

Kissed AOM 1851

Chapter 1851

Adam snorted. "Don't you two get it? Why should I stay here if they're not going to accept my apology? Let's leave!"

Lilin looked annoyed. "But Dad..."

"Enough!" Adam bent down and lifted his daughter in his arms. "We shouldn't have come here in the first place. Let's go. We're going to bail your sister out. She's waiting for us!"

Melinda, embarrassed but unable to do anything about it, bid farewell to Emily and Corinne before rushing out to try and catch up.

When they left, Emily's expression sank, and she felt her heart grow heavier. Corinne remained silent and chose to pretend as though nothing happened. She handed some food to her mother and said, "Here. Have some dinner."

Emily nodded and offered a reluctant smile to Corinne before eating quietly.

When Corinne saw this, she turned to Jeremy and asked, "Could you accompany me to the bathroom, please?"

Jeremy nodded in tacit understanding. He came forward and left the ward with her. The hospital corridors were slightly less crowded in the evening as there were not a lot of people.

Corinne held Jeremy's hand and said, "Hey. You don't need to show mercy to Adam for my mother's sake. I don't want you to suffer this injustice because of my mother and I. Just go ahead and deal with them as you see fit."

Jeremy turned to her and said, "I don't feel like I suffered that big of an injustice."

Corinne frowned. "You might not feel that way, but I do! Why should you forgive someone who broke your legs? Everyone must face the consequences of their wrongdoings. Adam and Sophia are no exception."

Jeremy felt a pang of distress when he saw how visibly distressed Corinne was. He held her in his arms and caressed the back of her head. "Okay, I won't show mercy on them. I'll deal with them harshly and stop this injustice. Don't cry, okay? It pains me when you cry."

Corinne buried her face in his chest. She was determined to ensure that Adam would not be let off that easily for her mother's sake, but she feared that Jeremy might show more mercy out of care and concern for his mother-in-law. She would not allow him to do that, not when Adam and Sophia had inflicted on him the worst form of suffering that he ever experienced in his entire life.

"I mean it, Jeremy. I don't want you to show mercy to Adam! It's his fault that he raised his daughter to become an evil and ruthless woman. He should bear the consequences of his actions!" Jeremy hugged her and said, "You're right. I'll do as you say."

Corinne was still concerned that he might not be able to bring himself to do it, so she emphasized to him, "I'll handle things on my mother's end. You don't need to worry about her. Do you understand?" Jeremy placed his chin on the top of her head and rubbed it slightly. "Yes, I understand."

Meanwhile, in the elevator, Melinda said to Adam, "Didn't you already say we won't rescue Sophia? Why are you changing your mind again?"

Adam snorted. "You saw that, didn't you? I apologized to them, but they're not keen on accepting it at all. Why should we suck up to them if they can't even bother to show you or Emily any courtesy? It's almost as if they don't give a damn about your friendship with Emily. I'm better off trying to help my daughter than dealing with them."

Chapter 1852

Melinda felt that nothing she said could snap Adam back to his senses. "Fine! In that case, I'm done with you! You can go and bail Sophia out if you want, but give Lilin back to me." She took Lilin from Adam and walked out when the elevator doors opened.

Adam caught up to them and said, "What do you expect me to do, Mel? I can't just ignore Sophia!"

Melinda took a deep breath and said disappointedly, "Go help Sophia, then. Lilin and I won't support you in this decision. We'll go our separate ways from now on. You can take Sophia, and I'll take Lilin. If Sophia does anything to hurt anyone, you can bear the consequences alone."

Adam could only remark helplessly, "Mel...Sophia isn't as evil as you make her out to be..."

Unable to bear his unreasonable remark, Melinda looked at Adam in bewilderment and said, "Haven't you seen all those wrongdoings she did over the years? She nearly succeeded in splashing acid on Corinne today! Sophia has always resorted to extreme measures when she doesn't get what she wants, and today's incident takes the cake. Is that still not enough for you to see that she's a bad person? I'm starting to wonder what your definition of a bad person is."

