

Kissed AOM 1901

Chapter 1901

Melody sighed at the sight of the full glass of alcohol in front of her. She tilted her head back and forced herself to drink it all.

When the alcohol hit her stomach, she immediately felt a wave of nausea. Melody could not control herself and vomited into the trash can.

"Ugh, ack!"

"Are you okay, Melody?" Wendy pretended to be concerned as she sat beside her. She then looked at her disdainfully and said, "Melody, you really don't look well! I've got a room booked at the hotel. Let me take you there to get some rest!"

"Okay..." Melody mumbled in a daze and let herself be supported by Wendy.

Wendy guided Melody up to the 20th floor of the bar. Just as they stepped out of the elevator, her manager's call came in.

As a D-list celebrity, Wendy could not afford to ignore her manager's call.

"Hey, Melody, my manager needs me urgently. Here's the room key. Head on over without me. I'll find you as soon as I'm done."

With a rushed explanation, Wendy handed the hotel room key to Melody and quickly made her way out.

"Ugh. Why is it so hot?" Melody mumbled as she leaned against the wall, struggling to stand. She staggered forward as her vision gradually became blurry.

She struggled to read the room number on the key card. "Two... Two, zero, zero, six..."

She walked toward Room 2006 with her last bit of consciousness. To her irritation, the door would not open even after she repeatedly swiped the keycard.

"What's up with this stupid door?" Melody muttered and gave it a few kicks. Surprisingly, the door swung open.

Melody lost her balance and fell forward. She thought she would fall to the floor, but she found herself against a warm and sturdy surface. She looked up and saw a strikingly handsome man.

Melody was so drunk that she abandoned her usual poise and intellect. She smiled goofily and said, "Hey... Handsome!"

In her drunken boldness, Melody reached out and draped her arms all over him. She leaned forward with a smile. "Hey, handsome. How come you're in my room?"

"Who are you?" Lucas asked in a deep voice. His cheeks were slightly red, and the strong smell of alcohol surrounded him.

"Hehe! Take a guess..." When Melody leaned against him, she felt a surge of warmth throughout her body. "Ugh, it's so hot... so hot..."

Melody tugged at her clothes uncomfortably as she continued to express her discomfort with the heat.

As Lucas lowered his gaze, he unexpectedly caught sight of the allure beneath her clothes. It ignited a rush of desire, and he impulsively leaned down to kiss her. "You brought this upon yourself. Don't regret it."

"Mmph!" Melody could not react in time as her words were silenced by his kiss.

As for what happened next, Melody could not process it in time. All she felt was herself lying on a soft bed, completely drained of energy.

Wendy returned after her call but could not find Melody. Assuming she had entered Room 2009 with the key card, she left with a triumphant smile.

In fact, Wendy tricked Melody into coming here just to please William Deloit. That way, she would not have to worry about losing the lead role in the upcoming popular television series.

Chapter 1902

'I've fought hard for this chance. You better please Mister William in his bed, Melody!' mused Wendy viciously.

It was already late at night by the time Wendy returned home. Just as she stepped inside, Helen Lewis came down from upstairs, asking, "Wendy, why are you back so late? Where were you?"

"I had a work gathering with the crew today." Wendy rubbed her temples and pretended to feel uncomfortable. "Helen, you can't imagine how tough it is for me to secure a role."

Seeing Wendy looking distressed, Helen felt a pang of sympathy. "Wendy, you've been through a lot. Go to your room and get some rest."

"Okay." Wendy continued her pretense and headed toward her room.

Meanwhile, Melody was going through an experience like never before. She felt uncomfortable all over, and she only felt relief when she touched Lucas' skin. She embraced his body and responded with a naive awkwardness to his kisses.

In the hazy atmosphere, she heard Lucas whispering a name in a deep voice by her ear. "Thalia..."

'Thalia? Who is she?' wondered Melody.

The next day, Lucas jolted awake in bed with a splitting headache. Sensing that he was completely naked, he felt something was off. Turning his head, he indeed found Melody still sound asleep on the other side of the bed.

'Who is this woman?' Lucas wondered.

Lucas quickly recalled the events of the previous night. He instantly felt a surge of disgust toward Melody. As the head of the Riveras, Lucas had numerous women vying to be his girlfriend using any means possible.

