

Desires DH 171

Chapter 171

Meanwhile, somewhere else in the city of Norden, near its hub was a lavish mansion. In that mansion was Shane. The man was shirtless, holding a black whip in his one hand and a bottle of red wine in the other. He bared his throat as he drank straight from the bottle. The limp looking whip swayed in his hand. There was a young woman tied to his bed. Shane eyed her with interest.

She looked young and barely legal. The pink shimmering robe she was wearing was nearly translucent and barely hid anything. She wore nothing but a bikini beneath the robe.

The young girl woman stared at Shane as he approached her slowly with a whip in his hand. Her eyes shone with sheer

terror

Beneath that terror was restraint.

Shane Brown was part of the Norden Quartet. The Browns were rich. She would be swimming in money if he ended up marrying her.

She knew how perverse the man was. She knew all about his perverted fetishes in bed. But she was willing to bear them silently

For money and for a better life.

The young woman was willing to be the man's plaything.

Shane had no plans to marry the woman. Women were playthings to him. They were toys. He wasn't interested in keeping mistresses or getting married. He might pay to have a good time every now and then but he wasn't interested in having a kept woman. There were plenty of beautiful, nubile young women out there. The young man wasn't going to play with one toy when he could play with so many.

The young girl had made a terrible mistake.

Shane took another long gulp from the bottle of wine as he walked up to the young woman. Then, he gazed down upon her.

Her beautiful semi-naked form lay before him.

The young woman murmured his name softly. Her soft cries for him were like a song to his ears.

What a

beauty.

No man would be able to resist her.

Yet Shane found himself strangely thinking about Anya. Frustration stirred inside him as he realized he would rather have Anya instead.

Anya was more beautiful than any of the women whom he had had in the past. Unfortunately, Evan had gotten to her before Shane could.

Shane found that utterly unacceptable. He was the one who was first interested in Anya. He didn't care if Anya was now

Evan's lover.

He was going to crush Evan.

Anya was nothing without Evan.

When he crushed Evan, he would have the young woman on her knees begging him for mercy.

The thought of that made Shane's blood burn with excitement. He lifted the bottle of wine and started pouring its contents on the woman at his feet.

Red wine gushed like blood before landing on the young woman's skin like crimson splatters.

The man watched as the wine soaked the young woman's robe. His eyes turned as red as the wine on her.

His lips spilt into a sharp grin.

The man seemed to be shaking with excitement.

He raised his other hand and started whipping the young woman.

Within moments, cries of pain filled the lavish mansion.

Elsewhere in Nordeny:

Evan's black Bentley sped down the streets of the city. Evan had released Anya from his kiss after suffering a bite on his lip.

A red mark appeared on his lip..

Blood swelled to the surface.

The young woman hadn't held back at all.

She stared at the wound on Evan's lips with some measure of trepidation. But she didn't regret doing that. He was the one who had forced the kiss on her.

Had he sought her

Onsent?

How could he kiss her without asking her permission in the first place?

Anya wasn't going to put up with the man anymore. The look on her face was dark with fury. "Mr. Welton, please respect my rights. I'm not your lover. You don't have the right to kiss me without my consent."

Done with her stern remark, she waited for

Evan to yell at her.

A long moment passed. The man didn't say a word. Instead, he simply wiped the blood off his thin lips. After that, he spoke. "Is that so? Are you telling me that all I have to do before I try and kiss you the next time is ask if you're okay

it?"

Anya froze. She felt as if she was stepping into Evan's trap.

That wasn't what she had meant at all. What she had been trying to tell him was that she didn't want him to kiss her at all.

The young woman bit her lips softly. "No. I'm trying to tell you not to kiss me. You shouldn't be kissing me just because you felt like it at that moment."

“You think I did it on the spur of the moment?” Evan swiped his fingers across his lips lightly, wiping fresh blood that had swelled to the surface away. The tone of his voice was mild when he spoke next. “I don’t go around kissing women. I only kiss women I’m interested in.”

The man’s argument sounded preposterous and illegal.

Anya found herself at a loss for words.

She didn’t know how to talk to the man. Perhaps she was simply not his match.

She decided to give up on talking altogether.

She simply had to focus on getting Mdm Welton’s coat done.

Once that was done, she would quit.

Evan might be the CEO of Welton Group, but who cares? He couldn’t stop her from leaving. She never wanted to see him

again.

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Evan realized that Anya had no retort back to what he had said when she remained silent. His lips quirked faintly upwards into a smirk. He pressed a button. The screen separating them and the driver rolled down again. Light spilled on to the backseats.

It didn’t take long before the Bentley arrived in front of a fancy Italian restaurant.

The car slid to a stop in front of the restaurant. A waiter standing at the entrance of the restaurant immediately made his way towards the car.

He pulled the door to the black Bentley open.

Anya got out of the car. Then, Evan got out next.

Anya eyed the fancy Italian restaurant before her before throwing a glance at the man next to her. She contemplated

making a run for it. Evan seemed to have read her mind. Before the young woman could do anything, he reached out and locked his fingers around her wrist.

The young man tugged Anya towards him.

“Where do you think you’re going? You can’t keep running forever,” he said casually before strolling into the fancy restaurant, his shoes clicking loudly against the restaurant’s smooth marble tiles.

Anya found herself at a loss for words again.

The man was unbelievable. He didn’t seem to have any regard for anyone and their feelings. All he wanted was to get his

way.

Forget it. The man knew nothing about respecting another person’s feelings or rights.

He was a bully.

