

## Master odells 531

### Chapter 531

Sylvia smiled as she took their hands, then she brought them to their new home.

Their new home had a wonderful yard covered with a bed of soft grass. Sylvia also made sure to set up a little play area for them, which included slides and swings with an additional mini racing track for remote control toy cars. Isabel ran to the play area as soon as she entered. She snatched up the controller and sent the toy car racing down the tracks. She exclaimed excitedly, "Brother, over here!" Liam was quietly surveying the new environment, Isabel yelled for him again when he did not show up, "Brother, come quickly!"

Liam pursed his lips and walked toward her.

The two sat on the ground and played together.

Sylvia had nothing else to do, so she sat with them and watched them play. When it got dark, Aunt Tonya called them into the house for dinner.

Sylvia immediately went to the kitchen to help Aunt Tonya set the food on the dining table. Then, she called for the children, "Isabel, Liam, time for dinner."

Isabel answered at the top of her voice, "Okay, Mommy."

Shortly after that, she trotted in with Liam. As Sylvia served them dinner, they sat on the chair and ate obediently. Sylvia chatted with them from time to time. "Did you two do anything fun at school today?" Isabel rambled on and on, "Nothing much happened today. Oh, Candice and the other girls from the other class kept glancing at Brother today. Also, one of the girls stuffed two pieces of chocolate into his pocket, but I ate them all." Sylvia made a look and stole a glance at Liam. The child held a spoon in hand and was slowly, even gracefully scooping mouthfuls of food into his mouth. His movements were precise and deliberate, completely looking like an adult himself.

It was also rather apparent that he was not interested in the girls Isabel mentioned. Sylvia found it very humorous. Aunt Tonya chuckled heartily, listening to Isabel's tales. Meanwhile, there was a black car that had been parked outside the gate for a long time. A man sat by himself alone in the backseat, his obsidian eyes silently observing the scene in the living room through the car window.

It was only a short distance from the entrance of the house to the living room. With the transparent windows surrounding the living room on both sides, it was not difficult to see the residents dining inside.

The children seemed very well behaved, and the two women seemed to be in a jovial mood as well.

"Master Carter, don't you want to go in and have a look?" Ben blurted out. "No, let's go back" Ben stayed silent and did as he was told, revving the car's engine. The car exited the area shortly after that. As Odell looked at the house in the rearview mirror, the shape of the house slowly shrunk as they drove farther away. "Has everything been arranged?" Ben assured Odell, "Don't worry. Our team is posted around the clock just as you have instructed. If anything happens to Ms. Sylvia or the children, our team will be alerted immediately and they will take swift action to ensure their safety." "Good."

After dinner, Sylvia took Liam and Isabel to their room. There were two beds inside the room that had a very cozy setup. However, Isabel was still not used to sleeping alone, so she crawled into Liam's bed after she took a shower.

Sylvia sat on the edge of the bed with a book and told them bedtime stories until they fell asleep, then she got up and went out. She had a peaceful, dreamless sleep. The next morning, she got up and went to the children's room again to find that they were still sleeping. Isabel had tangled herself around Liam, one of her legs even resting right on top of his torso.

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Sylvia chuckled at this sight and woke up them gently. "Isabel, Liam, it's time to wake up." Liam was the first to open his eyes, Isabel woke up right after that and drowsily burrowed herself into Sylvia's arms.

Sylvia sat down on the edge of the bed and shared an intimate hug with both the kids for a moment.

After they had fully woken up, she helped them get dressed. When they had washed up, they went to the living room. Aunt Tonya had already made breakfast for them. She made Eggs Benedict which was one of both Liam and Isabel's favorite dishes,

After breakfast, Sylvia took them to kindergarten.

Their days were simple and carefree, and three days passed in the blink of an eye.

It was soon Friday. Sylvia arrived at the gate of the kindergarten around evening, just in time to pick up Liam and Isabel. Then, she took them home.

While Aunt Tonya was busy with dinner, Sylvia played with the kids in the living room. Isabel was lying across her arms, her attention fixed on the cartoon she was watching. Liam sat next to her and was fiddling with a Rubik's cube.

Everyone was quiet and occupied with their activities.

Suddenly, Liam set the Rubik's cube aside and had an absent look on his face.

Sylvia noticed something was wrong and asked him, "Liam, what's wrong?"

Liam turned to her, "Mommy, it's Friday, why isn't Daddy coming to see us?"

