

A Lifetime With You – Chapter 1-32

Chapter 1 - Funeral -

L City...

On one of the towering building in the golden triangle of L City was MH Group headquarters.

In the large office on the highest floor of MH Group headquarters, a young man stood facing the french window. His sharp eyes were looking at the bustling city, but this view can't seem to calm his nerves.

The tension in the room was too strong that if one were to enter the room right now, they would feel the temperature drop even though it was hot outside.

Knock! Knock!

Neil Mo snapped out of his thought and turned around. He took a deep breath before he spoke. "Come in." He sat down on his swiveling leather chair and watched his assistant entered his room.

"President Mo," his assistant bowed at the door and stepped inside. He shivered a little bit and glanced towards the air-conditioner in the room.

Neil glanced at his table where various newspapers spread out. On the front cover, each and every one of them was reporting on his younger brother's accident a few days ago that lead both him and his wife to death.

Seeing the mess, Neil stacked the newspapers neatly on the side and turned to his assistant. "Speak."

Assistant Shawn clenched on the folder to gather his courage. He felt the need to prepare himself before he faced the President's wrath seconds later. He took a deep breath and handed the folder in his hand to his boss and spoke, "According to the investigation, the second young master received a tip regarding an embezzlement a month before his accident."

Neil's eyes darkened at the news. He browsed through the thin folder in his hand and frowned deeper. "Who was the whistle-blower?"

"It's Assistant Will Ye from Finance and Accounting Department."

"Where is he now?" He tossed the folder on his table.

"That... President Mo," Assistant Shawn hesitated. "Assistant Will committed suicide two weeks ago. After that, we have no other lead to follow."

A dangerous glint flashed through his eyes as he heard the report regarding Assistant Will's situation. Neil tightened his fist and felt his nails dug into his skin. A loud sound could be heard as he slammed his fist on the table.

Fortunately, the table was made of some high-quality wood, or else, it would have broken into two.

Right now, he was supposed to be at his brother's funeral but instead, he was stuck in the office to reassure the shareholders of the stability of the company.

Various thoughts went into Neil Mo's mind and his anger rose.

On the same day that he received news of his brother's accident, he received anonymous tips that his brother's accident was no accident. It was a planned murder.

Neil had his doubts when he received the tips but knew he could not just ignore it when it was related to his brother. That was why he had his assistant to look into his brother's activities before his death.

He then found out that his brother was investigating the embezzlement of funds for one of their projects. What frustrated him was that his brother had not said a word to him when he began to look into the matter.

Assistant Shawn pursed his lips and controlled his breathing. He was afraid to make a sound and irritate the president. He flinched when the President stood up abruptly. "President."

"Continue the investigation." He said, after a while. "Try harder. I want to know about the anonymous informant as well as what happened to my brother."

"Yes, President Mo."

Neil headed towards the door and paused. "I will be busy with the funeral for a few days. Assistant Shawn, you will be responsible for everything during my absence. If there's anything urgent, contact me."

"Yes. Don't worry, President Mo."

"Contact Henry Wu for me. Tell him to meet me as soon as he can."

Assistant Shawn nodded again.

Neil headed towards the door and paused again as he put his hand on the doorknob. "About Assistant Will, does he have a family?"

"A wife and two kids." Assistant Shawn said.

"Look after them properly. Tell me if they need anything."

"I will arrange everything. Don't worry, President Mo."

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The mood in the room was somber. People dressed in black walked in and out as they pay their respect to the dead couple. Just inside the room were pictures of the husband and wife. Adam Mo and Claire Fan. White and yellow flowers surrounded the room.

Neil Mo walked into the room and immediately, a few guards in black stopped the reporters from going forward. Only then a few friends and family members approached him to convey their condolences. Neil Mo replied to them with a quick nod and his gaze went towards the two elderly who were dressed in their mourning dress.

His mother, Sophie Huang, wiped the corner of her eyes with a handkerchief and forced a smile. "You're here."

"I'm sorry I couldn't be here sooner," Neil said.

"It's fine. You're here now. I'm sorry that you have to go to the company to convince the shareholders instead of spending time with everyone here." His father, Lucas Mo let out a heavy sigh. "How's everything?"

"You don't have to worry about the company, dad. I will handle everything." Neil said.

"If you need anything—"

"I will tell you," Neil said before his father could finish his sentences. "Dad, you just have to look after yourself. The doctor said you can't be too anxious." He patted her father on his shoulder and walked towards the altar to pay his respect to his brother.

He turned around to join his parents when he was done and glimpsed at a small girl at the corner. The little girl was sitting quietly alone with both hands hugging her knees tightly.

His gaze paused at her, then he glanced around the room.

It seemed that the room was full of people, but it seemed that no one in the room paid any attention to the little girl. Everyone around them was too busy to notice the girl.

After thinking for a while, Neil decided to approach his niece. No matter what, he didn't think it's right for them to leave the child alone.

After all, this little girl had only lost both her parents.

Neil walked over to the girl and sat down cross-legged beside her. The girl flinched slightly but did not make any further move.

Soon, both uncle and niece sat quietly beside each other as they mind their own business.

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A few days have passed since the day they received news that his younger brother and sister-in-law got into an accident.

It was at nighttime. The two of them were attending a company dinner. Adam Mo was driving back to their house when they met a group of youngsters racing on the highway. In the end, one of the racers hit his brother's vehicle, causing his car to hit the divider before it to turn around a few times.

When the authorities arrived at the site, the two vehicles were in bad shape.

The youngsters died on the spot, and his friends escaped from the site.

His brother and sister-in-law were brought to the hospital and was given treatment. But after two days of struggling in the ICU, his younger brother passed away, and his sister-in-law followed five minutes after, leaving their five years old daughter, Hazel Mo.

Neil glanced at the girl with the corner of his eyes. As if sensing that he was staring at her, the little girl inched away and tightened her hand into a fist.

It was then that Neil noticed the way her shoulders were shaking. It did not take him a long time to guess that the little girl was crying. Seeing the way she reacted, Neil lifted his hand to pat the girl on her head and paused.

Suddenly, he realized that he didn't know how to comfort the little girl. He... was never close to his niece.

Hazel Mo, or Hazel as how her parents would call her, was born prematurely. The first time that Neil saw him in the incubator, he could see how she appeared smaller than

other babies. Because of her small size, Neil had never carried or played with her as he was afraid that he would hurt her.

As she grew up, he noticed how the little girl would avoid him as if she was scared of him. He remembered how the little girl would always stick to her mother, hugging her thigh, and following her wherever she goes.

Neil let out a soft sigh as the memories came into his mind. He tried to peek at the girl again and began to notice a few things. The rim of her eyes was red and there were stains of tears on her cheek. Even though he could see that the girl was crying, Neil could not help but think that the kid had hidden her emotion well in front of others.

He suddenly realized that he had only seen the little girl bawled once. At that time, they had to explain to her that her parents have passed away and that she cannot see her parents again. That was the only time that she cried her heart out and threw a tantrum.

Ever since that one time, Hazel had only cried silently, as she did now.

Neil could guess how his niece was missing her parents tremendously.

Even he missed his brother terribly. As siblings, they were close despite their difference in personality. When he heard the news of his death, Neil could feel that a part of him went missing.

But he couldn't show his sorrow. For his parents, he had to be strong. For the company, he had to show that this loss doesn't, and will not affect his thought and emotion. Or else, their enemy will find a crack to attack them.

Neil snapped out of his trance when he noticed the girl beside him swayed and almost fell on the floor. But once she noticed that her body had almost fallen on the floor, Hazel straightened up her body immediately and fought her drowsiness away.

"If you're sleepy, you can lean on me for a little while. I'll wake you up later," Neil said, as he inched closer to his niece.

To his surprise, Hazel glanced at him once before she obediently leaned on his side and closed her eyes.

A small smile curved on his lips. He lifted his hand and patted her hair gently, coaxing her to fall deeper into sleep. "Adam," his lips moved into a whisper after a while. "Don't worry. I'll look after our parents and your daughter."

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The Mo family went back home as the funeral ended. When they arrived back at the residence, the maids were almost done cleaning up.

Neil Mo walked into the house carrying the sleepy girl in his arms.

Earlier today, just as the funeral ended, she had fallen asleep in the car just beside her grandma. Instead of letting the others carry her, Neil had volunteered to carry her inside. He headed towards the stairs, wanting to let her sleep in her room, but then he noticed the way her small fist tightened on his shirt and changed his mind.

The corner of his lips lifted upwards a little bit. It seemed like the little girl has woken up from her slumber and was only pretending to be asleep.

Neil laid the little girl on the sofa and covered her with his coat. He watched her turned around to find a comfortable position and sighed.

Ever since he chose to sit beside her and coax her to sleep, Hazel had loosened up whenever she was around him. She would no longer shy away from him but will follow him closely, silently behind.

Seeing the way she followed him around, Neil wondered if it was because he looked like her to her father.

When Neil looked up, he noticed that his friend, Henry Wu, had shown up beside him.

"Neil, I—"

Neil put his forefinger on his lips and signaled his friend not to say anything. His niece was pretending to be sleeping and he did not want her to listen to anything that she was not supposed to listen to. "Whatever it is, let's discuss it next Monday at my office." He said to his friend and smiled. "Henry, thank you for coming."

"Adam is my friend too. How can I not be here." Henry sighed.

Previously, Neil had sent his assistant to inform him to come over and meet him.

Henry knew that his friend has some doubts regarding his younger brother's death. As the CEO of the Iron Hawk Security, he had heard a few things regarding Adam's accident.. But since Neil had refused to speak anything about it at the moment, Henry could only choose to keep his mouth shut.

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Instead of discussing Adam and his wife's death, both Neil and his friend chatted about other matters.

Regarding the anonymous information that he had received about his brother's death, Neil had decided to keep it a secret from his parents.

His father was still recuperating from his last surgery. Neil did not want this information to reach his father's ears and cause the old man to be distressed. If something were to happen to his father right now, Neil Mo did not know if he can forgive himself.

Henry stayed at the residence for almost half an hour before he excused himself. Before he left, he made a promise to come over to visit Neil at his office to discuss the incident.

Seeing that their guest had left, Sophie sat down at the living room just across from her son and granddaughter.

"Your father and I will only stay for a few weeks before we return to the countryside," Sophie spoke after a while.

"You should return sooner. Living in the countryside is good for dad. I can see that his health had improved since you two moved to live there," Neil said.

"He is getting much better," Sophie smiled slightly at the thought of her husband's health.

"Mom, you don't need to worry about me," Neil said. "I'm an adult. I can look after myself and the company."

Sophie nodded. Her expression softened as her gaze moved towards her granddaughter who was sleeping on the sofa. "This poor child." her voice lowered as she was afraid that the little girl would wake up. "She lost both her parents in a day." She heaved a sigh and turned to her son.

"Neil," Sophie glanced at the little girl and hesitated. "I've talked to Claire's parents earlier today. Hazel's maternal grandparents might still be around, but they have migrated to Country F. After discussing with them... we agreed that it would be hard for Hazel to adjust herself if she moved over there."

Neil sat up straight, knowing that his mother was about to discuss the matter regarding his niece. "Then, what are you planning to do?"

"Your father and I are planning to take Hazel along with us and raise her in the countryside."

Neil opened his mouth to speak, but before he could say anything, his niece who was pretending to be sleeping from earlier moved to sit up.

Seeing her sudden movement, both Neil and his mother were surprised.

Hazel Mo stared at her grandmother with firm eyes and spoke, "Grandma, I don't want to go." The little girl's voice sounded a bit hoarse because she has not spoken a word after her parents passed away.

Sophie looked at her granddaughter with surprise. She didn't expect that the little girl would be awake to hear their conversation, and would speak after a few days has passed.

"Grandma, I don't want to live away from my daddy and mommy," Hazel spoke again.

"This child..." Sophie exchanged a look with her son as she lost the words she wanted to say. "Hazel." She stood up and sat down next to her granddaughter as she tried to coax her. "Your parents—"

"I know that I won't get to see them again," Hazel lowered her eyes. She wiped her eyes with sleeves when she felt her eyes grew misty and gritted her teeth hard to stop her tears from falling.

Neil had been watching the little girl for a few days and knew that she was trying hard to control her tears from falling. Seeing how hard the little girl suppressed her emotion like this, he felt something tugged on his heart.

"Grandma, you live so far away. What if I miss them?" her words were a bit incoherent as she forced back her sobs.

"Hazel. We can always return here. I'll bring you to see them whenever you want to." Sophie pulled her granddaughter into her embrace and caressed her softly on her back.

"No."

"Didn't you like staying with grandma and grandpa the last time?" Sophie spoke softly. "I remember you love going to the beach? If you live with grandma and grandpa, we can go to the beach and play every day, how's that? Don't you like it?"

Neil frowned when he heard the girl started to sob in his mother's embrace. He let out a helpless sigh and said, "Mom, maybe we shouldn't decide anything soon."

Sophie shot a look at her son. She raised her hand to wipe the tears that started to form in her eyes. Seeing how her granddaughter was crying in her arms, Sophie could not help but to shed her tears. "Then what else should we do? Hazel doesn't have any other family besides us."

His gaze stopped at the little girl. Neil felt something tugging at his heart as he watched his mother and niece crying together in each other's embrace.

For a few minutes, the living room was filled with nothing but the sound of Hazel's sobs.

"Hazel," Neil spoke after a while. "If you don't want to live in the countryside with grandma, then would you like to live with me?"

Hazel looked up at her uncle with her tears stained face. She tried to speak, but she could not stop her sobs.

"Neil! What are you saying?" Sophie was enraged at her son's impulse idea. "How can Hazel live with you?"

"Why not?"

"What do you know about looking after a child? Raising a child is not like playing house!"

Neil thought about it for a while and said, "I can learn."

Sophie stared at her son incredulously. "You have never been close to Hazel. Do you know how difficult it is to look after a child?"

"If I can secure a billion-dollar deal, how hard will it be to look after a child? Besides, Adam had a nanny who looked after Hazel, didn't he? I can continue to hire his nanny to help me to look after Hazel."

Sophie opened her mouth to say something but stopped when she felt Hazel tugging on her cloth. She tilted her head down to look at the girl. When her eyes met the girl's expectant gaze her anger towards her son dissipated.

"Grandmother... Can I live with my uncle in the city?"

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A soft smile curved on her lips as Sophie watched her granddaughter stood on the small stool and brushed her teeth. The girl wore a pastel pink pajama with some bunny pattern all over it.

These days, Sophie was training her son to look after Hazel before she and her husband went back to the countryside.

At first, Sophie was skeptical about the idea of letting her son, Neil to look after Hazel.

The uncle and niece's relationship was not that close. Ever since Hazel was born, her son had never tried to bond with the little girl. Her son would always wear that serious expression on his face. Later, Hazel would always avoid her uncle.

With how the relationship was, Sophie thought that it was not proper for Hazel to stay with her son. Her son had no knowledge of looking after a small child and Sophie did not want her granddaughter to suffer.

However, no matter how much she tried to coax her granddaughter, the little girl was firm with her decision to stay in the city with her uncle. The reason was that Hazel wanted to be able to visit her parent's grave whenever she missed them.

As both Sophie and her husband live in the countryside to let her husband recuperate from his illness, it would be difficult to come back to L City whenever Hazel missed her parents.

In the end, Sophie could only compromise. She decided to give it a try. The uncle and niece needed a chance.

If her son could live together with Hazel and repair the bond between them, that would be great!

After training her son and teach him how to look after Hazel, Sophie could see a massive improvement in their relationship. At least, Hazel would no longer hide away whenever she saw her uncle. Moreover, Hazel would take the initiative to get closer to her uncle.

Seeing the little girl's determination. Sophie could only reluctantly agree to their idea of living together.

"Grandmother, I'm done!"

Sophie snapped out of her trance to look at the little girl beside her. She bent down to reach her level and smiled. "Hazel is a good girl." She patted at the little girl's hair and continued. "Then, it's time for you to go to bed. Hazel, go and wish your grandfather and uncle good night."

The little girl nodded once before she walked over to her grandfather and uncle to wish them good night. Then, she walked into the room, and obediently got under the quilt and closed her eyes.

Seeing that the little girl had settled in her bed, Sophie turned off the light. The room turned dark, with only a small sleeping lamp lit up at the corner of the room. Sophie closed the door but left a small gap between the door. She walked over to her husband and sat down with a long sigh.

"Mom, what is it?" Neil asked.

Sophie looked at her son with a hint of anger. "It's you. I'm worried about you and Hazel. Your father and I will be returning to the countryside in a few days and I cannot stop but worry."

Although she was frustrated, Sophie tried her best to control her voice lest she disturbed Hazel's sleep.

Neil smiled to ease his mother's anger. "Mom, you've seen me and Hazel these days. With Auntie Ann's help, both of us will be alright. Don't worry too much."

"How can I not worry? These few days, your father and I were still around to help you look after Hazel. Once we returned to the countryside, there was nothing else we can do to help."

Lucas Mo put his hand on his wife's shoulder to ease her anxiety. "Since our son had decided to do it, we should let him try it. If the two of them live together for a while and found that they could not do it, our son will look for us. Then, we'll come up with something new for Hazel."

"Dad is right," Neil said. "Mom, I know my limit. If I think that it was hard for me to look after Hazel by myself, I will definitely give you a call or find someone to help me."

Sophie knew that her son was a sensible person, but as a mother and grandmother, she just could not help but worry. Knowing the nature of her son's work, Sophie was worried that he would start neglecting her granddaughter.

Hazel had just lost her parents. It was important for them to be around her. Sophie did not know how she could answer to both her late son and daughter-in-law if they mistreated their daughter.

"Fortunately, Hazel is not a difficult child to manage," Sophie commented. She glanced towards the slightly ajar door and heaved a sigh. Whenever she thought about what her granddaughter was facing, Sophie felt the urge to shed a few tears.

"Mmm..." Lucas nodded slowly. "Hazel is well behaved for a child her age. She did not throw a tantrum or make things difficult for us. I look at her these few days and thought that she can mostly take care after herself." He paused and sigh. "Actually Adam and Claire had done a great job to bring up Hazel."

As her husband mentioned the two names, Sophie felt her eyes and nose started to sting again. She sniffed once and suppressed her urge to cry. Hazel was brave enough to face the world without her parents. As an elder, Sophie thought that she had to try harder and be stronger for her family.

Neil saw the look on his mother's face and subconsciously glanced towards his niece's room. He could not help but wonder if Hazel's act could be explained by her parent's upbringing or perhaps she was a bit too mature for her age.

"Tomorrow, you should come with me to visit Hazel's kindergarten," Sophie said. "She had left school for a while, it would be good if she could return to school and resume her daily life. Moreover, it would be good to explain Hazel's situation to the school and ask the teachers there to look after her."

Neil thought of his mother's request for a while and nodded. "Alright, mom.. We'll do as you plan."

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"Alex He! Your mother is here to pick you up." Edith Qian, one of the kindergarten teachers from Sunflower Kindergarten, called out towards the playground area with her singsong voice.

Just as she finished saying that, the kids in the kindergarten started to join in and call, "Alex, pick up!"

A few seconds later, a little boy appeared from the playground. His eyes perked up when he saw his mother stood beside his teacher.

"Mummy!" he said excitedly and ran towards his mother and hug her thigh.

Alex He's mother, Lily Zhao staggered at the impact. "Did you have fun today?" seeing the bright smile on her son's face, she bent down and kissed him on both cheeks.

"En!" Alex He nodded excitedly and proceed to report on every single activity he did in the kindergarten. His hands moved along as he tried to explain everything to his mother.

Edith Qian laughed at his animated movements. She bent down a bit and patted his dark hair. "Alex was a really good boy today. He helped me a lot in class."

"Really?" Lily Zhao said, eyeing her son.

"Yes," he nodded. "Mummy!" Alex He let out a loud gasp when his mother suddenly carried him in her arms. "Put me down. You're embarrassing me."

He could tolerate his mother kissing him on both cheeks, but now that he has turned five, he did not want his friends to witness this scene.