Anya struggled to collect herself. She had nowhere to run. She should just play along and have lunch with the man.

Besides, she was going to quit soon. She would be rid of him then.

The thought calmed Anya down tremendously. She stopped trying to sneak away. Her attempts would have been futile

anyway.

The young woman pursed her lips unhappily before following Evan into the restaurant. They made their way towards a table next to the window. Evan had placed a reservation and had asked for a table by the window.

The two of them sat down.

As Anya got herself comfortable, she took the chance to study the restaurant's lavish décor.

That was when she realized that the other tables around them were empty.

They seemed to be the only patrons in the restaurant.

But it was lunchtime now. The restaurant should have patrons turning up to have their lunch.

Why weren't there any other patrons in the establishment?

Anya was wondering what happened to the other patrons when Evan spoke. He seemed to have read her mind. "I booked the whole restaurant for lunch. Relax and treat this like your own place."

He meant that she didn't have to feel awkward or out of place. No one was looking at her.

She could have her lunch in peace.

Anya had not expected the man to book the entire restaurant. She wanted to ask him what he was going to have for lunch. Then, she realized that unnecessary conversation simply meant more opportunities for slips of the tongue.

In the end, she decided not to say anything

She reached out for the glass of water on the table and started sipping on it.

“The restaurant’s famous for their oyster soup. Would you like to try it?” Evan asked Anya after picking up the black menu on the table and flipping through it.

“You can decide, Mr. Welton. You’re the one paying for it, after all.” She wasn’t interested in taking advantage of the man’s apparent generosity.

He might demand something from her in return in the future.

“I can’t decide what you should have when I have no idea what you like,” Evan said as he handed the menu to Anya.

The young woman eyed the menu for a few seconds before taking it. Then, she flipped through the menu and was studying

its contents.

Evan reached for his glass of water and started sipping on it leisurely.

The skies were clear and sunny today. Sunlight spilled through the window and pooled before their table in a golden puddle. The interplay of light and sunlight painted a beautiful picture.

Anya had made up her mind a long time ago. She wouldn’t fall in love with the man seated across the table.

Otherwise, she might have caved that very moment. The warm and romantic atmosphere in the restaurant was perfect. She might have fallen for the handsome man before her like any other woman would have.

But she wouldn't. She wasn't going to let her guard down.

This man was Nathaniel's and Eudora's father. He might challenge her for their custody and rob her of her children.

She couldn't cave to his attempts at winning her over.

Anya flipped through the menu casually, picked a few dishes with a look of indifference on her face and placed her order.

Then, she handed the menu back to Evan. Even gave the young woman a look. She didn't seem to care much for the dishes that she had ordered. He didn't say anything though. Instead, he ordered one of the more expensive soups on the menu for

After that, he flipped the menu shut and handed it to the waitress.

The waitress couldn't help but sneak Evan a few furtive glances as she took the menu. The man before her was incredibly handsome

In fact, he seemed too good looking to be true.

The waitress clutched the menu to her chest tightly and hurried to the kitchen where she informed the kitchen of their patrons' orders. Then, she was making a beeline to the reception. She began whispering excitedly to the receptionist.

"Did you see him? He's so hot!"

"Of course! I saw the lucky woman he's with too. I would kill to have a boyfriend as hot as hers!"

“Who known? Maybe he’s not her boyfriend. Maybe they’re friends with benefits.” The waitress honestly didn’t think that Anya deserved such a gorgeous looking man.

“You’re joking! I doubt so. The guy booked the entire restaurant. Who would do that for a casual fling?”

“That’s true. He paid a hundred grand to book the entire place. That’s not a small sum. She’s probably his girlfriend. What a generous boyfriend she has.”

“I’m envious. I want a boyfriend who’s hot and rich and generous as well. I want my boyfriend to book an entire restaurant Just to buy me lunch.”

“Sure. In your dreams, gal.”

“Hahah!”

The two young women burst into giggles before continuing their hushed conversation. In the meantime, the dishes that Anya and Evan had ordered were ready and slowly being served.

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The food served at the Italian restaurant was as fancy as the establishment’s décor.

Anya wasn’t particularly impressed though. She simply ate quietly, Evan didn’t try to lure her into talking about her kids on they dined.

In fact, he began talking about work.

He was interested in expanding JK Couture and bringing it to the international market. The young man looked forward to more collaborations between JK Couture and International designers and Intended to establish JK Couture an on International brand.

Anya’s superior, Jake, was aware of Evan’s plans for the company too.

But Anya was still serving her probation. She was not aware of the plans that her bosses had for the company.

Yet, here was Evan sharing these plans with her, a lowly designer.

His intentions were as stark as day. He wanted her to remain in JK Couture and continue her work as a designer.

If she did that, she might have a chance to become an internationally renowned designer.

But how could she?

She felt trapped. It was as if danger lurked at every corner.

She had to admit it though. JK Couture was a promising design agency. If she were not stuck in her current predicament, she wouldn't even consider the option of quitting.

But she was in real danger of losing Nathaniel and Eudora. She simply couldn't stay any longer.

Anya wasn't going to tell Evan that, of course. She simply played the role of a diligent listener dutifully and nodded every now and then.

Evan didn't delve further into the subject. They returned to Welton Group Tower after they were done with lunch.

Once they got back to the office, Anya headed back to her desk. She thought about what Evan had told her about his ambitions for JK Couture during lunch. She didn't spend too much time on it though.

Instead, she pinched the bridge of her nose slightly before planting her face onto the desk. She was going to take a nap.