"Yeah, the big baddie hasn't shown up for several days." Isabel turned away from the screen and echoed the same sentiment, "He didn't find some other woman, did he?"

Sylvia shot them a look and gently patted the top of Isabel's head before informing the two of them, "He's very busy with work. Maybe he just doesn't have time to come here." Liam frowned.

Sylvia caressed his forehead and suggested carefully, "Give your Daddy a call if you miss him."

When Liam looked silently at her, Sylvia smiled softly in return. "Okay," he answered with a flash of suspiciousness in his eyes.

It did not seem like Mommy and Daddy fought, but he could not shake off the feeling that something was going on between the two of them.

At night, In Llam and Isabel's room, Sylvia told them bedtime stories as usual. 11 did not take long for Isabel to begin snoring, and Liam had shut his eyes as well.

Seeing that they were almost asleep, Sylvia gently pecked their cheeks with a quick kiss and left their room. Immediately after she went out, Liam snapped his eyes wide open. He sat up with a ruminative look, then he got his phone and deftly dialed Odell's number. The call was answered rather quickly. Liam heard Odell's scratchy voice from the other end of the phone, "Liam, why are you calling me at this hour. Aren't you supposed to be sleeping?"

"What are you doing?" Liam asked. "Working." "Are you busy?" "Yeah, what's wrong?" Liam inquired, "Did you fight with Mommy?" After a few seconds of silence, Odell responded, "No, things are fine with your mother." "Then, why aren't you coming to visit us?"

"I've just been busy these days." After a pause, Odell offered, "It's Saturday tomorrow. Is there anywhere you want to go to tomorrow?" Liam thought about it for a second and asked, "Are you going to take us somewhere tomorrow?"

"Hm."

"Sis is already asleep. Why don't you ask her tomorrow after you get here?" "Alright, now you go to bed as well." Liam hung up and lay back under the covers. He closed his eyes and put his arm around his sleeping sister's shoulders.

The next morning, the sun rose at the same time as usual.

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Sylvia woke up at the same time as usual

Since it was Saturday, she was in no particular hurry to wake Isabel and Liam up. She made breakfast with Aunt Tonya before she went to get the children

To her surprise, Liam was already awake and already dressed. He was playing with the little Rubik's cube that she had handmade for him. Upon noticing Sylvia entering, he greeted her casually, "Good morning, Mommy." Sylvia smiled at him and returned the same greeting, "Good morning, Liam."

Then, she woke up Isabel, the lazy little pig.

After Isabel got washed and dressed as well, she took them to the living room for breakfast They wolfed down their breakfast very quickly. Sylvia took her phone and was just wondering where to take them today when Aunt Tonya suddenly marched through the door, appearing a little jumpy

Sylvia immediately inquired, "Aunt Tonya, is something the matter?"

Aunt Tonya darted a glance at Isabel and Liam, and lowered her voice to a hushed whisper, "He's here."

Something gleamed in Sylvia's eyes, and she proceeded to ask calmly, "Odell is here?" This immediately drew Isabel and Liam's attention

Aunt Tonya nodded

Sylvia smiled and turned to Isabel and Liam, "Liam, Isabel, your Daddy is here to bring you out. Why don't you two go to him?"

Isabel was rather delighted and climbed off the sofa immediately

Liam asked, "Mom, aren't you coming?"

Isabel turned to Sylvia with a curious glimmer in her eyes.

Sylvia looked at the two pairs of perfectly round eyes staring at her. She gave them a troubled look and said with a strained smile, "I have other things to deal with today, so I won't be going with you kids today. Have fun with your Daddy." Liam did not have anything to say while Isabel only muttered a short "oh" in a slightly dejected tone.

However, the prospect of getting to go somewhere fun filled her with joy again. After Sylvia urged them to go to their father, Isabel dragged Liam behind her and went to find Odell.

After they left, Sylvia recollected herself. She sat on the sofa and stayed there while Aunt Tonya followed the kids outside

After a stretch, she came back into the living room, probably because Isabel and Liam had left with Odell. She asked in a slightly puzzled manner, "Sylvia, the kids kept looking back at the house as they got in the car. Why didn't you go out to send them off?"

Sylvia stated, "They'll see me again when they come back tonight, so there was no need to send them off."

