

Madam Winters 411

Chapter 411 Duke parked the car and stepped out.

He had come five minutes earlier, hoping he could fetch the two children before Adina did. However, just as he went out of his car, he could feel a cold gaze fixated on him

He looked in that direction and from afar, he saw a slender person slowly approaching him. "Mr. Winters, why are you here?"

Adina asked with a slight frown as she looked at him. Duke smiled. "Didn't I tell you not to call me Mr Winters?"

Adina froze

'I used to call him Duke just to play along when I pretended to be his girlfriend. "But there's no need for such pretenses anymore.'

She said plainly. "I will pick Al and Mel up. You can go on with whatever it is you need to do."

"I'm their biological father. This is my duty." Duke said in a low voice, it sounded as low as the tune of a cello. "You've worked hard for the past four years. From now on, I'll help you

Out":

Adina's heart skipped a beat. She could only suppress that strange emotion after she dug her nails into her palm. She did not dare to meet Duke's gaze as she spoke calmly, "I'm used to it. You don't have to." "I insist." Duke interrupted her. "Don't worry, I won't fight for the children's custody I only want to give them the love I failed to shower them with over the past few years."

With those words, Adina was at a loss.

'His intentions for Al and Mel are the same as mine toward George and Harold-to make it up to them

'We must give them the love that they have missed out on for the past four years." Adina said nothing else. The two of them stood at the entrance of the preschool quietly. It was a peaceful moment as the sunshine of the orange sunset shone over their shoulders. "Wow, Alden Your father is here again!"

The children in the preschool had already noticed Adina and Duke, who were standing at the entrance, they leaned against the window. The rest of the children came over to look at them a well

"Wow, I finally w Alden's father He's so handsome

"Tal's my He's a humed times more handsoine than my father I want a father Like hin'"

It's no worden Alden is so handsatte and Melody is so prettyl Foth their parents are

All the children chatted in the classroom.

Alden, who always seemed indifferent, cracked a smirk.

When he realized that he was smirking, he instantly pursed his lips, trying to suppress his emotions.

Some children who were at the side exclaimed, "Look! Melody is smiling! "Melody looks so pretty when she smiles! She looks just like a Barbie doll!"

"Melody, give us another smile!"

Melody could not help but smile as four or five children surrounded her.

Ava hurriedly dispersed the crowd. "Melody is a shy girl. You need to give her some space What if she wouldn't smile anymore in the future? Keep your distance."

The other children stepped back obediently as they looked at Melody from a distance. A few girls even tried to smile like her.

"Come on, children. Let's hold hands and go to the entrance together. Your parents are here to fetch you!" The children held hands and walked out of the classroom with Miss Jones. Almost immediately, Adina saw Melody standing next to Ava. Her daughter usually kept a blank face, but she was smiling at that moment.

"Madam Daugherty, Melody has improved a lot!" Ava smiled as she spoke to Adina, "Even though she is still reluctant to talk to other children, she would respond when they call her name She also took the initiative to help them take toys and tissues!"

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Melody lowered her head, feeling embarrassed. It was as if she was aware of her teacher complimenting her. The two dimples on her cheek deepened as she smiled.

"Come here, let Daddy hug you."

Duke knelt down and stretched out his arms.

"Daddy!" Melody ran over to him quickly. Duke carried her and spun her around. Ava was stunned. 'Didn't Alden and Melody call another man "Father" two days ago? Why did their father change to another man again...?' "Miss Jones, he is Al's and Mel's biological father. You can hand over them whenever he comes and fetches them," Adina said gently with a smile. Ava nodded, still feeling stunned. She only returned to her senses when the family left the preschool. 'Alden's father is so handsome and charismatic. It's no wonder why the children could not stop looking at him. Even I couldn't take my eyes off him...' Two cars were parked at the entrance of the preschool. Adina and Duke opened their car doors. Hers was on the left, and he was on the right. "Mel, come here. I'll carry you. Let's get into the car first." Adina walked toward Melody and reached out.

Just as Melody was about to turn to her, Duke said, "Your mother has worked the whole day and is very tired. You shouldn't let her carry you." Melody, who was about to reach out to Adina, paused and pondered for a few seconds. She turned around and held onto Duke's neck again.

