!” After snickering at her, I began to look for my card in my handbag.

Yvette was fumed but held in her anger. Since I was still looking for my card, she sneered, “Yvonne, you don’t have that much money. I mean, do you think it’s three hundred?”

Then, she leaned in and whispered in my ear, “Why don’t you kneel and beg me? I might be delighted and even pay it for you if you do so. After all, I don’t want everyone to know that I have a sister who steals.”

Now, I finally figured out why Yvette set me up. She wanted to put me in an awkward position: be freed if I beg her or be a thief if I refuse. No matter which option I chose, she could still achieve her motive of causing me trouble.

“Dream on!” I declined it loudly as if I mustered up all of my strength.

Yvette blinked her eyes and spread her arms. “Since you’re so stubborn, there is nothing I can do. Alas, I wonder how many people out there would ridicule you once the news spread. I can’t even imagine how devastating it would be to you.”

“Yvette, come over here and don’t disturb your sister,” Scarlett said to Yvette. Then, she took out a banknote from her bag and said maliciously, “I’m sorry, Eve. Since our family has paid for unexpected expenses recently, I can only help so much. Please look for the rest of the money on your own.”

She handed over a one-hundred banknote to me but intended to drop it once I grabbed it from her. All she wanted was to watch the embarrassing moment when I bowed and picked it up.

However, they miscalculated how things would turn out, for I neither picked up the banknote nor let Scarlett pretend to be the good guy. I said coldly, “Scarlett, you’re indeed a caring wife. The Tanner family has a publicly listed company worth more than a billion. However, you’ve already spent almost all of your money at the beginning of the month.”

To everyone’s surprise, I took out a black card and gave it to the cashier at the counter. “I would like to make the payment.”

Scarlett and Yvette looked at each other shockingly. Shortly afterward, Yvette pursed her lips and said, “Where did you get this card? Could it be expired?”

The cashier changed her attitude toward me after swiping the card. After a while, she handed it back to me in deference and looked astounded.

Although I came from a wealthy family originally, I was no different from those from a slum. Nevertheless, I was aware that some nobles had black cards that perfectly displayed their social status. The cards looked ordinary on the surface, but people in that social circle could instantly tell the difference.

When Christopher gave me the card, he reminded me that I could purchase whatever I wanted. Besides, I could also request a loan whenever I needed it. Back then, I reluctantly accepted the card, for I didn't want him to be unhappy. I planned not to use it at all, yet the situation today left me with no choice.

"Yvonne, how did you get so much money? Could it be that you stole it?" Yvette yelled.

Meanwhile, Scarlett went even further to provoke me. "Don't say that. Since Yvonne has many friends from wealthy families, it's not surprising that she gets one of two cards from them."

I was furious because they smeared me non-stop. As such, I lifted my arm and slapped Scarlett's face with all my might.

It was the first time in my life that I hit Scarlett. She was stunned by it.

The next moment, Yvette shrieked and wanted to fight me, "Yvonne, how dare you hit my mom! I swear to beat the hell out of you!"

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I dodged Yvette's hand quickly, moved to the back of the table, and kicked a stool toward her. She tripped over it and fell to the floor embarrassedly. Shortly afterward, Scarlett came back to her senses. She let out a wail and wanted to throw a punch at me.

"B*tch, how dare you hit me? Even your dad never hit me!"

I dogged her by running around the counters and grabbed the chance to slap her again. With that, I said coldly, "Yes, I hit both of you. One of you is a homewrecker who drove Amelia away, while the other is a stepdaughter who is only a month younger than me. As the daughter of my dad's legal wife, I have the right to punish you two for ruining my family."

I kept the words in my heart for many years and never told anyone. I could still vividly remember the day when Scarlett brought Yvette to our mansion unashamedly. At that moment, I was despondent, for their presence cruelly destroyed my life and happiness.

"B*llshit, your mom was the homewrecker instead. Also, our dad drove her away because she made a mistake. What did it have to do with us?" Once Scarlett finished, she randomly grabbed a bottle on the counter and flung it at me.

I could hardly stand it whenever someone defamed. Although the bottle was near my face, I was unperturbed and wanted to slap Scarlett again. The next moment, someone gripped my wrist forcefully, so much so that I almost lost my balance and fell to the floor.

“Yvonne, what are you doing?” It was Lyle’s voice. He bellowed at me right away without even asking me what transpired.

I turned around and saw Crystal standing behind him. This time, she only stood still gracefully and didn’t provoke me.

“Lyle, you came at the right time. Can you stop Yvonne from making trouble? She stole some goods here and was caught. When we offered to help her, she declined and even hit my mom.”

Initially, Yvette had lifted a beer bottle and was about to smash it on my head. At this moment, her expression changed swiftly. She put down the bottle gently, covered her face, and held Scarlett’s shoulder helplessly.

“Indeed. Can you teach your wife to behave herself? She has brought shame to all of us.” Scarlett forced out a smile as she spoke. However, since she was furious earlier on, her face was contorted and looked like an old witch now.

“Was there any misunderstanding? Yvonne wouldn’t steal.” To my surprise, Lyle glanced at me for a moment and spoke up for me.

“Why wasn’t it possible? As you see, even police officers are here.” Scarlett said while pointing at the policemen.