After her nap, she had to make a trip to the factory. There was a bridal gown that needed to be made and a tailor she had to speak to.

While Anya was busy napping, Sydney was busy with something else. She had not seen Anya the entire morning and that infuriated the young woman.

She had no idea what was going on between Anya and Evan at all.

If Anya had truly hooked up with Evan, Sydney would be an idiot to harass her stepsister further and incur the latter's wrath.

But she wasn't sure. She didn't know what to do. After some thought, she decided to head home.

The MacMillans had just eaten lunch when Sydney arrived.

Mdm MacMillan was sitting in the living room watching a daytime soap opera. Sydney's mother, Melissa, was peeling oranges for her mother-in-law.

Unlike Anya, Melissa knew how to earn an old lady's favor.

She knew how to get the old lady on her side. After Anya had been driven out of the MacMillan family, Melissa had continued her lies, telling the old lady that Anya's mother had had an affair and had cursed the old lady before her death.

She had planted false evidence to convince the old lady of her deception.

She had hidden voodoo dolls in the room that Anya's mother had lived in. Nailed to the dolls were curses. Mdm

MacMillan's name had been written on all of them.

Mdm MacMillan was an extremely superstitious woman. She had fallen for the deception, hook, line and sinker. That was why the old lady had detested Anya so much.

No one could love a daughter-in-law who had wanted her dead. No one could love such a woman's daughter as well, when the latter had loose morals and slept around.

Sydney got out the car that had stopped outside the MacMillan's mansion. She marched into the house and walked right up to Mdm MacMillan.

She didn't take a seat on the couch. Instead, she fell to her knees and started sobbing. "Granny! You have to help me..... Anya's been picking on me!"

"What happened?" The old woman's heart broke when she saw the sight of her granddaughter wailing. She reached out and pulled Sydney to her feet. "Come on, Sydney, my precious darling, stop crying and tell your granny what happened."

"Granny! Anya's trying to steal Evan from me. Everyone in the family knows that I'm in love with Evan.... I didn't say a word when Anya tried to steal Evan from me a year ago. But this time, it's different. She tried to threaten me! She said that she was going to drive me out of Welton Group!" Sydney sat down on the couch next to Mdm MacMillan. Tears streamed down her cheeks ceaselessly

It was a great performance. Melissa couldn't help but marvel at how wonderful an actress her daughter was.

"What?" Mdm MacMillan couldn't believe her ears. She slammed her fist heavily onto the couch. "How dare she! Does she know what she's doing?"

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"She did. She threatened me." Sydney bit her lips and sobbed harder. She tried her best to squeeze out a few more tears and look as if she had been picked on by her stepsister. "Granny, you have no idea how obnoxious she is! She's seducing every man in her sight. In fact, she's throwing herself at Evan. She thinks that if she gets Evan on her side, she'll be able to push us around."

The young w

young woman wiped the crocodile tears off her cheeks as she continued sobbing. Her shoulders trembled with feigned anguish and misery. "Granny, she's going to come after our family. She's going to want payback. She must hate you for driving her out of the MacMillan family."

"That's right! She said something to me... Granny, she said..." Sydney trailed off as she bit her lips. The look on her face was that of hesitation and worry.

The old woman bought the act. She reached out and patted Sydney comfortingly on the back of her hand. "Don't worry, my sweet pumpkin. Tell me. Your Granny has your back."

"She cursed you. She said that she hopes you die and go to hell!" Sydney said viciously as she eyed the look on her grandmother's face deliberately.

As soon as she spat out those vicious words, the old lady lost her cool. The latter tightened her fingers into angry fists. Her face darkened with fury. You could almost feel the storm clouds gather above her head and sense the fast approach of a furious thunderstorm. Mdm MacMillan's eyes burned with anger.

The old lady shook with rage. She had fallen for Sydney's lies completely. "How dare she! I won't let her push our family around. Let her try! I'll stop her even if it kills me!"

She can still remember the voodoo dolls that they had found in the room of Anya's late mother.

She truly believed that the dolls were imbued with dark magic.

If the curse of Anya's late mother worked, it meant that the old lady was going to go to hell after she died. She was going to be barred from entering heaven.

Mdm MacMillan was a deeply religious person. She couldn't bear the thought of being sent to hell.

Yet, here was Anya, following her mother's footsteps and cursing her grandmother twice.

What a terrible young woman. How could she do that to her own grandmother? How could she repeat her mother's sin?

The woman had no morals. Why had she let Anya off that easily?

She should've made sure Anya died alongside her vicious mother. They would make good company for each other in hell.

"My precious Sydney, you can stop crying," the old lady finally said. "Like I said, Granny's got your back. As long as I'm around, I won't let her ruin your happiness."

"Okay, Granny," Sydney said. She didn't try to say anything more. She could see how furious her grandmother was. Besides, the old lady had agreed to step in and help her.

The young woman nodded meekly.

"Mom, don't get upset. Let me help you to your room." Melissa, who had been observing the exchange between Sydney and Mdm MacMillan, seized the opportunity to display her concern for the old lady as she offered to help the latter back to her

room.

She got

got Mdm MacMillan comfortable before stepping out of the old lady's bedroom.

Sydney had wiped the false tears off her cheeks and was glaring at the television set in the living room. The gears in her head were turning furiously as she tried to think of how to deal with Anya.

The old lady might have promised to help Sydney, but success was not guaranteed. She might fail.

Sydney needed a backup plan.

“Sydney, were you telling her the truth?” Melissa asked as she made her way towards her daughter and took a seat on the couch. “Is Anya honestly picking on you?”

