

Chapter 421

"I can't be any happier. Come in now!"

Adina helped the boys to carry their suitcases into the house. Her eyes were beaming with delight.

Whether Duke knew about it or not, these boys were not going anywhere today. She finally had a chance to spend some alone time with her four children.

Harold had been here once before, but he had not had the chance to come in. So this was his first visit as well. He looked around curiously and touched things with interest. He asked a few questions here and there. The living room was full of joy. George looked around with a solemn gaze. This villa was much smaller than the Winters family's place. Because it was so small, the living room seemed a bit crowded. The balcony was full of toys.

The color of the couch in the living room was pink. The curtains were of a similarly warm color. The decorative items were small furry objects that enticed people to touch them.

This home was so much cozier than the Winters family's place.

No wonder Harold had insisted on staying here.

At that moment, Alden came down from upstairs with Melody. Harold darted toward them excitedly. "Mel, you haven't combed your hair. Let me comb it for you today, okay?"

Melody's eyes bulged. She covered her hair with her hands and took a step back.

"I promise to be gentle. I won't hurt you. I am going to make you the most beautiful braid in the world."

Melody cocked her head and pondered for a few moments before nodding and following Harold to the couch.

Harold did not know how to comb hair at all. He was clumsy with the comb. He had pulled out two strands of the little girl's hair.

Alden felt bad for her as he glared at him in anger. "If you don't know how to comb hair, don't pretend like you are good at it."

Harold was aggrieved. "I watched a hair-braiding video last night. I know how to comb hair. I really do."

Alden took the comb and smoothed his sister's hair, then carefully braided it.

He was good with his hands. A few moments later, he finished braiding one side of her hair, he skillfully picked up the rubber band and tied it tightly. Then, he changed

direction and tied the other side.

"Wow. You are so good at it!"

Harold could not help but clap his hands. His eyes were filled with envy.

George stood by the side. His fingers were secretly imitating Alden's movements,

Adina smiled tenderly as she saw her four children getting along well. She put on her apron and went to the kitchen to prepare breakfast. Melody did not need to practice piano on weekends. She happily took out all her toys and sat on the crawling mat with Harold to play with them. Harold was actually not interested in girls' toys, but he would do anything to hang out with Melody for a little longer. He even put on a wig and let Melody put makeup on his face. His fingernails were also painted with various colors of nail polish.

Melody was having a lot of fun.

George, however, could not stand to look at it anymore. The makeup on his stupid brother's face at that moment was just too horrifying to look at.

When he turned his head, he saw Alden sitting on the balcony, clutching a notebook.

Alden's figure was obscured by the balcony curtain. If he

looked from a different angle, Alden would have never been spotted hiding there, playing with his laptop.

George narrowed his eyes and approached him.

Alden's fingers moved quickly across the keyboard. String after string of code symbols appeared on the screen, with the communication software's communication interface on the right.

"You're forming a hacker team?"

A voice suddenly came from behind him. Alden quickly raised his hand and closed the laptop.

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He slowly turned around to look at George. He frowned and said, "Is this any of your business?"

"You are a hacker?" George pursed his lips and said, "And it looks like you are the leading figure in the hacking field. So, that opponent I met before, that was you?"

Alden shoved his laptop into the crack in the balcony cabinet and stood up. He said, "Yes, that was me. Why didn't you accept my challenge?"

George paused for a second before he said, "I have little interest in hacking, and you should stop contacting other hackers, it's not safe."

There was a faint sneer on Alden's face.

If he really had no interest in hacking, he would not have registered an account on the dark web. Besides, George's hacking abilities were clearly exemplary.

"I don't know what you are trying to do by forming a hacker team, but I'm just offering you some friendly warning about this business. It's best to stay out of it," George went on and said. He remembered every word Daddy had said to him. Therefore, despite his interest in hacking, he did not really use his hacking skills to do anything

"I'm not forming any hacker team. You saw it wrong." Alden said nonchalantly. "This is just a virtual game. Don't tell Mummy."