"Alright, alright," Lily Zhao giggled at her son's puffing cheek. She pressed her lips on his cheek for one last time and put the little boy down. "Go and get your things. I'm going to talk with Teacher Qian for a bit."

"Oh!"

The smile on her face widened as she watched her son entered the building to get his belonging in the classroom. "Isn't he adorable?"

Edith nodded. "He is."

Lily let out a sigh. "He resembles his father more and more as he grew up, This isn't fair."

Edith chuckled. "Are you jealous?"

"Of course. Everywhere I go, people would say that Alex looks more and more like his dad. His hair, his tall nose. He's like a mini replica of Ethan. Sometimes it feels like I didn't have any part in making him. His DNA is just too strong."

Edith nearly choked at hearing this. They were at kindergarten! Was this an appropriate topic? "What are you saying? Clearly he came out of your womb. I was there. I know."

"I want my son to look a bit like me too." Lily pouted her lips slightly.

"Alex has your eyes." Edith offered. She thought about it for a few seconds and added, "Maybe you should consider having a daughter. I bet she will look exactly like you."

Lily stared at her friend long before she spoke. "To be honest, now that Alex is almost six, I'm considering having another child. Ethan and I think it's best to let fate decide."

"That's good. Don't stress yourself. If it will happen, it will happen."

"But Ethan has been busy with his workload lately. Saying that the company has an important project and whatnot," Lily let out another sigh. "He's going on a business trip tomorrow."

Edith smiled awkwardly. She knew where the conversation was leading, but she did not want to talk about her friend's private life. "Where is he going this time?" she decided to steer their conversation away from baby-making.

"Japan. His company is discussing a partnership. That's right." Lily's lips curved into a happy smile. "Since my husband won't be around, you should come over and sleepover at our place."

Edith's mouth twitched at her best friend's invitation.

Although Lily was two years older and comes from a respectable family, the two of them become best friends.

Edith had lost her parents when she was still a child and grew up with her grandpa in a small town near the sea. Ten years ago, when the small town had become a famous tourism spot, Lily visited the beach with her family.

At that time, Lily was having a walk alone on the beach when she was harassed by a few local boys. Coincidentally, Edith was around to help her.

Lily was amazed at how a small girl like Edith could defeat two boys bigger than her and pestered her to teach her self-defense. After spending time together, the two girls become best friends.

"We'll have a spicy hot pot. I'll prepare a lot of seafood. I heard crab is in season now." Lily tempted.

"Lily, why do you always make spicy hot pot whenever you invite me over?"

Lily laughed. "Because my husband can't eat spicy food, that's why. You and I both enjoyed spicy food. So? What do you say? Alex will like it if you come over."

"Now you're even using your son to tempt me to come over."

Lily smiled. "Tell me it's working."

Edith thought about it for a while before she said, "I have classes on Saturday."

Lily's face immediately fell.

"But I guess I can come over once my classes are over."

"That's fine. We can have dinner together." Lily waved a hand.

The two of them looked up when they heard footsteps running towards them.

"Mummy," Alex He said as he reappeared wearing his jacket and bag. "I'm ready."

"I'll walk you to your car." Edith offered. She frowned when she noticed a luxury car she had never seen before parked not far away from the gate.

As the kindergarten teacher, Edith had recognized and memorized the parents' vehicle and plate number after a few months of working for the kindergarten.

"What's the matter?" Lily asked, noticing her friend's strange expression. She followed Edith's gaze and raised her brows.

Edith shook her head. She told her friend not to worry and bid the mother and son goodbye. Just as she turned around, one of the teachers walked towards her in a hurry.

"Teacher Qian, here you are. I've been looking all over for you."

"What's the matter, Teacher Guo?"

"Headmistress Fu is looking for you."

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Once she heard the news that the headmistress was looking for her, Edith Qian asked her fellow colleagues to look after the other kids before she went straight to the headmistress's office.

Edith held up her hand and was about to knock on the door when the door suddenly opened from the inside. Her knuckles paused at mid-air. She tilted up her head and her eyes met with a man's piercing, deep gaze.

"Sorry," Edith said as she moved aside to let the man walk past.

The man's gaze fell on her face for a few seconds longer before he looked away. He nodded without looking at her and closed the door behind him with his phone pressed against his ears. "Neil Mo speaking."

Edith frowned as she watched the man walked past her and an inaudible sigh escaped her lips.

After working at the kindergarten for the upper-class for a while, Edith was used to seeing all sorts of parents. Some of them would come over to kindergarten with full understanding and cooperation. Some of them would come with a nasty temper and would always try to find fault with her or her colleagues for their child.

But, at least that man did not try to find fault with her despite his cold expression.

Edith 's gaze followed the man and she watched him disappeared behind the wall. She tilted her head sideways and a frown appeared on her face as a few thoughts crossed her mind.

She had never seen him around kindergarten before and was sure that he was not one of the student's parents, but why does she felt like she had seen his face before?

Edith quickly snapped out of her thoughts, knowing that the headmistress was looking for her urgently.

Ignoring her thoughts, Edith straightened her clothes before she knocked on the door and walked in once she heard the headmistress's voice with permission for her to come in.

The headmistress greeted her politely when she walked in.

Edith scanned her surroundings and saw an elderly woman sitting beside Headmistress Fu. The woman gave her a look over before she met her gaze with a kind smile on her face.

It did not take her too long to guess that the headmistress had called her over to discuss something regarding this elderly woman.

Edith gave the woman a polite nod and turned to the Headmistress. "Headmistress Fu, I heard that you were looking for me?"

Headmistress Fu smiled as she waved her hand for her to come closer. "Teacher Qian, come in." she pointed at an empty seat next to her. "Come. Come. You sit here."

Edith smiled at the elderly woman again before she sat down next to the headmistress. It was then that she saw the small silhouette that she has not seen for almost a month sitting next to the elderly woman.

Seeing the color on the little girl's face, Edith was relieved. She has been worried about the little girl after she heard the news that her parents both passed away from an accident.

Back then, the headmistress had explained to her that Hazel Mo was going to take a few weeks of leaves to deal with the funeral process and such.

Hazel nodded politely when she saw her classroom teacher. "Good evening, Teacher Qian."

"Hazel! Good evening."

"Teacher Qian," the headmistress called before she could continue to converse with Hazel. "Let me introduce you." Headmistress Fu turned to the elderly woman and continued, "This is Hazel Mo's grandmother, Sophie Huang."

"Hello Teacher Qian, you can call me Mrs. Mo." the elderly woman said with a smile.

"Mrs. Mo. Hello. I'm Edith Qian, Hazel Mo's classroom teacher." Edith glanced at Hazel as she spoke and noticed that the little girl was not like her old self.

Although she might look healthy and there were colors on her cheek, Hazel's body was thinner and she was not as talkative as she used to.

Before this, Hazel would always run and greeted her cheerily whenever she saw her or anyone.

Hazel Mo was a happy-go-lucky child.

Seeing Hazel's state right now, Edith knew that the little girl was coping with her grief after losing her parents.

"Mrs. Mo came here to discuss Hazel return to the kindergarten," the headmistress said. "You know that Hazel has been absent for a month now."

Edith nodded, then she turned to Sophie. "Mrs. Mo, you can tell me or ask me anything. I will try to help you in any way that I can."

Hearing her answer, both Headmistress Fu and Sophie exchanged a glance.

"Hazel," the headmistress called. She held out her hand and smiled at the little girl. "You haven't been to school for a while. Would you like to walk around with me around the school?"

Hazel turned to her grandmother as if asking for her opinion. When Sophie gave her a nod, Hazel slid off the chair and took the headmistress's hand.

Edith quickly understood that the headmistress was giving them space to discuss Hazel's condition.

A lot of different situation came to her mind as Edith wondered what Sophie was going to tell her during this private chat.

"I'm sure you have heard about what happened to Hazel's parents," Sophie said as the headmistress left with her granddaughter and closed the door behind them.

"I have," Edith Qian put on a somber expression. "My condolences for your loss Mrs. Mo."

Sophie replied with a light smile. She lifted the teacup on the side table and took a sip. "As you probably notice from that short interaction, Hazel hasn't been her old self since her parents died."

Edith thought of how the little girl and nodded.

"The reason why I asked Hearnmistress Fu to arrange this meeting was for me to explain Hazel's situation to you. That little girl... although she has not been showing it, she is grieving for his parent's sudden death."

Edith hesitated before she asked, "How did Hazel take it if you don't mind me asking?"

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Sophie Huang was silent for a long time after she heard Teacher Qian's question. A soft sigh escaped her as she thought of how her granddaughter had acted for the past few weeks.

"I'm not sure if I should say that she's taking it too well or not," Sophie said with hesitation. "Hazel has been a good girl. She understood that she couldn't see her parents again but she didn't throw any tantrum."

"Hazel has always been someone sensible." Edith pointed out.

"But I feel that she hasn't been acting normal," Sophie continued. "I have gone and see a few doctors and discuss Hazel's behavior... They said that Hazel's behavior is normal. But I'm still worried."

"People face their grief differently, Mrs. Mo. As long as you watch over her and show her support when she needs it, I'm sure she can get through this."

"I hope so."

Edith tried to smile when the elder gave her a hesitant look. After thinking about it for a while, Qian decided to speak, "I lost my father when I was still in my mother's belly and my mother passed away when I was eight. I was a bit older than Hazel when I lost my mother, but I can slightly understand her grief."

Sophie watched the kindergarten teacher curiously. "At that time, how did you..."

Sophie did not finish her question, but Edith could guess what was trying to ask her.

"I was a big child when my mother passed. Because I was raised by my mother... I was very reliant on her. When she passed away, I was lost and did not know what to do." At the memory of her childhood, Edith lowered her gaze and let out a short breath. "Back then, I almost shut myself from others. But I was lucky that I had my grandpa who looked after me and supported me."

Sophie lowered her gaze to the teacup in her hand. "I'm sorry for your lost."

She looked at Sophie again and mustered a smile. "I think, what Hazel needs is her family love and support. As long as you can patiently stay by her side and look after her, I'm sure that Hazel can overcome everything."

Sophie thought over the kindergarten teacher's words for a while. "I wanted to bring Hazel to live in the countryside with me and my husband, but she refused to come with us. She said if she lives with us, she won't get to visit her parents as much as she wants. For Hazel's sake, I would return to the city to live with my granddaughter, but with my husband's health, it was not something that we can do."

Seeing that the elderly woman had stopped talking, Edith then said, "Is there anything I can do to help, Mrs. Mo?"

"It was decided that Hazel will live with her uncle," Sophie said. "Actually, Hazel's uncle was supposed to be here to discuss this arrangement, but he had to leave due to an important matter."

It was then that Edith recalled the man she met at the door. Everyone in MH city knew that Adam Mo's brother is none other than Neil Mo, the man said to be ruthless in the business world.

No wonder she had thought that the man looked familiar. Edith was sure that she had seen that man's face in the newspaper and magazine a few times.

"This living arrangement will be a month trial for both of them," Sophie continued. "My elder son might know a thing or two about running a company, but he is clueless about taking care of a child. To tell you the truth, Hazel's uncle never had much interaction with her until a month ago, I hope you can understand my worry."

Edith was surprised when she heard of Hazel's living arrangement. She had thought that Hazel will surely live with her grandparents and that Sophie came over to the kindergarten to draw Hazel out from school and manage the transferring process.

"There will be many things they will have to face together. But as long as your son is willing to give it a try, I'm sure he will be good as time passed by," Edith said after a while.

Her thought went back to the moment she had live with her grandpa. Back then, her grandfather and her relationship were almost like a stranger. She was never closed to her grandfather but had no choice but to live with him as he was the only family she had.

The first year for their new living arrangement was the hardest.

Her grandfather was a policeman and due to his job, he rarely had time for her. But after a few shouting and yelling at each other for the whole years, they finally came together. They had to learn to compromise with each other. After that, things gradually worked out by themselves.

Truthfully, Edith did not know how she would survive without her grandfather at her side. As these thoughts came to her mind, Edith was very grateful that her grandfather had chosen to be patient to raise her instead of sending her away to some orphanage or let her be raised by someone else.

"Hearing your words make me feel less worried," Sophie said. "Teacher Qian, thank you for sharing your story."

Edith replied to her with a smile. "Will Hazel's nanny continue to look after her as well?"

Sophie nodded. "She will."

"Then, you should be more at ease. Auntie Ann has been by Hazel's side for a long time. At least Hazel's uncle will have someone to help him."

"I heard from Auntie Ann that Hazel is quite close to you in this kindergarten."

"I'm only Hazel's classroom teacher, Mrs. Mo."

"You don't have to be so polite. Actually," Sophie paused hesitantly. "I have a favor to ask."

"What is it? If it's something that I can help with..."

"It's nothing much. I am still worried about Hazel's new living arrangement. Therefore I would like to ask you to look after Hazel when you can. My son, Hazel's uncle have zero knowledge about looking after a child.. If you see that he was making a mistake, I hope that you can patiently help him to look after Hazel."

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Back in MH Group Headquarters...

Neil Mo cursed as soon as he slammed the phone to the receiver, making his assistant jump.

"President Mo," Assistant Shawn glanced towards the sofa area, where a little girl was seen sitting around the area. Colors of crayons and papers spread on the table. Hazel was holding a blue crayon in her hand and she seemed oblivious to her surroundings.

As if sensing that the adults were staring at her, Hazel Mo raised her head and met Assistant Shawn's gaze.

The assistant quickly looked away to his boss and reminded, "Little Miss Hazel is here."

Neil turned his head towards the little girl. Seeing that Hazel was watching him, Neil stood up straight and pressed his lips into a thin line. He then cursed inwardly as he reminded himself to be careful.

His mother would murder him if she knew that he had said certain words that he should not be said around the little girl.

It was weekend and he was supposed to stay at home with Hazel when he got an important call from his assistant about the new rumors surrounding his brother's death.

At first, Neil thought about leaving Hazel at his house with her nanny, but then he seemed to remember that Nanny Ann would have a day off every weekend. In the end, Neil had no other choice but to bring Hazel along to his office.

Since his parent had returned to the countryside two days ago, Hazel was now under his care.

Before they left, his mother, his mother had arranged everything so that living with Hazel wouldn't be a problem for him.

Because of that, Hazel wasn't as scared of him as she used to. Hazel can now speak a few words to him even if her words were usually short.

"Sorry," Neil cleared his throat as he turned to his niece. "Did I scare you?"

Hazel nodded, then shook her head. "No."

A thought crossed his mind and Neil asked, "Are you hungry? You want something to eat?"

The little girl shook her head again. Then, she turned her head away to ignore her uncle and continue on her drawing.

"Hazel, If you need anything, just tell Uncle Shawn, alright?"

The little girl replied without lifting up her head, "Okay."

Neil breathed in relief. Then he turned to his assistant before they continued to where they have left earlier. "Do we know this rumor start?" he lowered his voice as he was afraid that Hazel would listen to their conversation.

"This rumor started from this blogger who called himself the Rainmaker." Assistant Shawn tapped his finger on a tablet. He launched a website and passed his phone to his boss.

Neil took the tablet from his assistant, sat down on his chair, and started reading the original article on the blog.

Assistant Shawn took his silence as his cue to continue and explained, "The original blog post was published almost two weeks ago and no one took notice of this unknown blogger. But someone found his article and shared it on social media. The post went viral and things went badly from there. We've already contacted the blogger and warned him to take down his post and our legal representative will be meeting the blogger tomorrow morning."

Neil slid the tablet across the table and watched the assistant catch it before it slid down the floor. He tapped his fingers on the table as he was deep in his thought. Then, he reached for the phone on the table and dialed a number. Soon, his call was connected.

"How was the investigation?" Neil asked without any pleasantries.

There was a brief silence on the other line before a voice finally spoke out. "We are still investigating,"

"It has been so long. We still got nothing?"

On the other line, Henry Wu took a deep breath. "I'm sorry. We may have some leads, but I don't want to come to any conclusion without definite information."

Neil rubbed his forehead with his fingers. "Just tell me what you know. I just wanted to hear it."

Henry hesitated before he spoke in a low voice, "All I know is that Adam moved secretly. Even his assistant was kept in the dark about his activities a few months before the accident. But according to our investigation, your brother suddenly paid attention to the hospital project on the west side of the city not long before the accident."

Neil raised a brow.

Of course, he knew about the hospital project.

MH group had a joint collaboration with a few mega-companies to build a hospital in the city. It was scheduled to finish within late next year.

"Have you look into Assistant Will? What was he working on before he died?"

"We probe into everything we can, but we couldn't find anything helpful. Every lead we found led to a dead end. It seemed that your enemy has moved to destroy every evidence there is against them." Henry said.

"Since you can't find anything, stop looking into this matter for a while."

There was a brief silence before Henry spoke. "Neil, what are you trying to do?"

Neil continued. "Didn't you said the other side has destroyed any evidence that we can find against them? I want to observe the situation first. Let them lower their guard. Sooner or later, they will be careless and reveal their loophole."

"I will do as you say. But I would advise you to find someone to look into your finance and account department and CY Accounting Firm. Maybe you can find something from there."

Neil chatted with his friend for a minute and then put down the phone. When he looked up, his assistant stood straight before him.

"President Mo, what about the meeting with the board of directors tomorrow?" Assistant Shawn asked.

Neil raised a brow. "What about it? Of course, we have to hold the meeting as planned. This meeting with the board of directors is held once every quarter year. We can't call it off." he waved his hand. "You can leave now."

Assistant Shawn nodded and turned around, but stop when the president called him.

Neil thought about Henry's warning and said, "Call Jamie Xu.. Tell her she has six months to wrap up her job and return to the city."

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Edith Qian woke up early in the morning and went out after she took a quick shower, Then she took a bus and headed towards L City.

Traveling to the city from her place would usually take about an hour because of the traffic. But since it was a weekend morning, it would only take her half an hour.

If she was given a choice, of course, Edith would love to stay in L City especially since she had to travel from A City to L City back and forth to get to her workplace and college. But renting in L City would cost her a lot of money. Therefore, she had no other choice but to rent in the neighboring A City and commute every day via public transport.

Edith snapped out of her trance once she realized that she had reached her destination. She walked towards the zebra crossing and waited until it was her turn to cross the road.

She tilted her head up to see the big screen broadcasting the morning news. A month has passed, but everyone was still talking about the death of late Adam Mo, the Vice President of MH Group, and his wife, Claire Fan.

Moreover, it was recently that a gossip MH Group was involved in embezzlement was released. This gossip quickly became a hot topic in the country. A portal has linked Adam Mo's death to the embezzlement and the netizens were asking the authorities to quickly investigate the matter.

There were rumors that the accident may have been premeditated. With these new rumors, it was predicted that MH's Group stock would drop.

Although the authorities have stepped up to deny the accusation, the netizens have not stopped discussing it.

On the big screen, Neil Mo's face suddenly appeared. He was surrounded by reporters with questions and cameras pointed towards him. Despite the questions thrown by the reporters, the President of MH Group only said a few words. He pleaded for others to trust the police's investigation and stop spreading a groundless rumor or face the law, especially as his family is still grieving over the loss of their family members.

Edith sighed, feeling sorry for that guy for everything he had to deal with.

Not only did he have to look after his niece. He also has to manage the company and facing other people who had bad intentions towards him. A lot of people were coveting his status and wealth.

As these thoughts crossed her mind, Edith began to worry that the scandals surrounding MH Group will implicate Hazel.

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After her class ended in the evening, Edith Qian showed up at the He's family house with a box of egg tart in her hand. A few seconds after she pressed on the doorbell, Alex He appeared at the door and pulled her in excitedly into the house.

"Alex," Lily Zhao's voice came from the inside. "Did you greet Auntie Edith properly?"

The little boy stood up straight with his eyes wide. He slowly turned to Edith and bowed. "Auntie Edith, good evening."

Edith patted the boy on his hair. Then she looked at her friend who was in her apron. She greeted her friend and hand over the box of egg tart. "Lily, I brought something for you. It's your favorite egg tart."

Lily grabbed the bag and peered inside. She took a deep breath and felt her stomach rumbling at the sweet smell of egg tart. "You don't have to bring anything."