Duke smiled, feeling amused.

Alden said, "Mel can walk on her own."

Melody was very obedient to Alden. She struggled a little, trying to get down. Duke's smile faded. He asked gently, "Mel, do you want to sit in Daddy's car?"

Adina then said, "Mel, sit in Mommy's car. You're used to sitting in his car" Melody flooked at Daidy and Moinny, feeling, conflicted. Inike calmly adrd, "Daddy specially came to pick you up from school. I would be sad if I were to go back on alon."

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'A five-foot-nine man pretending to be sad in front of a small girl. How shameless!' Well, it worked on Melody.

She placed her hand on Duke's chest and looked like she was willing to get into Duke's car. Alden frowned. Just as he was about to speak up, Duke said, "Al, you should get into my car too. Give your mother a break." "No."

Alden stood motionlessly by Adina. Adina felt Melody drifting further and further away from her with each passing day. She patted her head and said, "You can get into Daddy's car. Your brother and I will get in the other car."

The four of them were left in two different cars. Duke only started his engine and followed Adina after he saw her drive off.

'I think I'll find a way to make Melody sit in my car by her choice...'

Adina took a glance at the car following behind her through the rearview mirror as the corners of her mouth twitched a little.

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"Mommy, don't worry. I will never leave you," said Alden, who was sitting at the back.

Adina was holding onto the steering wheel as she relaxed and smiled, "Al, you don't have to look at him like he's your enemy. Duke is your biological father. You should get to know him a little better, and there's nothing to lose."

"But you'll be sad." Al hid the emotion in his gaze as he clenched his fist.

"Al, I won't be. Where do you want to go?" Adina smiled helplessly. When they were at the traffic light, she turned and looked at her as she said gently, "Duke is your and Melody's father. I'm really happy that he's decided to protect and look after both of you with me. How can I be sad?"

Alden lowered his gaze and did not say anything.

'If Duke truly loves Mommy, I will accept him into our lives as well.

'But if he were to hurt her in any way, I will never let the Winters family off the hook!'

They drove to the Winters family's mansion.

Harold had been waiting at the entrance for a long time.

'I was supposed to go fetch Melody at the preschool with Daddy. But he said that I should get changed first. By the time I changed, he was already gone.'

He was so angry that he was close to tears.

Soon, a black car slowly drove up on the winding mountain road.

Harold hurriedly tidied up his shirt, puffed out his chest, and kept his chin up. 'I must look cool and handsome when I welcome Mommy and Melody.'

The cars stopped in front of him.

Before he could call out "Mommy", Liam got out of the car, went around to the other side, and opened the backseat door.

"George? Why are you here?"

Harold became flustered when he saw George getting out of the car.

'George usually comes back around eight or nine at night. It's only six. Why is he...?' 2 "Why not?" George coughed lightly and said, "I finished my work ahead of schedule. So, I'm back sooner. What's the matter?"

Liam, who was standing at the side, remained silent.

'You're supposed to attend a very important meeting

tonight. Just because Young Master Harold isn't as smart as you, you shouldn't fool him like that.'

George shot him a quick glare. Liam immediately stopped harboring those thoughts.

He said politely, "Sir, I will go attend to the matter in the office now."

He swiftly drove off.

Harold and George were both standing at the entrance of the mansion.

Harold asked angrily, "George, you usually head for the study room right after you come home. Why are you standing here?"

George retained his indifferent expression. "I'll do whatever you're doing."

"Hmph!"

Harold crossed his tiny arms.

'I knew it! George wants to curry favor with Mommy and Melody!

'I must not let him snatch them away from me!'

"George, I feel that Al's personality is similar to yours. You two definitely can get along very well."

Harold said cunningly, "Later on, you should go to the study room with him. I'm sure both of you have a lot of things to talk about with each other."

'With George being occupied with Alden, no one will take Mommy and Melody away from me!'

George said indifferently, "Al is smart. You should learn to speed – read books like him. You two should chit-chat with each other."

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Harold's expression turned sour. 'Can he not mention learning anything? I hate that the most...

As they were subtly bickering, two cars emerged; one after another.