George glanced at him and said nothing more.

Breakfast was promptly prepared. Adina brought out five plates of pasta and mushroom soups. She was about to call the kids over for breakfast. Then, she was dumbfounded.

"Hal, you..." Her mouth opened wide as she stared at Harold. "What happened to you?"

Harold did not find anything odd about his appearance. He lifted the hem of his dress and twirled around in a circle. "This is the dress Mel picked for me. She did my makeup too. What do you think? Do I look pretty?"

Adina stared at him and said reluctantly, "Yes, you look pretty."

Alden lit a candle for him in his mind.

Melody liked to dress up and put makeup on Barbie dolls. From now on, Harold had become a Barbie doll. George could not stand to look at him anymore. He said in a low voice, "Go and remove your makeup now, otherwise, I will lose my appetite."

"Come on. Hal. I will remove your makeup for you." Adina took Harold's hand and went to the bathroom.

Harold was still proud of his appearance, but after seeing himself in the bathroom mirror, he was so terrified that his voice broke. "Mel, your makeup skills are bad. You have turned me into a ghost!"

Melody lowered her head and stared at her fingers with a wounded expression. "But I think you look pretty."

Alden rubbed his sister's head. "You will get better with a little more practice. I'm sure our brother will be happy to help you."

This was the second time Alden had addressed Harold as their brother, but he had wielded the word as a weapon to entrap him.

Harold was well aware that it was a trap, yet he still walked into it obediently. "Mel, let's not use such a bright color for the eyeshadow, okay?"

Melody squinted her eyes happily. "I will use white next time."

White eyeshadow?

That would make him look more like a ghost, would it not?

Harold's smile became stiff for a second. "Alright now. Let's have breakfast. I'll take you to the amusement park after breakfast."

When they heard Adina, the kids took their seats

obediently and ate their pastas. They quickly finished their pastas and mushroom soups.

After they did the dishes, it was only 9:30 a.m. Adina got in the car with her four children and drove to the biggest amusement park in Sea City. Meanwhile, Duke, who was getting ready for a meeting, got a call from Mr. Brown. "We have a problem, sir. Young Master George and Young Master Harold have run away from home together, bringing their suitcases with them."

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Ever since she had kids, Adina had never once set foot in the amusement park.

Alden did not like to play with such rides, and Melody was afraid of strangers. Therefore, this was the first time she was taking the children to a place like this.

She had been carrying Melody in her arms with a protective posture. However, when they reached the amusement park, the little girl struggled to get down and walk on her own.

"Mel, let's blow bubbles together."

Harold was blowing bubbles, and Melody was chasing after bubbles. They had the most innocent smiles on their faces. Adina also smiled from the bottom of her heart.

The doctor who used to treat Melody was right. Only love would bring an autistic child out of his or her own bubble.

"Georgie, Al, why are you still standing there? Go and have some fun now!"

Adina was holding four full-access tickets. They could play with whatever rides they wanted. It was just that there were a lot of people. There was a line for every ride.

George and Alden were introverts. They were quite mature for their age. So they had no interest in playing with the rides, but seeing that Melody was having so much fun, they were tempted to play as well. Hence, in the end, whatever ride Melody wanted to go on, the kids would follow along

After going through all the rides, it was already past five o'clock in the evening.

All four children were drenched in sweat. They had a great time.

"Alright now, it's time to go home. I will take you here again when we have time, okay?"

Harold was the most excited one as he exclaimed cheerfully, "Okay! Let's come again tomorrow, okay? An amusement park is so fun!"

Adina smiled stiffly.

She was already so exhausted today. If she needed to do this again tomorrow, it would kill her! Alden was introverted and Melody was mostly quiet. She had no idea how much of a headache it could be when children were overly energetic.

She finally understood today why many people only have one child, because the more children you have, the more difficult it is to keep them under control!

Melody and Alden were such obedient kids. Under Harold's influence, they completely let themselves go today.

Adina carried the four children to the car and carefully fastened their seat belts before starting the engine and driving home.

