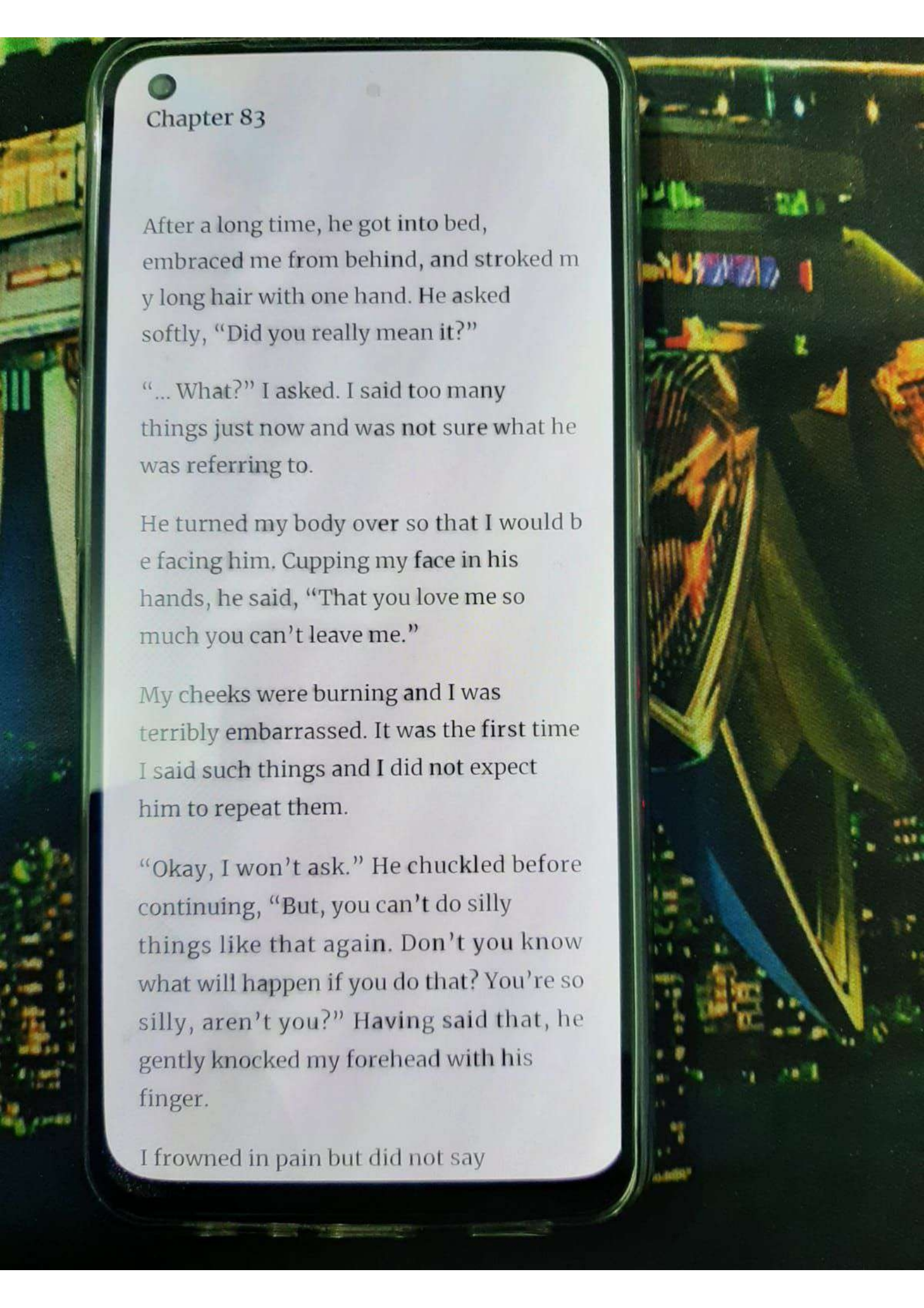




HEWLETT-PACKARD

then closed the bedroom door. Keith's voice could be vaguely heard from downstairs. "Let's go, Ms. Cindy. Please don't make things difficult for me."