"It doesn't feel right to come over without anything."

Lily thanked her friend and ushered her in. "How was your class?"

Edith gave her friend a weak smile. "It was alright. I have another test next in two weeks."

Lily laughed at her expression and pat her on her shoulder. "Good luck! You're halfway to finish this course. You will be graduating next year, right?"

"En." Edith sighed. She peeked at the kitchen and asked, "Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Nothing. But, you can accompany Alex to play for a while. Lily looked at her son and said, "Go bring Auntie Edith to the guest room. Then you can play with her for a while." she smiled at Edith. "You don't mind looking after Alex while I prepare dinner, right?"

Edith waved her hand. "Just go. I'll play with Alex. He promised to show me a new toy his father bought for him. What was that again? A new robot?"

Alex nodded excitedly as he held her hand tightly. "It's Gundam model," he corrected. "Auntie Edith, you have to help me build this new model. My daddy was too busy with his works and Mummy said she knew nothing about it."

Edith looked at the boy's expectant gaze and turned to her friend. She knew that Lily knew how to build those model robot. But because she was too impatient to deal with it, she had lied to her son by saying that she didn't know how to build them.

Lily coughed dryly and winked when she met Edith's gaze. "You go and help my son with those models. I'll call you once dinner is ready."

Edith heaved a sigh as she let Alex He led her to the guest room to put her belonging and the little boy dragged her into his playroom. Edith looked around the room which was slightly bigger than her apartment and sighed.

A minute later, Alex appeared with a box of unopened Gundam model in his hand.

Alex took the model to a low table in the center of the room. "Auntie Edith! Come! Help me build this model."

"Won't your daddy get sad when he knows that you build this model without him?" asked Edith.

The little boy shook his head. "No way. I have another three unopened boxes. I can build them with my daddy when he returns later."

Edith sat down on the carpeted floor and resigned to her fate.. A few minutes after reading the instruction, she was engrossed in building the Gundam model.

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After staring at the Gundam model for a long time, Edith was soon engrossed at assembling the model.

In the end, she didn't even realize that her friend had come over and knocked on her son's door for a while.

It was Alex who broke her concentration by waving his small hand in front of her. "Auntie Edith!"

Seeing that her eyesight was blocked by the little boy's hand, Edith then looked up. "Huh? What's up?"

"Mummy said dinner is ready," Alex said as he stared back at her with his wide eyes.

Edith lifted her head and saw her friend leaning on the door, watching her. She lifted her right hand, showing all five fingers and said, "Five more minutes. I'm trying to piece this thing together, and then we can have dinner together."

Lily peeked at the small pieces scattered on the table, waiting to be assembled and clicked her tongue disapprovingly. She sauntered into the room and crouched down next to her friend. "Is it fun? Why do I have this feeling that you were secretly enjoying yourself helping my son to assemble this model?" She picked up a piece of unknown part and put it back.

"I don't know why you didn't like doing this," Edith said without looking up. Her gaze focused on piecing up the small part in her hands together. "Building these models can be quite relaxing."

"What relaxing? It's obviously very frustrating."

"That's only because you're not patient enough."

Lily replied to her with a snort.

Sometimes she wished that her husband has never introduced building these models to their son. The father and son clearly enjoyed spending their time together building a Gundam model. Now, Alex's room was full of those models.

But that was not the reason why she was complaining. Because she did not enjoy this kind of activity, Lily found that she was unable to join in the fun whenever the father and son spent their time building this Gundam model.

Lily watched as her son glued a small part of the model with her friend's help and felt a tinge of jealousy that she could never enjoy being a part of this activity.

Just wait until she had a daughter later on. She will ensure that she and her daughter shared so many similarities and hobbies that the father and son will be jealous of them.

Fifteen minutes later, the three of them walked into the dining room where varieties of food spread across the table. Edith winced when the aroma of spicy food filled the air. Just by smelling the air could make her sweat.

"You really go all out for this, huh?" Edith said as she pulled her chair and sit down. She looked at the food on the table and noticed that there were two types of soup stock. One big pot with contained spicy broth and a small pot contained non-spicy broth.

"It's not like I get to eat spicy hot pot every day," Lily complained. "Every time Ethan wanted to have hot pot, I have to lower the spice level. I could not even taste the spice!"

Edith peeked at the soup stock and frowned at the color. "Just how spicy did you make this? I still have to work tomorrow. I don't want to end up with diarrhea."

Lily Zhao rolled her eyes. "You're thinking too much, It was not as spicy as they look."

Soon the three of them started having their dinner. Despite the bright, red color of the soup, Edith was glad that the soup was not as spicy as she had expected.

"That's right. How's your grandpa? Is he well?" Lily asked as they began to eat.

"He's fine." Edith blew at a piece of meat before she stuffed it into her mouth. "He's enjoying his retirement quite well. He's been going out with his friends every day, fishing."

Lily laughed. "That's good. At least he's doing something with his free time."

Edith shook her head. "It wasn't long ago when he was admitted to the hospital for his back pain. What was he doing going out every day to fish? He didn't even like eating them."

"It was only a way for him to spend time with his buddies," Lily pointed out. "Your grandpa will be fine. He has built his body strong enough after years serving in the police force." She picked up a piece of broccoli and placed them in Alex's bowl. "Alex said that Hazel went back to kindergarten."

"En," Edith nodded slowly. "It has been a week since she started to come back to kindergarten."

"How is that little girl?" Lily asked. As a mother, of course, she was worried about the little girl's well being. Moreover, Hazel Mo was also her son's classmates. She had met that little girl a few times and adored her cuteness.

Edith paused as she thought of her little student. "She seemed okay. Although not as cheerful as she used to."

"That's good. Who's looking after her now? I thought her grandparents had stayed in the countryside not too long ago for the sake of Chairman Mo's health."

"She's staying with her uncle."

Lily raised her brow. "Neil Mo?"

"En," Edith nodded again. "What do you know about him?"

"I probably have met him on a few occasions but I did not know him that well. Ethan and Neil Mo were not from the same field of business. Our circle of friends is also different. I heard that Neil kept a small social circle, and because of that, most people would say he's not very approachable."

"There's nothing wrong with keeping a small social circle."

Lily nodded. "True. But some people also said that Neil Mo is an emotionless robot because he barely smiled. The differences between Neil and Hazel's father can be compared to an iceblock and warm ray of sunshine."

"You're exaggerating." Edith laughed. She had encountered the two men briefly and knew that there was probably some truth in it.

When she met the late Adam Mo in the past, the man would always wear a smile on his face. His elder brother, on the contrary, was not someone who would spare anyone a smile.

"Tsk. It was others' words. Not mine.." Lily stuffed a piece of cooked meat into her mouth and sighed with satisfaction as the spice spread through her mouth.

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When Neil Mo finished reviewing the documents in his office, it was almost three in the morning. He had stayed up late to make some preparation for the emergency meeting with the board of directors early in the morning.

As he was planning to return to his room to sleep, Neil suddenly felt his throat was a bit dry and decided to went downstairs to pour himself a glass of water and sighed when he no longer felt as thirsty.

When he headed back upstairs, Neil stopped once he reached the guestroom—Hazel's room. He hesitated for a few seconds before he walked in into the room silently and peered at the sleeping visage on the bed.

Suddenly, the figure on the bed turned and Neil found a pair of wide eyes staring back at him. He frowned, worried that has disturbed the little girl's sleep.

"Why are you awake? Sorry. Did I wake you up?"

Hazel tightened her grip on the pink bunny plushy that her mother had given her on her birthday last year and hesitated. "I can't sleep."

The frown on his face deepened. Neil suddenly recalled that his mother would accompany the little girl in her room when she was still around. It was only after Hazel had fallen deeply into a sleep that his mother would leave the room.

The last time he checked the time, it was three in the morning. Then... the little girl was unable to fall asleep until this time?

"You're scared of sleeping alone?"

The little girl hid her head under the quilt cover and bit her lips. When she saw the look on her uncle's face, Hazel was suddenly worried that she might get scolded.

Back then, didn't her mother always scolded her whenever she didn't want to go to bed early? She did not want to get scold. What if her uncle does not want to live with her anymore?

When the little girl did not answer, Neil sat at the edge of the bed and looked at his niece who was wrapping herself like a small dumpling. "You can tell me, you know. I won't get angry."

He lifted his hand to caress her soft hair which was the only thing that popped out from the quilt cover with his stiff movements.

After a few seconds, Hazel pulled the quilt away from her face and nodded.

Neil's expression softened when he stared back into her eyes. Although the little girl resembled her mother the most, it was not hard to see traces of his brother, Adam, in her face.

"Close your eyes," Neil said as he patted at the little girl's hair softly. "I'll stay here until you fall asleep."

Hazel turned in her bed and closed her eyes.

Neil stayed beside the girl and continued to pat on her hair until he could see her breathing had changed.

He stood up to return to his room and hesitated at the fear that she might wake up suddenly. After some thought, Neil decided to sit down on the sofa, and soon, he too fell asleep.

...

Neil was jarred awake when he felt his body shook. He sat up quickly once he saw his niece, Hazel's face in front of him. It was a few seconds later that he began to process his mind and recalled that he had fallen asleep in the little girl's room.

"Uncle!" Hazel stared at him with her bright eyes. "Wake up."

"What's wrong?" Neil tried to sit up straight and felt his body, mostly around his shoulder and neck area was starting to ache. He reached his hand to his shoulder and started to massage the area.

The little girl pointed her fingers to the clock and soon, Neil stood up abruptly and let out a cursing word in front of her.

He had an important meeting that morning and he cannot be late.

Because he had slept in Hazel's room, Neil had forgotten that his phone and alarm clock were both left in his bedroom.

"Hazel, you should hurry and get ready before we will be late," Neil said as he walked over to the door. "I'll let you have your breakfast in the car before I send you over to the school."

"Oh."

He paused at the door and turned to look at her. "Will you be alright if you get ready by yourself?" Neil heaved a sigh with relief when he saw her nodded.

Almost half an hour later, Neil found his niece was already waiting for him in the dining room with her small backpack placed on the empty chair beside her.

When Neil walked closer, he could see that Hazel was eating a bowl of cereal.

It seemed that she was clever enough to find something to eat.

A breath of relief escaped him. Neil was sure that his mother would nag him nonstop if she ever found out that he let Hazel go to school without her breakfast.

But... last night, his niece had gone to bed late because she was unable to sleep. How did she wake up early than him?

Hazel quickly devoured her breakfast when she saw her uncle. Once her bowl was empty, she quickly set the bowl into the sink and turned to her uncle. "I'm ready."

His heart tightened as he watched his niece. He did not know if Hazel has always been a responsible kid, or did she only do these things because she was forced to grow up?

Neil could remember that he has always been someone unruly when he was at her age.

As he continued to watch his niece, the little girl had already reached to his side with her backpack.

"Did you bring everything?" Neil bent down to caress her hair.

"Un. I have put everything I need in my bag." She unzipped her backpack and showed the contents in her bag.

After checking that she had put in everything she might need in school, Neil helped her to zip her back. "Come on.. Let's go."

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Fortunately, the two of them arrived at the kindergarten on time. Once the driver pulled over his car on the side of the road, Neil walked get off the vehicle and helped Hazel out.

Because of her short legs, Hazel almost tripped as she slid down from her seat. However, Neil was quick enough to grab her hand before she would fall on the road.

"Are you alright?"

Hazel patted at her chest and felt her heartbeat increased. Earlier, she was so scared that she might fall and have been bracing for her fall. The thing she was afraid of was the pain from falling down.

"I'm alright." Hazel tightened her grip on her uncle's big hand to calm down.

Neil crouched down to check on his niece. Seeing that the little girl was not harmed, Neil stood up and continued to hold her hand. Together the uncle and niece walked towards the kindergarten's entrance.

A few parents who happened to see the uncle and niece together could not help but be drawn to the two of them.

One was cold and aloof and the other was cute and fluffy.

It was such a rare sight for any of the parents to see the President of MH Group, Neil Mo, to appear at the kindergarten.

Usually, they would not have the chance to run into them. After living together, Neil would send the little girl early, and Hazel would be the first person to arrive.

"Good morning, Teacher Qian!" Hazel greeted her classroom teacher when she saw her in front of the entrance.

"Hazel Mo," Edith crouched down to get on the little girl's level and smiled. "Good morning. You made it on time."

"Un," Hazel nodded before she glanced at her uncle.

Edith followed her eyesight and stood up as her gaze met with Neil's. "Good morning." she smiled.

Neil replied with a nod before he turned to his niece. "I'm going now and I will come and pick you up later."

The little girl's eyes widened as she heard his words. "You promise?"

Neil opened his mouth to reply and stopped himself once he saw the anticipation in her eyes. "Hmm." He nodded. "I promise." he patted Hazel on her hair before he turned around and left.

...

Assistant Shawn and a few high-level managers were waiting for their president, Neil Mo to arrive at the entrance. When the luxury car pulled up, Assistant Shawn hurriedly opened the door and Neil stepped out of his car as he fastened up a button on his suit.

"Good morning, President Mo." the managers greeted in unison.

Neil replied with a nod and walked into the building with the others following closely behind him. He tilted his head slightly to his assistant and asked, "Have the other arrived?"

Assistant Shawn quickened his pace to match up with the president. "They are waiting for you in the conference room, President Mo."

Neil nodded. Then he turned his head to one of the managers beside him. "How is the stock market?"

"It was just as we have expected," the manager said as he stepped up to walk by the president's side and he passed a thin stack of paper to him. "The stock price went down once the market is open. It was no doubt that this was the result of that rumor. But Our PR team had controlled the situation, so the drop was not as bad as we had expected."

"Continue to watch the trend and report back to me," Neil said. He entered his private elevator with his assistant, and soon, the others dispersed to go back to their task.

Neil took a deep breath as the elevator stopped and walked into the conference room to face the board of directors.

The meeting went on for the whole day. They only take a break for an hour during lunch. Even so, the members of directors stayed within the premises since President Mo had arranged for his assistant to order take away from a famous restaurant in the city.

The hours passed by and soon the employees clocked out when it was time for them to go back, but the meeting with the directors continued. Not one of them left their place as they discussed to find the best way to save MH Group from their recent crisis.

From the moment the meeting started, the directors have been giving out their opinions and debate on the issue for so long but after so long, they still could not agree on anything.

The door swung open and Neil saw his assistant walked with a hesitant expression on his face.

Noticing that it has been a long time that everyone has been cooped in the room, Neil glanced at his watch and noted that it was getting late. He turned to his assistant and beckoned him to come closer.

Assistant Shawn inclined his body forward to speak. "President Mo."

"This meeting should end in a couple of hours. Book a place for everyone to have dinner together," Neil said before his assistant could say anything.

"Yes, President Mo." he nodded. He paused for a while before he spoke again.

Neil raised a brow when his assistant stood still. "Is there anything else?"

"President Mo. It is time for young miss to return from her kindergarten."

Neil sat up straight as he remembered his niece. Then he glanced at his watch again. He lifted his head to look at the members of directors and hesitated.

These past few days, Neil Mo has been the one to send and pick up his niece from kindergarten. Because he was trying to build a bond with his niece, his mother suggested spending any time that he can with Hazel.

Up until today, Neil has never failed to do this task.

However, the discussion with the board of directors may have reached its climax, but the directors were still arguing. Knowing that they might come to an agreement soon, Neil knew that he cannot end the meeting now.

Neil tapped his fingers on his chair twice before he made a decision. "Assistant Shawn.. You go pick her up from the kindergarten and send her home to Nanny Ann."

Chapter 13

In just an hour or so, the sky will turn dark. Most of the students and teacher of Sunflower Kindergarten has gone back to their home. In one of the classrooms, two girls were seen folding some animal-shaped origami in silence.

"I'm done!" Megan Xiao said with excitement as she lifted up her frog origami. She stood up and peered at her friend's paper. "Hazel, what are you folding?"

"Paper cranes," Hazel answered. Her focus was on the paper.

Megan tilted her head sideways. "Paper cranes? Isn't that hard?"

Hazel nodded. "En. But I heard that if I can fold thousand of paper cranes, God will grant my wish."

Megan's eyes went wide as she heard her friend's word. "Really?" she grabbed a stack of paper and sat beside Hazel. "Hazel! Teach me!"

Just as Hazel was about to teach her friend how to fold the paper cranes, the girls heard their teacher calling out Megan Xiao's name.

"Yes, Teacher Qian?" Megan put down the paper in her hand and turned around.

"Your mother is here to pick you up," Edith announced. She watched the little girl picked up her bag and walked her to the entrance, where her mother was waiting for her.

Edith bid the mother and daughter goodbye. She returned to the waiting room and found Hazel was sitting quietly folding some paper cranes. She approached the girl and sat beside her. She picked up a paper crane and inspected the folding. Although Hazel was still young, her work was very neat.

Edith looked at the girl with a smile. "You're folding paper cranes. Do you have a wish?"

Hazel replied with a nod.

"Can you tell me about your wish?"

Hazel paused from her work for a couple of seconds. She continued her folding and answered with a small voice. "I wish that my parents will rest peacefully. I wish for them not to worry about me."

Edith was stunned at the little girl's answer. She forced a smile and patted the girl on her hair. "Do you need my help?"

Hazel shook her head. "No. I want to do this by myself."

"Then, I'll be at my desk and finish up with my work. Tell me if you need anything, alright?"

Hazel nodded. "Okay."

Edith walked to her desk and started doing her preparation for tomorrow's lessons and activities. Once in a while, she would glance towards the little girl who was busying herself with her origami.

After a few days, she noticed all the changes in this student. The most obvious thing was that Hazel would no longer act as spoiled as she used to. She loved to sit alone to

do her own thing, but she would not isolate herself whenever there's a group activity. She still got along with her friends well.

Sometimes, Edith would find Hazel would sit alone at the corner with her head tilted down whenever her friends weren't looking.

Soon, the other teachers started to leave the premises one by one. They stopped by the waiting room and bid her goodbye. The day has turned dark outside. Edith glanced at the clock and started to worry that Hazel's uncle has not shown up to pick up his niece.

The doorbell rang and Edith walked to the intercom and talked to the guard for a while. It looked like there was a problem.

"Hazel," Edith called. "Wait here for a while okay?"

"Okay."

Edith walked out of the class and walked to the guard room. A young man dressed in a suit stood beside the elderly guard. Although the guard can be said an elder, his body was still fit and strong.

Edith turned to the guard. "Guard Dan. Did you say someone come to pick up Hazel Mo?"

The young man in a suit stepped forward. "You must be Hazel Mo's teacher." He took out a business card from his suit and handed it to her. "Good evening. My surname is Zhong. But you can call me Assistant Shawn. I am Neil Mo's assistant."

Edith Qian took the business card and read the name. Shawn Zhong. As he had said earlier, he is an assistant slash secretary of President Neil Mo at MH Group. He was tall, thin, and wearing a black-rimmed spectacle.

"Good evening, Mister Zhong. You can just call me Teacher Qian."

"Teacher Qian, I'm here to pick Miss Hazel Mo," the assistant bowed and continued, "I'm sorry for my tardiness. There was traffic congestion due to a bad accident on my way here."

Edith returned the business card and turned to the elder guard. "Guard Dan, Assistant Shawn's name was really not in the list?"

The elder man nodded politely. "His name is not on the list. I would not trouble you if his name is in the list, Teacher Qian."

Edith glanced at the bespectacled man as she thought over the problem. "Is Headmistress Fu still around?"

"Headmistress Fu had left the kindergarten almost ten minutes ago," Guard Dan reported.

Edith Qian heaved a sigh and looked at the assistant. "Assistant Shawn, right?" she saw the man nodded and continued, "I'm sorry, but I really can't let you leave with Hazel Mo."

"Ah?" The assistant looked at her in surprise. "Why not? The president really sent me here to pick up the little miss. If you doubt my identity, you can ask Miss Hazel Mo to identify me."

"Even if Hazel Mo recognized you, I still can't let her leave with you. Your name was not registered as the authorized person to pick up the child. Unless if the child's guardian gave us notice first."

Assistant Shawn's expression soured at her words. "Teacher Qian, please don't make it hard for me."