The kids were exhausted. As soon as they got in the car, they fell asleep.

By the time they arrived home, it was already dark. Adina pulled open the back seat door and woke the children up, one at a time.

"Get up. Wake up. Go home and change your shoes. I'm going to make dinner."

George was not asleep. He was just resting his eyes. So he was the first to wake up. When he was about to get out of the car, he suddenly saw a familiar figure standing at the door of the villa.

He sat up straight with a jolt. "Daddy's here!"

"What? Daddy is here? Where?" Harold opened his eyes blearily. "Hurry, Georgie. Let's find a place and hide ourselves. We can't let Daddy catch us and bring us back!"

He bent down and tried to hide under the seat.

It took Adina a few seconds to react as she turned around. Only then did she see a shadowy figure standing in front

of the villa.

The courtyard had no lights and the doorway was dark. She actually failed to notice there was a car parked outside the door and a person was standing there.

The man's silhouette seemed a little blurry in the darkness. He was emitting an imposing aura.

Adina tried her best to ignore the figure over there. She bent down and said softly, "Georgie, Hal, get out of the car first."

It was George's first time doing such a willful thing. He felt a little guilty. As he looked at the figure in the distance, his palms started to get sweaty.

While the situation was at a standstill, Melody, who was sitting beside them, pushed open the car door and ran out.

A sweet and soft voice could be heard in the night air. "Daddy!"

Duke was still sulking. They were a family of six. How could they leave him behind?

Chapter 424

Before his anger could even grow, it all disappeared when he heard Melody call him "Daddy".

He picked up the little girl who ran toward him, and after spinning her around, he asked softly, "Did you miss Daddy?"

"Yes!"

The little girl nodded vigorously. On the other side, Harold was still looking for a place to hide in the car.

George pursed his lips and said, "You had the nerve to run away from home, but you're not brave enough to face the consequences?"

Harold buried his head under the cushion and said with a muffled voice, "Hmph. I am a scaredy-cat. What're you

going to do about it? Fight me?"

Adina was not sure whether to cry or laugh as she looked at them. "You think your Daddy can't find you if you hide under the cushion? Come out, darling."

"No! I don't want to come out!" Harold hugged the cushion and said stubbornly, "I want to stay here today. I want to spend the night at your house!"

"Stay here, then. I'll go back with Daddy," George said after pursing his lips for a moment.

He sat up and was ready to get out of the car.

Harold finally moved and tugged at George's sleeve. "George, you-"

At last, George felt some relief. This kid still had some degree of conscience and was reluctant to send his big brother out to face their father's wrath alone.

"I know you're the best, George. Just say that you dragged me to Mommy's house today. Daddy likes you the most, and he definitely won't punish you. Just don't tell on me, okay?"

George was rendered speechless.

He had truly overestimated Harold's sense of morality.

"Okay, Hal," Adina said weakly while holding her forehead. "I swear, I'll convince your daddy to let you two spend the night at my house, okay?"

George finally let go of the cushion.

Adina led the children out of the car. In the darkness of the night, the group of six stood face to face at the entrance of the mansion.

Standing on one side was Duke, who was carrying their little girl.

On the other side was Adina, who was holding on to the three boys.

Harold was hiding behind Adina, and George looked guilty.

"What brought you here? Have you eaten yet?" Adina asked with a soft smile.

Since she wanted to let George and Harold stay, she had best put on a friendly attitude so that it would be easier for her to negotiate later.

The two of them had parted on a sour note the day before, but Adina was all-smiles while talking to him today, and it made all the lingering sadness that surrounded Duke's heart vanish into thin air.

The corners of his lips curled up as he said, "I haven't eaten yet. Can I impose on you for dinner?"

"Of course, you can."

Adina pushed open the door to the mansion and stood to the side to allow the others to enter.

She took out all the ingredients from the fridge and planned to prepare a lavish dinner, as it was the first time George and Harold were eating at her house.

She still had to bring out the gifts she had carefully prepared for the two little ones after they finished their meals.