It was not so much that she did not want to do so; she just wanted to avoid seeing Odell again. After all, it was important to set a clear boundary after their divorce. Unless it was to settle matters directly concerning their children, there was no need for them to meet. Aunt Tonya had a hint of what was on Sylvia's mind, so she just sighed and decided against giving an opinion.

Meanwhile, the car was coasting down the lane. Odell was seated in the backseat with Isabel and Liam. He glanced at the rearview mirror.

Through the rearview mirror, he caught the reflection of Sylvia's house. He still could not spot Sylvia emerging from the house.

Aunt Tonya must have gone inside already, and it seemed like Sylvia had no intention of sending the children off. "Hey, baddie, where are you taking us today?" Isabel suddenly crawled up to him. Odell wiped away the worrisome look in his eyes and took Isabel into his arms. Isabel responded very well to this gesture. She leaned her weight against his arm, and wrapped her short arms around him, then fixed a curious stare at him.

He flashed a subtle smile and answered, "I'm taking you two somewhere fun." "What kind of fun place?" "You'll know when you get there." Isabel's eyes shone with excitement as she turned to look out the car window. What Odell said had piqued her interest, so she became restless and could not sit still on his lap anymore. After a while, she crawled to the other window to peer out.

Odell would grab at her shirt from time to time to prevent her from losing balance and falling off the seat. Meanwhile, Liam had not uttered a word since he got into the car. He was very stoic and sat motionlessly.

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The teachers trailed after him.

Before Sylvia could even realize what was happening, one of the teachers accidentally backed into her and sent her tumbling to the floor. It was a harder shove than it seemed. Sylvia stumbled twice and fell to the floor. Her knees scraped against the hard ground. She frowned, then picked herself up off the floor.

It was at this point that a large, and delicate hand suddenly extended in front of her.

The restless group of teachers instantly stopped their ceaseless fawning and became silent.

Sylvia was rather taken aback by this. She looked up and saw a very familiar and handsome face.

Underneath the man's fringe was a pair of cool and beautiful eyes staring back at her.

Sylvia opened her eyes wide and mouth agape, "Thomas? Why are you here?" Thomas curled his lip into a smile. "I work here." With that, he grabbed her by her wrist and lifted her from the ground. Sylvia was still reeling back from the shock "When did you start working here?" "A month ago." After a pause, he asked, "Why are you here?"

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"I'm working here too. I only just started today."

"Have you had lunch yet?"

"No."

"Let's have lunch together."

Sylvia felt countless needles prickling every part of her body. She looked behind her. It was the loathsome glare of the group of teachers penetrating through her. She chuckled dryly and changed her mind. "You know what? Maybe I shouldn't." Thomas turned to look at his worshippers with a piercing gaze in his eyes that were devoid of warmth. They felt a chilling pang of cold seeping through their skin when they felt his gaze on them.

Thomas stated politely, "It's getting late, teachers. You girls should quickly get something to

—

eat."

They took the hint. Some of them grunted a word or two in response while the others immediately turned and left, looking defeated. In time, they all walked away and branched off into several groups. Sylvia and Thomas went to a small restaurant near the school. After sitting down, Sylvia had many questions on her mind. "Thomas, what are you teaching here?"

From what she could remember, he was very withdrawn and was not fond of talking. Back

when Otell and their stepmother were still fighting for ownership of the family business, their stepmother had wanted him to work in the company in a managerial position. Head expressed very little interest in the arrangement, and in time, their stepmother ve up on the idea entirely

After the whole debate was wrapped up, their stepmother left the family business and was completely disgraced. After that she had taken Thomas with her and left Westchester. Till now, Sylvia did not know what line of work Thomas took interest in

It was rather surprising that he had come in the academy to work as a teacher

Thomas answered her obligingly. "I teach piano"

Sylvia's eyes glowed. She remembered that he liked playing the piano, and that he was very good at it

When she still lived with the Carters, she would always hear him playing the piano

Though they did not live in the same block, she could still hear the music as clear as day From time to time, she would also notice him playing piano through the window Whenever he played the piano, she would feel waves of inspiration During that period, she frequently paled whenever he played piano

“What about you? What are you teaching here?” he asked suddenly

She replied, “I teach”

He nodded and seemed like he had nothing to add

The waiter brought the menu

She asked, “What would you like to eat?”

“Anything works.”