“I won’t call it that.” Sydney looked away. “Everything else is true though. She’s spending a lot of time with Evan. I’m not sure if they’re dating.”

“Mom, you know that I’m in love with Evan. You tried to set Anya up a year ago and ended up doing the same to Evan. It took me six months to get over that.”

Melissa knew how much her daughter loved Evan. She hadn’t expected things to turn out that way a year ago. It had been

an accident.

She cupped her daughter’s cheek gently. “Don’t be upset, darling. You have us on your side. We won’t let Anya get what she wants. She won’t have Evan. If I’d known this would happen, I would’ve made sure your dear sister ended up getting buried alongside her mother.”

Sydney nodded. “Well, if we can’t kill her, can we at least marry her off to someone else?”

Melissa froze. Marry An

off?

“Marry Anya off? To whom?”

“Anyone will do. She could marry a dead man for all I care. It just can’t be Evan,” Sydney spat out viciously.

Melissa read Sydney's mind instantly. Her lips curled into a malicious smile. "Don't worry, Sydney. I'll take care of this."

"Okay, Mom."

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Evening came. It was time to knock off work. The skies above Nordeny were painted in hues of fiery red and orange.

They looked as if they were burning.

Anya was at a textile mill. JK Couture was partners with this factory. She was currently speaking to the tailor and discussing with him the design for Lola's bridal gown. She had to get the gown done as soon as possible.

This was the first time the tailor was making a bridal gown. He wasn't very familiar with the design. After studying the draft that Anya had shown him for a very long time, he finally started work on the prototype.

Lola was a celebrity.

had to b

Her bridal gown had to be made from the best fabric and material,

Anya had designed a flowy wedding veil for the young woman. Ordinary chiffon sold on the market wouldn't do. In fact, the more expensive ones wouldn't do either. The veil had to be made from the best type of chiffon.

A yard of the best type of chiffon cost two grand.

The fabric required for the wedding gown cost more than ten grand. The rhinestones and pearls that would decorate the veil were going to add to the cost too. The gown was going to cost at least three hundred grand.

But three hundred grand was nothing to a celebrity like Lola. It was but pocket change.

Someone as rich and famous as Lola wasn't going to quibble over a few hundred grand.

All she wanted was a beautiful gown.

That was why Anya had spent the entire afternoon in the textile mill, keeping an eye on the tailor until the prototype was done. She inspected the dress a few times. After making sure that it was perfect, the young woman's heart was finally set at ease. She could knock off work now.

Before stepping out of the tailor's office, Anya made sure to instruct the man. "We designed this bridal gown for one of our company's most important clients. Our client doesn't want anyone to know about the gown before she's ready."

The tailor knew the importance of protecting a client's privacy and confidentiality. He smiled. "Don't worry, Anya. I've been working with JK Couture for the past five years. We're professionals. We adhere to the professional code of conduct."

"Thank you so much," Anya said. Her voice brimmed with gratitude.

Lola was a celebrity. The young woman had told Anya repeatedly to keep quiet about her engagement. When it was time, she would issue an announcement on Twitter and tell the world that she was going to get engaged. She would be the one who would share pictures of her own bridal gown.

Anya had agreed, of course. She intended to keep her word.

"It's no big deal," the man said as he smiled warmly at Anya. "Don't worry."

Anya was an incredibly beautiful and hardworking young woman.

The tailor had heard that she was still serving her probation at JK Couture. But honestly, she had shown herself to be as good as the rest of the designers working at the company.

He had been working in the textile mill for many years. Talented designers like Anya were a rare breed.

It seemed as if she were born to be a designer.

Anya nodded. "I'll be here again tomorrow. I'm going to go now."

The man rose to his feet and offered to walk Anya out. He honestly liked the young woman.

It wasn't love, of course. He was forty, for goodness' sake. The young woman was as young as his daughter.

Perhaps her youth was the reason for why he liked her. Despite her youth and inexperience, she was a hard worker who took her work seriously. She was also extremely friendly and easy to work with. He couldn't help but like the hardworking

young woman.

While Anya felt bad for having the tailor walk her out, the man had insisted when she had tried to turn down the offer. In the end, she caved and let the man walk her out of the textile mill.

The tailor returned to his work after he escorted Anya to the entrance of the factory.

Anya peered at the skies. They looked as if they were ablaze with the setting sun. The view was breathtaking. The young woman marveled at the gorgeous sunsets that her city was blessed with.

She felt the rare absence of tension in her shoulders. It had been a long while since she had been so at ease.

She admired the sunset for another moment before heading towards the station. She had to get home.

She couldn't wait to see her two precious angels and spend the rest of the evening with them.

As Anya made her way to the station, she remembered that she owed her best friend a meal. She pulled her phone out and called Cindy. She had had plans of inviting Cindy to join her for dinner on her birthday. But Evan had interrupted her plans. Anya had ended up setting aside her plans to have dinner with Cindy.

She should be free for dinner tomorrow.

She could buy her best friend dinner. In fact, she could take the kids out and treat them to a decent meal.

As Anya made her way to the station, a white Toyota slid into the parking lot in front of the textile mill that Anya had just departed.

Carol had known that Anya was going to be at the textile mill today. The latter had to get Lola's wedding gown done.

The senior designer wasn't going to let Anya have her way so easily.

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Carol parked her car in the parking lot right outside the sexie mil.

She killed the engine.

Then, the young woman coed out of her car and headed straight for the factory. She had a tailor she needed to speak to.