Theo gently placed me on the bed. His dark pupils scanned me up and down, his countenance dark and gloomy. I did not know what he was thinking about.



Chapter 83

After a long time, he got into bed, embraced me from behind, and stroked my long hair with one hand. He asked softly, "Did you really mean it?"

"... What?" I asked. I said too many things just now and was not sure what he was referring to.

He turned my body over so that I would be facing him. Cupping my face in his hands, he said, "That you love me so much you can't leave me."

My cheeks were burning and I was terribly embarrassed. It was the first time I said such things and I did not expect him to repeat them.

"Okay, I won't ask." He chuckled before continuing, "But, you can't do silly things like that again. Don't you know what will happen if you do that? You're so silly, aren't you?" Having said that, he gently knocked my forehead with his finger.

I frowned in pain but did not say

anything.

I did not know what overcame me then. I just could not control my emotions when I saw Cindy standing there.

Thinking about it now, it was really silly of me to do that. Cindy was not worth sacrificing my whole life for!

He embraced me so tightly that I struggled to breathe.

At that moment, his phone rang. He fished it out from his pocket and I saw Cindy's name.

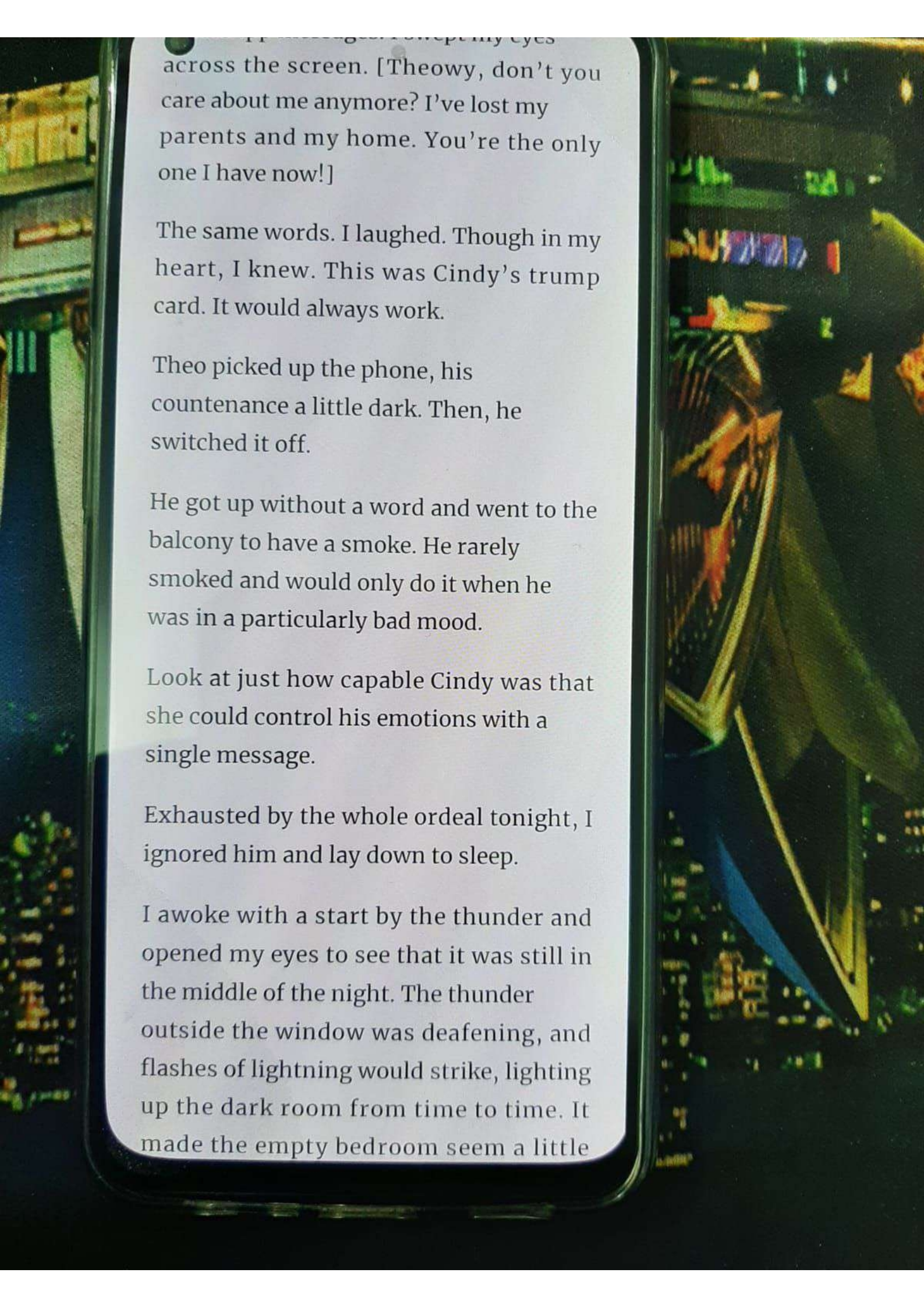
He looked down at me, then put the phone on the bedside table without answering it.

