

## Chapter 256

While Crystal was doing the dishes at the Stephenson family at 3 p.m., she received a phone.

It was Betty. She said she couldn't get through Christina.

"Christina is at home alone today," Crystal was also a little anxious. "I'll call her later."

"She has been in a good mental state recently."

They chatted for a while. Having not seen Betty for many days, Crystal invited her to dinner at the apartment and she readily agreed.

After hanging up, Crystal called

Christina immediately.

But there was only a busy tone.

Uneasiness creeping in, she hurriedly explained to Chandler and went home.

In fact, nothing happened to Christina. She was looking for medicine in the guest room while her phone was left on the TV bench in the living room.

She found the antidepressant prescribed in the hospital. Then she took two pills out and directly swallowed them like a robot.

She didn't want to get sick, nor did she want to worry the people around her.

She couldn't be sick anymore.

She should get better soon.

She curled up on the sofa for a long time, looking at the empty apartment confusedly. She was gloomy as if she were left alone in the world and didn't know who she should trust.

The phone screen on the TV bench lit up, showing she had two missed calls.

She put down the medicine bottle and was to check her phone. Just then, she heard a key in the door lock.

She thought it was Crystal or Derek, but it wasn't.

As soon as the person entered the house, she began to swear, "I heard you forcibly occupied my daughter's apartment and refused to pay the

rent?"

"You look decent, but why are you so shameless?"

She was in her sixties, dressed in a black chiffon dress with floral patterns. She looked like a fashionable woman in town, but she looked weird, wearing inferior foundation and lipstick.

Christina didn't know her and thought for a while before she said, "Are you Crystal's mother?"

"So impolite of you. My daughter treats you so well, but you are ungrateful. Do you think she has a good temper so you take advantage of her?"

"No more talking. Just let her get out of

here."

Another man came in. It was Simon, Crystal's step brother.

Simon looked smugger now than the last time they met. He was wearing a T-shirt and black jeans with colorful hair. He was a little stout with a potbelly as if he had been addicted to nightlife and junk food. And he looked like a gangster.

"Hey, get out of here now!" he cursed in a hoarse voice.

"Isn't your man quite rich? Why are you a freeloader in my sister's apartment?"

Simon looked her up and down. He seemed to have some scruples and said

hesitantly, "Give me fifty thousand dollars, or get out right now! I'm not afraid of you or your man. This is our house. Get out!"

Being yelled at and cursed, Christina was still and stared at them in a daze.

"This is Crystal's house." She said in a low voice without any emotion.

"This is my daughter's house!"

Crystal's mother roared in an unpleasant tone, "My daughter's house is mine. We're moving in now. You're just my daughter's friend. Don't stick to my house. Pack up and move out. Don't take advantage of us anymore."

At five past four in the afternoon,

Crystal and Betty accidentally met downstairs and went into the apartment together.

As soon as they entered, they saw that the apartment was in a mess.

"What's going on? Mom, why are you here?"

When Crystal saw the familiar figure, she immediately ran over and saw her mother moving the furniture in the guest room. "Mom, don't move it. This is my friend's room."

"What friend? Are you stupid? You just allow your friend to live here for free," Mrs. Zhu turned around and scolded her fiercely with a long face.

"My friend needed somewhere to live

while I happened to have a room available. So I let her live here. Anything wrong?"

"You're stupid. If you rent it to someone else, you can collect the rent every month. You've been saying you were hard up. Did you just pretend that? Or why did you pay me so little every month? What an unfilial daughter! Is your mom or your friend more important to you?"

Crystal was very angry and knew how unreasonable her mother was.

At this moment, Betty was heard, "Crystal, where's Christina? I don't see her."

Betty walked around the apartment but didn't see Christina. She got a little



anxious, "Did she go out?"

"She didn't say she was going out today," Crystal replied subconsciously, then she immediately called, "Mom, where's my friend? Did you see her when you came?"

Mrs. Zhu looked evasive and mumbled, "She's gone."

"You chased her away?"

"So what? I can't let her be a freeloader in my house. Are you stupid?" Mrs. Zhu said indignantly.