"I'm not trying to make things hard for you," Edith said apologetically. "But this is for the basic procedure to ensure the safety of the children here. I hope you can understand."

Assistant Shawn frowned as he was deep in his thought.

"How about this?" Edith said after a brief silence. "Why don't you give your boss a call and tell him to contact the kindergarten?"

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After listening to Teacher Qian's suggestion, Assistant Shawn picked up his phone and dialed the President's number. But after a few attempts to contact Neil Mo, Assistant Shawn started to look at both the guard and teacher anxiously. This is because the President did not pick up his phone.

Assistant Shawn cursed under his breath as he paced back and forth in front of the kindergarten. Right now, he felt like he was about to cry.

If he didn't pick up the young miss, the president will definitely scold him. But when the president didn't pick up his phone, how was he to explain his situation and difficulties?

...

Meanwhile, in a fancy restaurant, Neil Mo was having dinner with the members of the board of directors. His phone was in his pocket. Because of the noisy surrounding, he had missed the calls from his assistant.

It wasn't until he went to a toilet break and check his phone did he noticed almost 50 missed calls from his assistant. Neil pressed a button on the phone screen and pressed the phone to his ear. "Neil Mo speaking."

"President Mo!" Assistant Shawn said. His voice sounded happy now that the President finally returned the call. He had been trying to call the man for almost an hour, that his phone was about to die. He was lucky that the guard allowed him to use the charger to charge his phone.

"Where are you?" Neil asked. Now that he heard the assistant's voice, he realized that he had not seen the guy after he sent him to pick up his niece. "Did you pick up Hazel and send her back home?"

"This is why I'm trying to reach you, President,"

Neil listened to his assistant's tone and noticed that something doesn't feel right. "Is there a problem?"

"The kindergarten would not allow me to pick up the young miss."

Neil frowned. His grip on his phone tightened. "Why not?"

"My name was not registered as the authorized person to pick up the young miss," Assistant Shawn explained. "The person in charged said, if you give a call to the kindergarten and verified that you send me, I can pick up the young miss."

Neil glanced at his watch, then said. "No need. You stay there. I will come over soon."

In the end, Neil returned to the dining area and bid goodbye to the others before he left the restaurant. Because he had sent his driver with his assistant to pick up his niece, Neil had to hail a cab and headed to the kindergarten.

When he arrived, he saw his assistant and driver was leaning over the car. He paid for his ride and headed towards the two men.

"President Mo," both men said in unison.

Neil Mo nodded and turned to his assistant. "Why are you waiting here?" he looked at the kindergarten and said, "Come on."

Soon, Assistant Shawn was speaking to Guard Dan again. He handed the guard the president's identity card and the guard went in to find the young miss's teacher.

Not long after, Edith came out of the building again.

Neil gave her a look over and frowned. The woman before him was dressed casually in black cotton pants, a pastel pink t-shirt, and a beige cardigan. Her hair was braided into a messy bun.

Assistant Shawn quickly took the role to introduce the teacher to him, even though the two of them had met a few times.

Neil give the teacher a nod as his standard greeting and looked around when he saw no sign of his niece.

"Uh," Edith bit her lips. "Your niece fell asleep while waiting for you."

Neil glanced at his watch. His expression darkened when he realized that it was almost nine. No wonder Hazel would be asleep. It was late and he remembered that the little girl didn't get too much sleep last night. She must be exhausted.

"Come with me."

Neil followed the kindergarten teacher into the classroom and noticed that his niece was sleeping soundly on a mattress. A thick blanket was covering her small body. A helpless sigh escaped him as he inched towards the little girl and tucked her hair behind her ear.

Looking at her sleeping visage, suddenly Neil felt something tugging on his heart.

He made a promise to his brother and her parents that he will look after Hazel. It has been only a few days, but it seemed like he has been neglecting her.

"Is Hazel doing alright in school?" he asked.

Edith was surprised when she suddenly heard his voice. "She is."

Neil's gaze fell on Edith for a couple of seconds before he looked away again. He placed a hand behind the girl's head, another hand behind her knee joint, and lifted the little girl. Once he adjusted Hazel's position in his arms, Neil Mo turned to the kindergarten teacher again. "Thank you for looking after my niece, Teacher Qian."

Edith shook her head and sent them to the door. Only when the last student has gone back, did she tidy up her stuff and prepared to go home.

Her gaze paused at the origami paper cranes that Hazel had made. Earlier, the little girl had told her to keep those paper cranes in a safer place. Hazel was planning to fold a thousand of them to get her wishes to come true.

Edith looked at the time. Because it would be too late for her to return to her apartment, she decided to give a call to her friend, Lily to crash at her place.

...

Neil was holding his phone with one hand as he read his email while the other hands caressed Hazel's soft hair as she slept on his thigh. His eyes narrowed a bit to adjust looking at the bright light from his phone, making him look a bit colder.

He paused when he felt Hazel stirred in her sleep.

Soon, the little girl rubbed her eyes with her hands. She looked around in panic as she tried to figure out where she was. Her expression only softened when she saw her uncle.

Neil brushed his fingers on her eyes. "Sleep, I'll wake you up when we home."

Hazel caught his hand and adjusted her sleeping position. It was as if she was afraid that her uncle would disappear if she did not hold on to him.

Just when Neil thought that she had gone back to dreamland, he heard her muttered in a small voice, "You came.. You promised and you came."

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Neil Mo placed the sleeping girl carefully on her bed and stepped back. His gaze stayed at the little girl's face as he thought back about the words she uttered before she had fallen deep in sleep in the car.

He had not paid too much attention when he promised that he was going to come to her kindergarten to pick her up, but apparently, Hazel remembered. While he was having dinner and entertaining the boards of directors, Hazel was waiting for him.

A frown appeared on his face when something crossed his mind. He had heard from Nanny Ann that Hazel had stayed awake to wait for her parents when they received news of her parents' accident.

While he was having his dinner, Hazel was waiting for him with worry.

As these thoughts ran through his head, Neil was suddenly overcome with guilt.

Suddenly, Neil wondered how the little girl would feel if her teacher had allowed for his assistant to pick her up. Would the little girl be disappointed?

Would it mean that he had broken his promise to her if others had showed up instead of him?

Hazel was just a little kid. She had recently lost her parents and had no one but him, her uncle, at her side. Neil had promised to give a try and look after Hazel. Now, the little girl was relying on him.

Neil realized that once he had broken his promise with her, the little girl would be saddened and soon, it would be hard for her to trust him again. At this time, Neil was suddenly worried about how his action and decision would soon affect the way Hazel would grow up.

For Neil, his work would always be his priority. Ever since his father was hospitalized due to his poor health, Neil has worked hard to look over the company that he has no time to think of other things. He would come to the office and work in the morning and go out to entertain his clients almost every night. He often returned to his apartment when it was really late.

But it seemed that he has to change this habit. It seemed that now that Hazel was now staying with him, Neil had a lot to ponder about. He needed to change his lifestyle.

...

When Hazel walked down the stairs, she was surprised upon seeing the breakfast item on the dining table. Hazel had thought that she would be having a bowl of cereal for breakfast that morning, but surprisingly, her uncle had prepared some toast and a sunny side up.

"Come on," Neil waved his hand to the little girl. "Sit down and have your breakfast. Although I don't know how to cook many things, I can at least do something as simple as these."

Hazel walked around the dining table with her eyes wide. She put down her school bag beside her and pulled the chair to sit down. Smelling the aroma of the buttered toast, Hazel started to feel her stomach grumbling.

Last night, she did not eat too much. She was waiting for her uncle to come over to pick her up from the kindergarten and because it was too late, her teacher had offered her to eat some bread for her dinner.

Because she did not want to trouble her teacher, Hazel only had one piece of that strawberry-flavored bun and had not asked for more even though she was still hungry. By the time her uncle came to pick her up, she was already asleep.

Hazel stood on her knees and picked up the fork and knife on the table.

When Neil came back to her side with a mug of warm milk, he happened to see the way Hazel eat her breakfast and frowned. He then made a note to himself to get a suitable chair for his niece.

Neil slid into an empty seat across the little girl and picked up his mug of coffee. Then, he looked up at the little girl. "Hazel, let's talk."

The little girl stared at her uncle for a few seconds and nodded.

Neil rapped his fingers on the table as he wondered how he should start this conversation. He was used to striking a conversation to discuss a business deal. However, at this time, Neil suddenly realized that talking to a child can be more difficult.

Hazel munched at her toast as she continued to stare at her uncle. She then drank the warm milk from her mug and wiped her mouth with a napkin. "Uncle, you can talk to me. I promise I won't get angry."

Neil paused when he heard her words. He suddenly realized that he had said the same thing to her last night when she was too scared to sleep alone.

Suddenly, his lips curved into a soft smile. "Alright." He watched as the little girl continued to eat her breakfast and finally spoke, "Hazel, do you remember that I have promised to come over and pick you up from kindergarten yesterday?"

"Un." she nodded.

"If I did not come to pick you up yesterday, would you be angry?"

Hazel did not answer, but Neil could see how her movement had slowed down.

Seeing this, Neil let out a helpless sigh. "I'm sorry. Yesterday, I almost forgot that I have promised to come and pick you up."

Hazel continued to eat her breakfast silently.

"This is what I wanted to talk to you about. There are some days that I won't be able to come over and pick you up from the kindergarten."

The toast she was holding paused midair and her expression paled as she heard his words. "Are you going to leave me?"

"No," Neil quickly shook his head. When he saw the look on her face, Neil was glad that he chose to explain his situation to the little girl lest she would misunderstand when he did not show up. "I am not going to leave you. But there are some days that I get too

busy at work, that I cannot come over to pick you up. When that day comes, I will send over my assistant, Uncle Shawn to pick you up, and then, he will send you over to Nanny Ann's place. You remember Uncle Shawn, right?"

Hazel nodded slowly.

"When I was done with my work, I will come over and pick you up from Nanny Ann's place," Neil said. He continued to watch the little girl's expression and wonder what was going through her mind when she did not answer. "Is that okay?"

"Okay."

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While she was on a break, Edith Qian took out her phone and checked her messages.

It was after lunch hour and the kids were now taking their naps. This was the only time that she could relax and did a bit of her study in peace.

It has become a habit of hers to turn her phone on silent mode while she was in class and would only check on it during a break. If someone was in an emergency to find her, they will need to call the school. These days, the people who would look for her for an emergency were not that many. Only her grandpa, Michael Qian, and her friend, Lily Zhou knew how to contact her.

When she unlocked her phone, there was only one message notification and it was from her grandpa. He only sent her a message to tell her that she might not be able to contact him for a few days as he was going on another fishing trip with his friend.

Just as she slid her phone back into her apron, there was a soft knock on the door.

Edith stood up quietly when she saw Headmistress Fu through the glass window. She glanced at the sleeping kids to make sure that they were sleeping and headed out silently.

"Headmistress Fu." Edith greeted as she closed the door behind her.

The headmistress peeked inside the classroom. "Are the kids asleep?"

Edith nodded. "Is something the matter?"

Headmistress Fu smiled. "Nothing much. I received a phone call from Hazel Mo's guardian just now. He had an important meeting today and will be picking his niece a bit later."

"I understand." Edith nodded. She can only hope that Hazel's uncle won't be showing up as later than the first time he picked her up. She really did not want to crash over at her friend's house again.

Ever since that night where President Mo first showed up, he was never late again when he came to pick up Hazel. However, because of his timely presence, a few parents started to swarm around him in hoping to make a connection with him.

After that day, he would send his driver, Uncle Tang to pick up Hazel while he waited for her in the car. Fortunately, both Uncle Tang and Assistant Shawn's names were already registered with the kindergarten as the authorized person to pick up Hazel.

"It has been a couple of months since Hazel Mo returned to the kindergarten. Is she doing well?" Headmistress Fu asked with concern.

"She's adjusting quite well," Edith answered. She thought about it for a few seconds and added, "I think she will be alright with President Mo looking after her."

The last time Mrs. Mo came to look for her, Headmistress Fu was present and knew that the Mo family was asking her to keep her eyes on Hazel and her uncle in any way that she can.

"I'm glad to hear that." Headmistress Fu heaved a sigh. "I was worried when I heard that Hazel will be living with her uncle from Madam Mo. If President Mo can look after Hazel well, then, that's good."

"You can stop worrying too much, Headmistress Fu. I will look after Hazel while she's in school." Edith said. "If I noticed anything unusual, I will inform you right away."

Edith continued to chat with the Headmistress about the kids for a while and then she went back into the classroom. She grabbed her backpack and pulled out a few study materials.

The room was a bit dark as the children were asleep. Edith had to rely only on the dim light from the study lamp to read her books.

She was focusing on her books when her ears suddenly picked up muffled sounds.

Her ears perked up as she tried to find the source of that sound, but then, the sound stopped. She looked around only to see the students were sleeping soundly.

At the thought that her mind was playing tricks on her, Edith turned back to her books. But seconds later, she could hear the sound again. Edith straightened up her body to focus on the sound. Her eyes darted to a corner where the sound came from: it was one of the girls!

Edith stood up stealthily and walked towards the direction. Her eyes went wide with surprise when she saw Hazel hugging her knee closely to her chest. Her body shaking.

Was she having a nightmare?

Swiftly, Edith knelt beside her. It was then that the sobbing stop. From the look of it, it doesn't look like Hazel was sleeping at all.

Edith touched her shoulder lightly and whispered. "Hazel. What's wrong?"

Hazel stayed still. Only the sound of sniffing could be heard.

"Do you want to come out?" she whispered to Hazel again.

Hazel tightened her grip on her knees. After a minute has passed, she nodded.

Edith held her hand to pull her up but changed her mind. She scooped up the girl and brought the girl out to the small resting room. Then, she poured a glass of water for the little girl.

As Hazel drank her water quietly, Edith went over to the headmistress room and told her the situation. The headmistress then volunteered to watch over the other kids while Edith comforted the little girl.

When Edith entered the room again, Hazel has stopped her hiccup. She took a seat beside Hazel and smiled gently. "Are you alright now?"

Hazel replied with a nod.

"Do you want to talk?" asked Edith again.

Hazel tilted her head down and swung her feet slowly. Then she looked at her teacher and opened her mouth to speak, but it seemed like she didn't know what she wanted to tell her.

When Edith saw that the girl didn't want to talk, she pulled the girl closer into her embrace. The little girl's head was resting on her chest as she patted her soft hair. "It's fine if you don't want to talk about it. But if you ever need someone to talk to, you can find me, alright?"

Then, Hazel began to sniffle again. "Teacher Qian," she called. Her voice trembled. Her small hand was curled into a fist.

"Hmm?" Edith pulled away a little bit to look at her. "What is it?"

"Teacher Qian," she called again.

"Yes?" Edith rocked her body back and forth to comfort Hazel. "I'm right here."

"I—I miss my mom and dad."

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Back in MH Groups, Neil Mo was listening to his employee's explanation. The board of directors has agreed to bid for the tender and acquire the land in the neighboring city. Because the city was famous for a few of its attractions, they were planning to develop the area into a shopping mall and a serviced hotel and apartment.

Neil glanced at his wristwatch and back at Manager Feng, who was swaying her long hair now and then while presenting numbers and figures on the white screen. The corner of his lips twitched at the sight of the manager's hair swiping back and forth as she moved her head.

It wasn't as if she was in a hair product commercial. Why does she have to move her hair around like that?

It was too distracting.

He tapped his fingers on the table impatiently and fought the urge to say something about it. A couple of seconds later, he raised a hand.

Autumn Feng paused and smiled. "Yes, President Mo?"

"Manager Feng, can you please stop that?"

Autumn stared back at the President with a dazed look on her face. "Stop what?"

"Swaying your hair around like that," Neil said. "Do you know what you reminded me of?"

Autumn looked at President cautiously. "What?"

"A cow, swinging its tail back and forth to drive away flies from its butt," Neil said with a disinterested look on his face.

Hearing the President's words, chuckling sounds could be heard, echoing in the room.

"Stop moving around too much and just get over with your report," Neil said.

"Yes, President Mo." Autumn glanced around the room in embarrassment before she continued her presentation. She was trying to attract the man's attention, but he had called her a cow. What an embarrassment!

After Manager Feng continued her presentation for a while, Neil lifted his hand again.

"Yes, President Mo?" Autumn could feel her sweat wetting her back as she watched the President raised his hand again. She was sure that she had stopped moving around as per the President's instruction.

"How much longer do you need?"

Manager Feng's smile froze as she looked at the president with a stupefied expression. She gathered up herself and turned to look at the image on the white screen. Then, she turned to the president, "Not much longer, President Mo. Around ten more minutes?"

Neil Mo waved his hand. "Continue. You have five minutes to conclude everything."

Autumn opened her mouth to say something but managed to stop herself when she saw the warning glance from Assistant Shawn. "Yes, President Mo." She adjusted her blouse before she continued talking about figures and numbers again.

Neil Mo leaned on his chair towards his assistant. "Tell Driver Tang to prepare the car within ten minutes to pick up Hazel."

Assistant Shawn nodded and left the room quietly.

When the presentation ended, Neil Mo quickly went downstairs after giving pointers on areas that can be fixed before they submit the tender. After giving his instruction to Assistant Shawn, he went into the car and left with his driver to pick up his niece.

"Assistant Shawn..."

Assistant Shawn turned around and saw Autumn approached him with a smile. "Manager Feng. What can I do for you?"

Autumn Feng looked at the direction where the President's car disappeared to and then, back at the Assistant. "Where is President Mo going? Why do I feel like he always went back early this few weeks?"

Assistant Shawn frowned at her questions. "Didn't you hear that President Mo is looking after his niece? Of course, he was going back early to look after the young miss."

Autumn stared at Assistant Shawn with her eyes wide. "Isn't that only a rumor?"

Assistant Shawn ignored the manager's question and walked inside. He still has a lot of work.

What he didn't tell Manager Feng was that President Mo would send his niece home to her nanny and then he would return to the office to deal with some unfinished work almost every day.

...

Neil Mo glanced around the kindergarten when the car comes to a halt. When he saw that there were no other parents around to pick up their child, he stopped Driver Tang from going out and instead, went out himself.

He walked to the front door and waited until the teacher came out with Hazel trailing behind her.

"Uncle," Hazel greeted. Her eyes sparkled when she saw that it was her uncle who came to pick her up instead of his driver, Grandpa Tang.

Neil smiled at the little girl and patted her soft hair. "I'm sorry I came later than I'm supposed to. I got stuck at work. Will you forgive me?"

Hazel nodded. Her lips curved into a small smile. "Alright."

"Come on. Let's go home." Neil took Hazel's backpack in one hand and held her hand with the other hand. Then he turned to Hazel's teacher and gave her a nod.

Edith Qian hesitated as she watched them walked to the exit. Seconds later, she called. "President Mo,"

Neil Mo turned around. "Is there anything else?"

"Can I talk to you for a minute?"

Neil glanced at Hazel. Then he nodded at the teacher.

Edith heaved with relief. She didn't know why, but looking at the man's expression made her a bit scared of him. It was no wonder why people would say that Neil Mo was like a block of ice.

"I'll walk you to your car." Edith Qian said quickly. She changed her shoes and followed them to the car.

Neil Mo ushered Hazel into the backseat and helped her with her seat belt. He closed the door and looked at the teacher. "What is it?"

"I found Hazel crying during nap time today," Edith Qian said.

Neil turned to the teacher with a frown. His eyes narrowed a little bit, making him look a bit more unapproachable than he usually did. The air around them became suffocating. He won't tolerate it if anything happened to Hazel.

"Did something happen to her? She didn't hurt herself, did she? Was she bullied?" Neil asked. A lot of other things went through his mind. Neil decided that he would do anything to punish the person who bullied his niece.

"Don't worry. It's nothing like that," She gave him an assuring smile and hoped that this guy would stop making another assumption. "It's just that... Hazel cried because she was missing her parents."

"Oh," Neil blinked. The suppressing air around him quickly vanished.

He knew that Hazel has been missing her parents every day, but he never saw her cried again after the news of her parents passing. Most of the time, Hazel has been suppressing her grief. She won't cry as she did not want to be a burden for him.