"The concern you show for Sophia's well-being is so great that it comes at the expense of turning a blind eye to the harm that she could cause to others! Why must Sophia be excused from facing the consequences of hurting other people? Corinne saved my life. She might not mean much to you, but she means a lot to me. I can't bear to live with you anymore! I won't stop you from rescuing Sophia, but we're going ahead with the divorce once you're done!"

Adam was speechless. He knew that Sophia had committed much wrongdoing, but he could not bring himself to leave her be. "Mel, you're forcing me to choose between you or Sophia!"

"I'm not forcing you to choose between us," Melinda corrected him. "Lilin and I are simply removing ourselves from your life so you can pamper Sophia to your heart's content."

A trace of sadness appeared on Adam's expression and tried to strike a compromise. "I'm going to the police station just to see Sophia. I won't interfere with the police investigation. Just let me see her, Mel! Please! She's never been in such a situation before, and she must be scared at the police station!"

Before Melinda could say anything, Lilin sneered and said, "You're too soft on her, Dad. Why would someone who tried to splash acid on another person be scared so easily? She's braver than you think!" "But she's still your sister!"

"Tch! I don't want to have an evil sister like her!"

Melinda recalled just how manipulative Sophia was, so she thought about Adam's suggestion before saying, "Lilin and I will go with you to the police station on one condition-that you don't indulge any of her requests or try to protect her."

Adam felt a little conflicted but nodded regardless. "Okay. I'm not planning on doing anything anyway. I just want to go there and check on her."

Lilin then said to him, "You'll have to keep your promise if you want me to look up to you and respect you, Dad."

Adam sighed helplessly. Of all the struggles he had faced in his life, the most heart-wrenching one was when his younger daughter did not acknowledge him because he failed to educate his eldest daughter. He had no one else to blame but himself.

When they reached the police station, Adam explained who he was to the officer on duty and was soon brought to the place where the criminals were detained.

Chapter 1853

Sophia went berserk behind the iron bars and yelled all sorts of profanities as she kicked the doors.

The police officer who escorted Adam and his family said with a frown, "She's been causing a ruckus ever since she was placed in here, and she's been insulting our colleagues repeatedly, too."

Adam's expression remained somber, and his face grew even gloomier. Melinda apologized sheepishly to the police officer and felt ashamed that Sophia had been causing so much trouble.

The police officer declined to comment any further and simply gestured for them to go ahead and visit Sophia. She was still kicking the iron bars frantically when she spotted her father, and her eyes lit up right away. "Dad! You're finally here! Tell them to let me out, Dad! It's cold and wet here. This place isn't fit for humans!"

Sophia's unrepentant demeanor left Adam feeling a deep sense of regret and helplessness. "Do you realize what you've done, Sophia? Do you think you can just walk out of here?"

Sophia looked at her father and shed crocodile tears. "I know you'll have a way to save me, Dad! Let me out! Can we save everything else for after I'm out?"

Adam frowned and asked in a stern voice, "You'll have to stay behind bars and face the consequences of your actions."

Sophia was aghast. "What are you saying, Dad? Are you going to abandon me? You're my biological father! You can't do that to me!"

"I might be your biological father, but I can't overlook all the wrongdoing you've committed. You're not a child anymore. It's time for you to face the consequences of your actions!"

When Sophia realized that her father was not bluffing, she threw a fit and gritted her teeth while glaring at him. "So you're going to betray me too, huh? How dare you betray me, you b*stard! They said things about you, didn't they? You're doing this because of them, right?!"

She pointed viciously at Melinda and Lilin, and it seemed that she would have attacked them if she was not behind those iron bars. Adam's disappointment only continued to grow, and he finally snapped when he saw his daughter's lack of remorse and unjustified anger toward them. "Shut up! This has nothing to do with Melinda or Lilin! You committed a crime, and whatever you're facing now is karma! You're in this situation simply because of your actions! How did you even come up with a plan as horrible as splashing acid on other people?"