Carol was no stranger to the tailor. They had worked together on multiple occasions. Carol's unexpected visit did not draw any suspicions at all. In fact, she was welcomed warmly by the man.

She was an experienced senior designer at JK Couture, after all.

In fact, she was several ranks above Aye, who was a junior designer still serving her probationary period.

The tailor accorded Carol the respect that her rank deserved. "Carol, what a surprise! Do you have any new designs for us?"

"Is that why you're here?"

Carol plastered a smile on her face and laughed. That's right. We got a new international client recently who's looking for something haute couture. They're willing to pay. My creative director told me to take a look at the textile mills that we're working with currently and assess which might be the most ideal partner for the project."

The mention of a new project brought a smile to the man's face. "You know the quality of the products we produce. You can be confident of the quality that you'll receive if you work with us."

"I know that of course. It's an incredibly important project though. I can't rush into a decision without considering all our options." Carol said coolly.

"Why don't you take a seat in my office, Carol? Speak to my manager and get him to talk to you." The man's head was filled with the new project. He had forgotten all about what Anya had told him.

Having said that, he headed upstairs to look for his manager.

Carol smiled before making her way to the man's office.

Her eyes fell on Lola's bridal gown as soon as she stepped into the room.

The dress was still incomplete. It lacked the accessories and gemstones that would adorn the final product. But you could see the basic shape of the dress in the prototype.

It was going to be a flowy dress

It was beautiful.

Carol's eyes burned with envy as she studied the gown. She had to admit that Anya had done a good job.

She threw another glance at the gown before pulling her phone out. She snapped a few photos of the prototype.

Then, she kept her phone away and took a seat on the couch. The young woman grabbed a magazine from the coffee table

and started flipping through its pages as she waited for the factory manager to turn up

Night descended upon Norden Anya was just done with her call with Ondy. Her spirits soaring, she made her way back to Elle's apartment. She couldn't wait to see her precious darlings

The twins had just drunk the milk and were playing with their toys in the living room

Anya reached the apartment and unlocked the door

As soon as the twins heard the sound of the door swinging open, they knew that their mother was home

The children dropped the toys in their hands onto the floor and toddled towards Anya on their chubby little legs hurriedly.

Nathaniel got ahead of his sister shouting for his mother as he ran towards the young woman.

Eudora couldn't catch up with her brother. It took her a few moments to reach her mother. At this juncture, Nathaniel already had his arms around one of Anya's legs. Eudora spread her arms and wrapped them around her mother's other leg. The two kids began to cry for their mother.

"Mommy_

Mommy

"Eudora Nathaniel. Mommy missed you too." Anya said as she squatted down and greeted her kids.

The twins gave her a fierce hug when they heard that.

They continued crying for their mother.

In fact, they wouldn't let go of the young woman at all and demanded that she carry them.

Exasperated. Anya lifted her kids into her arms.

Ellie had been busy in the kitchen. She emerged from the kitchen with a tray of dishes. There was a smile on her face. "Nathaniel Eudora, you're getting heavier. Mommy can't carry you like that anymore. Mommy's been working the whole day. She's tired."

"Okay Mommy" Nathaniel understood what Ellie had said. The boy wanted to get out of his mother's arms immediately.

He was going to grow up and become a hero.

He'd protect his mother and his sister for the rest of his life. He couldn't let his mother overwork herself because of him.

Eudora followed in her brother's footsteps. Her brother wanted to get down. So did she.

Anya placed her two kids back down on the floor. Their antics made her break out into laughter. She had such adorable and kind children. She turned towards her aunt. "Ellie, let's dine out for dinner tomorrow. Something cropped up that day. We didn't even manage to celebrate my birthday together."

"Sure." Ellie was fine with anything. She was glad that the twins could get out of the apartment once in a while and have some fun. "Except when going out to buy groceries, I never bring the twins out before asking your permission. I don't dare to. I'm worried that I might run into."

The older woman trailed off.

But Anya knew what her aunt was trying to tell her.

"Forget it. Let's not talk about that. Come on and have dinner, Ellie said as she placed the dishes on the dining table.

Anya nodded before leading the kids to the dining area. They sat down around the dining table.

Ellie had begun feeding the twins some solids even though they were still drinking milk.

Now that they had had a taste of a wider range of delicious foods, they should grow less reliant on their mother's breastmilk.

Soon, Anya would be able to wean them off breastmilk completely.

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0 14:05

Dinner was an enjoyable affair that night. Anya breastfed the twins after she was done with dinner.

The young woman was playing with Eudora and Nathaniel when Ellie came out of the kitchen. She was just done with the dishes. "I'm going to buy some fruits from the grocery store nearby"

Tm

Anya took a look at the time. It was half past seven. "I do it"

It was still early

"You've been working late for the past few days. You must be exhausted. Besides, you haven't been spending much time with the kids recently You should spend more time with them"

"Why don't we bring them along?" Anya said after some thought

"They hardly get out of the apartment with me. They've spent the last year cooped up in the house."

"Wouldn't that be." Ellie was worried that they might run into someone they didn't want to run into.

"The grocery store's right around the corner I don't think we'll bump into him there, Anya said as she tugged her kids gently to their feet "Come on, sweethearts, Mommy's gonna bring you out. We're buying some fruits"

Eudora and Nathaniel beamed with delight when they heard what their mother had said. They couldn't wait to get out of the

apartment with their mother.

"Let's go." Anya said as she reached for Eudora's hand

Ellie couldn't stop Anya. She grabbed Nathaniel's hand and went downstairs with Anya.