The phone kept ringing. A little annoyed, I sat up from the bed.

He got up as well and embraced me, saying softly, "Ignore her. She'll stop calling in a while. Get some sleep."

I did not say anything.

After a very long time, the ringing finally stopped but then came the beeping of WhatsApp messages. I swept my eyes



... across the screen. [Theowy, don't you care about me anymore? I've lost my parents and my home. You're the only one I have now!]

The same words. I laughed. Though in my heart, I knew. This was Cindy's trump card. It would always work.

Theo picked up the phone, his countenance a little dark. Then, he switched it off.

He got up without a word and went to the balcony to have a smoke. He rarely smoked and would only do it when he was in a particularly bad mood.

Look at just how capable Cindy was that she could control his emotions with a single message.

Exhausted by the whole ordeal tonight, I ignored him and lay down to sleep.

I awoke with a start by the thunder and opened my eyes to see that it was still in the middle of the night. The thunder outside the window was deafening, and flashes of lightning would strike, lighting up the dark room from time to time. It made the empty bedroom seem a little

...the empty bedroom seem a little sinister.

I was not a timid person. I had always been alone whenever there were thunderstorms in the past.

Though ever since I got pregnant, I seemed to have become a timider person, especially during this time when I got used to having people around me. It made me even more afraid of being alone.

I looked around me. Theo was not in the room. There were a lot of cigarette butts on the balcony. He had smoked a lot.

He was probably in the study doing his work. I got up and pushed the bedroom door open.

The study was dark, but the living room downstairs was bright.

I walked to the stairway when I heard Theo's helpless voice. "What are you doing here when it's raining so heavily outside? What will you do if something happens to you?"

Downstairs, Cindy's white dress was soaked through. The rain dripped down her hair onto her face, making her



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Downstairs, Cindy's white dress was soaked through. The rain dripped down her hair onto her face, making her



delicate face seem a little pale.

“Theowy, will you be worried if something happens to me?” Cindy looked fixedly at Theo, her eyes determined and stubborn.

Theo did not reply to her question and pulled out his phone while saying, “I’ll ask Zedd to come pick you up.”

“No.” Cindy squeezed a smile, looking somewhat forlorn and pitiful. “Please don’t drive me away, Theowy. You know I’ve been afraid of thunderstorms ever since my parents died because of what happened that day—”

“Don’t say anymore. Go take a shower and change your clothes.” Theo frowned, finally giving in.

Cindy’s guilt-tripping methods were certainly tried and true.

When Cindy heard what he said, she chirped, “Can you get me one of your shirts, Theowy? I didn’t bring a change of clothes.”

“There’s one in the guest room that you brought here before. Go and get it



bought here before. Go and get it yourself.”

Cindy nodded and went to the guest room on the first floor.

I stood rooted at the stairway and listened to their conversation, my heart barren.

Back then, Grandma had said that this villa was too big and there were too many empty rooms, so she asked us to have more children to not make it seem so empty. I had disagreed then, but now it seemed that there were indeed too many rooms. There were so many that I did not even know Cindy had a room of her own.