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Harold recognized the car at the front. Before it stopped, he ran over and opened the backseat door. "Melody, I've missed you so much!"

He instantly went for a hug. His embrace tightened as the figure was soft and smelled really good. However, he quickly heard an angry voice say, "Harold Winters, let go!"

Alden, who was embraced in Harold's arms, was very upset.

Harold instantly let go. "Eh, Alden. Why are you here? Where's Melody?"

At that moment, he heard cute giggles from behind him.

He turned and saw Melody coming out of the second car. George had given her a toy rabbit, and she was overjoyed.

Harold swiftly ran over and took out the toy cat that he had been carrying. He then said, as if he was giving her a treasure, "Melody, this cat is much cuter than the rabbit. Look, it even makes sounds..."

The toy cat meowed when he gave it a little squeeze. Melody giggled even louder.

Duke, who had just come out of the car, smiled.

He had not heard cheerful laughter like this in the Winters family's mansion for a long time.

'Only three kids? Where's the other one?'

He turned and saw Alden looking at the three children. There was a hint of sadness in his eyes.

"George, you gave Melody a present, but how about Al?" Duke asked softly.

George said, "Of course, I prepared a present for him too."

'As the eldest brother, I must treat my younger sister and brother equally.'

He handed the toy rabbit to Melody and took out a box from his bag. He turned and approached Alden.

"This is for you."

George opened the box and there was a Rubik's cube in it.

"The 17 by 17 by 17 Rubik's Cube is the hardest one on the market. I assume you have already solved it before. This

is the 13 by 13 by 13 Rubik's Cube. I had someone customize it for you. He gave Alden the cube and said, "I can teach you if you don't know how to solve it."

Alden took the cube and fiddled with it a little. He looked at George. "Thank you, I like it."

Adina was still trying to find a way for Al to get along with the other children. Just then, she saw George walking

over.

She smiled gently and said, "Al, you should call him Brother."

So far, she had not heard Al call anyone his "Brother" or "Daddy."

Alden pursed his lips and stayed quiet.

'I don't feel anything towards George and Harold. I can't just call them my "Brothers".! "It's okay, Mommy. Al can call me anything he wants," George said plainly. He took out a stack of things from his back. "Mommy, this is for you." Adina was stunned.

'For me?

'I haven't even prepared presents for my two children, yet he has already prepared a gift for me?'

For a moment, she was touched. Her voice came out very gently. "Georgie, why did you prepare a present for me

too?"

"It's only fair that you get a present, Melody gets a present, and Alden gets a present too!" George said word by word.

"Boohoo! No, it's not!"

Harold walked over, pouting. He stared at his own brother

furiously.

There were tears in his eyes. "Everyone has a present, except for me. Boohoo! Poor me!"

Duke pursed his lips dejectedly as well.

'I didn't get any presents either. Am I a nobody?'

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George shifted his cold gaze to Harold.

His gaze was so cold that Harold, who had been fake crying, became overwhelmed and instantly stopped.

"Didn't Melody give you a present before?"

When he heard George's words, Harold quickly replied, "Oh, yes! Melody gave me a present before. It was a drawing by her. I'm the only one who has ever received a present from her. Nobody else got anything from her! I'm the luckiest boy ever! Melody, I love you so much!"

Harold was so happy that he gave Melody's cheek a peck. Duke frowned and pulled Harold back by his collar. He then said coldly, "Don't kiss Mel ever again."

Harold felt aggrieved as he pouted. "Why?"

'What is life if I can't even kiss my sister?' Duke said, "You're a boy, and Mel's a girl. Boys shouldn't simply kiss girls."

Harold became speechless.

'The teacher at school said this before, too. Does that mean I can never kiss Mel from now on?'

George did not utter a word.

'I've never kissed her. Does that mean I wouldn't have a chance to do it as well?'

Alden stayed silent.

'Well, at least Duke got one thing right. No one is allowed to simply kiss Mel!'

Adina said helplessly, "Let's check out what Georgie got for me."

She opened the document that she was holding and was stunned.

It was the share transfer letter of Daugherty Corporation. She already had twenty-five percent of the shares with her, and this equity transfer letter contained forty percent of the shares.