"Karma? Hahahaha... That's easy for you to say! Everything I did in the past was with your help. Should karma bite you back first? Hahahahahaha!" Sophia laughed maniacally and did not hold her true feelings back.

Adam could only mumble. "But..."

"But what? The apple doesn't fall far from the tree, Dad. I inherited my evil tendencies from you! Hahahahahaha... You taught me never to give in to anyone's demands, and

you promised to help me get whatever I want! Why didn't you keep your word, then? Why won't you help me when I'm asking for Zachary? He's the only man I want! It's such a simple wish! Was everything you said just an empty promise?"

Chapter 1854

Sophia's confrontational attitude left Adam speechless. He could not fathom that the manic person in front of him was his daughter. 'How did Sophia come to this?' he thought to himself.

Lilin lost her temper and said angrily, "Enough, Sophia! Haven't you demanded enough from Dad over these years? You're never satisfied with what you have, and we've only reached this point now because you insisted on taking things that don't belong to you! How could you have the audacity to blame your father for this? You should reflect on yourself!"

Sophia glared viciously at Lilin and retorted, "You little b*tch! You don't have the right to talk to me like that! I wouldn't have to share Dad's affection with you if you were never born, and he would never have treated me like this in the first place!"

Lilin snorted. "Even if I never came into this world, Dad would eventually realize you're not worth his care and concern. You're greedy, ungrateful, and selfish!"

Sophia seemed to lose her mind at that moment and yelled, "Come over here, you little b*tch! I'm going to teach you a lesson!" She extended her hands through the iron bars and attempted to strangle Lilin. Melinda reacted just in time and pulled her daughter away from Sophia's reach.

Sophia's slow but sure descent into madness erased the last remaining slivers of pity and tolerance in Adam's eyes. He grabbed a cup of water from a nearby wooden table and splashed it onto Sophia's face. The sudden shock brought her back to her senses.

Adam looked at her disappointedly and said, "It's my fault that you're like this. Accept the consequences you're about to face and try to turn over a new leaf. You don't want to be a menace to society after you're released, do you?"

He placed the teapot down and led Melinda and Lilin away. "We're done here."

He had assumed that Sophia might feel scared after what happened, but he was wrong. She remained arrogant and failed to recognize her wrongs. Her plan to splash acid on

Corinne was not a mere impulse -it stemmed from her unwavering confidence that Adam, her father, would always be prepared to back her up.

Panic finally started to creep in after that cold splash of water shocked Sophia back to her senses. She reached out and pleaded, "Don't go, Dad! You can't leave! You can't abandon your daughter! Help me... I'm... I'm scared."

Adam never looked back at her despite her pleas. As soon as he left the police station and got into the car, he was overwhelmed by a strong sense of sadness. He raised his hands to cover his eyes and tried his best to hold back his sobs.

Lilin never witnessed Adam in such a vulnerable state before. She asked cautiously, "Are you okay?"

Adam sobbed softly without answering her.

Melinda was distressed when she saw her usually headstrong husband having a minor breakdown. She reached out to pat him on the back and said, "Look on the bright side. Sophia will get the chance to change her ways here. It'll be good for her."

Adam covered his face with his hands and could not control himself from crying bitterly. "You were right all along, Mel! I've spoiled her rotten and turned her into the inhumane person she is today. I failed to raise her well! She might not have turned out like this if I listened to you earlier and stopped myself from giving in to her requests."

Melinda choked up in distress and responded, "Better late than never."

Adam remained silent and lowered his head as he continued to cry in regret. The realization that his daughter was beyond help led to Adam crying for the first time in his adult life.

Melinda and Lilin kept quiet and comforted Adam simply by remaining beside him as he released his emotions. When they returned to the hotel, Melinda helped Adam up to their suite for fear that he might collapse due to his depression. After bringing him to his room, she told him to get some rest and leave the other issues for another day.