“Theowy, I think there’s no hot water in the shower.” Cindy’s voice was heard from the bathroom.

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Chapter 84

Chapter 84

Theo responded and got up to walk toward the kitchen. When he walked past the stairway, he saw me and stopped in his tracks. He looked slightly surprised and said in a low voice, "You're up."

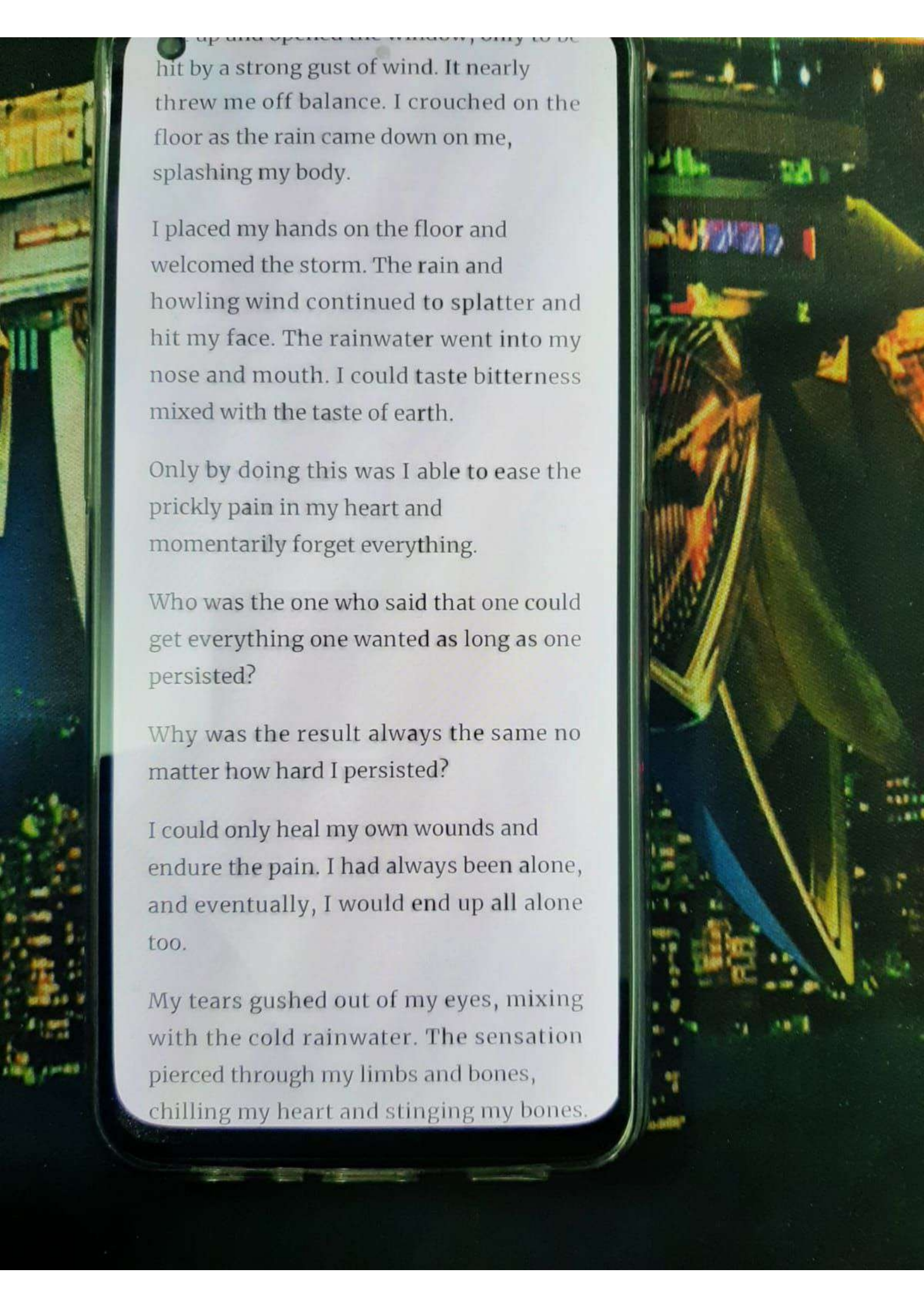
I should not have gotten up, more so went downstairs. I would not be feeling this sting of pain if I had just stayed in the room.