'If I were to sign it, I'd have sixty-five percent of the shares of Daugherty Corporation. This means that I would have absolute authority over the corporation.'

She truly did not expect George to give her such a present.

"Thank you, Georgie."

Adina was really touched. She suddenly did not seem to have the heart to take out the presents that she had prepared.

"I'm glad you like it." George smiled. "Mommy, let's go in."

Adina put the document in the car. She nodded as she went inside the mansion with the children.

"Mommy, wait for me!"

Harold led Melody into the mansion, leaving Duke alone behind.

Duke touched his nose, feeling upset.

'I don't mind not getting a gift, but they even went into the house without me. Am I not needed in their lives?' 2

The cold and quiet mansion instantly became merrier when the six of them entered.

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while Adina put on an apron and walked toward the kitchen.

She loved cooking, and she loved to see her children enjoy her food. Even cutting a potato could bring her joy.

Duke followed her into the kitchen. He waved his head, chasing the other chefs out of the kitchen. The two of them were left in that small space.

Perhaps the house's heater was on, or perhaps the kitchen was getting hot. For some reason, Adina felt tense.

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She tried to look calm as she said lightly. "Can you shell the peas for me?"

Duke took his eyes off her. "Okay." He brought the peas over, lowered his head, and shelled the peas.

The kitchen became even quieter. There were only sounds of Adina cutting the vegetables, the water boiling, and the noise of the cooker hood.

Adina added oil to the pan and proceeded to put in some onion, ginger, and garlic. She instinctively took a step back when the oil started splashing.

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Adina unexpectedly bumped into Duke, who was washing the peas.

The oil splashed on the back of her hand. She grimaced in pain.

Duke hurriedly turned down the fire on the stove, looking extremely worried. "Where did the oil hit you? Are you hurt?"

"It's nothing. I'm fine."

Adina ran the tap water over her hand.

After cooking for a long time, she was used to oil splashes. These little burns were nothing to her.

However, all of a sudden, a huge, rough hand grabbed her fingertips. "I'll put on some lotion for you."

She hurriedly pulled her hand back, but she could not break free from his grasp. She said helplessly, "I really don't need it. Besides, can you even find where I got burnt?"

There had been a small red spot when she was burnt. But after running it in the water, it was no longer visible.

Duke looked down at the back of her hand. After looking at it carefully and not seeing any wounds, he let go of her

hand.

Adina was blushing just because he held her fingertips.

Duke then took a step back. When he looked up, he noticed her eyes visibly lighting up a little.

He felt a sudden dryness in his throat.

Once again, he felt an impulse...

He took a step forward, stopping about an inch from Adina.

He stared at her lips. 'She must've tasted the tomatoes just now. There's a faint red stain at the corner of her lips, which, for some reason, looks irresistible.

He suddenly wanted to have a taste of her lips. 'What will her lips taste like? Would it be as sweet as the tomatoes?'

He slowly lowered his head.

Adina's mind went blank.

She had a rough idea of what he was doing. Her instinct told her to run away, but her legs just would not move... She could only stare at his face as he got closer and closer.

"Daddy! You lied!"

Harold suddenly shouted.

Adina came back to her senses. She turned and took the kitchen knife, pretending to cut the ginger.

Duke straightened up. He was not sure where to look as his face darkened. "Why are you here?"

"Hmph! You're a liar!" Harold crossed his arms and said angrily, "You told me not to kiss Melody, but you're the one who hid in the kitchen to kiss Mommy. Mommy's a girl and Daddy's a boy. Boys shouldn't simply kiss girls! You've crossed the line, Daddy! You're a big fat liar!" 1

Duke's face darkened. He had been caught red-handed by his own son.

He said coldly, "Are you that eager to be grounded?"

Harold stuck out his tongue and ran off.

The atmosphere of the kitchen returned to normal after Harold emerged.

Adina heated up the pan and put in the oil. She then proceeded to put in the tomatoes and cooked them. In less than five minutes, a tomato omelet was ready. Duke touched his nose. He placed the peas that he was holding onto the chopping board.