There was a knock on the door barely minutes after they entered the suite. When Lilin went over and opened the door, she was greeted by the sight of several people in office attire. One of them came forth and explained why they were there-Adam had to be taken away for investigation as several of the Adam Group's companies had been suspected of operating illegally within the country, in addition to evading taxes on a massive scale.

Melinda was stunned, and Lilin was at a loss too. However, Adam was remarkably calm for someone who had just wept bitterly. It was almost as if he had known that they would come for him sooner or later. He walked over calmly and said, "I'll go with you."

Melinda could not accept what was happening. "What's going on?"

Adam smiled bitterly and said, "I'm sorry I wasn't able to be the best version of myself for you and Lilin. I'll have to go with them now. You can contact my lawyer if you still want a divorce."

Tears welled up in Melinda's eyes. "Brian..."

"Dad!" Lilin exclaimed.

The people took Adam with them and left only Melinda and Lilin in the hotel suite.

Melinda sat blankly on the sofa and said nothing, so Lilin came over and held her hand. "Don't worry about Dad. He's just cooperating with the investigation. There's a chance the outcome might not be as bad as we think!"

Melinda came back to her senses. She forced a smile and reached out to pat her daughter's head. When Adam had been taken away, she finally understood why he had been so eager to sell all his assets within the country.

Unable to shake the emptiness she felt while in the suite, Melinda stood up and led her daughter to the door. "Let's go to the hospital and keep Miss Emily company. It's too quiet here, and we still have to take care of her."

Lilin did as her mother told her.

Corinne and Jeremy were still in Emily's ward when Melinda and Lilin arrived. Corinne did not trust the nurse to take care of her mother, so she wanted to be there and ensure that things did not go wrong again.

Melinda smiled at Jeremy and said, "You should bring Corinne home and get some rest, Mister Jeremy. Don't worry about Em. I'll take care of her here."

Corinne exchanged worried glances with Jeremy. They already received news that Adam had been taken away by the relevant government personnel, and there was no telling if Melinda could still be trusted or if she would resent them for what happened.

Emily seemed to have sensed the couple's worries. "You and Jeremy should get some rest. Melinda will take care of me here. She's my best friend, and we've known each other for years now."

In the end, Corinne nodded and said to Melinda, "Thank you for the trouble, Aunt Melinda."

Chapter 1856

Melinda responded with a bitter smile.

Corinne turned and held Jeremy's hand silently. Then, they said goodbye to Emily and left the ward together.

However, Corinne did not leave the hospital. She stood outside the ward, worrying what might happen.

Jeremy understood her worries, so he said, "If you don't want to leave, we can wait outside here. In case anything happens, we can go inside immediately."

Corinne nodded. She believed that Melinda was a reasonable person, but she could not stop worrying.

...

After Corinne and Jeremy had left the ward, Melinda walked to Emily's bedside as she usually would. "Have you eaten enough, Em? Should I heat up the food for you at the nurse stations so you can continue eating?"

Emily shook her head and looked worriedly at her best friend. She had known Melinda for many years, and she could tell something was bothering her even though Melinda was acting normal.

"I'm not hungry, Mel. Did you...fight with Adam again?"

"No, of course not. Now, take a good rest and stop imagining things," Melinda replied with a smile.

Emily held Melinda's hand. "Stop pretending, Mel. You cried, didn't you? What happened? Did you fight with Adam because of Sophia?"

Melinda's eyes welled up. She wiped off her tears and said, "No, nothing happened! We did have a small argument, but Adam admitted to his mistakes, so we're good now."

"Then why were you crying?" asked Emily worriedly and doubtfully.

Melinda fell silent. She did not want to burden Emily with her family matters.

However, Lilin pouted and said tearfully, "Miss Emily... Someone took my father away!"

'What? Who'd dare take away someone as influential as Adam?' she thought in disbelief.