"Are you there, Theowy?" Cindy, who was in the bathroom, sounded a little anxious.

"You should go. Ms. Cindy might catch a cold later." I looked up, gave a small smile, and turned around to go upstairs. I did not spare him another glance.

I slammed the bedroom door and began panting. For a moment, my heart was clenching so violently it was as though I was about to suffocate the next second.

The air in the bedroom was stuffy, and the storm howled outside the window. I got up and opened the window, only to be

A night scene with a street lamp and a person in a dark coat. The scene is dark, with the street lamp providing the main source of light. The person is walking away from the camera, their figure silhouetted against the light. The background shows a city street with buildings and other lights.

... up and opened the window, only to be hit by a strong gust of wind. It nearly threw me off balance. I crouched on the floor as the rain came down on me, splashing my body.

I placed my hands on the floor and welcomed the storm. The rain and howling wind continued to splatter and hit my face. The rainwater went into my nose and mouth. I could taste bitterness mixed with the taste of earth.

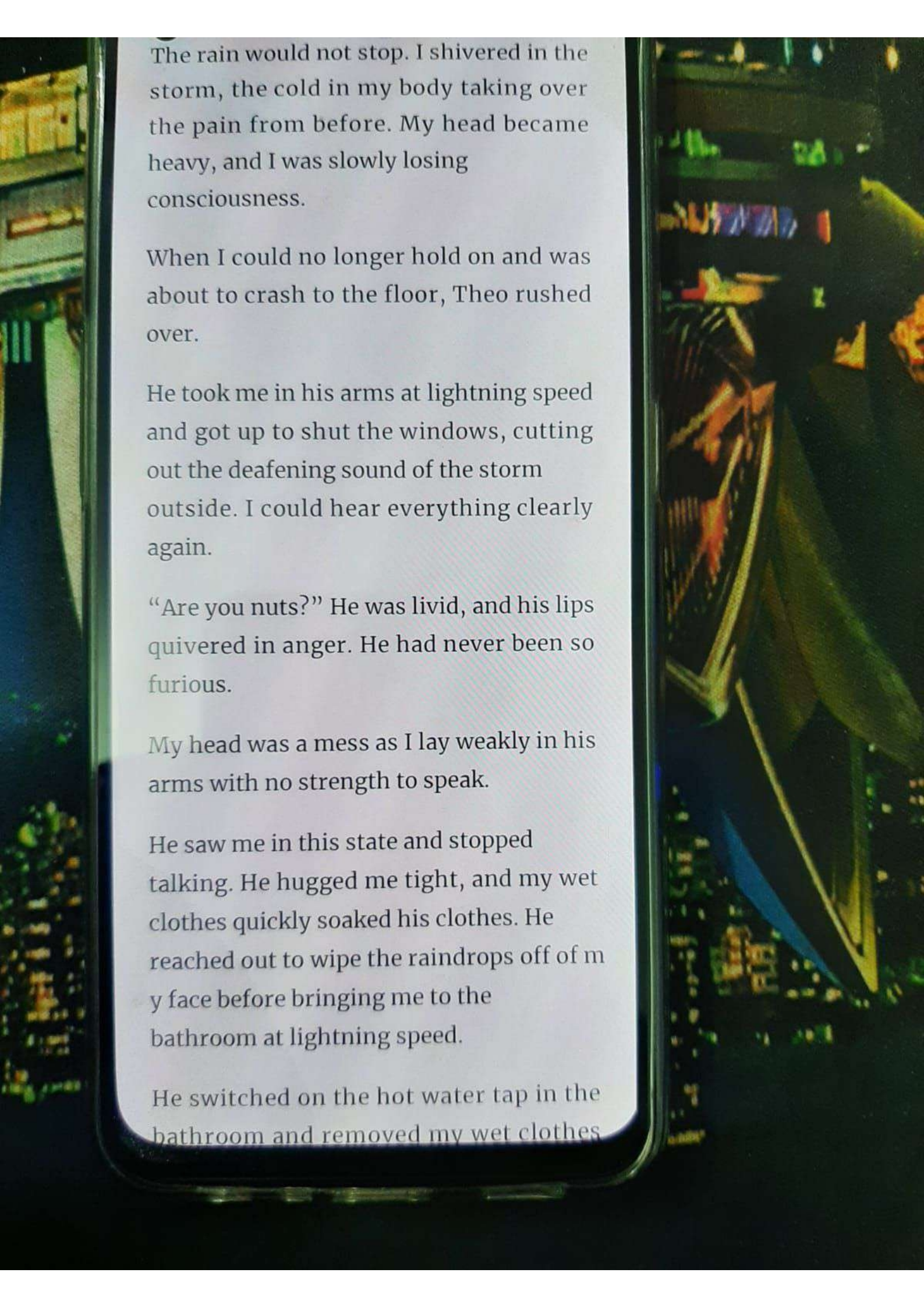
Only by doing this was I able to ease the prickly pain in my heart and momentarily forget everything.

