

Chapter 375 Punishment

The snow was falling in larger and larger clumps.

When they first got to the supermarket, the ground was only a little wet. But when they finished with their shopping one hour later, every inch of the entire road was already covered in snow.

Outside the vehicle, the snowflakes appeared like confetti dancing in the air. The car windows were shut tight.

All around them, it looked like the passers-by were in a rush to get to their destination. The wind whistling around them was shockingly cold.

With the heater blasting, the people inside the car were protected from the cold.

As they headed back, Raymond kept staring at Ryan.

There was no way Ryan could ignore his straightforward gaze. He turned around slightly and returned his look.

Feeling caught, Raymond hurried to look away.

Seeing their interaction from where she was sitting, Wendy cleared her throat and asked, "Ray, is there anything wrong?"

"It's nothing." In fact, Raymond was feeling a little downcast.

'I came out of my mom's womb. Yet why do I bear such a likeness to him?'

He touched his nose and mouth. 'Is there really such a striking resemblance? Why didn't I notice this until now?'

Pretty soon, they arrived at their home. Wendy was responsible for cleaning up the apartment, while Ryan was placed in charge of putting away their groceries. As for Luke, he was tasked with entertaining Raymond and Precious.

"Do you want to help me decorate the apartment together? Tomorrow's New Year's Eve, and it's customary to decorate the apartment before the celebrations start. Let's get going!"

Precious jumped up and down on the sofa happily and chirped, "I'll get the colored ribbons!"

This would be Raymond's first time celebrating the New Year. He had no clue what was in order. Feeling caught up in Precious' excitement, he decided to follow her lead.

Luke propped himself up on a chair and hung the doorway with balloons and colored ribbons. His job was to paste the colored ribbons on the wall and the two little guys helped him by giving directions.

"Uncle Luke! The ribbon should be higher! Oh no! That's too high! It's a little crooked. Move it a little towards the left. A little more."

Luke's hands were upraised for a long time and his arms had

become sore from the exertion. "Is this better?"

"Uh, it seems a little too far to the left. A little more to the right would be better!"

Luke finally caught on and he was angry. "Precious! Did you do this on purpose?"

"Ha-ha!" Precious knelt down and pounded the carpet with her fists, laughing until tears sprung from her eyes.

Luke gritted his teeth out of agitation. Clearly, his niece was being an annoyance.

A smile flashed over Raymond's face.

"Ray, you give me directions."

"Alright!"

Luke moved forward with getting the task done.

"Move the ribbon two centimeters to the left, then one centimeter down. Okay, that's it. It looks good!"

Luke proceeded to paste the colored ribbons without hassle.

Under Raymond's helpful direction, the apartment was soon artfully decorated for the oncoming holidays.

"Wow! Everything looks amazing!" Precious clutched her face with both hands, happiness radiating off her.

"Of course. I'm calling this my masterpiece!" As Luke was showing off, he forgot he was in a precarious position and lost his balance on the chair.

"Uncle, watch out!" Precious saw her uncle was in danger and screamed out loud to warn him.

A noticeable shift could also be seen on Raymond's face.

"Uncle!"

Luke could have leaped off the chair to avoid falling down, but when he heard Raymond address him as his uncle, he was too stunned to react in time. And then...

Bang!

His butt heavily came into contact with the floor.

"Ouch!" Pain overwhelmed him and Luke screamed out intensely. But he recovered quickly and got up from the floor, ignored the pain in his bottom, and ran to Raymond's side excitedly. He squatted on his haunches, gripped the little boy's shoulders with both of his hands, and looked him in the eye. "Ray, did I hear wrong? What did you call me just now?"

The little boy's face reddened and he turned away, unable to meet Luke's gaze.

"I heard you. You just called me your uncle, didn't you? This makes me so happy!" Luke gave the boy a hug and planted several kisses on his face, which left specks of saliva on his cheeks.

Raymond wiped away the spit off his face, completely grossed out.

But Luke pretended to not notice. He was still smiling happily

and said in an excited voice, "Since tomorrow is New Year's Eve, I will have a big gift prepared for you!"

Luke was so overjoyed, he covered Raymond's face with kisses two more times before Ray pulled away from him. Then, he ran off to the kitchen to share the new development with Ryan and Wendy.

In the kitchen, Ryan and Wendy were putting away their newly bought items into the fridge.

Without waiting around, Luke walked up to them.

"Ryan, Ray just called me his uncle. Isn't this wonderful? I never thought I would be accepted so soon. I'm the first family member accepted by Ray!" Luke's joyous laughter filled the kitchen.

Ryan stopped for a second to reassess the situation. He looked in on the scene of the twins playing in the living room and then turned to give Luke a look. Squinting his eyes as he looked at Luke suspiciously, he asked, "Did Ray really call you his uncle just now?"

Luke didn't notice the dangerous glint in Ryan's eyes. Out of excitement, he nodded his head enthusiastically. "Yes. I almost lost my balance and fell down from the chair I was standing on. The little boy must've been concerned for my well-being so he called out 'Uncle' out of anxiety. Ray may look cold and distant on the surface, but I know he cares a

lot about me. I'm so moved."

Ryan's pair of eyes noticeably darkened.

'So... Luke came in here to throw this in my face?' A glimmer of slyness momentarily shot through Ryan's eyes.

With a composed front, he calmly handed over the food in his hand to Wendy and gave Luke a gentle look. "Luke..."

"What is it?" Luke was too absorbed in his joy to notice the dangerous tone in Ryan's voice. He was even thinking about calling his parents later to show off in front of them.

"New Year is right around the corner."

"Yes, that's right. Tomorrow is New Year's Eve," Luke nodded.

"It has suddenly dawned on me that there is a cooperative project that has yet to be completed..."

Hearing his words, Luke recovered his senses. He swallowed his spit and gave Ryan a bland smile. "Ryan, the New Year is right up ahead. I don't think this is a good time to be thinking about work."

Ryan's eyes visibly softened. "So, for you to enjoy your holiday wholeheartedly, you should deal with the project before New Year's Eve."

Ryan's words filled Luke with tons of grief and indignation. 'Everyone is off for the holidays right now. Why do I have to be the one to work overtime? Why is that?! Ryan must be jealous. He is jealous that I'm accepted by Ray while he is not.'

"This was purely a vengeful act!"

"Ryan..." Luke tried to plead for his case.

Ryan said in a rather casual manner, "But it doesn't matter if you don't want to go back to work."

Luke's eyes brightened noticeably.

"The company is going to send someone to purchase diamonds," Ryan added nonchalantly.

At his words, Luke felt a chill and he shivered.

Luke raised his hand to get Ryan's attention. When Ryan turned to him, he said in a hurry, "It's good to finish up the project. For the sake of the company, I am willing to work overtime to keep things running smoothly. I'll head back to work right now."

Scared that Ryan might reconsider, Luke hurried to get back to work. He felt like he was about to cry. 'If I take on the task of buying diamonds, I will have to make my way to Africa! It's the holidays. I'd be crazy to want to go there!'

Seeing Luke's receding back, Wendy could not help but feel sorry for him. 'He's such a silly man.'


In order to gain Raymond's favor, Ryan had pushed aside his work for two months to improve his relationship with the boy. But even up till now, Raymond was not making things any easier for Ryan. Luke came to flaunt to Ryan that Ray had called him his uncle. Ryan saw this as a challenge. That was

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
why he decided to punish Luke in this way!



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