Before he could say anything, Adina had already started to cook the next dish. The kitchen was filled with cooking noises. He had to hold himself back from saying anything further.

In just half an hour, Adina swiftly prepared six dishes.

She turned off the stove and once again, the kitchen fell

silent.

She took off her apron and said softly, "Mr. Winters, I know what you want to say. I'll say this — Mrs. Winters gave me two options, and I will choose neither of them."

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Adina stood in front of the tap and washed her hands. The kitchen was filled with the sound of running water.

She lowered her gaze and looked at her hand before she spoke again, "I won't let go of the four children, and I won't marry into the Winters family because of them."

Duke looked at the side of her face. Her eyelashes cast a shadow over her eyes and hid her emotions away.

He could not figure out what was on her mind.

He pursed his lips and asked softly, "Why?"

Adina wiped her hands.

She slowly looked up. Her lips were downturned, making her look fierce.

"There are some things that I just don't want to bring up.

But he almost kissed me just now. There was a strong sense of predation in his gaze.

'It reminds me of what happened that night five years ago

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'At first, I resisted and struggled with all my strength, but it was all in vain. In the end, I was ruthlessly plowed by him.

'It was the most depressing night I've ever had.

'I still feel disgusted every time I wake up...'

Even though Adina did not utter a word, Duke noticed a look of disgust in her gaze.

The look in her eyes came upon him like a tidal wave, choking him.

I've lived for more than two decades and have only spoken to a few women. But I know it in my heart that wherever I went, I would be their topic of conversation .

'Sea City is filled with prominent and wealthy women. No woman will reject me as long as I want to be with that person.

"But Adina is an exception.

'I proposed to her, and my mother asked us to get married, but she rejected it.

"We already have children together, yet she still refuses to be with me.

"Am I that disgusting to her?"

'I will never forget the night five years ago. If you had not forced yourself onto me, whatever that had happened after that day would not have happened.'" Adina paused before speaking again, "No matter how desperate I am, I will never marry a rapist."

'Arapist'

Duke's expression turned cold when he heard the two words.

He suddenly reached out and grabbed Adina's shoulder. "That night, I was drunk..."

"Are you saying that it was okay to force yourself onto a fragile girl if you're drunk?" Adina's eyes reddened.

'I was roofed and barely conscious. I escaped from that room with the last shred of strength that I have.

I've walked out from the den. I will never enter the same place again.' 'I bit my tongue, trying my best to stay conscious.

"But there was nothing that I could do. He wasn't conscious at all. Bit by bit, he tore off my clothes...

'I can still recall it all clearly; my struggle, my desperation, my anger, my tears...' "Duke Winters, you don't have the right to marry me." Adina said sharply, "I will not spend the rest of my life bearing such injustice, just for the four children."

'I've suffered enough in the past. I've finally moved on...

'I can never let myself marry the man that ruined me...'

His hands were still grabbing her slender shoulder as his fingers curled up a little.

Duke had thought of all kinds of reasons why Adina refused to marry her, but he did not expect this to be her reason.

That was why every time he approached her, he would notice a hint of fear in her gaze.

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This was the trauma left by the incident five years ago.

Duke said in a low voice, "If I had a choice, I wish our first night together had not caused so much damage."

Adina lowered her head. The corners of her mouth stretched into a bitter smile.

How much did she wish that night had not happened?

How much did she wish she had gotten married and had children like everyone else?

How much did she wish her four children were born into this world normally? How much did she wish they were born into a complete and happy family? "Daddy, Mommy, what are you doing?"

Harold's voice suddenly came from beside them.

Adina snapped out of her thoughts. She turned around and saw the children and their fluffy heads peeking through the kitchen door. Each child's face was filled with bemusement.

She quickly took a step back and curled her lips up into a smile. "Dinner is ready. Come in and help serve the food and set the table."

George led his three siblings in, and each child took a

plate of food out.

Adina put down her apron and walked out after them.

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Duke pursed his lips and suppressed the emotions in his eyes before he sat down at the dining table, pretending as if nothing had happened. "Wow! Your cooking has gotten even better today, Mommy!"

Harold took a bite of the roasted pork. He found it so tasty that he squeezed his eyes shut in bliss. If he had a tail behind him, he would have been wagging it.