It didn't matter that it was a short trip to the grocery store. The family rarely had an opportunity to go out together. Ellie might bring Eudora and Nathaniel along with her when she went out for groceries, but this was the first time the twins were getting groceries with their mother.

The kids were jumping with joy

They wouldn't leave Anya's side and wouldn't stop blabbering garbled and unintelligible words to her.

The owner of the grocery store had never seen Anya with the twins. She had had the impression that the beautiful young woman was still single. She had not expected her to be a mother of two. In fact, she hadn't expected Anya's kids to be so pretty

They looked like dolls.

Other patrons in the store shared the same sentiment. They couldn't stop themselves from approaching the adorable children and playing with them

Anya and Ellie left the twins alone with the other patrons. They seemed friendly and appeared to like the twins.

The two women headed towards the fruits and started picking what they wanted. The folks who patronized the grocery store lived in the neighborhood. They wouldn't hurt their kids.

At least, that was what Anya thought. She was still young and naïve.

soon as she and Ellie turned around, a strange woman made a grab for Eudora.

Nathaniel could talk. The woman dared not make a grab for him, lest he say something.

The boy panicked as he watched a stranger abduct his sister. There was no way he could catch up with her. He turned around and burst into tears. The boy wailed loudly for his mother. His loud cries drew the attention of everyone in the store.

That was adorable young girl whom they had been playing with a moment ago was gone.

everyone realized that t

Anya whirled around as soon as she heard Nathaniel's cries. Her eyes landed on her son. Her daughter was nowhere in sight.

The young woman hurried over towards the boy with her aunt. "Nathaniel, where is Eudora?"

Nathaniel didn't know many words. He stuttered as he tried to tell his mother what had happened. "A stranger... took..."

sister...

"Dora's gone.

The boy wailed loudly.

Tears streamed down Anya's cheeks when she realized what had happened. Her precious daughter had been abducted. Someone had stolen her daughter from her. Voices rose around her as soon as the folks around her realized what had happened too. "Somebody, call the cops!"

"I saw a woman in her forties leaving the store with the girl," someone else said. "She headed left after leaving the store.. You should go after her."

Anya stopped crying. She pushed Nathaniel into Ellie's arms and raced out of the store. She was going to get Eudora back.

She took a left turn after racing out of the store. In the distance was a woman with her daughter in her arms. They hadn't gone that far.

All thoughts fled Anya's head. She started running

after the couple with all her might, yelling at the top of her voice as she tried to catch up with her daughter's kidnapper. "Somebody, help! Someone took my kid! Help me! That lady in a brown vest, Somebody, stop her!"

Her words stopped everyone in their tracks. They couldn't believe it. Someone had tried to abduct a child in broad daylight.

No one was going to stand by and let that happen. Some of them began running after the kidnapper.

Some pulled their phones out and called the cops.

Anya kept running. The kidnapper finally started running as well.

Anya's cold tubes she had to get her counter work. She didn't pick up the call

the man won the third call. Fry's trally greed of the was on the verge of tears. Her voice shook with fear

ta ganderweg me with your calls, Mr. Wartort

Chapter 178

There was dead silence coming from the other end of the line. Anya had hung up,

The moment had passed and was followed by the dull beeping of a dial tone. Evan leaned into his chair. He was still in the office. His eyes darkened. Eudora? An abduction? What was going on?

The young man was still for a few seconds. Then, he reached for his phone and was calling his personal assistant in the next moment. "Hayden, get the car ready. I'm heading to Anya's apartment."

Evan sounded really serious. Hayden had never heard him so stern before. The young man dared not drag his feet. He replied his boss immediately. "Of course, Mr. Welton, I'll have the car ready right away."

The young man did exactly that. Within minutes, a black Bentley slid out of the tower and stopped right outside the entrance of the building. All Hayden had to do now was wait for Evan to step out of Welton Group Tower.

Meanwhile, Evan was in the elevator. The young man stared at his phone as he texted Anya. "Ms. MacMillan, who took Eudora? What happened?"

After the text was sent, he sent another one. "Don't worry. I'm on my way."

The young man stared at the reflective surface in the elevator. He was thinking.

Honestly, he didn't trust the results of the DNA test. He hadn't found any evidence that proved that the twins weren't his.

Until he found such evidence, he was going to treat them like his own.

That was why he was worried about Eudora too.

Evan mulled over the matter as he rode the elevator. It didn't take him long to reach the ground floor.

The young man stepped out of the elevator and headed towards the entrance. Meanwhile, Sydney had arrived at the building. She had dedicated a great deal of time to her makeup today to make sure that she looked good. She had on a form-fitting dress that showed off her cleavage and her curves as well as her long legs. It ended at mid-thigh. The young woman was carrying a bento box as she stepped into the building in her eight-inch heels. She had prepared dinner for

Evan.

The young woman had paid a hefty sum to an employee who worked for the man.

She knew that he was going to be working late tonight.

She was right. He was still in the building when she arrived with her lovingly prepared bento box.

In fact, he had just arrived at the ground floor when she had stepped into the building. What a happy coincidence.

Sydney's eyes brightened at the sight of the young man. Her heart began to race.

She lifted her arm and combed her fingers through her hair.

Then, she made a beeline for Evan. The young woman gathered her courage and raised her voice as Evan headed for his Bentley. "Mr Welton, are you heading home?"

Evan stopped in his tracks immediately. He turned and gave Sydney a look. His eyes did not betray any hint of emotion. Yet you could tell that he was a little annoyed. "Do you need anything, Ms. MacMillan?*

"Well yes. handsome.

actually." Sydney stared at the dashing young man in front of her. Her heart wouldn't stop racing. Evan was so

He wasn't just handsome. He was also rich. His family was incredibly influential and powerful.