Adina was in a really great mood, but it quickly changed when she noticed Duke wandering into the kitchen.

This man was freely walking around her house as if it were his own. How could he do that when he was just a

guest?

However, she would need to ask him for something later, and it was not really ideal for her to give him the cold shoulder all the time.

She was focused on chopping up the ingredients, while Duke volunteered to wash the vegetables and peel the potatoes. The atmosphere in the kitchen fell silent.

Chapter 425

Duke rarely entered a kitchen, or he had never actually stepped foot in one.

But lately, he had gone into the kitchen practically every day. He would wash vegetables or peel potatoes, and he was starting to get the hang of things.

The kitchen was located right next to the living room in Adina's modest mansion. They could hear the noise coming from the living room despite the two of them being busy in the kitchen. Basically, Harold was making all the noise as he chased Melody around the living room while laughing and playing

"You're so naughty, Mel. How dare you tickle me!"

Harold rolled his sleeves up and started chasing after Mel. Dimples appeared on the little girl's face as she ran away while smiling, but Harold caught her and pushed her onto the couch.

"Let's see if you're still going to tickle me again!"

"I'm sorry, Hal," Melody pleaded while laughing since she was unable to escape.

Alden hurried over to them and said, "Let go of Mel, Harold. She'll get out of breath from laughing so much."

After letting go of Mel, Harold turned his body over and pushed Alden onto the play mat. "I'll tickle you instead, then. Is it ticklish? Hahaha."

Alden was able to resist Harold's attacks, but slowly after that, Harold reached his hands into Alden's shirt and started tickling all over his belly. Alden finally could not take it anymore and burst out laughing. Once he started laughing, he could not stop.

"Let's see if you dare to pick on me again! Hahaha," Harold said as he tickled harder and more vigorously."

Ah!!"

Alden flipped them over and pinned Harold under him before Harold could even finish his sentence. Alden did exactly what Harold had done to him earlier and started tickling him nonstop. "Hahaha ... it's so ticklish! I'm sorry, Alden, stop tickling me... hahaha. George! George, help me! Hurry... Hahaha

George pursed his lips in silence as he watched the three little rascals rolling all over the play mat.

He approached them with the intention of pulling Harold away, but he was forcefully yanked into the pile instead.

In no time, the four kids were rolling around and having fun.

The vase that was placed atop the coffee table by the couch dropped when they collided into it, making a loud clang.

However, Harold's laughter was too loud, and the kids did not notice the vase dropping, so they carried on playing and tickling each other.

Adina stepped out of the kitchen after preparing dinner and saw the scene. The play mat, under the table, the shelves, the balcony, and even the corners were scattered with building blocks. There were building blocks all over the place.

Even the coffee table next to the couch had been knocked over, leaving the vase on the floor broken. The children were playing just beside the glass shards. She did not have any idea if any of them had been hurt.

Adina immediately placed the bowls down and hurried over to them with big strides and asked, "What are you kids doing?"

"Hahaha , we're tickling each other. Hurry up and help me, Mommy. I can't take it anymore. I'm going to pass out from laughing, haha!"

Harold complained as he tugged on Alden's collar and reached to vigorously scratch Alden's armpit. Adina was completely speechless.

It seemed that the children were not all that noisy when they were playing in the playground that day. They were

the noisiest when they were rolling around and fighting like this.

She really could not believe how the quiet Mel, the introverted Hal, and the sensible Georgie were able to make such a mess when playing with Harold.

Maybe that was just how kids were?

“Did any of you get hurt by all the glass shards on the floor?” Adina asked while holding her forehead.

The four little rascals were already standing obediently in a row and shook their heads in response to her question. “Okay, that’s good. Now, go wash your hands and get ready to eat.” The four kids immediately wore their shoes and went straight to the bathroom.

Chapter 426

When he looked at himself in the mirror, Alden saw that his shirt collar was practically torn, his hair looked like a bird’s nest, and his mouth twitched.