Fearing she might have misunderstood Lilin, Emily turned to look at Melinda. "Is that true, Mel? What happened? Who took away Adam?"

Melinda sighed, knowing she could not keep it a secret anymore. She wiped her tears, took a deep breath, and explained calmly, "There were some problems with Adam's company, something about their business tax, so Adam was taken away by the authority for investigation. But don't worry, Emily. Everything is still under investigation. If it turns out to be true, Adam acted on his own initiative, so he'll bear the consequences."

Emily gasped. She wanted to comfort her best friend but could barely find the words to do so. "Mel, does this have something to do with my daughter and son-in-law?"

Melinda quickly shook her head and said, "No, it's not their fault. Don't let your mind run wild, Emily. I know Adam. If he didn't do anything wrong, he wouldn't have complied in the first place."

Emily said nothing as she could piece together everything that happened. She might not be able to vouch for Adam's character, but a shrewd businessman like him knew very well how to cover up the dark secrets behind his company.

In other words, the person who was capable of exposing these secrets must be someone as influential as Adam.

Chapter 1857

Emily realized Corinne and Jeremy must have had something to do with Adam being taken away.

She looked at Melinda guiltily, and said helplessly, "I'm sorry, Mel. I think I know what's going on, but I can't do anything. I..."

"It's okay, Emily. I understand how you feel. I'd feel the same if I were you," said Melinda while patting Emily's hand.

Emily's eyes reddened with sadness and guilt.

When she wandered all those years without a place to call home, Melinda had always been there for her. Yet, when Melinda needed her help to save her family, she could not provide any...

She felt sorry for Melinda as well as Corinne. She gave Corinne away to the wrong person and made her suffer for many years. While Corinne prevailed over life's challenges and met her perfect match, they were separated for three years because of some troublemaker.

Emily was well aware she had failed to fulfill her responsibilities as a mother to Corinne, so she had no right to ask her to let Adam go, especially when his daughter was the one who took Jeremy away from her.

Emily felt that she was trapped in this complicated relationship. She was lost and did not know how or who to help.

"Mel, I don't know what I can do. You've helped me so much, yet I can't even do you a favor! Please forgive Moonie. She..."

Melinda, not able to see how Emily blamed herself so relentlessly, hugged and patted her back. "You know me, Emily. And I know what kind of person you are, as well as your daughter and her husband. Corinne saved my life once; I wouldn't be here today if it weren't for her. I can't possibly blame her for this. I know exactly what Sophia has done over the years. If now is the time for Adam and Sophia to get what they deserve, so be it. We must all pay for what we've done, don't we?"

"Besides, the problems in Adam's company weren't made up. Someone exposed it in the newspapers, which means it was true. Don't worry, Emily. I'm fine. I always knew that the man I loved was far from ideal. If he's guilty of something, I'll wait for him to mend his faults. If he has to serve time in prison, I'll wait for him to come out. I have plenty of time."

Instead of lessening Emily's burden, Melinda's words weighed in Emily's heart even more. "But... If he's really sent to prison over this, it'll take years before he gets out of it. You can't possibly waste your youth waiting..."

Melinda stood up and gave Emily a strong, determined smile. "I can wait no matter how long it takes. You know how much of a fool I can be when it comes to love! Remember the time when you tried to talk me out of marrying Adam, but I didn't take your advice and married him anyway? That's how stubborn I am! Anyway, stop worrying about me. When I'm in love, even water tastes like honey to me. I'm sure I'll enjoy my time waiting for him."

"Oh, Mel, you silly girl..." Emily's heavy heart was lightened up by her optimism.

Melinda smiled. "I mean it! I'm glad that he finally sees his faults now. And he definitely should be punished for turning Sophia into such a spoiled brat!"

Chapter 1858

Not knowing what else there was to say, Emily gazed at Melinda with gratitude, admiring her positivity and understanding.

...

Outside the ward, Corinne and Jeremy overheard Emily and Melinda's conversation. They looked at each other silently, deeply impressed by Melinda's moral standing.