Lucas had always maintained a clean image and never engaged in relationships with those women. Thus, it was unbelievable that he would lose control last night and end up in such a state.

He had attended a business gathering and was somewhat drunk, so he was helped to a hotel to rest for the night. Little did he know, he would fall victim to this woman who swooped into his bed. Lucas looked at Melody coldly. He did not think there was any difference between her and the other women who dreamed of being with him. After all, they would sacrifice everything for fame and fortune. At that moment, Melody's eyelashes twitched before she slowly opened her eyes. She was no doubt startled to see him next to her, and even more so when she realized she was naked.

She quickly pulled the blanket to cover her body and screamed. "Ahh! Who are you?! Why are you in my room?!"

Lucas frowned and said, "Take a good look to see whose room is this."

Melody was forced to calm down. She looked around before recalling what happened the night before.

"Wait... Isn't this the room Wendy booked? How... How did you get in?!" Melody spoke while wrapping herself with the blanket tighter. After she got off the bed warily, she saw the blood stain on the sheet and felt a sudden headache.

Chapter 1903

'What's going on? Didn't Wendy promise she'd come back last night?' Melody thought with a heavy heart. After all, she lost something precious because of a one-night stand with a stranger.

Lucas thought she was just acting and did not want to get involved with her. He took out his credit card and threw it onto the bed, saying, "There's enough in there for you to live without working for the rest of your life. Take the money, and never show your face in front of me again."

Melody was stunned as she felt a deep sense of humiliation from Lucas. "Who wants your stinking money?!"

Then, she went to the bathroom and quickly put on her clothes. When she returned, she took 200 dollars from her wallet and tossed them onto Lucas.

"We're even now. Last night was my bad luck, so don't bother me again!" said Melody, returning what Lucas said to her. She then quickly left before he could react.

After taking a taxi home, Melody walked in just as Wendy was about to step out.

Upon seeing Melody back, Wendy was particularly furious. She rushed up and slapped her face harshly.

"Where did you go last night, Melody?!"

Just five minutes ago, Wendy believed her scheming had paid off. Thus, she called William, hoping he would stick to his earlier promise and secure the role for her.

However, William exploded in anger when Wendy called him. "Wendy, do you have any shame? How dare you call me and demand a role! Just what are you trying to pull? You hyped up your sister's looks and body. I was eagerly waiting at the hotel all night, and not a single woman showed up. Fine. Since you were bold enough to toy with me, don't even dream of getting a role from me ever again!"

Without giving her a chance to explain, William abruptly ended the call. Wendy not only endured a scolding but also lost a role she had been yearning for. Thus, she was full of anger and had nowhere to vent it. Melody walked in at that moment, so she ended up being Wendy's emotional punching bag.

Melody was bewildered by Wendy's slap and sensed that something was off. "Wendy, why did you hit me? You told me to go to the room you booked and said you'd look for me afterward. You weren't there this morning!"

Wendy glared at her with burning anger in her eyes. "Just who are you trying to fool, Melody? You never went to the room I booked for you last night! Mister William waited for you all night in that room, and you stood him up! Where were you, then?"

"Mister William?" Melody caught onto the crucial point. "Who is he? Wendy, just what did you plan for me to do last night?"

Wendy thought there was no point hiding her plot from Melody since everything was out.

"Mister William is the investor for the television drama 'Dreamlike.' According to my plan, you were supposed to spend the night with him, and then the leading role in the drama would be mine. Everything has gone down the drain thanks to you."

Melody finally understood what happened last night. She realized that Wendy had not sought consolation for a broken heart or a drinking companion. It was all a ploy to get her into William's bed!

"So you were trying to sell me out last night?!" Melody felt an intense ache in her heart. Her eyes welled up with tears, and she shouted, "I've always treated you like a sister, Wendy! How could you do this to me?!"

Wendy was momentarily taken aback by her outburst but quickly regained composure. "So what? You were always the odd one out in our family. Shouldn't you feel honored to have some value in helping me out?"

Melody cried. Even though they were half-sisters and Wendy often bullied her, Melody always considered her a true sister.

She never thought she was merely a commodity Wendy could use and be discarded at will.