George’s mouth twitched too. He did not even know who had made the red scratch mark on his face. The collar of his shirt was stained black, and he looked very disheveled. Only Harold remained absorbed in the fun of playing. “Alden, you lost today, haha! Hurry, call me big brother!” Alden rolled his eyes at him and said, “Take a look at Mel, then we’ll talk.”

Melody stood forlornly in front of the mirror and looked helplessly in the mirror at herself. Tears were threatening to spill from her eyes.

The little girl’s hair was long, but it was all over the place and looked like a bird’s nest now. Her chiffon dress had been tom in some places, and there were even a few dirty shoe prints on her pink dress. “Uh, I’m sorry, Mel.” Harold was very guilty. “I won’t do that again.”

Alden came over and helped tidy up his sister’s clothes and hair before leading her out while holding her hand,

The six of them sat down at the small dining table.

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The four rascals had been too rowdy just now, so they were very quiet while eating their dinner.

After she was almost finished with her meal, Adina spoke tentatively, “Mr. Winters, it’s getting late already, why don’t you let Georgie and Hal stay at my place tonight?” Duke placed down his spoon and said, “I think I’ve said the same words to you yesterday.”

Adina was flabbergasted.

The Winters family had offered her to stay the night at their mansion, but she had turned them down.

Duke’s choice to reject her request for George and Harold to stay at her home tonight was understandable.

However, she really did not want to lose the chance to spend more time with the kids.

She pursed her lips and said, "Then, what should I do so that you'll agree to let George and Harold stay the night here?"

"They have every right to do that since you are their birth mother. I don't have any issues with it," Duke calmly said.

Adina was stunned.

'Did this man just agree?'

"But—" In a low voice, Duke added, "I'm the children's birth father. It's not too much for me to occasionally ask

them to stay with me for a few days, right?"

Adina went silent.

Of course, he had been waiting for her to say that.

She just knew that it was not easy to convince this man.

There was no way that George and Harold could spend the night at her house if she rejected him.

If she agreed to him, then it meant that she would have to send Al and Mel to the Winters' house at some point in the future.

The atmosphere turned heavy all of a sudden.

Duke looked at her for a few seconds and muttered quietly, "It's okay, I'm just bringing it up. I never said that the kids had to stay at my house. I won't make them do it if they don't want to."

He turned to face George and Harold and added, "You two are all grown up now, and you have the right to decide where you want to spend the night. I won't get in the way of your decision." "Wow! Really, Daddy?!" Harold was ecstatic when things took a turn because he believed they had missed their chance. "You're the best, Daddy! You're the best daddy in the world! I love you so much!"

The corner of Duke's lips curled up.

Harold thought Duke had no idea, but he knew this little

rascal gave him a nickname behind his back and always secretly called him the Big Devil.

Now that he agreed to let this little guy stay here, and he became the best Daddy in the world?

He was not sure whether to get angry or be happy at that.

Chapter 427

As darkness took over the sky, Adina was finally finished cleaning up the messy living room. She took a glance at Duke who was reading a book on the couch, and rubbed her nose in confusion.

'It's almost ten in the evening. Why is this man still here?

Does he want me to order him to leave?'

The four kids seemed to be gaining even more energy, and Adina had no idea when they would all be going to bed.

After giving it some thought, Adina made the decision to put the kids to bed first and deal with Duke after.

"Alright, Georgie, Hal, Al, and Mel, time to put the toys away. We're going to go upstairs and take a bath," she said with a smile while standing at the side of the play mat.

Harold said, "Five more minutes, Mommy," without raising his head and while still holding the Transformer toy in his arms.

Adina was getting a little tired.

That was already the third time they had asked for five more minutes.

Even Mel had copied her brother and said, "Five more minutes."

The little girl seldom spoke, but when she did, anybody who heard her would instantly be melted by her soft voice. Adina looked at Alden and George and asked, "What about you two? Do you want to play for another five minutes as well?"

Alden nodded and said, "I'm going to stay here with Mel because I'm afraid Harold might bully her."