'Mom is lucky to have a friend like Missus Addison. She's such an understanding woman,' thought Corinne. Suddenly, Corinne's phone buzzed in her pocket. She took out her phone and saw it was a call from Pamela. She showed the phone to Jeremy, who took a quick glance and said, "Go ahead, answer it."

'Grandma must be wondering why we're not home yet at this hour,' thought Corinne as she picked up the phone.

Before she could tell Pamela that they would not be home that night, Pamela said anxiously, "Corinne, where are you and Jeremy? Come back, now! Something terrible has happened!"

Corinne exchanged glances with Jeremy before asking, "What's happened, Grandma?"

"Joey... Joey was abducted! A stranger took him away! I've sent our men to go after them, but we haven't received any updates. Greg and I... We don't know what to do...so come back quick! Hurry!" replied Pamela. She sounded like she was hyperventilating.

'Joey was abducted? How could this have happened?'

Corinne stood up and dashed to the elevator. Her maternal instinct was triggered the moment she heard about the abduction.

She had to find him!

Jeremy was also anxious, but he hurried to her side and said calmly, "Calm down, little rascal. We should head back home first."

Corinne's hand was cold and sweaty.

'Please be safe, Joey... Please be safe... Oh Lord, what kind of sick joke is this? Why does this keep happening to me? Jeremy's finally back with us, and now Joey is gone?' lamented Corinne.

Jeremy swiftly drove, and they reached the Holdens' estate within half an hour.

When they got out of the car and ran into the house, they bumped into Francine who had just arrived.

"Jeremy, Corinne! You've just arrived, too? Have you found Joey?"

Corinne dashed into the house without answering. Pamela and Greg were sitting agitatedly in the living room, waiting for the latest updates.

Benjamin, Bryan, and Christine were in the living room as well. They were guarded by five maids and five servants to keep them from wandering off.

"Grandma! Where's Joey? Any news?" Corinne was so worried that her eyes had become bloodshot.

Pamela wiped her tears sadly and said, "I'm sorry, Corinne. It's all my fault for not looking after him well... Our men came back, and they failed to get him back. The stranger grabbed Joey and got in a plateless minivan at the junction. The minivan drove into a small street and vanished."

Corinne, flabbergasted by the news, fainted in Jeremy's arms.

Chapter 1859

Francine immediately noticed only three out of four kids in the living room when she came in. When she assessed everyone's expressions, she immediately knew Joey had yet to be found. "How did it happen, Grandma? Joey should be perfectly safe in this house. Did you bring the kids out of the house?" asked Francine.

Pamela sobbed and explained, "No, I didn't. I'm too old to take them outside myself. Greg and I only brought the kids to the yard after dinner. A balloon seller with glowing balloons passed by, and the kids begged us to buy them the balloons. I asked Bowen to go, but the kids insisted on choosing the balloons for themselves, so they went along with Bowen. When Bowen was making payments, the seller suddenly let go of the balloons in his hand, grabbed Joey, and ran away!"

'The balloon seller? It's that man again!'

Corinne remembered the balloon seller who kept showing up around her and the kids. She knew there was something fishy about that man. She had reminded Francine and the servants to take note of that man and keep the children away from that man, but she had forgotten to remind Pamela, Greg, and Bowen.

'How careless of me! Grandma, Grandpa, and Bowen rarely take care of the kids themselves, so I didn't bother to tell them about that man. We all got carried away by Jeremy's return. Looks like that balloon seller has been targeting Joey all along, but why? Is he related to Joey?' thought Corinne.

"Gahh! The balloon seller! The one that Corinne had warned me of!" shouted Francine, anguished. "Grandpa and Grandma weren't aware of that! Oh, I shouldn't have gone out for a date this afternoon. It's all my fault that Joey got kidnapped!"

"Anyone called the police yet?" asked Jeremy calmly after he had steadied Corinne.

"He's right! Has anyone called the police yet?" Francine quickly followed up.