If he married her, she would become the wife of the most powerful man in Nordeny.

Every woman in the city would be desperately trying to get into her good graces then.

The thought of that filled Sydney with immense pleasure.

“What is it? I’m in a hurry.” Honestly, Evan wasn’t interested in what Sydney had to say. But she was an employee of his company. He couldn’t possibly brush her off rudely. That would tarnish his reputation.

The young man tried to keep his impatience from showing in his voice.

“It’s nothing important, really. I found out that you’re working late tonight, Mr. Welton, and I was just thinking... that you might not have time to get dinner. That’s why I made something for you,” Sydney said demurely as she stuck her arms out and revealed the bento box in her hands.

Evan threw a look at the bento box. He wasn’t interested at all. “Thanks, Ms. MacMillan, but I have something to attend to. Since it’s nothing important, you can go now.”

Then, he pulled the door to his Bentley open and slipped into the car.

Sydney heard a loud thud as the door slammed shut. The next moment, the Bentley was speeding into the distance, its engines roaring loudly as it disappeared down the street.

The smoke emitted from the car’s exhaust pipe had the young woman hacking loudly for a few seconds.

She stared as Evan’s car vanished into the night. A deep frown creased her brow

She wasn’t going to give up.

She would have Evan. She would become his wife and the young mistress of the Welton family.

Evan would not stop frowning as he sat in his car while it sped down the streets. Anya had not replied to his texts.

She must be panicking right now.

The young man was not upset. He turned his eyes towards the window and gazed at the night sky calmly. After some deliberation, he pulled his phone out and called a friend. The guy was a cop.

Evan wanted to ask his friend for a favor and get him to help keep an eye out for Eudora.

Josh answered his call within seconds. The man checked the address that Evan gave him quietly. It was the address that Anya had fabricated. "Evan, someone did file a report recently about an attempted abduction. But the address stated in the report doesn't match the one that you've given me."

A crease appeared between Evan's brows. "What do you mean?"

"Ms. MacMillan's address is recorded in our database, but it's not the same address as you've given me," Josh said tactfully. He could not reveal personal details of a civilian to anyone without a legitimate reason. It did not matter that Evan was a friend. "I can't share the address with you. I don't have access to the information."

"I hope you understand, Evan."

He did. The young man fell into a momentary silence. "Have the patrol cars been sent out?"

"Yes," Josh replied. "They're headed for Monk's Groceries on Sedan Street. That's all I can tell you."

Monk's Groceries on Sedan Street.

Evan could work with that. He would find out where Anya really lived. He had his ways.

“Thanks,” Evan said before ending the call. After a moment’s pause, the young man turned towards Hayden who was driving the car. “Hayden, get me a copy of Anya’s application for her position at JK Couture.”

Hayden eyed Evan’s reflection in the rearview mirror, then nodded. “Sure, Mr. Welton.”

The young man tucked his earpiece into his ear and called the HR department. He told the person on the other end of the line to get him Anya’s address.

Evan had looked into Anya’s aunt but had not checked her address.

He could not believe that Anya had tried to lie to him.

Did she really believe that he was not going to find out?

“Head to Sedan Street,” Evan told Hayden.

Hayden slammed his foot into the gas pedal and sped towards Sedan Street immediately after he heard Evan’s instruction.

Within ten minutes, Evan’s car appeared around the corner of the street.

Hayden made a turn and started looking for the grocery store. That was when Evan caught a glimpse of the scene outside

Someone was running down the streets. She had a child in her arms.

No one was chasing her, yet the woman ran as if there were hellhounds snapping at her heels.

The bizarre sight made the young man stare. After a moment, his eyes darkened. The child that the woman was holding in her arms was Eudora.

The girl was wailing. Her face was flushed from the exertion of crying.

“Stop the car” Even told Hayden instantly.

Heyden had no idea what was going on in Evan’s head. He threw a baffled look at Evan’s reflection in the rearview mirror before slamming his foot on the brakes.

The car screeched to a stop.

The door swung open. Evan dashed out of the car.

The young man began running after the woman. He was clearly the faster runner. Within seconds, he had caught up to her. Evan grabbed the woman by the arm and seized her collar with his other hand. “How dare you touch my daughter! Do you have any idea who you’re messing with?”

The woman was caught in Evan’s vice-like grip. She had no idea who Evan was. She thought he had wanted to abduct the child too and burst out a loud wail instantly. “Somebody, help me! Someone’s trying to take my granddaughter from me...

somebody, help!

The woman struggled to free herself from the stranger as she wailed.

was to no avail.

She continued crying loudly. “Somebody, please help! Won’t anyone help me? Someone’s trying to steal my grandkid...”

Her loud cries frightened Eudora. The girl burst into tears as well.

Folks in the vicinity gathered around the three of them immediately. Many of them were ready to step forward and help the

“Let’s call the cops then. That’ll fix everything.” Evan said fearlessly. “Can someone please call the cops?”

Everyone could tell that Evan was unruffled by the commotion that the woman had caused. In fact, the latter was the one stomping her feet and making a scene. She did not seem to care at all that the girl in her arms was wailing inconsolably.

She was clearly the more suspicious of the two.

“Don’t listen to him! He’s trying to steal my granddaughter from me!” The woman raised her voice when she saw the

suspicious looks on the onlookers’ faces.