Crystal's face was dark with rage, "She's not feeling well. How can you drive her away? Mom, you're going too far!"

Mrs. Zhu was immediately displeased with Crystal's tone and scolded.

"Why doesn't she go to the hospital! Don't stay here."

"What are you talking about?" Betty couldn't bear her anymore. "She's just not feeling well recently. Don't be so mean."

Then it was noisy in the small apartment.

"She didn't answer the call."

"It's all my fault. I shouldn't have left her alone at home," Crystal dialed her number again and again anxiously.

Seeing how worried they were, Mrs. Zhu felt something wrong, "That

woman is a psycho? Why did you bring her back? She should be locked up in the hospital."

"Can you stop talking?" Crystal bristled with rage.

"How can you be like that? I've done these for you. Your brother just picked up a few tiny wireless cameras in the trash can. Those are not good people's things. You're not allowed to hang out with her anymore!"

Crystal didn't know about those cameras, but she noticed that the whiteboard which had been on the shelf for a long time was placed on the sofa and there was ink on its corner.

Who took it out?

There were no words on the whiteboard anymore, as if someone had written on it but didn't want others to know.

"I'll contact Derek and ask him to send someone to find her," Betty couldn't stand such an unreasonable woman as Mrs. Zhu or stay with her any longer, so she walked out.

Crystal quickly followed, "We can drive around nearby to find her."

"Where did she go? She was driven out and had nowhere to go," Betty was burning with anxiety, walking side by side with Crystal.

They went straight to the parking lot.

As Crystal was about to take the car

key, she paused and said hesitantly, "I'll call the Hopkins family."

## Chapter 257

Crystal called the Hopkins family. The phone was received by Nanny Faang from the Eastern Garden. Nanny Faang had a rather kind attitude, and Crystal felt that Nanny Faang was the only one in the Hopkins family who was relatively friendly.

"You mean, Junior Mrs. Hopkins..." Nanny Faang was used to addressing Christina Junior Mrs. Hopkins, but this time she switched awkwardly. "You mean Miss Dickens is missing?"

Crystal's voice appeared sullen. She didn't like people from the Hopkins family. However, since she was now asking for help, she tried to speak in a friendly tone.

"Well, here's the thing. She hasn't recovered yet and has been very weak. I'm afraid something might happen to her if she runs around. The last time she left, she went to the Hopkins family. So this time, I just wanted to call and ask if she had been there. Nanny Faang, could you please help me ask the security guards at the Hopkins family gate? They should know..."

"Don't hang up. I'll ask on the house calls." Nanny Faang came up with a positive answer.

Crystal was relieved to hear that she was willing to help.

Those people in the Hopkins family were indeed too lofty and distant, and one might feel especially humble every time asking them for help, which was

so terrible that people would rather lead an ordinary life.

"She didn't come." Soon, Nanny Faang got the result.

Christina didn't go to the Hopkins family, then she probably wouldn't go to find Patrick again, would she?

Crystal herself was not so sure and hesitated for a while. "Well, if you could ask Patrick..."

Before she could finish her sentence, Nanny Faang, who had already guessed that she was going to ask on the other end, took the initiative to refuse. "Miss Zhu, I will try my best to help, but we servants have no right to interfere in our young master's affairs."



Crystal listened and remained silent for a long time.

She didn't want to make things difficult for others, but the reply sounded bitterly disappointing.

In a low voice, she sneered, "I recall that Christina and Patrick haven't officially signed to divorce yet." Were they afraid that she would cling to the Hopkins family so they were so eager to disassociate with her?

Nanny Faang lapsed into awkward silence when she heard this.

It was true that they had not officially divorced, but the news she had heard these days denoted that Christina could hardly stay in the Hopkins family anymore because Young Master

Hopkins was very repulsed by a "strange woman."

"What happened?"

From the gate of the Hopkins family Eastern Garden trotted a beautiful figure. Perhaps she noticed Nanny Faang holding the telephone in the living room with a strange expression, so she cried out to Nanny Faang curiously.

Nanny Faang looked up and was taken aback for a moment before she called out, "Miss Parker."

Crystal clearly heard "Miss Parker," and she grabbed her phone seething. It was this Parker again! She was annoying like a haunting ghost, irritating Crystal every time with only

the reference of her name.