“Well... Yvonne, do you lack anything lately? If you need anything, please feel free to tell us. I happened to have organized a painting exhibition recently and made some money. So, I can offer you some help,” Crystal said smilingly.

“Yvonne, what happened?” Lyle asked doubtfully and frowned. At that moment, I could sense the contempt and bewilderment in his eyes.

I felt that it was a waste of time talking to them. As such, I lifted my bag and said coldly, “I didn’t steal. Since I’m not a trustworthy woman to you, you can ask the police instead.”

With that, I turned around and left the shop furiously. Given my understanding of Lyle, I could tell that he had partially bought into their lies. Hence, I wasn’t interested in explaining to him, even if he treated me as a thief now.

“Wait, Yvonne!” Lyle came up to me and gazed at my bag. “Today is your dad’s birthday. Did you buy the gift for him?”

I wouldn’t tell Lyle that I bought it for Christopher. As such, I fell silent and didn’t respond to his question. A moment later, he took out a pile of cash from his wallet and said, “I’m sorry. I was busy

lately and forgot to give you some living expenses. Anyway, please take the money to solve your problem.”

He probably thought it was logical that I stole because I didn't have a job or money. I glanced at him in disdain and wanted to continue leaving. Furthermore, I didn't need his money to make ends meet, for I already had a job.

“Yvonne, please don't put up a tough front,” Lyle yelled curtly.

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I ignored what he said and left the shopping mall. Deep down, I felt that Lyle didn't understand me at all. While I was gentle and timid, my pride and self-esteem were a lot more than he imagined.

Back then, after Nathan drove me out of home, I didn't ask for money from him but worked in the basement to make ends meet. After Lyle hurt me badly, I was brave enough to forgo my eight years of secret crush and two years of marriage. These were proofs that I could be resolute whenever I wanted to.

However, he thought I was the same nose of wax, who was obedient to him.

As I was deep in thought, I opened my handbag and looked at the gift I prepared for Nathan—a slightly old-fashioned necktie. Initially, I wanted to deliver it to him via courier. After the incident, Scarlett and Yvette would claim that I dared not go home because I was guilty. Therefore, I decided to go, for I wanted them to shut their mouths. I would leave as soon as possible if all of them were unhappy to see me.

It had been a long time since I returned to the Tanner residence. As I stood at the entrance, I somehow felt unfamiliar with it. Although it was my home and supposedly haven, I seldom came back after I turned eighteen.

The servants opened the door for me coldly and didn't even serve me with a glass of water. Given that servants there disrespected me, I was indeed a nobody in the Tanner family.

Nathan and Scarlett were chatting happily on the couch. Nonetheless, the atmosphere changed the moment I came in. The next moment, Nathan sneered, slammed the table with his hand, and said, “Why are you here?”

Judging from his tone, I knew that something wasn't right. I came up to him, put down the necktie on the table, and said calmly, “I bought it from the mall just now. Happy birthday, Dad.”

“Why should I be happy? How can you have the cheek to give me something that you stole from the mall?” Nathan flung the necktie to the floor and said, “I don't have such a disgraceful daughter.”

As I gazed at the necktie, I praised myself silently for making the right choice to buy an inexpensive necktie. Nevertheless, I still felt uncomfortable about it, for I spent quite some time choosing the necktie for Nathan.

“Since you don’t like the necktie, you can do whatever you want with it. I’ll get my belongings upstairs and leave right away.” I stopped looking at the necktie and went to my bedroom upstairs. After looking around the room, I realized that I probably didn’t have any personal items left in this house.

Suddenly, I remembered that the things that Amelia gave me were in this house. One of them was an amethyst hair clip. However, I spent quite some time but still couldn’t find it.

There were originally two hair clips. I still kept one of them now, but the other was somewhere in this house. Amelia bought the hair clips for me from the mall before she left. As I liked the gift very much, I always hoped to find the other hair clip.

After packing up my belongings, I stared at the living room for a long time. Deep down, I believed I would only come back here when it was necessary. As I left the bedroom, I could hear Scarlett and Yvette speaking ill of me. Nathan was irritated as he listened to them and scolded me from time to time.

I couldn’t help but heave a sigh. Some people said that a biological father would turn into a stepfather once he married another woman. However, I still couldn’t accept the drastic change in Nathan’s attitude toward me. Worse still, he never attempted to maintain our relationship in any way. If the situation persisted, we would eventually become a father and a daughter in name only.

Knowing that they loathed my presence, I wanted to leave the Tanner residence once I finished packing. As I arrived at the door, I was suddenly hit by something from behind. I turned around and realized that it was the necktie that I spent two hours choosing for Nathan.

“Take your belonging away. I can’t accept any stolen goods,” Nathan said coldly.

As I picked up the necktie, I noticed the smug smiles on Scarlett and Yvette’s faces. Besides, Yvette, who was leaning against Nathan, turned her thumb down at me provokingly. I turned around to look at Nathan, who glared at me, and said curtly, “It’s fine if you don’t want it. I wish the three of you a happy and harmonious life.”

After exiting the Tanner residence, I lifted my arm and threw the necktie into the dustbin. Also, I told myself that I wouldn’t come back ever again.