“We’re surrounded. Neither of us are going anywhere. I’m not afraid. What are you afraid of?” Evan said. He clearly knew

what he was doing.

The man was composed and exuded an air of confidence and authority.

Everyone around him were momentarily overpowered by the aura that he was exuding.

The young man made a lot of sense. A crowd had gathered around the trio. No one was going anywhere. They simply had to call the cops. The police would get to the bottom of things and find out who the true kidnapper was.

If the woman truly were the kid's grandmother, she should not be panicking at all.

Everyone ended up on Evan's side. The young man was looking at Eudora. The girl was growing breathless from her violent wailing. The look in Evan's eyes sharpened. He reached out and pulled Eudora out of the woman's arms. He gave Eudora a gentle pat on her back and started comforting the girl.

Evan had no experience with kids at all.

Yet, somehow, he could feel a rush of paternal affection surging through him as he tried to get Eudora to stop crying. He would give her anything. He would give her the world if she wanted it.

Chapter 180

Eudora should be frightened of Evan as well.

But compared to the strange woman who had abducted her, Evan was less of a stranger. Anya had brought Eudora and her brother to Evan's place to play. The child naturally felt safer with the young man.

She shouldn't. Anya had told her not to get too friendly with the young man when they had visited his place. She had listened to her mother and kept her distance.

But the young man was carrying her in his arms right now.

The girl felt strangely safe in his arms. His embrace felt as familiar as Anya's.

Besides, the young man smelled nice. He smelled like peppermint.

Eudora stopped crying instantly. She wrapped her arms around Evan tightly and didn't let go. It was as if he were her very own knight.

The woman who had snatched her from her mother had been terrifying. She had grabbed Eudora and started running. Anya couldn't catch up with her at all.

Eudora had been so frightened.

She had been worried that she might never see her mother again.

Evan was startled by the light grip Eudora had on him. She was just a small child. The kid was hugging him fiercely with her tiny arms. A sudden and unexpected surge of paternal affection rose within the young man.

He patted the young girl's back gently and tried to calm the child down.

Evan's gentle gesture sent Hayden reeling with disbelief. He had just caught up with his boss.

His impression of Evan was of a distant and unapproachable man who kept everyone at a distance.

In fact, the young man carried himself like royalty. He was the emperor and everyone else, his humble servant.

Not this time though. The man was as gentle as a lamb.

Hayden wasn't going to speculate the relationship that Evan might share with the young girl. But that didn't mean that he had forgotten about the expensive kids' furniture that Evan had bought recently. Honestly, he couldn't help but wonder privately.

Was the girl his boss' illegitimate daughter?

You couldn't deny the possibility.

Hayden thought about the matter for a few moments before he shoved those terrifying thoughts aside.

He stood at one side and waited for further instructions from the

“Look, the girl must know him. She’s not crying anymore the clockers would have fun and adore her
discussing heatedly with one another as Evan continued his attempts to calm the group

“That’s right. Doesn’t that mean that the woman’s the one who tried to seduce the kid in the first place

placed

“She might be! This is unbelievable. Who would try to kidnap a kid in broad daylight? That’s outrageous She
must be one kind of a human trafficker. We can’t let her escape?”

“That’s right. We have to keep an eye on her before the cops arrive

Everyone continued discussing heatedly in the middle of the street. The woman could hear what they
were saying. She realized that they seemed to be serious. They weren’t going to let her leave. She had to
run before it was too late

But it was. She was surrounded.

Everyone detested human traffickers. In fact, they thought that human traffickers deserved capital
punishment

These abhorrent criminals stole children and tore families apart

They were the scum of the earth.

The crowd began to close in around the woman. She knew that the jig was up. Terror had her falling to
her knees and begging for mercy. “Please let me go! I didn’t mean it.”

“Please. I just wanted a kid... my granddaughter died in a car accident. I just wanted a granddaughter...please, have mercy on me. I just miss my granddaughter.”

“I can’t believe it! She is a human trafficker! Make sure she doesn’t run. We have to hand her to the cops when they solve.” The woman’s begging didn’t invoke any sympathy for her. All it brought upon her were waves of disgust and anger

No one should be robbing another family of their kids because her own was gone. That wasn’t right

The crowd of onlookers seemed to have the situation under control. Eudora’s attempted kidnapper wasn’t going anywhere Evan decided to bring Eudora to Anya.

Meanwhile, Anya had been running for the past twenty minutes. Her legs were ready to give out. She finally managed to catch up with Eudora’s kidnapper.

That was when she saw the kidnapper surrounded by a crowd of onlookers. The woman was on her knees begging for mercy. Standing next to her was a man and in his arms was Eudora.

Anya felt tears well up in her eyes. She started sobbing uncontrollably.

The young woman raced towards Eudora as she cried. She pulled Eudora from Evan’s arms and hugged her daughter tightly. Her voice was choked with tears when she spoke. “I’m so sorry, Eudora. Mommy’s not going to let her eyes off you ever again.”

“I’m so sorry, Eudora.”

Aniya sounded anguished Evan frowned at the misery in her voice. He wasn’t going to yell at the woman in public. There were people watching. He reached out, grabbed Anya’s arm, and dragged her into his car. Then, he told Hayden to hand some tissue to the woman. “Dry your tears”

The man had saved her daughter. Anya didn’t refuse his kind gesture. She still kept her distance though. The young woman wiped the tears off her cheeks. “Thank you, Mr.

Evan fell silent for a moment. "You should be more careful next time

Eudora and Nathaniel might be his kids. He couldn't let anything happen to either of them.