"Nothing. Thank you. I'm hanging up."  
Crystal failed to smother her emotions and her tone was cold. She hung up the phone without waiting for a reply.

Nanny Faang listened to the beeps in the telephone and looked quite despondent.

"Who called just now?"

Barbara walked over straight away, treading gracefully. She was now living in the guest room of the Hopkins family's main residence, and she acted like she was the hostess here after a few visits.

Nanny Faang replied truthfully, "It's a friend of Miss Dickens's..."

"Crystal Zhu?" Barbara had guessed who it was, knowing that Christina didn't have many friends.

"Yes."

Nanny Faang looked at her and suddenly thought of something. She slowed down her voice and pleaded with her, "Miss Parker, you're going to see Young Master Hopkins, aren't you? Could you please help me pass a message?"

"What's the matter?"

Barbara had always been tactful in treating people and handling things. Seeing that Nanny Faang was in need of help, she smiled generously. "Tell me what happened. I know that Patrick

has a bad temper recently, but don't be too anxious. I'll tell him if there's anything, it's not going to be serious..."

"Miss Dickens is missing, and I want to ask Young Master Hopkins if he knows anything about her whereabouts." As soon as Nanny Faang said that, the smile on Barbara's face froze.

Barbara said in astonishment, "Christina is missing?"

"I don't know exactly what happened. Miss Zhu called just now and it seems that Miss Dickens is not in good health. So she is worried that something will happen to her if she loiters outside alone..."

Christian had lived in the Hopkins family for nearly a year, and she had

especially spent a long time in the Eastern Garden, so Nanny Faang held compassion for her.

Barbara's lips curled into a forced smile. "I'm going to find Patrick right now, and I'll inform him about that later." With that, she turned around and left.

Nanny Faang looked at Barbara's delicate figure walking upstairs step by step. She didn't know why, but she felt a little uncomfortable, maybe because Christina used to be the one living in this house. After all, they were different.

"Miss Parker, Young Master Hopkins is not in the study. He's in the nursery on the third floor." Nanny Faang recalled something and reminded the one on

the stairs.

Patrick was in the nursery on the third floor.

Barbara still walked up the stairs calmly, but her footsteps were a little heavier.

On the third floor of the Eastern Garden, there was a nursery room of more than 200 square meters, adorably decorated in various colors featuring a fairy tale, with all kinds of fluffy toys of cartoon characters, and rows of crystal wind-bells tinkling briskly. This was the nursery they had elaborately prepared, yet now it looked cold and gloomy.

The window was open and streams of sunbeam penetrated in.

It made the room warmer, and the beams shone on the man's tall profile, who was standing in front of a light blue wardrobe with two identical baby clothes for twins in his big palm.

"What's the matter?"

He heard footsteps approaching and did not turn around but asked in his low voice, his tone indifferent.

Barbara saw that he was looking at the two small clothes in his hands with a mix of emotions. When she heard his question, she was a little slow to react. What Nanny Faang had just asked her was on the tip of her tongue, but she still didn't say it in the end.

Instead, she said teasingly, "Can't I



come to you if I have nothing to ask?"

Patrick did not reply. He stuffed the two small clothes in his hands back into the wardrobe and closed it. Then he walked around the baby room of 200 square meters with interest.

Barbara followed him with a smile fixed on her face. When they looked at the pictures of small marine animals and a castle of the knights on the broad wall, she noticed that contemplations were swelling in the eyes of the man beside her.

These lovely portraits in bright colors filled the whole space with vitality and childishness.

Finally, he stopped in front of the two wooden cribs, which were custom-

made with meticulous details, in that even the paint on them had strict standards. There was a small rotating gadget at the head of each crib, a few fluffy little giraffes hanging on it.

Patrick's large and slender hands twirled it seemingly in boredom, and the fluffy little giraffes started to spin, accompanied by light piano music. It was Mozart's minuet, which bestowed the space with more lovely exuberance.

"Twins." He suddenly muttered a word.

When Barbara heard what he said, a trace of nervousness crept over her face. "What do you remember?"

Patrick turned to look at her but did not answer.