As the two argued, a sleek black luxury car pulled up in front of them. Then, a man in a black suit stepped out and approached them.

After a brief comparison with a photo, he fixed his eyes on Melody, saying, "Miss Melody, right? I've been tasked by my employer to escort you to him."

"Your boss?" Melody tried to remember but could not recall any high-flying businessperson she knew.

Chapter 1904

"Sorry, but I don't know who your employer is. Are you sure you've got the right person?" asked Melody.

Edmund remained composed and handed 200 dollars to Melody. "My employer said that Miss Melody will remember upon seeing this."

"That's..." Melody looked at the crumpled money and recalled the events from that morning.

'Wait, so this suited guy is talking about the one I spent the night with? He seemed pretty important. Is this visit about settling scores?' Melody wondered.

Melody became a little frightened. She turned to see Wendy looking at her with suspicion.

'If I argue with this guy right now, I won't be able to keep last night's events a secret. Wendy didn't benefit from it, and she won't let it go. She'll definitely use this against me! Instead of going back and getting stabbed in the back by Wendy in front of Mom and Dad, maybe it's better to see what this guy's employer wants...' thought Melody.

"Okay, I'll go with you," said Wendy.

Under Wendy's puzzled gaze, Melody got into the car with Edmund, and they quickly drove away.

Watching the luxury car leave, Wendy felt a pang of jealousy and confusion. "How does Melody know someone with such a fancy car?" "Hey, Wendy, did Melody just come back? I thought I heard her voice." Helen stepped out of the house, only to find Wendy at the door. Wendy snapped out of her thoughts. She then nodded and said slyly, "Yeah, she did come back, but she got picked up by a guy again."

"What? Who took her? She didn't tell me she wouldn't be coming home last night. Why did she leave again so soon after coming back?" asked Helen worriedly.

Wendy scoffed and walked into the house. "What else could it be? A girl staying out all night must be fooling around with a guy! I just saw her getting into a fancy car with a married man. She's probably going to be a mistress for some rich guy! Helen, you should keep a better watch over Melody so she won't do such shameless things!"

"What? Being a mistress? Melody would never..." Helen looked at Wendy in disbelief, unable to accept that her daughter could do such a thing. "Impossible. Melody has never even been in a relationship. How could she..."

At that moment, Ethan Sander descended the stairs and heard Helen's words. "What's going on? What happened to Melody?"

"Dad, Melody has become a mistress to a wealthy man. She probably won't be staying home much anymore," Wendy lied shamelessly. Her poker face hid any trace of remorse as she secretly relished the thought of Melody getting a good scolding upon her return.

Ethan was usually occupied with work. He was not overly involved in family matters, but he held family values in high regard. Messy scandals were something he detested the most in the family. "What? Who's this man she's involved with?! How could my daughter stoop so low?" Ethan expressed his disdain while side-eyeing Helen.

Helen-who had no standing in the family-sensed Ethan's anger and quickly adopted an attitude of shared frustration. "It's my fault for not disciplining her properly. We must teach her a lesson when she comes back!"

Unaware of the drama Wendy had orchestrated at home, Melody arrived at a residential area in a car driven by Edmund. The vehicle came to a stop in front of a particular mansion.

"Miss Melody, please get out of the car. Mister Lucas is waiting for you inside the mansion."

Melody began to feel nervous when she stood in front of the mansion. She had no idea what awaited her inside. Nevertheless, she walked over and rang the doorbell.

Chapter 1905

The door creaked open, revealing Lucas in a casual all-black attire.

"I heard from your right-hand man that you...wanted to see me?" asked Melody warily.

Lucas stayed silent, coldly turning and heading inside. Melody reluctantly followed.

The interior of the house was elegantly simple, yet it exuded an expensive aura that outshone anything the Sanders' residence owned.

Melody stood in the living room, keeping a cautious distance. "Why did you bring me here?"

"Sit." Lucas placed a folder on the table. "If there's anything you're not happy with, we can still make changes."

Melody picked up the folder, confused. When she turned to the first page, the bold words left her dumbfounded.

"Marriage agreement? What does this mean? Who's getting married?"

"You and me." Lucas casually sipped his coffee as if his words were perfectly reasonable.

Melody glanced through the agreement. In essence, it outlined her marrying Lucas and maintaining the marriage for a year in exchange for an annual compensation of one million dollars.