Melody followed his example as she put a piece of roasted pork into her mouth. Then, her eyes were squeezed shut with a happy look on her face.

Adina said with a smile, "Have some more if you think they are good."

Her smile did not reach her eyes. After she said that, she lowered her head and started eating. Her expression remained indifferent.

Duke sat by her side. He put a piece of roasted pork into her bowl. "You are too skinny. You should have more meat."

"My mommy doesn't like roasted pork."

Alden took out the roasted pork from her bowl and put it into his own bowl.

He could tell that his mother was in a bad mood. Something unpleasant must have happened in the kitchen.

He bit into the roasted pork and stole a glance at Duke, seemingly unintentionally.

They finished the dinner under the sound of Harold's chattering

It was already dark, so Adina grabbed her two children and said goodbye.

"Mommy, please stay, okay?" Harold hugged her arm and shook it. "Our house is very big. We have many rooms. Just stay for the night, Mommy!" George said calmly, "Mr. Brown prepared three bedrooms last night. Mommy, Al, Mel, you can stay for the night."

"That's right, Ms. Daugherty. It's already dark. It's not safe on the road. It's better for you to stay the night." Mr. Brown smiled and said, "Besides, it's Saturday tomorrow. You can take the three young masters and the lady to have some fun tomorrow. It will spare you from the trouble of traveling back and forth."

"That's right. It's a holiday tomorrow. Why don't we go to the amusement park?" Harold clapped his hands in joy.

Duke stood at the side. A shadow loomed over his body.

He, too, wanted to ask her to stay with the children, but

when he thought of what she had just said in the kitchen, he felt like a bucket of cold water had been poured on his head.

He stood at the side in silence; he did not say a single word.

Harold did not notice that there was something wrong with the atmosphere. He walked over and pulled on Duke's sleeve. "Daddy, ask Mommy to stay now. Ask her. Come on."

George keenly felt a strange vibe between the adults that he could not put his finger on.

He tugged at Harold and said indifferently, "Let's not force Mommy to stay. Besides, Mommy and Mel don't have any spare clothes here."

"Alright, I should go home now. Georgie, Hal, bye-bye."

Adina waved to the two children as she walked out of the Winters family's villa, holding Alden and Melody's hands.

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After Adina left with the children, the initially lively living room became quiet and gloomy.

Harold was sulking on the couch as he played with the Legos and puzzles that Melody had not finished putting together.

George raised his head and walked to Duke's side. He asked indifferently, "Daddy, did you make Mommy angry?"

Duke frowned. "What makes you say that?"

"Mommy's mood has been a little off since she came out of the kitchen. I thought Mommy was too tired, but during dinner just now, Mommy did not say a word to you." George continued. "Did you say something harsh to Mommy?"

Duke pinched his brows. "It's some adult stuff. It's too complicated for a kid to understand."

He did something terrible five years ago.

On that night, he had been so drunk and confused that he could not remember what he had done.

He would never have let Trent get him drunk if he had known it would end up like this today.

However...

Duke smiled a little.

If that incident had not occurred that night five years ago, he and Adina would not have these four children.

If it were not for these four children, he and she would never have met in this life.

What was the probability of a person meeting the one who makes your heart flutter?

He had heard that the chances are less than one in ten million.

Since he had found her now, he would never let her go.

“So, it’s you who upset Mommy!” It took Harold a few seconds to understand what George said. “That explains why Mommy looked so upset tonight. No wonder Mommy didn’t kiss me. It’s all your fault, Daddy! Hmph! It’s fine if you don’t like Mommy. The point is, I like her. When I grow up, I’m going to marry Mommy!”

Duke’s expression darkened . “Do you even know what you are talking about?”

“Hmph! The point is, I like Mommy. I want to be with Mommy forever! If you are incompetent, then I will do it!” Harold got farther away from him and made a face at him. Then, he ran away and hid upstairs.

The look on Duke’s face was so awfully gloomy.

He was incompetent?

If he was incompetent, this brat would not have been born!

“Mommy is the most beautiful woman in Sea City. There are a lot of men who like Mommy. Good luck, Daddy.”