Then, as if he had lost interest in the nursery, he turned around and went straight downstairs. Barbara had been by his side, as she carefully examined his expression.

"What kind of woman is she?"

Probably because Barbara's eyes were chasing after him, he was curious and stopped. "Does she like me as much as you do?"

Barbara didn't expect him to ask that and didn't know how to answer for a moment.

"Christina, she... she didn't like you very much at first." That was the truth.

"Didn't like me?"

Patrick raised his eyebrows slightly as if he was astonished, but he did not delve into it. He still wore his cold countenance, and his thin lips quirked up into a faint smile. He was clearly smirking, but his eyes were so distant and cold.

## Chapter 258

"Where's Christina?"

At seven o'clock in the evening, the Hopkins family were chattering and laughing around the dining table, waiting for the dinner to be served.

Nanny Faang and other maids brought the dishes methodically, which were more sumptuous than usual, and later put a three-layered cake on the table. However, everyone's face changed because of Brianna's question.

Today was Brianna's birthday. Chandler and Charles were also invited. Old Master Hopkins thought that too many bad things had happened to the Hopkins family recently and he hadn't even celebrated

his eightieth birthday, so today was a good chance to lighten the mood a bit.

Brianna looked around in her seat and found one person missing. She'd hesitated for a long time before asking that question.

No one knew how to answer her.

Brianna was autistic and simple-minded. Old Master Hopkins, who was wearing a smart suit especially for today's occasion, took on a gloomy face due to Brianna's question.

"It doesn't matter."

Judy darted her daughter a glare. Her demure aura just made her voice colder. "She'd off-limits in this family."

Brianna flinched a little because of her mother's sharp tone. She wanted to say something but didn't have the courage.

Like a kid who did something wrong, she lowered her head, looking uneasy and nervous.

"Brianna, Brianna was just asking. I'll talk to her later."

Barbara was on the table too and chimed in with a smile to smooth things over.

"Christina left the house herself that night. She killed the baby of the Hopkins family. We looked after her so carefully when she was pregnant. Has she done anything for the Hopkins family? A woman like that doesn't

deserve to stay," Judy said morosely as if she really abominated Christina.

"No, Christina said she wouldn't leave..."

Brianna snapped her head up abruptly and retorted unthinkingly.

Judy scowled at her with bleak eyes. "Brianna, what did I say just now?" Brianna was scared and shut up immediately, lolling her head again.

"Enough. It's Brianna's birthday today."

Old Master Hopkins was partial to his granddaughter and cast Judy a glance. His hoarse voice of authority lacked a bit of confidence. He wouldn't mention that night as well.



The room quieted down soon and everyone resumed eating.

Barbara stole a glance at Patrick from time to time and found him daintily slicing the steak with a perfectly fine expression as though he wasn't interested in their conversation at all.

As a guest, Chandler remained silent even if he had something to say, but at the end of the dinner, he said out of the blue, "Christina got lost this afternoon."

The finally serene atmosphere tensed up again.

"What happened?" Charles asked instantly.

"She's been staying at her friend Crystal's house these days, but

Crystal's mother asked her to leave at noon," Chandler said unhurriedly.

"Patrick, have you heard from her?"

Patrick had finished the steak and put down his knife and fork. He was drinking a glass of water and looked up at Chandler. Barbara's face changed and she pursed her lips, trying to say something before he did.

Nanny Faang was waiting on the table and heard their conversations. She gave Barbara a look with a complicated expression and lowered her head down, realizing that Barbara wouldn't help Christina.

"Stupid!"

Charles turned livid and lost appetite.

He pushed his plate away and cursed angrily, "She's so stupid. She should've insisted staying here."

He lurched to his feet regardless of the table manners and said to Old Master Hopkins, "Sorry, Old Master Hopkins, I'm gotta go. Enjoy the meal."

The maid behind him immediately pulled his chair back. Charles turned to Brianna and said quickly, "Happy birthday."

Then he stomped away.

People on the table quietly watched Charles leave, knowing exactly what he was going to do.

Tacitly, none of them brought up Christina again and except for Barbara

who peeped at Patrick now and then,  
no one seemed to be bothered.