“Very well”

Knowing that he was not a very talkative man, she stopped pestering him. She ordered her favorites and ordered something normal for her, then she handed the menu back to the waiter. They ate their lunch in silence

After the meal, she went to ask for the bill before he could, only to find out that the bill had already been paid. She turned around with an astonished look

Thomas just happened to be approaching her, his tall figure impossible to miss. Noticing the look on Sylvia’s face, he brandished his phone “Online payment.”

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Sylvia gave a troubled look They walked out of the restaurant together and strolled along a path leading back to the academy Sylvia spoke her mind, “Thomas, please let me pay the bill next time.” Although she was divorced from Odell, she still considered Thomas her younger brother

Furthermore, he had rescued her not once but twice in her times of greatest need She simply did not know how she could ever repay the favor she owed him, and she certainly could not have Thomas paying for her food

“Yeah.” He grunted.

Sylvia breathed a sigh of relief.

After a while, they reached the academy office, beside which was his office

After saying their goodbyes, the two of them went back to their respective offices.

Since Sylvia did not teach academic courses, her classes had a looser structure.

She had prepared everything in advance, and the students had very good dynamics with her as well. The two classes she taught turned out to be very relaxing and productive.

The two classes flew by in the blink of an eye. She returned to the office, ready to pack her things and head to the kindergarten to pick up Isabel and Liam.



However, she stumbled into Thomas again when she was leaving her office

He wore a cream-colored coat over his white shirt, the drape of the fabric perfectly complementing his lanky figure. He could easily pass for a model. Sylvia asked him with a smile, "Thomas, are you done for the day as well?"

"Yeah."

"Where do you stay?" "I stay in the school dormitory." After a pause, he looked at her and asked, "What about you?"

"I live in the area." Sylvia looked at the time and saw that she was running late, so she hurriedly said to him, "See you. I need to pick Isabel and Liam up from kindergarten."

"See you."

Sylvia turned and trotted in the direction of the stairs,

Thomas stood like a statue and quietly observed her figure from behind.

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Sylvia arrived at the kindergarten just as their classes ended.

Isabel and Liam walked out together holding hands as usual. They trotted toward Sylvia the moment they saw her

Delighted to see them, she kissed them on the cheeks and took them home

As always, Sylvia played with them for a while after dinner, then she told them bedtime stories and waited until they fell asleep before heading back to her room

In Carter Tower, Westchester City, it was already midnight, but the lights in the office on the top floor were still turned on

There was a tall figure of a man sitting on a leather chair, illuminated by the ceiling lights After reviewing the final document, he looked at the watch on his wrist He zipped his lips into a line and swung the chair around to face the window He looked at the night view of the city. the tint in his eyes as black as the night sky

Knock knock

There was someone at the door

Odell called out, "Come in." Cliff opened the door and walked in cautiously

"Master Carter, you've already arranged everything for the next half month Do you want to go back and get some rest?" Odell pursed his lips, "How are things over there looking like Cliff did not need any further elaboration to know that he was talking about Sylvia

Since he and Sylvia divorced, he had been in the office almost every day from top to bottom. everyone from the managers to the janitors was wracked with nerves, knowing that they had to face the man every hour of the day.

Upon hearing this, he informed in a servile way, "Noi much, the missus stays home most of the time as usual. She went to the art academy today. It seems like she was recently recruited as a guest professor at the academy"

Guest professor? That was hardly surprising. With her talent and reputation, she was more than qualified to become a guest professor.

A glimpse of a grin appeared in the corners of his thin lips as he informed, "I'll be sleeping here tonight as well, so you can head back."

Chiff answered curtly. "Yes, sir"

Sylvia only had two classes a week at the acadainy, one on Monday and the other on Thursday. thus she had plenty of time to herself

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After two days of staying at home, she went to the academy again on Thursday.

Just like Monday, she prepared for her lessons as soon as she got to the office. She focused on her work until her phone chimed.

It was a message from Thomas.

In the message, he asked, "Want to have lunch?" Sylvia checked the time. It was already noon, so she answered, "Sure."

After putting on her coat, she walked out of the office and saw Thomas leaning against a wall, waiting for her.

He was wearing a long gray coat and tucked his hands in his pockets. His height combined with his refined looks drew the attention of several female teachers who passed and fawned over him

Unfortunately for them, he did not seem to take interest in any of them at all. He hardly looked at them and wore the same blank look as he always did.

"Hey, Thomas," Sylvia greeted him.

Thomas looked at her and walked toward her.