'Does he want to turn me into his sugar baby? He really sees me as someone willing to sell myself for money,' Melody thought with a mix of frustration and disbelief.

"Excuse me. When did I agree to marry you?" Melody found the whole agreement to be ludicrous, so she closed the folder and placed it back on the table. "I have no interest in what's written here. If there's nothing else, I'll be going now!"

As she stood up to leave, her phone rang. It was a call from her mother.

Lucas observed coldly as Melody walked away, neither making a move to stop her nor uttering a word. After all, if it were not for the need to appease his grandparents, he would not even consider marrying someone like her.

After Melody left the hotel that morning, Beatrice's nagging phone call about marriage came flooding in, accompanied by another round of scolding.

As Cedric and Beatrice aged, their concerns about Lucas' marital status grew. They would find potential matches for him at every opportunity, hoping he would marry soon.

At first, Beatrice used to consider Lucas' opinion before setting up these meetings, but she began notifying him of the date and location without bothering about what he would think. "Grandma, I've told you. I'm not ready for marriage yet," said Lucas.

Beatrice's expression darkened. "Are you trying to give us a stroke by vexing your grandpa and me so much? We're not getting any younger, and our biggest wish is to see all of you kids settled down. Otherwise, I won't be able to rest in peace, and neither will your grandpa."

Whenever Lucas mentioned not wanting to get married, Beatrice responded with dramatic threats of her demise.

"Lucas, be honest with me. Are you...into guys or something?"

Lucas' calm demeanor finally cracked for a moment, but just as swiftly, he regained his composure. "No, Grandma. I have a fiancée. I'll bring her around to meet you in a few days." "Fiancée? Seriously?!" Beatrice clearly doubted his words.

Lucas glanced at the 200 dollars on the floor and came up with a compromise in his mind. "Well, Grandma, you'll know I'm serious when I bring her in to visit you."

Chapter 1906

"Alright, I'll trust you this time. If you don't bring anyone, I'll genuinely stop taking my meds!" threatened Beatrice. After hanging up the phone, Lucas picked up the 200 dollars Melody left on the floor and dialed Edmund's number. "There was a woman in my room yesterday. I need to see her again."

"Yes, sir. I'll find her right away."

Edmund was startled when he heard that a woman had entered Lucas' room. He had worked for Lucas' for years and knew how much Lucas hated shameless women who tried to hit on him. He always managed things to keep any woman from getting too close to Lucas.

Little did he expect a slip-up this time. Fortunately, Lucas did not blow up at him.

After leaving the Riveras' residence, Melody stepped outside and answered Helen's call. "Hey, Mom. What's up?"

"You stupid girl! Where are you right now?!" Helen's tone was harsh. "Melody, we've raised you better than to be someone's mistress! How can you wreck someone else's family? Even if you have no shame, you should think about what other people will say about your family!"

Melody was bewildered. "Mom, what are you talking about? I haven't done anything you said. How could I be someone's mistress?"

"Don't play innocent! Wendy told us everything. Are you still denying it? I thought that even though you might not be as outstanding as Wendy, at least you had some sense and decency. How could you do something so unethical?"

'Unethical?' Melody never thought her own mother would use such a harsh word to describe her.

She had always known that between Wendy and herself, Helen favored Wendy more. Even though Wendy was not her biological daughter, Helen loved her unconditionally.

It was clear that Helen adored Ethan, and she knew that he chose her because she was caring and responsible, especially when it came to Wendy. After all, if Wendy said anything negative about her to Ethan, he might reconsider everything. By then, her status as his wife would not be so secure.

Helen had hoped to bear a son for Ethan to carry on the family name. To her disappointment, she ended up with Melody, a seemingly 'useless daughter'. Thus, she decided to overlook her own flesh and blood, putting all her efforts into pleasing Wendy.

She knew that if she ever got kicked out of the family, both she and Melody would be in for a tough ride.

Melody had picked up on this dynamic from a young age. That was why she never bothered to compete with Wendy. Even if Wendy gave her a hard time, she just let it slide.

What she had not expected was for her own biological mother to use such harsh words to describe her based on a single remark from Wendy.

"That's some nonsense, Mom. I'm not anyone's mistress!"