George looked up and said, "Harold plays rough sometimes. I'll be here to keep an eye on him."

Harold was speechless.

Mel is my favorite, so why would I pick on her? These two are trying to throw mud on me while lying through their teeth!

"Harold is restless wherever he goes. With him here, it'll be difficult for you to get a good night's sleep," Duke added with a smile. "That's okay," Adina answered with a soft smile. "L'IL join them in playing if they want to."

Regardless, she would never let go of them.

"It's difficult for you to take care of four kids on your OWI, so you don't need to put up such a strong front,"

Duke said quietly. "How about this? I'll stay over to help you look after the kids."

"There's no need for that!" Adina shook her head immediately as her eyes widened.

This man was like a hungry wolf, and the gaze he used to look at her was always intrusive.

She would be insane to let this man stay the night at her place. A glimpse of disappointment flashed through Duke's eyes. "Okay then. It's getting late. I should head back now," he said as he stood up calmly.

He took a few steps towards the door, but turned back and asked, "Are you kids not going to say goodbye to Daddy?"

Harold and George appeared not to have heard him, as they were focused on stacking the building blocks.

Alden looked at Duke and gave him a little wave.

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Only Mel approached Duke barefoot and gently shook his hand while saying, "Goodbye, Daddy."

"Mel is the sweetest!"

Duke left a kiss on the little girl's cheek and walked out of the mansion.

He was very fortunate to have a little girl out of his four children since he would have been miserable without her.

The mansion was suddenly quite empty once Duke left.

Adina first took a shower of her own and headed downstairs after that. The four kids were finally looking sleepy. She first gave Mel a bath, and then Harold.

George and Alden, on the other hand, matured quickly and could already bathe themselves by the time they turned three.

By the time she finished looking after the kids, it was eleven thirty at night.

Adina immediately dozed off after lying down as her body felt exhausted.

However, she heard crying in the middle of the night.

Mel was sleeping in a room on her own, while the other three kids were sharing another room.

Adina went after the crying sound and found Harold sobbing while sitting on the carpet next to the room's door. "I want milk. I want milk!" He cried out loud.

Chapter 428

Adina thought he was sleep talking.

She crouched down and said, "Hal, come here. Let's get you to bed."

"No, I want milk. I'm hungry. I want milk..." the kid cried while hugging Adina's neck. "I brought the milk powder, and it's in the suitcase. Mommy, I want to drink some milk."

Well, it did not seem like he was sleep talking.

Adina walked over to the suitcase, and sure enough, there was a tub of milk powder inside.

Harold was already four and a half years old. It was not quite right for a child that big to drink milk at night.

“Mommy, Hal has to drink milk at night,” George said drowsily, having woken up from the crying. “The bottle is in the suitcase too.”

“Okay, I got it. You can go to sleep now.”

Adina patted George on the head and carried the crying Harold to prepare his milk.

She prepared a big bottle of milk, but Harold finished the whole thing in less than five minutes.

She finally understood the meaning of Duke’s words. She could not, in fact, sleep soundly while Harold was around.

What about it, though? All of that she did owe to Harold.

When both of the kids were born, she had not been around to be their mother, and now it was time for her to make it up to them with her motherly love.

Harold was fast asleep in her arms and since she did not want to disturb George and Alden’s sleep, she carried Harold to her own room.

That night, the mother and son slept side by side. The moment Harold opened his eyes in the morning, he was face to face with Adina’s face.

He rubbed his eyes in disbelief, thinking he was hallucinating, but not only did the face in front of him not disappear, it actually got clearer instead.

He reached a finger out and poked Adina’s face.

“Wow! It really is Mommy!

“I actually slept with Mommy for the night!

“Wow! I’m really the happiest kid in the whole world!”

As Harold was covering his mouth while snickering, Adina opened her eyes and asked, “Why are you laughing so happily right in the morning, kid?”

“I can’t believe I actually spent the night with Mommy. I’m too happy,” Harold blushed.

“There will be even more opportunities for that in the future!” Adina sat up and said, “Now, that’s enough sleeping, time to wake up!”