She asked, "What do you want for lunch?" He merely answered, "Anything works for me." "Alright, then."

As they walked outside, Sylvia went on her phone and searched if there was any good food nearby

Meanwhile, several young teachers were spying on the duo from a safe distance.

"Who is that walking with Mr. Carter? Why haven't I ever seen her before?"

"I think she's the guest professor President Dendro invited. Her name is Sylvia Ross, I believe."

"Oh, I know that name. Isn't she Ms. Sunflower? She was involved in a couple of our academy's activities in the past." The other teachers seemed very surprised upon hearing this. There was growing envy among them as they gawked at Sylvia who got to spend time and have lunch with Thomas.

One of them noted, "But why does Mr. Carter only eat with her?"

"Who knows?"

They ate at the same restaurant they are at the last time, only this time it was Sylvia footing the bill.

After their meal, they went back to the academy and immediately returned to their respective

offices. During another short break, Sylvia lay her head on the table and prepared to get some brief shut-eye. That was when another female teacher suddenly knocked on the door and entered her office.

"Hi, Ms. Sylvia. My name is Leah, and I teach the elective courses."

Sylvia smiled back kindly. "Hi, Mrs. Leah." Leah approached the table and said in a sincere voice, "I heard that you are Ms. Sunflower. Would you mind if I asked you for some pointers?" Sylvia answered cheerfully, "Of course."

There were a couple of chairs in the office, so Leah grabbed one and sat next to Sylvia. She then procured her drawing book and handed it to Sylvia.

Sylvia looked through her work, taking it very seriously. Leah did not major in art, and it was evident in her painting since she seemed to slightly lack the fundamentals. Therefore, Sylvia decided to help work on her basic skills first.

After giving an honest critique with a healthy supplement of advice, Sylvia added, "Overall, I like the art direction of your work. I believe that you will improve after working on your fundamentals." Leah smiled nervously. "Alright, I'll make sure to keep that in mind."

Now that they were done, it seemed like she had no intention of leaving just yet.

Sylvia could sense that there was something more to this sudden visit and asked, "Is there anything else you'd like to ask?"

Leah tousled her hair with an air of embarrassment, and a strange look surfaced in her eyes. "Ms. Sylvia, what's your relationship with Thomas?" Sylvia immediately caught on. Chances were that the primary reason she came here was to enquire about this.

She answered honestly, "I've known him for many years, and he's like a brother to me."

Although Thomas was several months older than her, she had been his sister-in-law since the day she met him and had always thought of him as something like a little brother. Leah was visibly surprised by this, "Like a brother? You two look around the same age though, and you two don't share the same surname."

"Our grandparents were friends," Sylvia remarked.

She was not eager to discuss how she used to be his sister-in-law since it would only lead to more unnecessary gossip leading back to Odell. Besides, Tara had only done enough of rumor mongering, telling people that Sylvia had once dated Odell, and she did not need more such talk going around. She only came here to teach. These gossips were certainly neither helpful nor productive.

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Leah seemed to have obtained a satisfactory answer, so she remarked, "I see."

After some small talk, she took her things and left.

Sylvia got a little more rest after that.

There was only a single partition wall separating her office from the next office. At the same time, there was a lanky figure of a man leaning against the wall. The partition walls were made of wood and were not exactly known for having good sound insulation. He could overhear the conversation in the neighboring office just by leaning against the wall.

A brother?

Did she still think of him as nothing more than a brother even till now?

Fast forward to Friday, around evening, Sylvia arrived at the kindergarten on time to pick up the kids. She led each of them in one hand. Since tomorrow was the weekend, Isabel was skipping along and seemed very happy.

Liam was the exact opposite of her. She trailed behind Sylvia without a word. There was no telling what was on his mind, and he seemed more like a miniature adult than a child.

"Isabel, Liam, where do you two want to go this weekend?"

Isabel chirped merrily, "Mommy, I want to go to the amusement park!"

Sylvia nodded and turned to Liam who answered without any visible change in expression, "I'll follow Isabel."

The next morning, Sylvia had just finished breakfast and was about to pack up and take the children to the amusement park when Aunt Tonya slid in through the door and whispered to her, "Sylvia, he's here." Sylvia zipped her lips into a grimace. She suddenly approached Isabel and Liam, smiling meekly as she informed them, "Isabel, Liam, Mommy suddenly received an invitation to join a certain art exhibition. Since your Daddy happened to come by, you two can go out with him today instead."