Nanny Faang cut the cake and  
everyone ate their piece of cake in  
silence, immersed in different  
thoughts.

## Chapter 259

It was already 8 in the evening but Crystal and the others still didn't find Christina. They were very anxious.

"Where do you think she can go?"

Betty looked worriedly at the dark sky outside while holding her cell phone in hand. She had been trying to call Christina, whose phone was, however, turned off.

Crystal and the others searched the neighborhood twice as well as every corner of the community garden. The result was still disappointing.

In the end, they went back to the apartment. Thanks to those strong and tall men Derek had asked Larry to send

here to help, Mrs. Zhu was scared away.

"I'm sorry. My mother has gone too far." Crystal looked ashamed while she was sitting on the sofa, holding her phone anxiously.

Betty did not say anything more about Mrs. Zhu. Both of them were sitting on the sofa in the small living room under the light, anxious and uneasy. They didn't even where to look for Christina.

Betty glanced at the clock on the wall, sighing. "Christina is never a crybaby like other girls even when she was a child and sometimes even despises some boys for being useless. She isn't a particularly strong girl, but once she meets something unlucky, instead of crying about it in front of everyone, she

will just hide and try to make it through by herself."

Thinking of this, Betty calmed down and comforted Crystal, "She probably just needs some time alone. Don't worry too much. It's already past dinner time. I'll go to the kitchen to cook some noodles."

Staring at Betty's back as she walked towards the kitchen, Crystal was still worried. Although what Betty said about Christina's temper was true, neither of them had an appetite at this time.

Under normal circumstances, Crystal wouldn't worry about Christina no matter how long she hid alone. But now, concerning all the terrible things that had happened recently, she was

really worried that Christina would hurt herself or make rash decisions that she would probably regret in the future.

"Betty, how about we going out and looking for her again..." Crystal stood up, grabbed the car keys, and was about to walk towards the door.

Just then, the door was opened from the outside.

A familiar figure came in.

Upon seeing him, Crystal rushed forward and grabbed his arm excitedly. "Derek, any news about Christina?"

Derek, who was not used to physical contact, withdrew his hand and replied calmly, "No."



Betty also ran over from the kitchen when she heard the door opening, whose face turned back into gloom as she heard Derek's answer.

With so many people Derek had sent to look for her, Christina was still nowhere to be seen. Where else could she go?

"Derek, did you follow the route consisted of nearby surveillance cameras? She must have walked out of the community first and would definitely pass supermarkets and banks nearby. The surveillance cameras there would record her as long as she passed by. How could she not be found?" Crystal taught him how to track her in an urgent voice.

Derek didn't reply and just walked into the apartment.

"Derek, is that you don't have enough friends to help here in A City? Maybe we should ask Chandler to help us..."

Crystal followed Derek as if he was her last hope. As she spoke, she suddenly remembered another "friend" in A City who might be helpful.

"I see. We should turn to Charles for help. He has a lot of friends here and used to have a good relationship with Christina. I think he'll help us." Crystal tried her best to come up with more ideas as she followed Derek.

However, Derek didn't make any reply to her suggestion. He walked into the guest room which Christina had used

and looked around carefully as if he was looking for something.

Crystal finally quieted down, staring at him angrily as he was searching every corner of the room.

She knew that Derek must have tried out all the ways she had just suggested. Maybe Christina's route was remote so the nearby street surveillance didn't record her.

"Hey, we're all worried. What are you looking for here? Why don't we go out together..."

As she was urging him impatiently, Derek suddenly took a small round blue ornament made of glass from the closet.

After a closer look, Crystal was stunned.

"What is this?"

"Wireless camera," Derek replied in a low voice.

Crystal also saw the small circuit board behind the glass ornament. Her mind went blank for a moment and then she quickly came to her senses, "Larry found a broken piece in the corner of the TV cabinet in the living room which was similar to this one. But that ornament he found looked like a red Chinese knot..."

"Also, my mother once said that she found four black wireless cameras in the trash can." Crystal looked around the apartment again as she was

speaking, feeling a little more frightened.

She had never expected that someone had been spying on her family and their privacy.

"Oh, the black ones are mine."