Helen was about to retort when Ethan reached for the phone. She quickly handed it over to him.

"Melody, you graduated from college without any achievements, but I've never blamed you for that. However, we can't afford to have anyone from our family be involved in scandalous affairs! Leave that man immediately, and come back home. Otherwise, consider yourself cut off from the family for good!"

Ethan hung up the phone after that.

Helen eyed Ethan's expression; her forced smile trying to conceal an uneasy feeling.

"Don't worry, Ethan. Melody is probably just going through a confused phase. She'll come home soon."

Her words failed to ease the tension in Ethan's face. He stood up, visibly displeased.

"After marrying me, you quit your job and threw yourself entirely into our two daughters. I just don't get how you're raising them!"

"Ethan, I..."

Chapter 1907

Ethan left without giving Helen a chance to explain herself.

Seeing Helen's panic, Wendy approached and gently held her hand. She put on a fake smile and said, "Don't worry, Helen. This is all on Melody alone. I'll talk to Dad and make sure he knows you're not to blame for her mistakes."

Wendy's words brought relief to Helen. She said gratefully, "Wendy, you're such a sweet kid. It's good to know all the love and care I've shown you over the years hasn't ended in vain."

Melody felt at a loss for words after her father hung up on her. It was just so unbelievable how Wendy would try to set her up and cause trouble at home for her like that.

The home she once considered a haven was in complete chaos. Melody's emotions were in turmoil, and she had no idea where to turn.

Even without any evidence, her parents would still buy into Melody's guilt just because of a few words from Wendy. No matter how much she tried to explain, it was just pointless.

It was just like back in elementary school. Even though it was Wendy who started the fight, it was Melody who ended up being scolded and punished. As long as Wendy cried and claimed she was the one being bullied, Ethan and Helen would always unconditionally take Wendy's side.

There was never a place for her in the family nor someone she could turn to. Thus, if she were at that moment, what awaited her would surely be reprimands from Ethan and Helen, and the delight and mockery from Wendy.

Somehow, she had grown used to the mess that had been her life for over two decades.

However, a sudden wave of fatigue suddenly washed over her, and she just felt so tired.

She turned around and stared at the mansion in front of her for a long time. Finally, she mustered the courage to walk back and knocked on the door.

The door opened again, and inside stood Lucas.

"Can I still sign that agreement we discussed earlier?" she asked hesitantly.

Lucas was somewhat surprised by her unexpected return, but it was not bad news for him. He gave a subtle nod and let Melody in.

As she settled back onto the sofa, Melody appeared a bit uneasy. "I'm sorry. I know this change of mind isn't ideal, but I do have my reasons for it."

Lucas was not interested in delving into her reasons. Instead, he simply said, "Let's just focus on the agreement."

Lucas did not care why Melody returned or what drove her to do so. All he desired was a wife who could please his grandparents, thereby avoiding unnecessary trouble.

"Alright." Melody suddenly felt her earlier words were a bit too much. She reached out and picked up the agreement, examining it even more carefully than before.

The marriage contract laid everything out clearly: They had to legally register their marriage and live together, presenting themselves as a pair of genuine husband and wife to outsiders.

Lucas wanted Melody to play the perfect wife in public, making the family elders happy. In return, Melody would receive a generous sum of money. Money was not her priority as she simply wanted a temporary place to stay without returning home.

After reading through the agreement, Melody placed it back on the table. "I'm willing to go through with this and marry you, but on one condition."

From the outset, Lucas had anticipated that a woman like her might make some hefty demands. After all, he decided to use her as a shield against his grandparents' nagging, and registering marriage was no small matter. It was only reasonable to go along with any condition she might have.

"Go ahead," he said impassively.

Chapter 1908

"Since we're getting married, there might be a need for you to accompany me to visit my parents later. However, I'd prefer if you didn't let my family know about your identity for now." Melody was worried that Helen and Ethan might get greedy if they found out about Lucas' identity. That would only make things more troublesome for her.

"Sure," replied Lucas without hesitation.

All that was left for Melody to do was sign her name on the marriage contract. Although it was a one-year deal, it meant a year free from worrying about getting kicked out and left stranded. With the agreement signed, Lucas stood up and headed upstairs without uttering another word.