Isabel pursed her lips and complained, "Mommy, why do you have something suddenly coming up again?"

Liam fixed a stare on Sylvia with his large eyes that contained a countenance that made him seem older than he was.

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Sylvia blinked a few times and patted their heads. "Mommy didn't expect it to come up so suddenly either. Both of

pend time with you tomorrow, alright?" Isabel grunted. "Okay."

Meanwhile, Liam was silent. The pair went out shortly after. Sylvia stood at the door and watched them leave. When she noticed the tall figure of a man turning toward them, she immediately ducked for cover and no longer tried to steal a second glance. Outside the gate, Odell got out of the car and was waiting for Isabel and Liam to come to him.

Isabel was skipping toward him while Liam walked slowly with composure. As soon as they reached the car, both of them turned back to look at the house in unison.

Odell followed their gaze and looked at the house as well. He barely managed to catch a glimpse of a figure disappearing around the corner. He pursed his lips and concealed the dark look in his eyes, then he grabbed Isabel and Liam one after the other and put them into the car. Isabel seemed upset being carried this way and immediately voiced her complaint upon entering the car, "Baddie, can't you be more gentle with us kids?" Odell sat between them and took her into his arms. "Did I hurt you?" "Well, no." Isabel pouted, and said with her large eyes beaming, "But can't you properly carry me and my brother into the car next time?" Odell shot her a look and grunted. "Alright." Isabel leaned into his chest and announced, "We want to go to the amusement park today." "Alright."

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"And we want ice cream."

"Sure."

The father and daughter chatted candidly. As Liam sat quietly beside them, he would dart a glance at Odell from time to time throughout the drive.

Around evening when the amusement park was closing, Liam and Isabel walked out with Odell. The girl must have been exhausted from the day's activity, so she put her chubby hand out toward Odell, clearly signaling what she wanted. Odell obliged and took her into his arms with one hand. She burrowed her chubby face into his neck and quickly fell asleep. It did not take long before they returned to the car.

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Odell hugged Isabel who was sleeping soundly. Liam sat quietly beside him, just like he did on the way here. The car followed the path down the lane. Out of the blue, Liam suddenly broke his silence. "Dad, did you and Mommy get divorced?" Though his voice was that of a child's, he spoke with an air of composure uncommon in children.

Odell frowned and shot a look at him. "Who told you that?" "No one told me." Liam lowered his head and continued, "Two of our classmates have divorced parents as well. They don't live together, just like you and Mommy. They take turns bringing their kids out as well."

Odell wore a grimace and fell silent. The atmosphere inside the car suddenly became unbearably uncomfortable. After what seemed like forever, he finally answered, "Your mother and I got divorced, but that doesn't change the fact that we're still your parents." "Why?" Liam frowned and looked at him. Odell replied, "Well, there are many reasons."

It all came down to one thing in the end—he had wounded her too deeply to a point where he could not even justify what he had done or forgive himself for it. If not for this conscience within him, he would have never agreed to the divorce. Liam asked again, "Did you do something unforgivable?" Odell muttered meekly, "Yeah."

Liam looked out of the car window.

Odell lifted a hand and gently patted the little boy on his head. "This is between your mother and me. You and your sister don't have to worry about it." However, Liam ignored him. Odell frowned. He cleared his throat and asked cautiously, "Liam?" "Understood," he spoke in a very reticent tone.

Odell quietly looked at Liam's troubled demeanor and added, "If you want to live with me, just call me and I will pick up both you and our sister, and you two can come to stay with me even if it's just for a short while."

At the end of the day, the boy had grown up with his father and must miss him. Alas, as soon as Odell proposed this option, Liam immediately answered insistently, "No, I want to live with Mommy and Sis."

Odell was speechless.

Before long, the car stopped outside Sylvia's house. The driver immediately got out of the car and opened the door for them.

Liam stepped out immediately.

Isabel was still asleep when Odell carried her out of the car. She was sleeping very soundly and Odell was careful to not wake her up. He carried her in his arms as he walked toward the door with Liam beside him.

That was when Aunt Tonya heard their arrival and appeared. She smiled politely and beckoned.

"Master Carter, I'll take Isabel," she said with her arms put out toward Odell. Odell frowned and obliged. Aunt Tonya hugged Isabel tightly and entered the living room as Liam followed her. Odell peered inside, then he proceeded to leave without much fanfare.