Derek admitted it calmly.

Crystal's mind went blank for a few seconds and then she glared at him. "Why are you so perverted?" He should have told them about it first!

Ignoring her scolding, Derek put the glass ornament that had just been found in her hand. "You should be concerned about whom this belongs to."

He sounded calm but people who were familiar with him could tell that there was a hint of anger in his voice. After saying that, he turned around and walked out.

Crystal stood there in a daze as she looked down at the tiny camera, feeling a chill on her back.

Who was it?

Who could do it without being discovered by Derek?

Crystal followed Derek out immediately. "Derek, shall we search the house thoroughly..." She really felt insecure when she knew that someone was spying on her for unknown purposes.

On the other side, Betty suddenly shouted at them excitedly with her phone in hand, "Christina texted me!"

Crystal was so surprised that she forgot about all the horrible cameras at home for the time being and ran to Betty happily. "Did she? What did she say?"

"Don't worry about me. I'm in a hotel by myself. Need some time alone. Contact you tomorrow. =="

It was a short message sent from Christina's phone number. Crystal and the others were finally relieved.

"Derek, do you think this message is fake?" Crystal was careful, who took Betty's phone and ran to the balcony.

Derek was standing beside the cabinet for sundries on the balcony, whose long fingers of the right hand were rubbing a whiteboard there slowly as if he was thinking about something.

He glanced at the screen of the phone that Crystal showed him. "It's from her." He sounded pretty sure in a calm and clear voice.

"Really? Don't you have to check it out? What if someone impersonated her? What if she's in danger..."

Crystal, on the other hand, did not seem convinced since she had been shocked by the cameras in her house and her mind was now full of terrifying conspiracies.

Derek pointed at two small symbols on



the screen with his slim, pretty finger, and said calmly, "Look at the two symbols: ==". This was the secret code between him and Christina.

Crystal was still confused but now she believed that Christina was safe.

Now she finally realized she was hungry and went to share noodles with Betty.

She complained at the same time, "Why did she go to the hotel? And which one? Why didn't she tell us... If she doesn't show up at noon tomorrow, we'll search every hotel for her..."

In fact, Christina was not at the hotel now.

She was going to spend the night in a hotel, but currently, she was still alone in an old park in the old district.

The park was already dilapidated with most of the residents nearby moving away. There were weeds everywhere and the streetlights on one side flashed ghostlily. Few people would come here. It was such a desolate and gloomy place at night.

The seesaws and the small merry-go-round facilities in the park were rusty and paint-shedding. On the far left was a relatively large children's slide that looked like the long neck of a giraffe. Below that, it was a u-shaped hole where children would get into and play together in the past. And now Christina was alone in there huddling her hands and feet with a confused

look.

Not knowing where to go, she had been hiding here for hours after she left Crystal's apartment.

So she hid in the hole in the deserted children's slide as soon as she saw it. Just like a small prey that was being chased for her life finally found a safe place to go.

She sat in a corner, quietly watching how the sun went down outside and the world got darker and darker.

She knew that Crystal and the others would worry about her and she didn't want to cause any more trouble for others.

So she turned on her phone and found

that Betty had called her several times and left a few messages. Her eyes were even darker as she felt that she was such a useless person who failed in everything and was nothing but a burden to everyone.

Her eyes were red as she sent Betty a text message quickly.

What should she do now? Her mind was blank. She knew that she should get up and find a hotel to spend the night in but somehow she didn't want to move. She was so afraid of contacting others that she wished to hide in this desolate place forever.

She didn't want to see anyone or say anything.

It was quiet all around. Her mind was

empty while her spirit was extremely sensitive. So, when a car stopped nearby, the harsh sound of brakes just made her panic and helpless.

She thought that it was just someone passing by.

However, she guessed it wrong. The steady footsteps approached her, turning her face pale...

Who was it?

Who had installed those cameras in the apartment?

Who planned to hurt her?

Christina held her breath, trembling uncontrollably. The footsteps were getting closer and closer. Finally, the

man stopped at the entrance of the hole. She was scared by the shadow of the man that lengthened by the dim yellow streetlights outside. A familiar voice came in as she was frozen in fear.