But to hear that she had cried today, Neil was heavyhearted.

His eyes flickered as he looked at the teacher before him before he glanced at the car. "I understand. Thank you for telling me this, Teacher Qian."

Edith smiled.. "If there is anything I can do to help, please, do tell."

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"Are you sure you're fine living with Hazel?"

Neil Mo kept his eyes on the little girl who stood not far away from him. She was wearing her pastel-colored cotton dress and a white sandal. Her hair was tied into a messy ponytail and the ribbon was slightly crooked as he was the one who had helped her to tied her hair earlier.

At this time, his niece, Hazel Mo stood in front of her parents' tomb and there was a tall glass jar of paper cranes in front of it.

Neil could still remember when his niece had brought home that glass jar from her kindergarten. He had asked about it, and she had only told him that the paper cranes was for her parents.

It was then that he learned that previously, Hazel's mother was the one who taught her how to fold the paper cranes, and Hazel had wanted to give the paper cranes to her parents and tell them that she was living fine.

"We're fine, " he spoke to his mother. "Mom, why are you asking the same question every week?"

It has been a few weeks since the last time he took his niece to visit her parents. It was after Hazel's teacher's reminder that he finally told his assistant to clear up his schedule so that he will have time to accompany Hazel.

The expression she showed him this morning when he told her that he's taking her to the grave was adorable.

Sophie sighed in the other line. "You're a bachelor with no experience in looking after a child. How can I not worry?"

"Isn't Auntie Ann and the others are around to look after Hazel?" Neil Mo said. "Besides, Hazel is a good girl. She didn't throw tantrums or cause any problem at all."

"How about I come over next week?"

"Mom, you don't have to come. It'll be tiring for dad and you to travel back and forth." Neil straightened up his posture when he saw Hazel walked towards him. "Mom, Hazel finished talking to her parents. Do you want to talk to her for a while?"

"Pass me the phone to Hazel."

Neil handed his phone to Hazel when she approached him. "Grandma wants to talk to you." He watched the little girl spoke to her grandma and occasionally replied with a few series of 'en'. After a while, she handed his phone back to him.

He stared at the phone screen and saw that his mother was still on the line. Neil Mo pressed the phone to his left ear, and said, "Mom? Is there anything else?"

"Since you're out with Hazel, take her out for lunch and buy her a few things," Sophie said. "Living together with Hazel is not enough. You have to spend some time bonding with her. Don't forget what the doctor said."

"I know." After saying goodbye, Neil Mo hung up his phone and went back to his car with Hazel. He helped her to the passenger side before he went to the driver's seat. He put the car in the ignition and drove away.

After a few minutes of driving, Neil Mo glanced at his niece. "Did you tell your parents everything you wanted to say to them?"

"En." Hazel nodded. Her eyes were looking at the scenery outside. "Uncle, are we going somewhere?"

"Since Nanny Ann and the others are not at home, let's have lunch somewhere," he said. "Is that okay?"

"Okay."

Neil Mo stopped his car at the shopping mall's entrance and quickly, a valet approached him. He handed his keys to the valet and helped Hazel out. "What do you want to eat?"

Hazel thought about it for a while and said, "Anything is fine."

Neil Mo felt the corner of his lips twitched. He found the little girl's answer to be troublesome. He didn't know what the kid likes to eat. What if he just walked in into a random restaurant and Hazel find that she didn't like anything?

"Uncle," Hazel tugged the hem of her uncle's shirt. "Let's walk around first and decide later."

He nodded and led the girl to pull him around. Occasionally, they would stop at a restaurant to study their menu before they walked away when Hazel didn't find anything she likes.

Neil frowned when Hazel inched closer to him. It was then that he realized a few people around them were staring at them. He may find it normal to have people staring at him wherever he went to, but not for Hazel.

Noticing the little girl's discomfort, Neil tightened his grip on her hand and said, "Come on. Let's go to that cafe."

He was immediately satisfied once they stepped into the cafe.

It was a quiet place with a small crowd. The way it was designed gave the patrons their privacy. Neil was about to lead Hazel to an empty seat when he felt the little girl's hand slipped away from his.

He was alarmed when Hazel ran from his side to another table. He was about to say something to her when he noticed that Hazel was talking to the person at the table.

"Teacher Qian!" Hazel said enthusiastically.

Edith Qian was going through her study materials while drinking her coffee when she heard someone calling out her name. She looked up and saw that Hazel was heading towards her with a big smile on her face. The coffee in her mouth nearly spilled out.

She put the coffee cup back on its saucer and stood up. "Hazel? What are you doing here? Why are you alone?"

Hazel shook her head. "I'm not alone, Teacher Qian. I came here with my uncle." She turned around and smiled when she saw her uncle stood right behind her.

"Hazel," Neil called as he approached. "You can't run like that!"

The little girl bit her lips and bowed her head down. "Sorry."

Neil heaved a sigh. He wanted to scold the little girl for her abrupt action, but he realized that he could not get angry as he saw her adorable expression. Suddenly, he did not know what he should do. He patted her soft hair and said, "Don't do that again next time."

Hazel nodded. "En. I won't do it again next time."

Neil Mo lifted his head. It was then that he recognized Hazel's kindergarten teacher. She would usually style her hair into a messy bun, but this time, she had let her hair down, causing him to almost unable to recognize her.

"Teacher Qian?" Neil Mo said. He glanced at the books and notes on the table and frowned. "I'm sorry if Hazel has disturbed you."

Edith waved her hands. "No. She's not."

In fact, Edith was not there to study. The only reason why she was at the cafe was killing some time before she was going to meet her friend, Lily, and her son. She had promised to accompany her friend to go shopping later.

She looked at the two people before her. "Are you guys here to have lunch?"

"Un." Neil Mo nodded. He held Hazel's hand in his and spoke to the little girl, "Hazel, be good. Let's not disturb Teacher Qian."

Hazel nodded obediently. She then waved her teacher goodbye and followed her uncle and stopped after a few steps. "Uncle.. Wait for a second."

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Neil Mo stopped as soon as he heard his niece's voice. He turned to the little girl and asked, "What is it?"

Hazel glanced around the cafe and gestured for her uncle to lower his body so that she can whisper the words to his ear.

Neil raised a brow upon seeing his niece's strange behavior. However, he went along with what she had asked and crouched down to be on her level.

Soon, Hazel went towards her uncle and placed a hand beside his ear. Then, she went closer and whispered, "Uncle, I need to go to the bathroom."

The frown on his face disappeared upon hearing her request. Neil had thought of various things that Hazel might tell him, but he was not expecting this. "Alright." He nodded.

Neil tried to stand up, but his movement halted when Hazel tugged at his arm. He went back to his crouching position and waited for the little girl to speak again.

Hazel placed her hand at her uncle's ear again. "Uncle, can I ask Teacher Qian to go with me?"

Neil frowned at his niece's request. "If you need to go to the bathroom, I can take you. There's no need to trouble your teacher."

"But," Hazel looked at her teacher and then back at her uncle, "I'm a girl and you're a boy. You cannot enter the girl's restroom and I cannot go into the boy's. Mommy said it's not right. I am big enough to know the difference between a girl and a boy."

It was then that he understood her concern. Neil stared at his niece with surprise on his expression. He did not think that at this age, Hazel was taught of the difference between a boy and a girl. It seemed that his sister-in-law had taught her daughter well.

As someone who had never look after a child, Nei had never thought that this would be a troublesome issue.

However, he cannot allow Hazel to go to the bathroom alone.

If something happened to her when he was not around... Neil was not sure how he was going to face everyone, and especially his brother.

Neil stood silently as he weighed his decision. His head turned to the woman behind the table before he stood up again, and head over the table with Hazel.

Edith Qian looked up when she sensed someone stood next to her. She immediately stood up when she saw that it was Neil Mo and his niece, Hazel. "President Mo... can I help you with anything?"

Neil stared at the woman in front of him for a while. From the way she was looking at him, Neil could sense that she was frightened of him.

"Sorry," Neil said. "Did I startle you?"

"No," Edith shook her head quickly. "It's fine." She forced a smile.

Neil glanced at Hazel when he felt his niece shook his hand impatiently. He looked at the kindergarten teacher again and spoke, "Teacher Qian, can I ask for a favor?"

A confused look flashed through her eyes briefly as she wondered what kind of favor he was going to ask from her. "Sure. I will try to help you if it is within my ability. What is it?"

Neil Mo glanced at his niece again. "Hazel needs to go to the restroom. Can you take her with you?"

Edith looked at Hazel and saw that the little girl was staring back at her with a pitiful expression. Once she learned of Neil Mo's difficulties, her expression softened and a smile curved on her lips.

"Of course. Sure. I'll be happy to help you." She grabbed her purse and glanced at the books and notes on the table.

"I will look after your stuff," Neil Mo said.

A look of relief flashed on her face. "Thank you." Edith then turned to the little girl and stretch out her hand. "Hazel, come on. I will accompany you to the bathroom, alright?"

Hazel glanced at her uncle before she held on her teacher's hand. Then, the two girls walked out of the cafe holding hands.

Edith searched for the restroom in the mall and took Hazel in. She watched Hazel entered one of the cubicles and waited at the door.

Seconds later, there was music coming from her purse. Edith took out her phone and slid her fingers on the screen. Then she pressed her phone to her left ear. "Hello?" her voice low.

"Edith, this is Lily," the person on the other line spoke.

"En, I know," Edith smiled. She saw Lily's name on the caller ID and knew that it was her friend. "What is it? Are you here yet?"

"No. Not yet," Lily said. "I called to say that I will be late for our appointment. My mother-in-law called earlier and said that she was going to drop by to send something. I have to wait for her before I can leave the house."

"Oh," Edith glanced at her wristwatch to look at the time. "Alright. I will stay at the cafe and wait for you."

"Is it alright?" Lily asked. "Sorry, Edith. I will make it up to you."

"Don't worry about it. Lily, I'm in the restroom. Just call me when you have arrived, alright?"

Just as Edith hung up the phone, Hazel came out from the cubicle. Edith slid her phone back into her purse and turned to Hazel with a smile. "Have you finished?"

"En." The little girl nodded.

"Then go and wash your hands." Edith watched the little girl walked over to the low sink to watch her hand. She then helped the little girl to dry her hand and noticed the way Hazel pulled at her crooked ponytail.

Looking at the way her hair was tied, Edith was sure that the little girl was feeling uncomfortable. It looked as if the pink hairband was going to slip off her hair anytime soon.

"Hazel, would you like me to redo your ponytail?"

Hazel looked at herself in the mirror and frowned. Then she turned to her teacher. "Can you help me, Teacher Qian?"

Edith laughed. "Of course I can." she crouched down and said, "come here."

Hazel obediently went to her side and turned around to let her teacher combed and restyled her hair. "Nanny Ann and the others are not around on Sundays. So my uncle helped to tie my hair this morning," Hazel said voluntarily.

A smile curled on Edith's lips as she got the explanation of Hazel's crooked ponytail.

"Are you getting along with your uncle well?"

Hazel was quiet for a few before she spoke again. "It's not the same as living with my parents, but uncle lets me do anything I want. But uncle has been treating Hazel well. Earlier today, we went to visit my parents."

Edith paused briefly as she recalled the conversation with Neil Mo a few days ago where she had told him that Hazel has been missing her parents. After listening to her words, the man had taken his niece to visit her parents.

She quickly recovered and smiled as the little girl's hair was properly tied.

"It's done," Edith said.

Hazel checked herself in the mirror again and a wide, satisfying smile curled on her lips. "Thank you, Teacher Qian."

"Come on. Let's go back before your uncle started to worry about you." Edith said.. She took Hazel's hand and led her back to the cafe.

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When Edith returned to her table with Hazel, Edith was surprised upon finding that the President of MH Group was sitting at the chair that she had occupied earlier.

Neil Mo does not seem to notice them approaching him as he was engrossed in reading the books she left on the table.

"Uncle!" Hazel called once she saw the man from a distance. Though she had wanted to run over to his side, Hazel was reminded that she had promised him earlier that she will not run around.

Neil Mo raised his head when he heard his niece's sweet voice. He shut the book he was reading earlier and smiled.

Seeing that the President had stood up, Edith picked up her pace again and headed over with Hazel.

"Thank you," Neil said to the kindergarten teacher. He glanced at the books on the table and smiled. "Sorry. I had nothing to do so I browsed through your books while waiting."

Edith glanced at her books. "That's alright."

Neil then shifted his gaze to his niece. "Are you done?" He watched the little girl nodded and saw that her ponytail was tied neatly. There were no longer some loose strands and Hazel looked much cuter and tidy.

Hazel touched the tip of her ponytail and smiled. "Teacher Qian helped to tie my hair. Uncle, is it nice?"

"It's nice." Hearing his niece's words, Neil raised his head to look at the kindergarten teacher again. "Thank you." He then reached his hand to Hazel and the little girl ran to his side. "Come on Hazel. Let's not disturb your teacher. You must be hungry."

"You can sit here if you don't mind," Edith said as the uncle and niece turned around. "It's lunch hour and the place is an almost full house."

Neil looked around and saw that the table he had wanted to go to earlier was now occupied by a family. It was the weekend and most of the parents had taken this opportunity to take their children to the mall to eat and shop.

At first, Neil had wanted to go to another restaurant but knowing that the other restaurant in the mall would be full as well, Neil then hesitated. He could not let his niece starve because he wanted to find another place to eat.

Neil lowered his gaze to look at his niece and saw the way she was staring back at him in expectation. When he looked at Hazel's teacher again, the woman had already tidied the books on the table to make space for both of them.

"It's alright," Edith Qian continued when she noticed his hesitance. "I sat here alone. I don't mind some companies."

"Uncle," Hazel shook his hand. "Let's just sit here." She had heard her teacher's invitation earlier and was excited to sit with her.

Ever since Teacher Qian had consoled her the other day, Hazel found that she liked to stay around with her class teacher and the two had become closer. Previously, Hazel was very close to her mother. Now that her mother was no longer around, Edith had become the closest female figure to Hazel and she had looked up to her.

Sensing the woman's sincerity, Neil decided to accept her offer. "Thank you, Teacher Qian" He pulled a chair for Hazel, but the little girl had already run over to her teacher's side. With no other choice, Neil then sat down across Edith. He then waved a hand to the waiter and ordered a meal for himself and his niece.

Once the waiter walked away, Neil was suddenly at loss at what to do.

Although he could always ignore Hazel's teacher and do his thing, Neil was aware that he should not be rude especially since the woman had helped him earlier.

He was someone who had never go out and have a meal with someone who was not his business client or partners. But right now, he was sharing a table with both his niece and Hazel's teacher, he found himself in an awkward position.

Fortunately, Hazel was around. The little girl looked at the books that her teacher was looking at and had asked some questions.

At this time, Neil Mo suddenly found that his niece can be a talkative person. Whenever she was with him, Hazel did not talk much and would prefer to do her own thing. Looking at the two girls interacting, Neil was relieved to see that his niece was acting... normal.

A slight frown appeared on his face at the thought that his niece might be disturbing the teacher, however, Edith Qian had been answering her questions and explained things to Hazel patiently.

With absolutely no idea how he should strike a conversation, Neil looked around and paused as his eyes caught the book he was reading earlier.

"Teacher Qian, what are these books?" Hazel tilted her head as she stared at the book. Although she can read the letters, Hazel found that she did not understand the words. "These are not English?"

"No. They're French."

Hazel's eyes went wide as she continued to study the words even when she could not understand a thing.

"You were studying French?" Neil took the initiative to ask.

Edith paused as she heard his question. Though she was the one who invited the man to sit together, Edith soon found that sitting together with a man like Neil Mo can be stressful, especially because of who they were.

A well respected President Mo of MH Group was sitting together with her on the same table! How can she not find it stressful? Although that man was good looking, he always wore that stiff expression on his face.

At this time, Edith was suddenly reminded of how Lily had described Neil Mo—an emotionless robot and an iceblock!

Edith slowly looked up at the iceblock and mustered a smile. "Hmm... just to pass time."

When she was still a small kid, Edith had learned French with her mother and since then, this language was what makes her connected to her late mother. These days, with her knowledge, Edith had become a freelance translator to support her life living in the city.

"It's a good hobby," Neil commented.

At this time, the waiter came back with Neil and Hazel's lunch. Neil heaved a relieved sigh as he began to eat. Once in a while, he would glance at his niece to ensure that she was eating properly.

"Teacher Qian, my uncle said that he was going to take me to buy some clothes. Do you want to come along?" Hazel whispered as she peeked at her uncle.

"Thank you for your invitation, but I am going to meet with a friend later on."

Hazel lowered her gaze. "Oh."

Sensing the little girl's disappointment, Edith patted the little on her back and smiled. "Maybe next time, alright?"

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As the uncle and niece almost finished with their lunch, a notification tone chimed from her phone. Edith sent an apologetic smile to the man in front of her before she looked at the message.

Seeing that it was a text from her friend, Lily Zhao, Edith quickly replied to her text and placed her phone back on the table.

Neil Mo has been observing the girl for a while. Noticing the slight frown on her face, Neil lowered the cutlery in his hands as a thought crossed his mind. "Are you in a hurry?"

Edith looked up in surprise. "Huh?" Her gaze met with President Mo's sharp gaze and she was startled for a while. It took her a few seconds to register his question in her mind and answered, "No. I'm not."

The thought that he had perhaps disturbed her on a date suddenly made him uneasy.

Sensing his uneasiness, Edith then explained. "It's alright. I was the one who invited you to sit here. It's fine. You don't have to worry, President Mo. I only hang out here to kill some times before my next appointment."

Hearing her words, Neil Mo pursed his lips and did not say anything.

Once he had finished his lunch, Neil Mo paid for everything on their bills and the three of them left the cafe together.

Earlier Edith had received another message from her friend and she was planning to wait for her friend outside the cafe. There were still people who wanted to go in and dine. As both Neil and Hazel had finished eating, Edith did not feel right to hang around the cafe for too long.

Neil turned around as they exited the cafe. "Thank you."

"President Mo, you have said these words to me a few times. If you keep thanking me, I would be embarrassed," Edith said and smiled. "I did not do anything much but accompany Hazel. You don't have to be too polite about it."

Neil stared at her with a hint of surprise. Then his lips tilted into a small smile. "I understand."

The smile, although it was quickly disappeared managed to stun Edith for a few seconds. She had heard about Neil Mo's unsmiling personality from everyone around her that it was surprising this rare sight. For a second, Edith was wondering that perhaps she was imagining things.

"Edith!"

Suddenly, Edith heard someone called out her name. She turned around and saw that her friend, Lily was walking over to her with her son, Alex He beside him.

Lily's face changed the moment she saw Neil Mo and Hazel beside her friend. Her steps halted, but she quickly regained her composure when her son pulled her forward.

"Yi? Hazel!" Alex He exclaimed when he saw his friend. He looked at Hazel and their teacher back and forth. "What are you doing here with Auntie Edith?"

"Alex! Why are you here as well?" Hazel stared at Alex with her eyes wide. Then, she sifted her gaze to her teacher and frowned at the boy. "Auntie Edith? Why are you calling Teacher Qian as Auntie Edith?"

Alex touched his nose as he thought for an answer. "We're not at school. So, I'm allowed to call Teacher Qian as Auntie Edith. Mummy said so."

Lily Zhao approached with a smile on her face. She poked at her friend's waist and raised a brow as if asking for an explanation. However, Edith only blinked her eyes as if to tell that she will explain everything later.

Bending slightly, Lily waved at Hazel. "Hello, Hazel."

The little girl stand up straight and greeted, "Hello Mrs. He."

"Teacher Qian and I are friends. That's why Alex is allowed to call Teacher Qian as Auntie whenever we are not in school," Lily explained.

"Oh! So that is why." Hazel looked at her teacher and her friends back and forth before she finally stopped at Alex. Her wide eyes showed that she was shocked at this new information.

For a second, Hazel was jealous that Alex was closer to their teacher. Back at the kindergarten, although Alex had never fight to catch their teacher's attention, Hazel could still tell that the two were close. After all, Teacher Qian would always ask Alex to help her with anything.