Melody hastily stood up and called out. "Wait! Um... So what's next? What am I supposed to do?"

"Edmund will take care of the rest," said Lucas. After that, he went straight upstairs.

Melody pursed her lips and thought, 'What a taciturn man!'

She then opened the door and stepped outside, where Edmund was patiently waiting. He gave her a polite nod and a friendly smile.

"Um, Mister Lucas told me to find you. He mentioned you'd take care of things for me?" said Melody.

Edmund nodded, pulled out a folder from the car, and handed it to her.

"Mister Lucas asked me to set up some newlywed essentials for you. Here's the list I came up with. Take a look, and let me know if there's anything else you need."

Melody accepted the folder which covered everything a girl might need in her daily life, right down to sanitary pads.

"Looks good. Nothing's missing. That should be enough," she said.

"Perfect," Edmund responded without any surprise. He was known for his meticulousness in most things, except perhaps what happened yesterday. "Miss Melody, I'll drive you back to the Sanders' residence so you can pack your things."

Melody nodded and settled into Edmund's car. She started spacing out as she stared at the flowing scenes outside the window. All of a sudden, she spotted the bar from the previous night.

'That's right. Wendy purposely got me drunk at that bar last night. Maybe the surveillance cameras there caught something...' mused Melody.

"Mister Edmund, could you please drop me off at this bar?" asked Melody.

Normally, Edmund did not take orders from just anyone. However, since Melody was Lucas' wife for the coming one year, she was equivalent to his boss. Thus, he figured her requests were worth listening to when they were not too outlandish.

"Miss Melody, please call me Edmund."

"Oh... Okay, Edmund."

Edmund parked the car in the parking lot of the bar and entered the bar with her.

The bartender noticed them entering and quickly approached, saying, "Sorry, the bar's not open yet. We're still cleaning up."

"We're not here to drink. I lost something here yesterday and wanted to check the surveillance footage from last night," Melody explained.

The bartender looked uneasy. "I'm sorry, but we can't just show our surveillance footage to anyone."

Anticipating the pushback, Melody turned to Edmund with a pleading look for help.

Edmund caught her gaze and quickly got the message. "I'm the personal assistant to the president of Rivera Group. If you can't make the decision, please get your boss."

Chapter 1909

Upon hearing the name 'Rivera Group', the bartender's expression changed immediately. He led them to a booth and even brought two glasses of water, saying, "Please wait a moment. I'll get our boss right away."

The stark shift in the bartender's attitude highlighted the Rivera family's immense influence in the city.

Melody felt a bit uneasy. She never interacted with such a bigwig before, and she was about to become the wife of one for a year. She had no clue what challenges the upcoming year might come her way. The bar owner arrived promptly, smiling obsequiously at Edmund. "I apologize for the wait. I heard you lost something and want to check last night's surveillance footage. Our bar is quite large, and we have multiple cameras. Could you please let me know the specific areas you'd like to review?"

Edmund turned to Melody.

Melody stood up and pointed to the nearby booth. "Around this spot, and the route leading to your hotel."

The bar owner promptly had a laptop brought over and played the surveillance footage for them.

As expected, the footage clearly captured Wendy persistently pushing Melody to drink. Every gesture and expression was sharply defined. The footage from the pathway to the hotel also revealed Wendy engaging in a conversation with William.

He seemed eager to have Wendy go upstairs, but after some words were exchanged, he nodded with a sly smile and ascended the stairs alone.

Melody realized that Wendy must have made some deal with William at that moment, perhaps promising to bring Melody to his room later.

'Well played, Wendy. The 'best sister of the year' award goes to you,' Melody thought sarcastically.

"Sir, could you make a copy of this footage for me? I need it," Melody requested.

Given Lucas' influence, the bar owner did not dare to refuse and did not press for more details.

With the surveillance video in hand, Melody and Edmund returned to the car and continued their journey to the Sanders' residence.

Edmund parked the car at the entrance of Sanders' residence, turned to Melody, and asked respectfully, "Miss Melody, do you want me to go in with you?"

After witnessing Melody and Wendy's fight yesterday, he had a sense of the dynamics within the Sanders. Thus, he was a bit worried about the challenges Melody might face.