Sylvia waited for the car to drive away before coming out. She put Isabel on the sofa and tucked her in with a small blanket, then she pulled Liam to her side and gave him a big hug. "Liam, where did you and Daddy go today?" Liam snuggled up to her and answered, "To the amusement park" "Did you have fun?" "Yeah, it was fun." There was hardly any excess emotion on his expression. Sylvia pursed her lips and stopped pressing the matter. She switched to another topic instead. "Are you hungry?" "A little."

"What do you want to eat? Mommy will make anything for you." As Liam looked at his mother's gentle smile, something gleamed in his eyes, "I want to eat spaghetti."

"Alright, coming up right away. Get some rest first for now." "Okay."

Sylvia gently ruffled his hair before getting up to cook while Liam sat next to Isabel and quietly peered in the direction of the kitchen.

#### Chapter 540

The weekend passed in the blink of an eye. On Monday morning, Sylvia took Isabel and Liam to kindergarten, and after dropping them off, she went to the academy.

The weather was getting cold, and there was already a sheet of ice floating atop the surface of the lake near the school.

Sylvia walked in the direction of the office.

The surface of the steps on the stairs was glittering because someone had spilled water on the stairs.

After taking two steps up the stairs, Sylvia slipped and felt her body toppling backward. She was thrown off guard instantly and nearly shrieked when suddenly, she felt an arm reaching from behind and wrapping itself around her waist.

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She was already thrown off balance as she fell backward into a broad and muscular chest. "Are you alright?" She heard the voice of a man filled with concern. She composed herself and quickly stood up and thanked her savior with a smile, "I'm fine. Thanks, Thomas." Thomas cautioned, "Be careful. The floor is wet." "Alright," Sylvia answered and walked up cautiously this time. While Thomas followed after her and walked by her side, his arm was pressed against her nearly the entire time.

Sylvia shot him a look

Due to the condition of the stairs, she had to walk at a turtle pace and move forward with him next to her side. Upon reaching the top of the stairs, she promptly quickened her pace to create some distance between herself and Thomas.

When they got to her office door, she looked back at him and said to him with a smile,"

Thanks for saving me just now. I'm going to work now. Have a good day." Thomas provided a nonchalant response, "Alright." As Sylvia hurried into her office, Thomas glanced in the direction of the stairs and entered his office as well.

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Sylvia sat down and shook her head to awaken her senses. She must be overthinking this. Thomas had only walked up the stairs with her as a precautionary measure in case she fell again.

Meanwhile, at the stairwell, the female janitor appeared. She frowned as she looked at the water sprinkled over the stairs and muttered to herself in bewilderment, "That's weird. I just cleaned it up. Where did all this water come from?"

Around noon the same day, Sylvia received a message from Christopher.

He told her that there would be a seminar on Saturday that a lot of the teachers in the academy would be taking part in it, and in turn, invited her to join. Sylvia figured that Odell would pick up the children on Saturday, so she promptly confirmed her attendance. Shortly after that, she received a message from Thomas.

He asked, "Are you going to the seminar on Saturday?" Sylvia texted back, "I'm going. Are you?" He replied, "Yeah, probably." "Okay, see you at the seminar then." "Yeah."

Just as Sylvia predicted, on Saturday morning, Odell's car showed up as usual.

Snow was falling from the sky.

Sylvia ensured that Isabel and Liam had thick layers of padded clothes before sending them off.

Isabel suddenly pouted and asked her, "Mommy, are you not going out with us today again?"

Liam stayed silent and only regarded her with an expectant look. Sylvia explained with a soft smile, "Mommy needs to attend a seminar held at the school today, so I can't go out with you two."

Isabel grunted. "Hmph, why do you have to join these events every Saturday?"

Sylvia pinched Isabel's chubby cheeks playfully and tried to appease her, "Be good, Isabel. Your Daddy will take you and your brother somewhere fun today. Go on, go with your brother."

Isabel's eyes glowed at the prospect of going somewhere fun, but immediately after that, she grumbled again, "If you don't come and play with us the next time, I'm going to get angry."

Sylvia grimaced weakly. She was about to say something to Isabel when Liam suddenly interjected, "Sis, if we still don't leave, the snow is going to pile up on the road." "Okay, let's go!" Isabel grabbed Liam and ran out. Liam glanced at Sylvia. "Bye, Mommy."