Harold immediately got up.

As soon as he got dressed, he quickly ran to the next room.

“George, do you know? I slept with Mommy last night!

“Did you hear that, Alden? I slept with Mommy last night. Hehehe. Mommy hugged me as we slept through the night.

“Mommy must’ve liked me the most because I’m the cutest and most handsome. Hahaha!”

Both George and Alden were speechless and rolled their eyes at him. Harold ran to Melody's room to disturb her too. "Mel, let me tell you some good news. Mommy hugged me while we were sleeping last night. Have you ever slept with Mommy before?" "Mommy said a kid who still sleeps with an adult after turning three is not a good kid," Melody murmured softly as she tilted her head to the side.

Her words were like a bolt from the blue for Harold.

Harold was dumbfounded. "So, I'm not a good kid?"

"That was what Mommy said," Melody added while nodding

Adina entered the room with a smile and said, "Harold is the sweetest. How can you be a bad kid? But you have to get rid of your habit of drinking milk in the middle of the night."

Harold pouted sadly. "But I was hungry. I woke up in the night because I was hungry."

"Then you should eat more at dinner," Adina said gently. "If you don't brush your teeth after drinking milk at night, you could get cavities. Do you want your teeth to get ruined?"

Harold covered his mouth in shock.

Adina wanted to continue with her lecture, but the phone in her pocket buzzed all of a sudden.

Chapter 429

Adina pulled out her phone, and after taking a look at the caller ID, she answered the call.

"Good day, Ms. Daugherty. I'm an account representative from Elitos Corporation. I'd like to let you know that your bid document has cleared our company's initial evaluation. Please make plans to attend the meeting at Elitos Corporation at ten o'clock this morning."

Adina glanced at the time and agreed.

The fact that Elitos Corporation had called her at this exact time meant that there must be good news regarding the bid.

She had to win this project. She had to go.

But what about these four kids?

Just as she was thinking of a plan to arrange the four kids, a knock came from downstairs.

Mel, who was sitting quietly on the bed, suddenly jumped out and ran downstairs to open the door.

Adina immediately guessed who the visitor was.

She walked into her room to wash up and dressed in official attire before heading downstairs.

Duke had already taken a seat on the couch. He looked up

to face the woman coming down the stairs and asked with a small smile, "Where did you plan to take the kids today?"

“Mr. Winters, I believe I have a favor to ask of you.” Adina cleared her throat and muttered dryly, “I suddenly have some urgent matters to settle at work. Would you kindly help me watch the kids for a little while?”

“Huh? Are you going to work, Mommy?” Harold was instantly bummed. “I want to follow Mommy to work too.”

Adina patted his head and said, “I have very important things to take care of, but I’ll be home in the afternoon. Stay at home and behave, okay?”

Harold was about to speak again when George interrupted, “Mel was right. You’re not a good kid.” “That’s not true! I’m a good kid!” Harold said as he took a step back and waved his hands. “Hurry up and head to work, Mommy. I’ll make sure to behave!” Adina laughed at his antics.

She patted each child’s head one by one before turning to look at Duke and said, “I’ll leave it to you, Mr. Winters.”

Duke hated the words “Mr. Winters” more than anything, yet there was nothing he could do about it.

He nodded lightly and said, “Don’t worry, I’ll take care of the kids. You can work in peace.”

Adina made her way to the door, changed into a pair of heels, and left.

For the first time, Duke felt clueless about what to do as he stared at the four children in the living room.

He had watched George and Harold grow up in front of his eyes, but he had never really taken care of them on his own. All the daily chores and activities had been managed by Mr. Brown.

“Daddy, I’m hungry,” Melody said in a super soft voice as she grabbed onto Duke’s shirt and swayed. Harold rubbed his tummy and said, “Daddy, I’m hungry too. I want to eat veggie noodles.”

It was seven in the morning when Duke took a quick check at the time. It was time to prepare breakfast. He had not eaten breakfast as well.