Seeing the man beside them stood straight watching their exchange, Edith took the initiative to introduce him. "President Mo, this is Lily Zhao, Alex He's mother." She patted at Alex's shoulder and continued. "Alex and Hazel go to the same kindergarten and they are classmates."

Neil's expression changed upon hearing Edith's introduction. At the thought that he will have another interaction with Lily at the kindergarten, Neil decided to greet her politely. "Hello."

"Hello, President Mo," Lily replied, looking flustered. She had come to shop around with her friend and did not expect that she will run into Neil Mo.

"Hazel and I better move," Neil Mo said. He then turned to his niece. "Hazel, say goodbye to your teacher and friends."

"En." Hazel nodded before she turned to the others and waved her hand. "Teacher Qian, bye-bye. Alex, bye-bye. Auntie He, bye-bye."

Edith smiled. "Hazel, bye-bye. I will see you at school tomorrow, alright?" She watched as the niece and uncle disappeared from their sight and was surprised when she turned to her friend.

Lily's eyes glittered with excitement. She shook at Edith's hands and spoke, "Talk. Now. Why are you with President Mo?"

Edith Qian rolled her eyes at her friend's enthusiasm. She then raised both hands in defeat before explaining her encounter with the uncle and niece. Of course, she did not mention anything about sharing a table with both President Mo and Hazel or else, her friend would start bombarding her with more questions. Edith was not that crazy to dug her own grave.

When she was done, Edith found that Lily's interest in the encounter has faded when Lily found nothing worth gossiping about. Lily glanced towards the direction where the

two had gone and sighed. "Looking at them, it looks like President Mo has been treating Hazel well."

Edith Qian nodded absentmindedly. "He does."

"I wonder why people would say that he's an emotionless robot? He doesn't look like one." Lily said. "He looks like the type of person who would only treat those around him warmly and ignored those who unrelated to him."

"You can tell after one meeting with President Mo?"

Lily gave her a sideways glance. "I can tell by the way he treats his niece. Didn't you see it earlier? He was so gentle with Hazel."

"Are we still going to shop after this?" Edith asked, trying to change the conversation.

"Why? Do you have any other plan?"

"I'm asking casually." Edith shrugged.

"Then, let's go.." Lily then dragged her friend to shop around.

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Once she returned from shopping with her friend, Edith went home and immediately slumped on her bed. After going out for the whole day, she was dead tired. Although she went shopping with Lily, mostly, it was her friend who was buying a few clothes for her husband and son, while Edith spent her time accompanying Alex.

Initially, Edith has no plan on shopping for clothes, but in the end, she bought a blouse and a cute dress after Lily convinced her that the clothes look good on her. Anyway, the prices were reasonable and Edith had thought that there might be a day when she needed to wear such clothes.

Edith had lived in A City, a neighboring city from L City where she had worked. The apartment she had rented was small, but it was big enough for her to live alone. She was used to living alone in the apartment, however, at this night, Edith was suddenly feeling alone. She did not have any other family, but her grandfather who lives in Z Town.

Her plan years ago was to continue living in a small town while looking after her grandfather, but later, her grandfather had objected to her idea. According to him, she

would not have a bright future in a small town and thus, had encouraged her to find a job in a big city. With Lily Zhao's help, she finally got a job as a kindergarten teacher.

Because it was an elite school, naturally her salary was big enough for her to send to her grandfather monthly.

Though she was happy that she could provide for her grandfather, Edith would sometimes hope that she can leave everything and stay in the small town. At least, when she came back home, there would still be voices of someone concerned about her.

Edith heaved a sigh and closed her eyes to rest for a while. Just as she was about to fall asleep, her phone rang. Edith rummaged through her bag, took out her phone and slid her finger on the screen when she saw the name on the phone.

"Hello. Grandpa?" she greeted. There was an unmistakable joy in her voice. Earlier, she was feeling a bit sleepy. But after receiving the phone call, Edith found that the sleepiness had gone.

"Edith, how are you?" Edith's grandfather, Mike Qian's voice could be heard on the other line.

Edith stretched her arms to get rid of her tiredness. "I'm fine, grandpa. How about you? When did you return from your fishing trip?"

"I just come back this afternoon," Mike answered. "I saw your text as soon as I reached home, but I keep forgetting whether you would have class or not. I did not want to interrupt and waited to call back just now."

"Oh," Edith said. "Did you catch a lot of fishes?"

Hearing the question from his granddaughter, Mike began to talk about his fishing trip with his friends, while Edith would hum once in a while as she continued to listen to him.

"Right," Mike cleared his throat and hesitated. "Edith, I need to tell you that I will be going on another fishing trip in two days."

"You're going again? Grandpa, you just returned from a fishing trip and you're going again?"

Edith was well aware of her grandfather's addiction to fishing. This was a hobby that he had taken after he had retired from the police.

Usually, her grandfather would go out on the sea for weeks with his best friend, Grandpa George, and sometimes, his junior, Uncle James would accompany them.

Although her grandfather loved going to the sea, Edith had always known that the trio had not caught a lot of fish whenever they go out. Among the three of them, only Uncle James was quite good at fishing. Most of the time, Uncle James would give some of his catch to her grandfather so that she would not nag him whenever he came back empty-handed.

How did Edith know all this?

It was Uncle James's son, Aaron Li, who had told her.

"George asked me to come with him and I can't say no," Mike said. "Don't nag me too much. I was bored to stay home alone anyway and I like going fishing. It's good that I'm enjoying life at my age."

Edith Qian bit her lips. "How long are you going this time?"

"Probably two weeks. We met a few people the other day and they told us about this good spot," Mike said before he continued to ramble about this new fishing spot.

"Don't go with Grandpa George this time," Edith said. "Grandpa, I'm planning to come home and visit you next weekend, okay."

Mike paused upon hearing his granddaughter's suggestion. "Why would you come home? Just stay in the city and study well to make a lot of money."

"Why can't I come home?" Edith asked. "Grandpa, you always forbid me to come back. What is it? What are you trying to hide from me?" A thought crossed her mind and Edith smiled. "Grandpa, did you get yourself a girlfriend?"

"You!" He wanted to curse, but then he remembered that he was on the phone with his granddaughter. The words he wanted to say stuck in his throat. "What girlfriend? I'm already this old, why would I find myself a girlfriend?"

"What's wrong? My grandpa is still young and handsome? Why can't you find a girlfriend?" Edith continued to tease. "Anyway, I heard that Auntie Mel who sold steamed bun at the station had fancied you for years."

"Stop talking nonsense. I'm very loyal to your grandmother, alright." Mike took a deep breath and decided to change his tactic. "It's not that you can't come home. Aren't you busy with your work? Didn't you have classes every weekend? Since you're busy, you don't have to worry so much about me. Just live well and I'll be happy."

Edith giggled upon hearing her grandfather's words. "Don't worry about my classes. I will still come back next weekend."

"Edith—"

"Grandpa, have you forgotten?" Edith spoke before her grandfather could come out with another excuse to stop her from coming back home. "It will be my mother's death anniversary this weekend, of course, I have to come home." Her voice gradually turned soft as she spoke. "We promised that we will visit her every year, right?"

Mike went silent for a while when he realized that his daughter's death anniversary will be next month. As he turned towards the calendar on the wall and there was a trace of both anger and sadness in his eyes. Mike heaved a small sigh and speak again. "Then, I won't make any plans when you come back. You come back. I'll catch a few fish and cook for you later, is that alright?"

Edith Qian felt the corner of her mouth twitched. "Grandpa! You're still planning to go fishing!"

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Sunflower Kindergarten.

The school session ended and the students were let to play in the classroom as they waited for their parents to fetch them. Because it was raining outside, none of the students were allowed to go to the playground.

Hazel Mo was sitting in the corner with a few girls with their drawing paper in front of them and crayons neatly arranged beside them. The girl had just finished drawing her favorite bunny plush going on an adventure when she saw Alex He at the side.

Unlike the other kids, Alex often played alone with his robots. Other than his best friend, Tyler Lu, Alex was not close to anyone else.

Thinking about their coincidental meeting last weekend, Hazel decided to walk over to Alex and talk to him. "Alex He."

The little guy looked up. When he saw Hazel Mo, he tilted his head sideways. "Hazel, what's wrong?"

"You," Hazel paused when she noticed that the other kids gathered around to watch them. When the others saw that Hazel was looking at them, they turned around and went back to whatever they were doing before.

Seeing that everyone had stopped staring at them, Hazel sat down next to Alex. Her gaze paused on the robot in his hand and wondered why does Alex love to play with them so much.

"You have something to tell me?" Alex spoke when the girl beside him did not say anything.

"It's not that I have something to tell... But, I'm just curious. Alex He... Why do you always play alone?"

Hearing the question, Alex paused before he looked at Hazel with a smile on his face. "What's wrong with playing alone?"

Hazel found that she could not find a way to answer to his response. However, she had seen Alex always playing by himself a few times, she thought that it was too lonely.

"I think building robots is interesting, but the others did not share the same opinion. They liked to play with robots, but not the way I like them," Alex said. A bright smile appeared on his lips as he talked about them. He pulled a part of the robot and attached it to a different part. When he looked up again, Alex could not miss the way that Hazel was staring at the robot. Alex hesitated for a few seconds and asked, "Do you want to try building a robot?"

Hazel was about to reply that she was not interested in building in the robot when she heard Alex's next words.

"Teacher Qian liked to build robots too."

Her eyes went wide upon hearing this new information.

"Sometimes, when Teacher Qian came to my house, she would help me to build the Gundam robot model with me," Alex said.

Hearing that her favorite teacher was into building robots, Hazel was suddenly interested. "But, I don't know how."

"I can teach you," Alex said. His eyes sparkled at the thought that Hazel might be interested in building a robot. "I have a lot of Gundam model at home. Later, how about I give you one and teach you how to assemble them? Of course, if we encountered a difficult part, we can always ask Teacher Qian to help. Other than my father, Teacher Qian is very good at it."

Hazel balled her hand into a fist and straightened up. "Alright." Although she was not very interested in them, Hazel thought that it would not be bad if she gave it a try.

At this time, the classroom door swung open and Teacher Qian appeared at the door with a smile on her face.

"Alex He, Hazel Mo, come. Someone is here to pick you up."

Hazel Mo stood up and went to tidy up her things. Just as she was about to head to the door, her friend, Megan Xiao tugged her on her sleeves. Hazel turned to her friend and tilted her head sideways.

"Hazel," the little girl whispered. "What did you say to Alex?"

Hazel glanced at the boy who was talking to Teacher Qian at the door. "Nothing. I was asking why he was playing alone. What's wrong?"

Her friend smiled. "I have never seen you talk to Alex before."

Hazel smiled.

She knew that the girls didn't talk to Alex that much. It was not because he was snobby or naughty, but Alex He was usually quiet.

Hazel chatted with her friends a little bit and bid them goodbye.

When she walked out with her teacher, the rain had stopped. Hazel found Grandfather Tang, her uncle's driver, stood at the entrance waiting for her. Beside him was a tall, handsome, bespectacled man. Looking at the man reminded Hazel to someone. She lowered her gaze and saw Alex He attached to the man's leg.

"Daddy!" Alex shouted.

When Alex He noticed that someone was looking at him, he immediately released his grip on his father's leg and turned around. Suddenly, there was a shy look on his face. "Hazel. You're going back too?"

"Un." Hazel Mo nodded. She glanced at the tall man again. "This is your father?"

Alex nodded. "Yes."

This was Hazel's first time seeing Alex He's father. Usually, it was Alex's mother who would pick him up.

Hazel looked at the bespectacled man again and noticed that Alex looked very much like his father. Hazel straightened her body when her gaze met with Alex's father. She nodded and said, "Hello, Alex's father."

Ethan He lowered his body and smiled at the little girl. "Hello. You must be Alex He's classmate."

"Yes. My name is Hazel Mo."

Ethan's eyes flickered upon hearing Hazel's name. He exchanged a look with Edith, saw her smile, and guessed that Hazel was Neil Mo's niece. Ethan turned around to look for that influential man, however, other than the old man beside him, he could not see anyone else.

Hazel took Grandfather Tang's hand and waved with the others. "Goodbye, Teacher Qian. Bye Alex." Then, she went along with the driver and walked over to her uncle's vehicle.

Grandpa Tang led Hazel to the back seat and opened the door for her.

Once Hazel shuffled inside, she saw her uncle was speaking to someone on the phone in a language she did not understand. He turned to her with his phone sandwiched between his ears and shoulder as he helped her with her seat belt.

As the driver began to drive, Hazel leaned on the seat and enjoyed the scenery outside the windows.

She especially loved the street just before they entered her uncle's place. There were shady trees lined up at both sides of the road and Hazel loved to look up at the sunlight peeking through the branches and leaves.

"Hazel."

The girl turned around when she heard her uncle called out her name.

"Your grandma and grandpa missed you," Neil spoke. "Let's go and visit your grandparents this weekend. What do you say?"

Hazel thought about her grandparents that she had not seen for more than a month and nodded.. "Alright."

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Assistant Shawn filtered through the documents on the table based on the level of importance. He placed the most important documents on the right side of the table and the less important on the left.

Since the President planned to visit the Chairman along with his niece on the weekend, there were a lot of matters that would need his attention.

When he heard that the President would be visiting his parents who were living in the countryside, Assistant Shawn was relieved. He heard that Chairman Li and his wife were staying at a villa in a small town near the sea. He only hoped that President Mo would use this opportunity to get some rest.

Ever since the Vice President and his wife passed away in that accident, President Mo has been spending most of his time in the office, while looking after the young miss.

President Mo's daily routine would include picking up the young miss from the kindergarten and sending her back to his place with Nanny Ann looking after his niece. Then, returned to the office to deal with his never-ending works.

Although Assistant Shawn could see that there was a slight improvement in the uncle and niece's relationship, it was still worrying to see them both together. The two of them were not having any problem with the way they were living now, but sooner or later, once the young miss had grown up, it would be a problem for both of them.

Assistant Shawn paused from whatever he was doing when his phone vibrated in his pocket. He took out his phone and frowned upon seeing the President's driver, Old Tang's name on the screen. Thinking that the old man had tried to reach him due to an urgent matter, Assistant Shawn slid his finger across the screen and pressed the phone to his ear. "Hello?"

"Assistant Shawn, sorry for bothering. Is the President with you?" Old Tang spoke immediately when the call was connected. "I tried to contact him, but he did not pick up."

"President Mo is having a meeting with the high-level managers. He must have turned his phone on silent mode. What's wrong? If it's urgent, I can reach the President for you."

Old Tang took a deep breath. "Assistant Shawn. There is a problem."

"What's the matter?" He listened to the driver's explanation and frowned at the urgency of the matter. "I got it. I will talk to the President soon. Not to worry. Old Tang, I will need to trouble you to check on Auntie Ann and help her with anything you can. Don't forget to update me when you had any news."

Shawn Ye stared at his phone as he thought over Old Tang's news. After a few seconds, he fiddled with his phone and made a few phone calls. Then, he stood up and headed towards the meeting room. He peered through the glass and saw that the meeting was not yet over.

Currently, President Mo sat on the big swiveling chair as he spoke something. Looking at the stern look on his face, Assistant Shawn was suddenly afraid that he would be disturbing him in an important meeting.

However, the matter regarding Young Miss Hazel was important too.

Should he knock on the door and tell the President the news now, or should he wait?

Just as he was hesitating the door swung open from the inside and few managers walked out with their files in their hands.

A sigh of relief escaped him at the thought that the meeting had ended. He walked inside and saw that a few managers were conversing with the President.

He eavesdropped to their conversation and decided to wait as they were talking about their latest project in the neighboring city.

When President Mo waved his hand to dismiss the manager, Assistant Shawn quickly stepped forward.

Neil Mo raised a brow when he saw someone stepped closer to him. His expression relaxed upon seeing his assistant. "Assistant Shawn, what's wrong?"

"I received news from Old Tang that Auntie Ann met with an accident just now." Assistant Shawn said.

A frown appeared on his face and his heart was beating loudly. It was not long ago that he received news that his brother and his wife were involved in an accident. Hearing that someone he knew was in an accident, Neil Mo became anxious. He was worried that he would hear another unpleasant news.

"What happened? How did Auntie Ann get into an accident?"

"She was crossing the road when a speeding car run through the red light and hit her."

His expression darkened at the news. "And the driver?"

"It was a hit and run. But I already talked to the police. They are searching for the driver. We should get an answer as soon as possible," Assistant Shawn said. "Auntie Ann was brought to People Hospital by ambulance. When Old Tang called me, the doctor was still checking on her. Therefore, we did not know anything about her injury. I have spoken to Old Tang to help with anything she needs in the hospital."

Neil Mo thought over the news for a moment before he spoke again. "I'm going to the hospital to check on Auntie Ann. If there's anything important, just give me a call."

"What about the young miss?"

Neil Mo looked at the time. He thought about fetching the girl and brought her to the hospital with him, but decided against it. Neil did not want the little girl to be upset by

coming to the hospital. When her parents were hospitalized due to an accident, Hazel had accompanied them for a few days before her parents passed away.

The little girl was close to her nanny. If she heard the news and saw that her nanny was in the hospital due to an accident, it might trigger a bad memory.

It was until recently that his niece had started to smile a lot more and Neil did not want his niece to be unhappy once she heard about what had happened to her nanny.

"Call the kindergarten and inform them that I might be late to pick up Hazel today," Neil Mo instructed. "I will visit Auntie Ann at the hospital first and come back to fetch her. Inform the school of what happened, but don't let them tell Hazel about the accident."

Assistant Shawn nodded.. "Understood."

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When Neil Mo arrived at the hospital, his driver Old Tang was waiting for him at the entrance. The elder man led him into the hospital towards one of the wards. Because of his visit, no one paid much attention to him. However for a few people who could recognize Neil. After all, his face was everywhere in the newspaper after his brother had passed away.

Neil Mo lowered his head as he followed Old Tang to the wards. At this time, Auntie Ann's treatment had finished and she had regained her consciousness.

"P-President Mo," Auntie Ann tried to sit up straight when she saw President Mo walked in. He stopped the elder lady from sitting up when he saw the painful expression on her face.

"Auntie, how are you?"

"I'm alright," Auntie Ann answered as she pulled at the blanket on her chest. "President Mo, I'm sorry."

"What are you apologizing for? It was not your fault." Neil frowned as he looked at her leg cast.

"Hazel... I won't be able to look after her because of my injury," Auntie Ann said.

"President Mo, I hope that you won't tell Hazel about this."

"Auntie Ann, you don't have to worry about this. The most important thing is that you should get enough rest and recuperate well," Neil said. "Regarding the runaway driver, I have asked the police to find him."

The elderly lady nodded.

"I have arranged for a caretaker to look after you while you're in the hospital," Neil said. "She should be here soon."

"President Mo, you don't have to worry. My son will come over to look after me. He should be here soon."

"Auntie, you don't have to be polite. You have to look after Hazel for years. Auntie Ann, please don't reject this. Arranging someone to look after you was the only thing I can do."

After hearing the man's words, Auntie Ann finally accepted his kindness.

Neil Mo had a brief chat with Nanny Ann and left the ward after five minutes to let the elderly woman rest. Anyway, he still needed to go over to the kindergarten to pick up his niece.

He stepped into the corridor and turned to the Old Tang. "How is Nanny Ann's condition?"

"The doctor said Nanny Ann broke her left leg. It might take her about two months to heal, or later," Old Tang said. "She had a few bruises on her body, other than that, she seemed alright."

"Old Tang, you look after Nanny Ann and have the doctor give her the best treatment. I will take care of the bills." Neil Mo said. "Find something for her to eat. After that, you may go home. I will take the car and drive myself today."

"Yes. President Mo." Old Tang handed the car keys to Neil and watched him as he entered the elevator.

Neil went to the basement to look for his car and soon drove over to the kindergarten.

He arrived just in time just as the other parents were fetching their kids from the kindergarten. When he parked his car, the parents turned their heads towards the car and started to discuss among themselves.