George glanced at Duke briefly before he went upstairs as well.

Duke sat on the couch. His brow furrowed into a crease so deep it could clamp a fly to death.

He took out his phone and found Trent’s contact. He typed out a sentence in the input field. “How do you usually woo women? What are your most effective methods?”

After he typed that out, he felt that something was not right. So he deleted that message.

Adina was not like other women.

Those methods of Trent simply would not work on Adina.

Besides, if he used Trent’s methods to woo Adina, it somehow just felt disrespectful.

However, he just could not think of a good way to do it.

Mr. Winters always had a plan. Nothing could scare him, but he was not extremely frustrated.

He clicked open his Facebook account and swiped

through it casually. His gaze suddenly paused.

He saw a long post.

“I met a patient today. She is suffering from a severe psychological disorder. She was traumatized when she was little. Twelve years had passed since that incident, and she had long forgotten about it. However, during her wedding night with her husband , she suddenly recalled the horrible past. She loves her husband very much, but every time she recalled the past when she was raped, she could not sleep on the same bed with her husband. Almost every month, I meet at least one patient like her.”

He was just swiping through his phone casually, but this had got his attention. How could he forget that he knew a psychiatrist in his circle of friends?

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He glanced at the note. It was an English name, Catherine. He remembered it now. It had been at his mother's birthday party a few days ago. Catherine had sent someone over to deliver the birthday gift, so he added Catherine as a Facebook friend.

He had sent someone to check on Catherine's background a long time ago. She was already a well-known psychiatrist overseas, despite her young age. It was said that she could be ranked in the top three when it came to this line of work in Australia.

Duke thought about it for a moment before he finally clicked on the chat box to message Catherine.

He sent her a greeting emoji. She quickly replied, "I thought you had deleted me, Mr. Winters. Turns out that you hadn't."

"I have a friend who wants some consultation on a mental health issue."

Duke pondered over it for quite a while before he sent that message to her.

In the next second, Catherine sent a smiley face over with a witty message. "Many people who come to me for a consultation begin with the phrase, I have a friend."

Duke did not know how to reply to that.

He suddenly felt a little awkward. Talking about such a private subject with a stranger he had never met before did not seem like a good idea.

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Catherine said, "I am a psychiatrist. I have seen all kinds of situations. You don't need to hesitate, Mr. Winters. You can share your story with me in detail. I maintain confidentiality for every patient."

Duke said, "My friend's girlfriend seems to have a fear of intimacy. What can he do to help her overcome it?" Catherine said, "If it is something that she doesn't like to do, he can watch more movies with intimate scenes with her. If she was traumatized by some incident that happened in the past, she will need to consult a professional psychiatrist and undergo therapy."

Adina got up earlier on weekdays and an hour later on weekends.

The sun shone in from the balcony. She drew the blanket over her head and went back to sleep.

"Bam bam bam!" There was a loud banging on the door from downstairs all of a sudden.

Who would come to visit so early in the morning?

Adina rubbed her eyes. When she walked out of her room in slippers, she saw that Alden had also woken up. He was rubbing his sleepy eyes and standing on the stairs.

"Al, go back to sleep. I will get the door."

Adina tidied up her hair when she was walking downstairs so that she would not look sloppy. She stood at the door and peered through the peephole for quite a while, yet she did not see anyone standing out there. Was she hallucinating?

“Bam bam bam!”

There was that loud banging again.

Adina suspiciously pulled the door open. “Mommy, you finally opened the door! I missed you so much!”

Standing before her were two little boys, who were dragging their luggage.

Adina was fully awake now. “Georgie, Hal, what are you doing here?” Harold tugged on her arm and said joyfully, “Georgie and I have decided to stay here with you for a while. Are you happy, Mommy?”

Adina was a little dumbfounded.

She understood that Harold could be reckless and do as he wished, but why was George following in his suit?

Besides, this was such a big deal. Did Duke even know about this?

“Hal and I will stay here for now. Do you not welcome us, Mommy?” George inquired, cocking his head as he dragged his suitcase.

His expression was nonchalant, but his hand was clenched tightly.

This was the first time in his life that he had done something so willful and reckless.