He turned to his two other boys and asked, “What about you two? What do you want to eat?”

“Anything would do,” George replied calmly. Alden paused for a second and said, “I want to eat handmade noodles. Does Daddy know how to make it?” It was practically his first time calling Duke “Daddy”, and also the first time he had asked for something. Duke would definitely not turn him down. “All right, wait for a while. Breakfast will be ready in a bit.”

Harold and Melody continued playing heartlessly.

George glanced at Alden with doubt and asked, “Do you really like having handmade noodles?” “Does it matter?” Alden pursed his lips and said, “I believe Daddy will definitely succeed at making it.”

Duke entered the kitchen, closed the door, and pulled out his phone.

He opened up the web and searched for “handmade noodle” recipes.

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“First, prepare the flour, then knead the dough.”

He followed the tutorial, poured flour into the container, and added water.

“If the dough is slightly moist, add some flour. If it seems too dry after that, add a little water.” However, try as he might, he just could not make the dough take shape.

“Wow, Daddy, making handmade noodles seems to be fun. Can I do it with you?” Harold entered the kitchen at some point in time. He simply grabbed a handful of flour and flung it into the air. The flour landed on Duke’s body, and his black suit instantly became powdered up. Just as he was about to erupt in anger, Melody ran into the kitchen.

The girl must have never played with flour before. She reached into the flour bag with both hands, and, with a wave of her hand, the kitchen immediately became foggy. With a blossoming headache, Duke asked, “Can you two go out of the kitchen first?” He was stuck on the first step of making the handmade noodles. He did not have the patience to deal with these two children.

“Daddy, do you not know how to make handmade noodles?” Harold caught on and laughed loudly at his dad, “Daddy, if you don’t know how to make the noodles, you should have said so, because George will undoubtedly be able to! Even if George is unable to make it, Alden will undoubtedly know! Both of them are very intelligent. They will know how to make handmade noodles just by watching the tutorial video.”

Duke was speechless.

Those two boys were clever because they had inherited his IQ.

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Harold welcomed George and Alden into the kitchen. Once they stood by the kitchen top, there was barely any place left to stand in the area.

Alden was very thoughtful and said, “Daddy, if you can’t make this, then I’m fine with not eating it. I’m okay with

instant noodles too.”

“I want to eat handmade noodles!” Harold gulped. “It looks very delicious. Mel, do you want to eat it too?”

Melody nodded, then grabbed a handful of flour and threw it at Harold’s head.

“Gah, Mel, another sneak attack?!”

Harold turned around and went after Melody, and the two of them chased after each other in the narrow kitchen.

Bang!

Clang!

An oil bottle and a salt jar on the side of the kitchen top fell to the floor with a crash.

Harold's whole body tensed up, and he took a step back in fear, but he obediently apologized to his father, "Sorry, Daddy, I won't do it again!"

Duke instantly sighed with relief. He said in a deep voice, "The oil and salt are now gone, so it's impossible to make handmade noodles. Let's go. I'll take you all outside to eat."

Harold was flabbergasted.

Why did he feel that his father was just waiting for him to screw things up?

But it was also true that with the oil and salt gone, they could not make noodles. Duke, the sole adult, then brought the four children outside.

Adina drove toward Elitos Corporation.

Serene was waiting for her at the entrance. "Ms. Daugherty, good news. Our bid proposal has passed the review."

Adina nodded. "I know, but there's one more hurdle to overcome."

"I thought the results would only be revealed at tomorrow's tender conference. I didn't anticipate receiving news that soon." Serene was very shocked. "I've heard that Elitos Corporation's senior executives mixed the bids from our company and Miss Perry's together, and they also removed our names. The entire company then cast its votes. Our company's bid received eighty percent of the votes in favor, which means the unofficial chief chip designer is now you!"

Adina was not surprised by this result.

Although she had only spent one day preparing her bid proposal, she had been in this field for four to five years. As a result, her knowledge of what she needed to know was deeply ingrained in her brain.

Her bid did not have any fatal errors, other than it being too concise.