Although everyone was expecting to see the elder driver come over, they were still expecting that the President of MH Group will come over himself to pick up the young miss.

When the driver's side of the door swung open, the others began to sigh in disappointment, knowing that the driver will be the one to pick up Hazel as usual.

Just as the parents turned around, Neil stepped out of the vehicle.

One of the parents noticed him and immediately signaled the others. A lot of them were watching him, starstruck. Most of those who were presented were young mothers. Of course, they will not waste the chance to look at the handsome man. Some of them even took out their phone to snap a few pictures.

As the President of MH Group, Neil Mo is famous in the city. When the chairman fell ill years ago, MH Group nearly fell along. Neil and his brother teamed up and take over the company. In a short span, he managed to convince everyone with his skills. The Mo brothers stabilized the company and helped it grew further.

Everyone was amazed as the two brothers were still in their twenties as they do that.

At that time, many had tried to approach the brothers through marriage. A few of those from the prestigious families would try to introduce their daughter to them. They failed as Neil Mo was difficult to approach, while his younger brother, Adam Mo had no one but his childhood sweetheart in his eyes. As their elders had long decided not to interfere in their sons' marriage, the young ladies and their parents had no way to get close to the brothers.

A lot of them gave up to pursue the brothers and a few were persistent to keep on trying. Among the young mothers, there were two of them who had once tried to pursue Neil Mo.

As they watched Neil came over to pick up his niece, the two ladies began to regret that they have given up too soon.

Neil Mo stepped towards the kindergarten as he ignored his surrounding. He gave his identification to the guard and waited with his head tilted down to avoid making eye contact with the others. It would be troublesome if some of them decided to initiate a conversation later.

A couple of minutes of waiting, his niece, Hazel Mo appeared at the door. The little girl's smile widened as she saw him. "Uncle!"

His lips curled into a smile when he watched the little girl greeted him excitedly. He patted Hazel on her soft hair and asked, "Did you behave well today?"

Hazel nodded enthusiastically. She glanced towards her teacher who stood behind her and spoke, "You can ask Teacher Qian!"

Edith nodded along. "En. En. Hazel behaved well today."

Hazel turned to her uncle with a smug smile on her face. She turned around and was surprised upon seeing the young mothers were staring at her. The way they were looking at her was making her... uncomfortable.

Subconsciously, her hand tightened around her uncle's.

Noticing his niece's discomfort, Neil looked up and noticed that his appearance had caused a commotion.

Edith let out a sigh upon seeing the parents gaze on the uncle and niece. The mothers were checking up on Neil as it was a rare occasion to see him closely, while the fathers were seeking for a chance to talk to him and hope that they initiate a conversation and talk about business.

If he was alone, he would not hesitate to ignore everyone. But right now, Hazel was with him and he was afraid she would get hurt.

Moreover, his mother had reminded him to be nice to other parents or else, Hazel might suffer when the parents would ask their kids to ignore his niece.

At this moment, Neil was hesitant at what he should do.

Looking at the situation, it was as if they were surrounded by a pack of wolves.

"President Mo," Edith let out a dry cough and hoped to catch his attention. A smile curled on her lips when he turned to look at her. "Didn't you say you were going to see the headmistress? Why don't you come in first?"

Neil stared back at the young teacher. He then nodded once he realized her intention to help them.. "Alright."

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Once the door behind them closed, Neil Mo felt his niece's grip on his hand started to loosen. He glanced at her and saw that her expression was no longer as tense.

The quiet surrounding snapped Hazel off her trance and she suddenly found that she was back inside the building. Now that she did not have to face the adult's inquiring gaze, Hazel felt more at ease.

Just now... when the adults were surrounding her, watching her, Hazel felt as if she was back to the day after her parents had passed away.

She was at the hospital with her grandmother when a group of adults suddenly surrounded them. The flash from cameras and their constant question frightened her to the point that she had frozen in place, unable to react. It was only when someone had helped her out of the situation that she was able to react again.

Later, during her parents' funeral, Hazel had chosen to sit in the corner away from the adults. Fortunately, none of those adults with flashing cameras and the large microphone was allowed to enter the hall and she was left alone.

"Hazel?"

The little girl turned around and blinked as she saw her uncle staring back at her with a worried expression. "Uncle, why are you here to pick me up instead of Grandpa Tang?"

Neil raised a brow. "You don't like it?"

"No. It's not that. I like it," Hazel spoke quickly. "But you always asked Grandpa Tang to pick me up. Didn't you always wait in the car?"

Neil Mo tightened his hand into a fist. Then he forced a smile as he looked at his niece. "Nanny Ann had a fever, so Grandpa Tang took her to back to her home to let her rest."

Hazel seemed as if she was unable to respond and she continued to stare at her uncle in a daze.

Nanny Ann was not feeling well?

At this time, Edith Qian stepped up and spoke, "President Mo, I'll take you to the waiting area and you can sit there for a while. Once the parents had left, I will let you know. Then, you can leave with Hazel."

He nodded. "Thank you."

A helpless smile appeared on her lips. Edith had always heard how President Mo of MH Group was someone with a cold demeanor. However, she had found that this man was not stingy with his gratitude words.

She turned around and lead the uncle and niece to the waiting area. Then, she went over to the kitchen and came back with small bottles of drinking water.

"Please, have a drink." Edith placed the bottle on the table and hesitated. "Or, would you like to have something else?"

"No, this is fine," he took the bottle, unscrew the cap, and took a sip. Neil blew a sigh as he watched the kindergarten teacher left to check on the situation outside. He turned to

his niece who was sitting beside him and saw that the girl was still staring at him. "What is it?"

"Uncle, is Nanny Ann alright?" Hazel asked.

Neil Mo turned around and met with the little girl's gaze. Then he said, "Nanny Ann will be alright after some rest." He thought about Auntie Ann's broken legs and knew that he should come up with an excuse. "Hazel, Nanny Ann won't be around to look after you for a few months."

Hazel's expression changed. Her eyes widened as she looked at her uncle. "Why not?" Suddenly, she was worried that her Nanny's illness was worse than just a fever.

"Just now, Grandpa Tang took her back to her son's place," Neil came up with an excuse. "It has been a while since Nanny Ann spend her time with her grandchild. She told me that she wanted to spend her time with her grandchild for a while."

Hazel's eyes softened upon hearing her uncle's words. She bit on her lips and nodded. "I understand. But Uncle, can I call and talk to Nanny Ann later if I missed her?"

Neil patted at the girl's head. "Of course." Seeing the smile on her face, Neil was more at ease. "Do you like going to this school?"

"En," Hazel nodded. "I like it here. Everyone here is very nice to me. And I learned a lot of stuff and played a lot of games."

The corner of his lips tilted up as Neil continued to listen to his niece, chattering about what she liked about her kindergarten. He then realized that this was the first time that his niece had spoken a lot with him.

Usually, Hazel would only answer back to him with a short answer. It seemed that she really liked attending kindergarten. At this time, Neil was relieved that he had not acted rashly and offended the other parents. Or else, he might have to let his niece transfer to another school.

"The other day, Alex taught me how to build a robot!"

"Alex?" To hear her classmate's name from his niece made Neil think that this person might be a good friend of hers.

"En," Hazel nodded again. "Uncle. Do you know about the Gundam model?"

Neil stiffened as a thought crossed his mind.

Gundam? Was that not something that a boy would enjoy?

"Hazel, tell me, is Alex a boy?"

"En," Hazel nodded again. She stared at her uncle and hesitated for a few seconds. "Uncle, can I get one of them? I wanted to try building them as well."

Neil Mo felt the corner of his lips started to twitch. "Why do you want to play with them? Aren't they... something that a boy would play with?"

"Of course not," Hazel frowned. "Teacher Qian is very good at building them as well. The other day, she had helped me and Alex to build one. But it was not yet completed. Teacher Qian said that anyone could build robots and it was not necessarily something that only a boy can play with."

Neil noticed how the little girl's face would brighten up whenever she was talking about her teacher. "You keep praising Teacher Qian. You must really like her a lot."

A shy look appeared on the little girl's face. "Of course. Teacher Qian treated me the best."

The corner of his lips turned up and Neil stretched his hand to pat at his niece's head.

After waiting for almost ten minutes, Edith appeared and announced that the parents got too tired after waiting for too long and had left the kindergarten.

Hearing the news, Neil stood up and led his niece outside. He thanked the kindergarten teacher for her help again and watched as his niece waved her hand to bid goodbye.

Just as Neil slid into the driver's seat, the phone in his pocket started to vibrate. He stared at the caller ID for a few seconds and answered the call.

"Neil, I'm heading over to your place later, is that alright?" His friend, Henry Wu's voice could be heard from the other line.

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Water dripped from the tip of his hair and streamed down on his torso as he stepped out of the shower. Neil Mo grabbed the towel from the rack on the rack and wrapped his lower half with the towel and stepped out of the bathroom.

He went over to the wardrobe and picked up lazy pants and a t-shirt.

Just in time, his phone on the bedside table started to ring.

Neil walked over to the bed and glanced at the screen. A light flashed in his eyes as he saw the name on the caller ID. He combed his wet hair with a hand and reached to pick up the phone.

"Neil Mo speaking."

"Open up," Henry Wu's voice could be heard from the other line. "I'm at your door."

Neil pulled his phone away and stared at it for a few seconds before he pressed it back to his ear. "Are you drunk?"

Henry Wu scoffed at the other line. "No. I'm very sober. Didn't I tell you that I'm coming over?"

"Then, why didn't you press the doorbell?"

He was very sure that his doorbell was fully functioning, but he had not heard any sound even after he had left the bathroom a few minutes ago.

"You live with your niece now. It's late and I did not want to accidentally wake her from sleep." Henry said. "My sister would have this murderous look on her face whenever the delivery guy showed up at her doorstep and pressed the doorbell when her kids are asleep."

An image of Henry's elder sister appeared on his mind and Neil tried not to shudder. He seemed to remember that Henry's sister could turn into a lioness whenever she was angry.

With a sigh, Neil walked over to the door. He pressed at a button and soon, an image of his friend dressed in his usual black pants and black shirt appeared on the small screen. Then, he pressed the other button and spoke through the intercom, "Come in. The door's unlocked."

Neil walked into the kitchen and poured himself a glass of water. When he turned around, his friend stood in front of him. His face was slightly haggard and there was an obvious black rim under his eyes.

Henry Wu examined his surroundings and raised a brow to his friend. "You still haven't employed any helpers?"

"I don't need too many people around when I'm here," Neil replied lazily.

"Where's that kid?"

"Sleeping," Neil answered. "You want anything to drink?"

Henry sat down on the kitchen bar stool and heaved a sigh. "Just water. I still need to head over to the office later."

Neil turned around to pick up a clean glass and took out the bottle from the refrigerator. Once the glass was full, Neil slid it across the counter and the glass stopped right before his friend. "You're more workaholic than I am."

"This is what happened when you're in this line of business. Non-fixed working hours." Henry took a sip and shrugged.

Neil leaned on the walls behind him and crossed his arms on his chest. "Why are you here?"

Henry drained the water from the glass and shrugged off the backpack from his shoulder. He unzipped the bag and took out a large brown envelope. Then, he slid it on the marbled table and stopped just at the edge of it. A sigh of relief escaped him upon seeing that the envelope did not drop to the floor.

"What is that?" Neil raised a brow.

"You should look at it yourself."

Neil Mo groaned in dissatisfaction, but he stepped forward to pick up the envelope. Once he had scattered the contents on the marbled table, a deep frown appeared on his face and his heartbeat escalated.

Reports and black and white photographs were displayed.

Neil picked up one of the photographs and recognized the man on it. It was his brother, Adam Mo, and a woman in a restaurant.

"I know you said to drop the investigation for a while," Henry spoke cautiously as he watched his friend's expression. "But I found a few footages of your brother and this woman having a meal at a restaurant by coincidence."

"Coincidence?" He looked up and met Henry's gaze. "What do you mean?"

"My company provided our service to Lobster Palace, a restaurant in the neighboring A City," Henry said. "Two days ago there was some trouble at the restaurant. They asked me to come and look at their system. Somehow, my guy clicked at some random past footage from three months ago and I saw this."

Three months ago.

Neil Mo repeated the words in his mind a few times as he continued to stare at the photograph. His gaze moved towards the woman in the photograph. A thought crossed his mind and Neil quickly dismissed it.

His brother, Adam Mo, loved this wife dearly. They were a childhood sweetheart and his brother had never strayed once he was committed to his wife.

But why was Adam having a meal with this woman?

Neil picked up another photo, and another. There were a few of them. His gaze paused for a few seconds on each photo as he studied everything.

In one of the photograph was a photo of his brother and his younger sister-in-law with that same woman. Looking at their expression in each photograph, he knew that the pictures were not evidence of brother acting stupid.

But, judging from the way they were dressed differently in each photograph, Neil Mo could summarized that the woman frequently met with his brother.

"You should know what kind of place is Lobster Palace," Henry continued. "It's a high-end restaurant where they regards their customer's privacy the most important. If my company was not in business with them, there's no way we could find these footage. Once I saw that first photograph, I looked at whatever recording that they still kept in their archives and found the others. Those pictures were taken from three to six months ago."

Neil went back to the first photograph. He took a closer look at the woman and felt his heart beat furiously.

This woman... Why did he felt like he had seen her before?

"Who is she?" Neil Mo spoke after a long silence.

"Jennifer Jiang. A prosecutor."

Neil Mo narrowed his eyes at the introduction. "Why is my brother meeting with a prosecutor? What is this all about? Why haven't he said anything to me?"

Henry shook his head. "I don't know why your brother met that prosecutor. But I can tell you that she usually involved in corporate crimes."

Something flashed in Neil's eyes as he recalled how his brother meeting with Manager Wang from accounting.

A whistle blower... A prosecutor... Could they be related?

"Do you know how long they have been meeting?"

"The earliest footage we have was from six months ago." Henry said. "But they probably met earlier than that."

Neil Mo shoved the photograph back into the brown envelop. "Can you find this prosecutor for me?"

"Already made my move without your instruction." Henry stared at him with a serious expression. "But the prosecutor has been missing for weeks. According to co-workers, she stopped showing up to work without any notices and her family believe that she was on a holiday in Paris. But none of them had contacted her yet." Henry said. "I have sent my men to investigate.. I will tell you if there's any news."

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As the weekend came, Edith Qian packed her belongings and took a bus back to her hometown.

Because the bus had several stops on the way, the journey took her for almost two hours to arrive. Edith took a deep breath as she stepped off the bus.

The town was not far away from the sea. When the wind blew, she could smell the familiar salty air. And the smell gave her a nostalgic feeling. It seemed that it has been a while since she returned home.

She adjusted her backpack's strap on her shoulder and walked towards the taxi stand. Just as she was about to hail a car, a vehicle not far away from her beeped its horn. Edith turned around and saw a man, waving his hands at her with a smile.

Once he noticed that she was looking at his direction, the man beckoned her to come over.

Edith picked up her steps upon seeing the familiar face. "Aaron! What are you doing here?" she asked as soon as she reached his side. Her lips tilted up into a bright smile.

He gave her a lopsided smile as he leaned on the pale blue van behind him. "Your grandfather said that you're coming back today. He let me come and pick you up."

"Thank you." Edith Qian gave his friend a look over. There was not much change in him since the last time she saw him a year ago. Except that, his hair was getting longer and it had almost reached his shoulder.

Aaron Li raised a brow teasingly when he noticed the way his friend was checking him out. "What is it? You think I'm getting handsome since you haven't seen me for a while?"

Edith punched him on his shoulder and rolled her eyes. "You're still that same annoying brat."

The man burst into a laugh upon hearing her words. He opened the passenger's door side and ushered her in. Then, he slid into the driver seat and drove away from the bus station.

Edith Qian watched the scenery outside. Judging from the scenery outside, she knew that he had deliberately used the beach route to drive her back. Although the journey might take ten minutes longer, the beach scenery was exceptional.

"When did you come back to town?" Edith turned to her friend who was holding the steering wheel with a hand.

He had rolled down the window and the sea breeze blew in.

"Two months ago."

"You're taking over the family business?"

Aaron chuckled. He placed one elbow on the window and drove. He glanced at her lazily and said, "Why? Do you need a job? If you ever need a job, you can always find me. I will hire you as the housekeeper."

Edith Qian chuckled. "Can you even afford me? I'm very expensive to hire."

He laughed before he spoke again. "That's not it. I was transferred back here. I am now a detective for this town."

"You can still be a detective with the way you look?" Edith gave him another lookover.

"With that long hair?"

"What's wrong with the way I look?" He clicked his tongue at her. "I'm very good looking, alright?"

Edith laughed at his words. She could still remember that Aaron had wanted to enter the police force just like his father. She did not think that he would really become a police officer.

After a brief silence between them, he spoke again. "How long are you planning to stay this time"

Edith threw her gaze out the window again and looked at the blue sea. "I'm just here for my mother's death anniversary. I'll head back to the city tomorrow after visiting my mom. I still have to work on Monday."

A sigh escaped her as she thought about going back to the city. At this time, she wished that she was on a longer break so that she would be able to spend a longer time in the small town.

However, Edith knew that she could not escape her job. Anyway, she loved her job as a kindergarten teacher. She had grown up looking after kids younger than her and had enjoyed interacting with children.

It was one of the reasons why she did not mind staying in the city and work.

"Come to my place before you head back," Aaron said. "My mom would love to see you."

"Alright." Edith nodded.

Even if he did not remind her to come over, she does have a plan to come over and visit Mrs. Li.

Edith Qian and Aaron Li have been friends they were kids. They went to the same primary school to high school together. Because her grandfather and Aaron's father were both in the police, they would often meet and spend time together.

Whenever her grandfather was busy with a case, he would often send her to stay at the Li's place. Aaron's mother runs a small B&B near the beach. Whenever the B&B was not too busy, she would often babysit other kids as well. Because Edith and Aaron were the same age, the two were very close.

She had spent most of her time with Li's family as she grew up. Mrs. Li had treated her and every child she babysat like her own child. It would not feel right if she did not go over and visited her.

The van cruised smoothly along the road beside the beach area.

Edith's expression grew bright as they moved passed the Li's B&B. She could still remember the beautiful beach spot just beside the B&B. Back then, she used to play there with the other kids a lot.

Aaron laughed when he glanced at her expression. "It's too hot to go to the beach now. Let's go later in the evening."

The van stopped when they arrived in front of a small house. Edith got off the vehicle, grabbed her backpack, and stopped at the door. A frown appeared on her face when she saw that the door was locked.

"Grandpa?" Edith knocked on the door a few times, but no one came to greet her.

That was strange. She had remember that she had texted her grandfather last night that she would be arriving in the town before lunch hour.

Her grandfather had replied a few minutes after. He wouldn't be on high sea where there was no reception, right?

Fortunately, Edith had remembered to bring the keys to the house, or else, she might have to stay out there until her grandfather came back.

At this time, Aaron walked over to her with a small suitcase in his hand. Seeing that her friend had helped her to carry her belongings, Edith quickly thanked him.

"Your grandfather should return in a while," Aaron said.

"Huh?" Edith looked at him in puzzled.

Aaron looked at her with his lopsided smile and continued, "He's probably hanging out at Old Chen's beef noodle stand with a few others. What do you think?"

Her eyes grew wide when she figured out why was her grandfather not at home to welcome her. "My Grandpa went fishing again this morning?"

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Hearing that her grandfather was hanging out at Old Chen's noodle place after he went fishing with a few of his friends, Edith placed her luggage in her room before she went out again.

She grabbed the keys hung on the wall and walked out the door.

"Where are you going?" Aaron stopped her.

"Of course I'm going to find my grandpa. Aaron, you should go back first. I'll come over to find you later," Edith said. Without waiting for his answer, she then hopped on the scooter. Fortunately, her grandfather has been using the scooter once in a while and therefore, it did not take her too long to start the engine.

Aaron Li crossed his arms on his chest and smiled as he watched the scooter disappeared from his eyesight.

He could guess at what will happen at Old Chen's noodle stall later and knew that it would be an exciting scene. He pondered whether he should go and join the fun. However, he then decided to head back to his mother's place and help her.