"How long are you going to hide inside?"

The deep and cold voice echoed in the desolate park on an early winter night...

## Chapter 260

Christina had never expected him to be the first one who found her.

She curled up into a ball in the narrow platform up the slide and tilted her head up a little. With blurred eyes, she saw the man standing under the dim street lamp who had appeared out of the blue.

Patrick.

She considered his familiar and angelic face. Her eyes turned red and watery.

She had so much to say to him but it all got stuck in her throat, so she just gazed at him as if he was just a phantom that would disappear once she called him.

"How long are you going to stay there?" The man yelled at her impatiently.

Seeing her stay motionless, he frowned annoyedly.

"Come out!"

His voice was deep, melodic, and overbearing as it'd always been.

She didn't move. Patrick's face sank. He bent down and reached out one arm to grab her wrist in a bossy manner. With one yank, he pulled her out.

It happened so suddenly that Christina stumbled down the slide headlong and hit her forehead.



As if he didn't want to touch her, he released her immediately after he dragged her out and looked down at her, who was down on her hands and knees with messy hair.

"You should have more self-awareness before you try to invoke sympathy, or you just end up looking stupid!"

His eyes were penetrating and his voice was scornful.

In his eyes, she was worthless.

As if she hadn't heard him, Christina propped herself up slowly with her hands on the muddy ground. She kept her head down so her hair hid the pallor of her face.

She'd stayed in the narrow platform up the ramp for too long and her legs went numb and felt a dull pain, so she grabbed one side of the chute with her right hand for support.

She twisted her right ankle when she stood up and thought that she was going to fall on her face again.

But Patrick stepped forward and held her.

"Just tell me you sprained your ankle. What's the matter with you!" He was somehow pissed off and clasped her shoulders. She was bony.

His words sounded familiar to her.

Christina kept her head down and felt tears welling up in her eyes. She was

not a crier but she couldn't help it when he was around.

Without being responded, Patrick scoffed with a sullen face, "Are you playing tough guy, or are you trying to get more alimony?"

If it were in the past, she would've thrown her head up and retorted that she didn't want the alimony.

But she kept silent now. She didn't want to get divorced.

She didn't want to talk about anything about divorce. He'd said they would never divorce.

He forgot that.

Wind at night in the early winter was

bone-chilling.

It was a remote and quiet place. The broken street lamp was blinking on and off.

Patrick ran out of patience. He scooped Christina up and scooted to his black Ferrari by the curb.

Christina panicked and struggled subconsciously, which only made him angrier. He tightened his arms around her as a punishment.

Patrick shoved her into the passenger seat and slammed the door shut. She froze because of the bang and stopped wriggling.

Then he walked around the front of the car and sat into the driver's seat.

Revvng the engine, he sped up and left this damned place.

"You really know where to hide."

He said gloomily and turned the wheel with one broad palm. The car entered the highway soon and headed downtown.

Only then did Christina surprisedly realize that he didn't bring a driver with him.

After a while, the familiar white building appeared outside the window. She flipped and protested loudly, "I'm going to the hospital."

"Pull over! I'm not going to the hospital!"

She hated the hospital, the smell of disinfectant there, and the sirens of ambulances.

Terrible memories abruptly overwhelmed her, crimson blood, the closed operating room... They filled her mind. She flailed about and muttered, "No hospital. No..."

Patrick ignored her and stopped the car in front of the emergency room. He got out of the car, went around to the other side, and opened the door. He dragged her out in an impatient and rude manner and hauled her into the emergency room.

Doctors were on shifts in the emergency room round the clock. The air smelled of disinfectant. Incandescent lights on the ceiling were

dazzling. There were weak patients in the hallway chairs.

Christina freaked out. She kept prying his fingers around her wrist with the other hand, her face pale, her voice trembling.

"No. Not here, not here..."

Doctors, nurses, and patients all looked at her. With an infuriated face, the man lifted her up and lay her on an empty bed. Then he pressed his body against hers.

"Can you stop making a scene now!" He ranted, his eyes sharp.

Christina was stunned.

His masculine body was flush against

her and she could feel the rhythm of  
his strong heartbeat.