Who was the one who said that one could get everything one wanted as long as one persisted?

Why was the result always the same no matter how hard I persisted?

I could only heal my own wounds and endure the pain. I had always been alone, and eventually, I would end up all alone too.

My tears gushed out of my eyes, mixing with the cold rainwater. The sensation pierced through my limbs and bones, chilling my heart and stinging my bones.



The rain would not stop. I shivered in the storm, the cold in my body taking over the pain from before. My head became heavy, and I was slowly losing consciousness.

When I could no longer hold on and was about to crash to the floor, Theo rushed over.

He took me in his arms at lightning speed and got up to shut the windows, cutting out the deafening sound of the storm outside. I could hear everything clearly again.

“Are you nuts?” He was livid, and his lips quivered in anger. He had never been so furious.

My head was a mess as I lay weakly in his arms with no strength to speak.

He saw me in this state and stopped talking. He hugged me tight, and my wet clothes quickly soaked his clothes. He reached out to wipe the raindrops off of my face before bringing me to the bathroom at lightning speed.

He switched on the hot water tap in the bathroom and removed my wet clothes

...n room and removed my wet clothes
very quickly before gently putting me
into the bathtub.

My body continued to tremble as an
inexplicable feeling gushed out of my
heart. I felt very uncomfortable.

When my body touched the hot water,
warmth returned to my body and I slowly
stopped shivering.

He looked at me with dark and sullen
eyes. His voice was chilly. "Wanda Lane,
there are many ways for you to punish m
e. Don't torture me like that."

My chest throbbed in pain again as I
looked up with tears streaming down my
face. I muttered, "It wasn't my intention t
o punish you..."

I was not thinking too much at the time
and merely felt that the rain could ease
the pressure in my heart. I was just trying
to release my emotions.

He looked down at me and sighed, wiping
away the tears from my face with a towel.
He said helplessly, "I can't shirk my
responsibility toward the Reeds and
Cindy. I can't just ignore her. Promise m
e, don't hurt yourself and the child



don't hurt yourself and the child anymore. You can scold and hit me if you're unhappy."

He said these words with a serious expression.

I felt a little sad and reached out to coil my arms around his neck, choking. "I didn't do it on purpose."

He patted my back for a very long time before he began scrubbing and washing my body.

The rain had drenched my body and mind, making me dizzy. I sat dazedly on the same spot, not budging as he continued to wash me. This was not the first time anyway, so there was nothing to feel abashed about.

After soaking in the hot water, my body warmed up completely and my consciousness recovered.

Theo wrapped me up with a towel, picked me up, and walked out of the bathroom. He placed me on the bed. He found a set of clothes and put them on for me before grabbing the hairdryer to dry my hair for me.



A gush of warmth flowed within me. I enjoyed every moment of this warmth and bliss, so much so that I feared time would slip away. I hoped that we could forever stay in this moment. 2

After he blew dry my hair, I wanted to lie down and rest but Theo stopped me. He bent down in front of me and said softly, "Let's go downstairs first."