Pamela sobbed so much that she could barely say another word.

Greg, who was calmer, answered with a sigh, "We wanted to call the police, but before we did, an unknown number called the landline and warned us not to call the police, or we might never see Joey ever again!"

'A death threat? So this is a kidnapping!' thought Corinne.

She then asked anxiously, "How much do they want?"

Corinne was willing to give all of her fortune if it meant she could get Joey back safely. After all, a problem that could be solved by money was no problem at all.

Alas, that was the problem.

"They didn't ask for money. They hung up after they gave us the warning. The number has already been deactivated by the time we called back," answered Greg with a sigh.

Corinne, who was hopeful a second ago, lost all of her strength again and fell into Jeremy's arms.

Jeremy held her firmly and said to the servants, "Look after Grandpa, Grandma, and the kids."

He then went upstairs with Corinne.

"What are you going to do now, Jeremy? Shouldn't we call the police?" asked Francine as she followed behind them.

Jeremy gave his sister a calm glance and said, "Just look after the kids, and leave the rest to us."

As anxious as Francine was, she was more worried that she might cause more trouble to Corinne and Jeremy, so she nodded and replied, "Okay..."

Jeremy did not bring Corinne to their bedroom. Instead, they went to the study and turned on the computer.

Chapter 1860

Corinne's mind was a mess. She stood absent-mindedly until she saw Jeremy turning on the computer. Only then did she regain her usual calmness.

'That's right. Maybe I can trace the kidnapper's call and find out their location by using the computer!' thought Corinne.

She tried to push Jeremy off the chair. "Get up. Let me use the computer!"

Jeremy turned his head and gave her a calm but worried glance. "Stay there. I got this."

Corinne had no idea that Jeremy knew a few things about hacking too. When she tried to tell him that she could hack into the mobile networks, Jeremy already entered the underground network and logged into his Ghostlord account.

'Ghostlord? He's the Ghostlord?!'

This was, of course, a surprise to Corinne. Nonetheless, she stood quietly and let Jeremy do his thing.

'Ghostlord is way more skillful than I am, so if Jeremy's Ghostlord, he'll locate the caller!'

Corinne was right; it only took Jeremy less than a minute to find out the location of the kidnappers!

The two stared at the location shown on the monitor, exchanged glances, and walked out of the room together.

Jeremy was reluctant to take Corinne with him as he worried it might be dangerous. However, he knew that Corinne would never agree to stay home. Hence, he decided to bring her along so he could protect her at all times. They thus hurried down.

They told Pamela, Greg, and Francine to keep watch over the kids at all times and not to do anything or go out until they were back. Before Pamela and Greg could ask about their plans, Jeremy and Corinne jumped into their car and drove away.

"Don't worry, Grandpa and Grandma. Jeremy and Corinne are the smartest people I know in the world. They'll surely find Joey!" Francine gave Pamela and Greg a reassuring smile. Nonetheless, she was silently concerned about Jeremy and Corinne's safety as well.

'We're dealing with kidnappers now. Who knows how reckless the kidnappers can be? What if they...' thought Francine.

While the car sped along the road, Jeremy told Corinne, "We still have to call the police but not through phones. Our phones are probably bugged. Get the laptop at the back and hack into the police network. Tell the police what we know so far, and ask them to not do anything that will alert the kidnappers."

"Got it!" Corinne nodded and turned around to grab the laptop on the tray table in the backseat.

Meanwhile, in a dark cave outside the city, a sleeping child was locked in a one-meter-tall dog cage. The cave was lit dimly by the firewood burning, which gave off a little warmth.

The chill was enough to wake Joey. He did not fall asleep naturally but was drugged. After the drug wore off, his whole body and his head started to ache. He rubbed his sleepy eyes to take a good look around him. It was then he realized he was locked in a dog cage at some unknown place.

'Where...am I? Is this a dream?' He was terribly confused.

"Oh, you're awake!"