Edmund thought being there as Lucas' assistant might offer some support to Melody and possibly smooth things over with the Sanders. After all, the Sanders should not be so disrespectful as to deny guests even basic courtesy.

However, Melody found the situation somewhat comical. The idea of needing an outsider to accompany her into her own home was ironic.

"It's okay, I can handle it. Just wait for me outside."

She declined Edmund's offer and stepped into her house alone.

As Melody stepped inside, the first person she encountered was Helen.

Seeing Melody's return, Helen immediately put on a stern expression. She raised her hand and slapped Melody, saying, "How dare you still show your face here? Do you have any idea how your dad scolded me because of you? He hasn't even talked to me since!"

The slap brought tears to Melody's eyes. Beyond the physical pain on her face, the ache in her heart cut deeper.

After being away for so long, there was no warmth or concern from Helen. All Melody got was blame and a slap.

Melody quickly wiped away the tears and shot Helen a defiant look. Without saying a word or offering any explanation, she headed straight to her room. There, she pulled out her luggage and began packing her belongings.

Helen came in after Melody. She stood at the side and asked angrily when she saw her packing her luggage, "What are you doing, Melody? Are you really moving out to be someone's mistress?" Melody ignored Helen; she just quickly packed her things.

However, most of her belongings were hand-me-downs from Wendy since childhood. Thus, there was actually no need for Melody to bring it with her to her new residence.

Chapter 1910

With her few belongings packed in a single luggage, Melody was ready to leave.

As she descended the stairs, Helen grabbed her arm and asked, "Melody, have you lost your mind? Have you no shred of self-respect?! With your looks, finding a decent guy should be easy. Why stoop to being a home-wrecker?"

"Mom, is that how you really see me? Just someone who'd willingly become someone's mistress?"

Helen was taken aback by the unfamiliar resentment in Melody's gaze. Melody had never looked at her like that, so she could not help but wonder, 'How could she look at me like this? Is it because she found a sugar daddy that she thinks she doesn't need us anymore?'

While Helen was momentarily distracted, Melody freed herself from Helen's grasp and briskly descended the stairs with her luggage. As she reached the ground floor, Ethan and Wendy crossed her path. Wendy, eyeing Melody with the suitcase, could not resist a mocking laugh. "What did I tell you, Dad? Melody is someone's mistress now. Look, she's even taking her luggage. She must be moving out to be someone's sugar baby!"

Wendy's taunt stirred up a wave of deep displeasure in Ethan.

"Melody, must you drag the Sander family's name through the mud?" he scolded sternly. "If I had known your mom was pregnant with a daughter back then, I would've never allowed her to go through with the pregnancy!"

These words were nothing new to Melody. She was constantly reminded that she was never the child born under the hopeful expectations of Ethan and Helen. Melody might never have been born if it were not for their mistaken belief that Helen was carrying a son.

Over the years, she had borne such comments in silence. However, she did not want to endure it any longer. Melody could not find it in herself to forgive or tolerate Wendy's actions from last night, coupled with Ethan and Helen's unwavering support for Wendy.

"I'm indeed moving out. I came back to pack my things and also to talk to you about something."

Sensing that Melody might reveal the truth, Wendy began to panic. She quickly exchanged a glance with Helen, signaling her to handle Melody.

Helen promptly understood Wendy's message. After all, Ethan had not uttered a single word to her the entire night because of Melody's late-night escapade. Helen did not want to further irk Ethan over their wayward daughter's actions.

"If you've already decided to move out, why bother sharing anything with us? If you respected our opinions, you wouldn't have ended up as someone's mistress!"

Helen had no interest in hearing what Melody had to say. She was afraid Melody might spill something that would further anger Ethan and turn his frustration toward her.

Ethan did not want to entertain Melody's words either. He decided to bypass her and head upstairs.

Melody hurriedly walked up to him and put on her arm to block him.

"Dad, the truth of the matter is that yesterday, it was Wendy who took me to the bar and forced me to drink until I was drunk so she could sell me out to a movie investor in

exchange for a role. I didn't become someone's mistress, nor did I fool around with any man."

"Melody, you... You... What nonsense are you talking about?!" Wendy panicked, quickly stepping in to pull Melody away. "Don't make up stories just to clear your name, and don't try to throw the blame on me!"