...

It did not take Edith a long time to arrive at the jetty area. It was the weekend. Usually, the area would be packed with the people from the city who came to enjoy Old Chen's beef noodle. However, it was still too early and therefore, there were only a few people around.

At this time, Old Chen was slicing some beef for the noodles as his two little assistants wiped the bowls and utensils at the side.

Edith parked her scooter at the side and immediately saw her grandfather along with his best buddy, George Bei. Their fishing rods were at their side and they were joking around with Old Chen.

George Bei was the first to notice her presence. He poked at his friend's waist and soon, her grandfather looked up with surprise on his face.

"Old Qian, you're in trouble," George Bei whispered to his friend.

Mike Qian's face changed slightly as his granddaughter approached. "Edith." He forced a smile. "Why are you here? You should stay at home and wait for me."

"Grandpa, you said you weren't going out to the sea to fish!"

"I said I was not going to stay longer on the sea to fish," Mike Qian explained. "I went out early in the morning and came back quickly. Didn't I promise that I will catch some fish for you?"

Edith Qian narrowed her eyes at her grandfather.

"Did Aaron came and pick you up from the bus station?" Mike Qian let out a dry cough when his granddaughter did not answer. "Edith, come here and sit down for a while. Did you have your breakfast yet?" He turned to Old Chen who was still slicing the beef and waved his hand. "Old Chen, make one bowl for my granddaughter. Remember to add in a lot of meat."

Old Chen nodded. He raised his head to look at Edith and smiled. "Edith. I haven't seen you in a while. Your grandfather said you were working in the city."

"Grandpa Chen," Edith turned to the old man and smiled amiably. When her gaze shifted to her grandfather again, the smile quickly disappeared.

"Edith, extra chilies in your bowl of noodle, as usual, right?" Old Chen spoke as he grabbed the bowl behind him. He watched the girl nodded and smiled. "Hey, my memory is still good."

Seeing that the old man had boiled a portion of noodle, Edith walked over to her grandfather and stared at him.

"Alright, don't get angry," Mike Qian tried to appease his granddaughter. "Didn't I come back? I promised you that we will be visiting your mother the next morning, right? Of course, I will not break my promise." He touched the tip of his nose when his granddaughter continued to ignore him. "How about this? I'll make lunch for you, alright? I caught some Sea bass. I'll steam them for you later. Or would you like it deep-fried?"

Edith did not reply to his grandfather and instead turned to his best buddy, George Bei. "Grandpa George, tell me, did my grandfather caught this fish?"

George Bei laughed at her question. Meanwhile, Mike Qian's face turned a few shades darker.

"You don't have to worry," George Bei said. "This time, your grandpa was the one who caught this fish."

"Old Bei, what do you mean 'this time'," Mike Qian turned to his friend and frowned. "Speak properly."

It was an open secret that Mike Qian often went to the sea, but usually, he would not come back with any fish. Whenever his granddaughter was around, he would buy some fish from other fishermen and claimed it as his hard work. However, no one was supposed to mention this.

George Bei smiled and decided not to say anything. He pulled out a stool and patted at it, signaling Edith to sit down.

Seeing that his granddaughter had sat down, Mike Qian knew that his granddaughter was no longer angry at him. He took out the utensils and placed it in front of her.

Soon, the Old Chen came over with a piping hot beef noodle soup. The broth was clear and there were a few more slices of beef on top as well as some chilies, just the way she liked it.

Tempted by the look and smell of the noodle, Edith tasted the broth and eat the noodle.

Old Chen's noodle was always springy. The broth was tasty, refreshing and full of flavor. No matter how many beef noodle she had tried, Edith thought that Old Chen's beef noodle was always the best she had ever tasted.

Once his granddaughter started to eat, Mike Qian finally heaved with relief. Anyway, he always knew that his granddaughter wouldn't really be angry at him. As long as he can coax her with food, everything should be fine, right?

As Edith continued to eat her noodle, a luxury car stopped at the side.

By now, the local was familiar with this scene. During the weekend, Old Chen's noodle stall would be packed with people from the city. But mostly, they would start to come over in the afternoon.

Just as Edith was about to take another sip at the broth, a cheery voice greeted her.

"Yi? Teacher Qian?"

When she looked up, her student, Hazel Mo stood at the entrance with her uncle.

The soup suddenly caught in her throat. The chili pepper then started to burn her throat and Edith was coughing. Fortunately, her grandfather brought a glass of water for her. She emptied the glass and looked at the uncle and niece in front of her.

"Hazel," Edith patted at her chest to calm down. "Why are you here?"

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Mike Qian shifted his gaze between his granddaughter and the newcomers. Seeing how his granddaughter had such a big reaction upon seeing the little girl, he was suddenly curious about them.

At this time, Edith Qian was staring at the two in a daze.

Mike Qian nudged at his granddaughter's side and raised a brow, silently asking her if she knew the two strangers before them.

"We came here to buy some noodle," Hazel answered as she glanced at her uncle.

A moment ago, her uncle had told her that he was going to stop by at the noodle stall and buy some for her grandparents. It was the first time for her to come over the noodle stall and was curious about the place.

As she looked around, Hazel Mo was surprised when she saw that her teacher was eating noodles with a few grandfathers. She could not help but call out her teacher. But who would have thought that her teacher would be surprised and had almost choked on her noodle?

Edith swallowed as she looked at the two people in front of her. Her gaze shifted to the tall man and suddenly, Edith did not know how to act before them.

Since she was back in the countryside, Edith had long let go of herself and forgotten her gentle way when she was interacting with her kindergarten students.

Just now... both President Mo and Hazel probably had seen the way she was eating her noodles. She had her right legs propped on her left and she knew that she was slurping loudly.

Edith was worried if she had ruined her image. At this time, she was embarrassed that she wanted to bury herself in the ground.

"Teacher Qian, you came here to eat noodles too?" Hazel asked when she saw that her teacher was staring back at her in a daze.

"Teacher Qian?" George Bei repeated. He glanced at the grandfather and granddaughter pair beside him and smiled at the little girl. "Little girl, who did you call Teacher Qian?"

"Grandpa George. This is my student," Edith said in a low voice.

"Your student?" George Bei frowned. "You mean, from the city?"

"Hmm," Edith nodded.

"It turns out that you are my granddaughter's student," Mike Qian had a bright smile on his face. "Hello. Little girl, what is your name?"

"Hello grandpa," Hazel greeted. "My name is Hazel Mo."

"Oh, she's very well behaved," Mike Qian nodded. He lifted his gaze to the tall man beside the girl and smiled. "You must be the father." His smile froze when he suddenly felt his granddaughter tugging at his shirt. He gave a questioning look at her and saw that his granddaughter shook her head at him.

"Grandpa, you're wrong," Hazel spoke. "This is my uncle."

"Hello," Neil took the initiative to greet the elderly. Then he turned to Edith and smiled. "It turns out that Teacher Qian is from Z Town. Hazel's grandparents stayed in the west part of the town. We came to visit them."

It was then that Edith seemed to remember that she had heard that Chairman Mo was staying in the countryside due to his health problem. If her guess was right, then, Chairman Mo and his wife should be staying in the west part of the town. There were a few luxury private residences in the area and during the weekend, some rich families would come over to stay there.

In fact, her friend, Lily Zhao had a residence in the area as well. It was at this town that she had run into this friend and they became closer.

"How is Chairman Mo's condition?" Edith asked.

"He's recuperating well," Neil said. "It seemed that this town's environment is good for him."

Mike Qian frowned when he noticed that his granddaughter's polite attitude. Earlier, when she came to find him, his granddaughter still had her gangster attitude. It still gave him a shiver whenever he recalled the way his granddaughter had appeared earlier. She was too fierce!

"Young man, here's your noodles," Old Chen spoke as he put the bag on the table. "Since you're very familiar with Edith, I added in a few more slices of meat."

Neil looked at the old man and smiled. "Thank you." He then turned to his niece and stretched his hand. "Hazel, let's go. Grandma is waiting for you."

The little girl nodded. She put her hand in her uncle's and paused. "Teacher Qian, my grandma promised me to take me to the beach. Later, you can come over and play together with me."

Edith bent down to look at her student. "Hazel, you like to play at the beach?"

"En." Hazel nodded. The smile on her face widened.

"The beach on the west side of this town isn't as safe and beautiful as the one on the east side. Well, if you like it, I can take you to a good spot." Edith paused when he saw that the girl was looking at her uncle. She followed Hazel's gaze and saw that Neil Mo was looking at her. Seeing the man's gaze on her, Edith pushed a few strands of hair behind her ear and flashed him an awkward smile.

She had momentarily forgotten that Hazel still need her guardian's permission to come out and play!

Neil was about to say something when he felt Hazel gripping at his hand. He turned to his niece and the words he wanted to say suddenly disappeared.

He came to Z Town because his parents were missing their granddaughter. Other than staying at the mansion, Neil did not have any plan to go anywhere.

However, seeing the expectant look on the little girl's face, Neil did not have the heart to reject her teacher's invitation. It was not every day that Hazel would have this look on her face.

Neil was always worried that Hazel was forced to grow up too fast after she had lost her parents. But at this time, Hazel had that rare expression that made him remember that she was still a five years old kid.

"Do you want to go?" Neil asked his niece.

Hazel's eyes sparkled. She nodded vigorously and stopped herself. "Can I?"

Neil looked at Edith and spoke, "Well, if your teacher's offer still stands, then sure."

Edith looked at the uncle and niece back and forth before she finally stopped at Hazel. "If you want to go, then I will wait for you here later." She turned to Neil and continued. "How about around five? The weather isn't too hot."

"Alright.." Neil agreed.

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Once the luxury car left the area, Edith slumped into her seat. Then, her brain replayed the situation just now and she started to think of how she might have looked like in front of student Hazel.

Because she was teaching at an elite kindergarten, Edith Qian had learned her etiquette and had always done her best to act politely in front of the children. After a while, she was used to integrating this well-mannered attitude into her daily life.

It was only when she returned to this small town and met the townspeople that her carefree attitude would come out.

However, just now, Hazel might have seen the way she was eating her noodle without care. What if the little girl would copy her way and the school found out that she was giving a bad example to the kids? Will she get fired over this?

What if President Mo thought that she was too unruly? Would he report it to the kindergarten and have her replaced? She did not want to lose this job!

"What's wrong with you?" Mike Qian asked when he saw the strange way his granddaughter was reacting.

Edith turned to her grandfather with a complicated look on her face. In the end, she was unable to say anything.

"That young girl was really your student?" Mike Qian inquired.

"Hmm," Edith nodded.

Mike Qian let out a long breath. "Looking at the little girl reminded me of you. Before your mother passed away, you used to be that cute."

Edith narrowed her eyes as she looked at her grandfather. As the memory of her mother came to her mind, her gaze began to soften again. Though it has been years and those memories were starting to grow fuzzy, Edith found that she was missing her late mother.

It was not long ago that Hazel lost both her parents at the same time. At this time, Edith was worried about the little girl.

"Grandpa, did you heard about the accident in L City months ago? The Vice President of MH Group and his wife met in an accident and died."

Mike Qian found that it was strange for his granddaughter to suddenly change the subject. "Un. I heard."

The couple's accident had become a hot topic. Especially after there were rumors that the couple's accident might not be an accident. Whenever Mike met up with those guys from the police force, he would often hear them discussing this matter.

"That student, Hazel is the daughter of the couple," Edith spoke. She lowered her gaze and stared absentmindedly at her unfinished bowl of noodles. "For five years old who suddenly lost both her parents like that... I wonder how must that make her feel."

Mike Qian was surprised. He shifted his gaze to where the luxurious vehicle was parked before. His mind reeled back towards how his granddaughter had acted after her mother passed away.

His granddaughter grew up with only her mother and the were very close. When her mother passed away, Edith was at loss. She would not cry in front of him, but Edith would create a problem for him almost every day.

She ran away from home a few times and was involved in a fight with other students. Back then, Mike Qian would receive a call from the headmaster, telling him to come over to the school to discuss his granddaughter's problematic act almost every week.

Raising Edith was hard, but he was glad that this girl turned out alright.

"As long as she had someone to look after her, that little girl would be fine," Mike Qian whispered. He turned to his granddaughter and patted at her shoulder. "Just treat that student of yours gentler next time."

...

The grandfather and granddaughter returned to their house after a while. Edith stared at the locked door and was suddenly reminded that she had left her friend, Aaron just like that.

After making a mental note to thank him later, Edith went to her room to clean up. Knowing that she was going to return home that week, her grandfather had cleaned up the room a little bit and changed the sheets.

The room was exactly like how she had left it.

"What do you want to eat for dinner?" Mike Qian asked as he appeared behind his granddaughter. "Is steamed fish alright with you?"

Edith let out a long sigh as she was suddenly reminded of her grandfather's obsession with fishing after he was retired from the police force. Even Grandpa Bei was pulled along to join this new hobby.

Although she was glad that her grandfather found something he liked to do, she was worried whenever she heard that her grandfather would leave for the sea for weeks.

If something happened to her grandfather, then she would have no one else.

Seeing that she did not reply, Mike thought that his granddaughter was not in the mood to eat steamed Sea Bass. "Alright. I'll deep-fry it in sweet and sour sauce. You're fine with that, right?"

Another long sigh escaped her. "Fine. As long as you stay and have a meal together with me later instead of running around to go fishing."

Mike clicked at his tongue. "What kind of person do you think I am? I still have common sense."

His granddaughter had returned home and it was his daughter's anniversary tomorrow. Of course, he was not going to head over to the sea with his friends.

"Alright, you should go and take a rest," Mike said. "You just got back and you must be tired. Later, didn't you promise to meet the little girl and take her to the beach?"

Edith was suddenly reminded of her promise with Hazel and was nervous at meeting the cold president again.

...

Back in the luxurious villa in the west part of the town...

Hazel Mo has been sticking to her grandmother's side as soon as they arrived at the villa. It has been a few months since Sophie Huang had spent time with her granddaughter and now that the little girl was at her side, Sophie had refused to be apart from her.

It was only after Hazel was too tired and had to take her nap that Sophie left the little girl's side.

Neil watched as his mother closed the door softly and walked over to him.

"Hazel told me that she was going to the beach with her teacher later on," Sophie said to her son.

"Hmm," Neil nodded. "We ran into her kindergarten teacher at the noodle stall earlier and she invited her to play together."

"Hazel's kindergarten teacher?" A person appeared in her mind. "Teacher Qian?"

"Mom, you know her?"

Sophie nodded. "We met previously when I went over to Hazel's kindergarten the last time. You have been with Hazel and had went to her kindergarten for a few times... What do you think about that teacher?"

"It seemed like Hazel really liked her teacher," Neil said as he recalled his niece's expression whenever she talked about this teacher.

"That teacher had almost the same experience as Hazel," Sophie let out a sigh before she told her son about what the teacher had shared with her previously.. "I think it's a good thing that Hazel was close to her."

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Grandpa Chen's noodle stall had already closed when Edith arrived in the evening. The tables and chairs have been arranged neatly at the side, and everything was sparkly clean.

Edith Qian saw the familiar Audi SUV parked at the side of the road and stared at the uncle and niece who stood under the tree with a dazed expression.

At this time, the President of MH Group dressed in a khakis short and dark blue shirt, while Hazel was dressed in a bareback bohemian blue and white striped dress. The uncle and niece's outfit matched and the two of them looked so good just standing there.

Looking at how casual, yet fashionable they were, Edith thought that the two were going photo shooting by the beach.

At this time, she was very tempted to pull out her phone and snapped a few pictures of them. If only she was not afraid of getting caught by this serious looking man.

Edith checked on her wristwatch and saw that there were still five minutes before their appointment. She parked the scooter near the SUV and greeted both of them.

"Hazel was excited knowing that you were going to take her to the beach and insisted to come earlier," Neil Mo explained.

"Oh," Edith nodded absentmindedly. She shifted her gaze from the man and turned to the little girl who only reached around her waist area and bent down to Hazel's height. "Hazel you look pretty."

The little girl beamed at upon hearing her teacher's praise. A smile curved on her lips and she thanked Edith timidly. "Grandma prepared this dress for me when she heard that I'm coming over to visit her."

"Your grandmother had excellent eyes," Edith said as she patted at the girl's hair. She looked at the clothes she was wearing and wonder if she should go home and change.

She was only dressed in short denim and baby pink T-Shirt, and standing beside the uncle and niece gave her the feeling as if she was not dressed enough to play at the beach.

"Let's go," Neil spoke after a brief silence between them.

Edith stared back at the handsome man and her mind had suddenly gone blank. It seemed as if her CPU was overload and it was going to take her some time to process his words.

"You said you were going to take Hazel to a good spot to play," Neil reminded her. A thought crossed his mind and he narrowed his eyes slightly. "You didn't think that I will leave Hazel to you just like that, right?"

"No. Of course not." Edith shook her head quickly.

The cold expression on his face disappeared at her answer. "I am not that irresponsible," he explained.

"Of course," Edith nodded. "I know."

Neil Mo has guessed rightly.

Edith had thought that the man was going to leave little Hazel to her care for a few hours. She was planning to play around with Hazel and return the girl to her family just before the sky turned dark.

It seemed that she was used to it. Her friend, Lily Zhao would leave her son, Alex He into her care, and subconsciously, Edith had thought that this man was going to do the same.

Anyway, she did not think that the President of MH Group would want to spend his time playing around at the beach.

Wasn't he's a busy man? Shouldn't he be busy doing a lot of work? Why did he want to come along and play at the beach?

She knew that as the President of MH Group Neil Mo was always busy. Or else, he would not come late to pick up Hazel at the kindergarten almost every day.

Edith forced a smile and shifted her gaze back to Hazel. "Let's go." She extended her hand to Hazel and the little girl put her hands in hers.

Just as Edith was heading to her scooter, something came to her mind. She stopped abruptly and turned to the tall man behind her. "How about you drive and I rode my scooter and lead you into the location? Though it was not very far from here, Hazel would easily get tired if she walked over there."

Hazel's eyes brightened upon hearing her name. "Teacher Qian, I don't mind walking."

"I don't want you to get too tired," Edith spoke to the little girl. "Or else, you wouldn't have so much fun when you arrived."

Neil was momentarily startled as the two girls turned their heads simultaneously to look at him to wait for his answer. "Teacher Qian, you should get in the car."

"No," Edith waved her hand to decline. "That's alright. It would be more convenient if I rode my scooter."

Neil Mo stared at the woman in front of him for a few seconds longer and frowned. It was rare for anyone to decline his offer. "You should go with us," he spoke again. "Hazel seemed to like your company. She would be happy if you are with her."

Edith shifted her gaze to Hazel and saw the way the little girl was staring back at her with a pleading gaze. Suddenly, Edith found herself that she was unable to say a word.

"Don't worry. I will send you back here afterward," Neil said. "You can get your scooter and head back home."

"Oh," Edith nodded. Her hand subconsciously tightened at the hem of her T-Shirt. The thought of spending her time in the vehicle with this cold man was making her nervous.

Edith followed the little girl to the Audi SUV and froze when Neil opened the back passenger door. She helped the little girl into the car and helped her into her car seat.

Once everything was settled, Neil Mo shut the door and slid into the driver's seat. He put on his seat belt and looked at the kindergarten teacher through the rear mirror. "Teacher Qian, I have to trouble you to show the way."

"Oh," Edith nodded. She leaned forward and showed the way to the spot where most the locals would play go.

After five minutes of driving, a frown appeared on Neil Mo's face. He was sure that Hazel's teacher had mentioned that it would be possible for them to reach the location on foot, but looking at the distance, Neil did not think that it was suitable for anyone to walk over to the location.

"Is it farther?" Neil asked.

"Almost there," Edith said. Her gaze met with Neil's via the rear mirror and she quickly shifted her gaze to the road. "There were a few beautiful beach spots in this town. Since you choose to drive, of course, I have to show both you and Hazel to the prettiest spot." She lifted her gaze again and saw that he was no longer looking at her. "Don't worry, President Mo.. I'm not going to take you and Hazel to some shady place."