

## Midnight III 271

### Chapter 1753 - 271: Who Did This?

Eric straightened his collar and came down the stairs. He had also drunk a lot, but he had not lost control or blacked out. Thus, he did not have a hangover.

As he reached the landing, he saw the servants gathered around the couch in the living room, and his brow furrowed. What is this?- he wondered.

A moment passed, and then he heard Paul's voice. Almost immediately, the servants turned around and began to clear out - and he was able to see what all the fuss was about. "Oh, my God?" Eric chuckled. "What happened to you?"

"I had a hangover," Paul replied. "And it is all your fault. Can you get me a couple of Advil and a large glass of ice water? My head is killing me!"

Eric told one of the servants to get the water and medicine, and then he slowly approached his friend. "You were pretty drunk last night," he said. "I am surprised that you had the energy to do anything other than pass out."

"What are you talking about?" Paul threw a sofa pillow at Eric and said, "Speak plainly, man!"

"Well..." Eric rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"I doubt Nancy took you back, so you must have fooled around with one of the servants."

Paul frowned. "Is that how little you think of me?" he asked. "I would never be desperate enough that I would fuck around with the staff."

"Not even if you were blackout drunk?" Eric smirked and said, "You should really watch how much you drink. Just look at yourself. I think that you might have a problem!"

Paul looked down, and his face turned white when he saw what Eric had alluded to. "Who did this?" he gasped. Then the color returned to his face, and he said, "Never mind. I. will check the security cameras."

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Paul's face turned angry as he watched the security footage. "How dare she?" he muttered. First, Nancy had stomped on his face. Then she had cut his clothes and exposed his genitals. "This is unforgivable...."

He watched in dismay as the servants hovered over him. One of them leaned over and poked at his shriveled-up manhood with a pen. She flinched when it twitched, and she stepped away in disgust.

Eric laughed so hard that he dropped the cup that was in his hand. He had never laughed so hard in his life. "This is what happens when you let a woman run wild," he said. "Don't say I didn't warn you!"

"That damned woman!" roared Paul. "Where the fuck is she?!?!"

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Nancy was squatting in the flower bed in the castle's backyard, gazing off into the distance. She did not know what had become of Clark since she had last seen him, and she missed him very much.

Suddenly, a branch broke behind her, and a flock of birds took flight. It's Paul - she realized. And somehow, she knew that he had figured out that she had been the one that had disrupted his sleep.

"Nancy." The footsteps stopped behind her, and Paul said, "Don't move!"

Nancy did as she was told. She was not a fool. She knew that if she ran, he would catch her. "Are you here to try to hurt me?" she asked casually. In the past, she had obediently let him hit her, but those days were over.

Paul inched closer to her, and with the sun behind him, his shadow fell over her like a foul blanket. He is like a demon - she thought. "What now?" she asked.

"You know what you've done to me," Paul replied. "And turnabout is only fair play. I will do to you what you did to me, plus interest." He smirked wickedly and said, "I'm going to strip you naked and offer you to a group of horny men."

"Don't be ridiculous." Nancy's face turned pale. "I don't know what you're talking about! I didn't do anything!"

"Didn't do anything? Paul scoffed. "How dare you lie to me like that? Don't you know that this castle is rigged with security cameras? I saw everything that you did to me, so there is no point denying it."

Paul reached out to grab Nancy, but she was prepared for this. When she came out to the garden, she had brought the hose with her. Until now, she had kept it hidden in her lap. Now that he was about to attack her, she spun around, pointed the hose at him, and blasted him in the face with ice-cold water. And such was the force of the hose that it blinded him and sent him reeling.

Finally, Paul was able to get out of the way of the hose, and Nancy turned it off. "Shall we parley?" he asked.

"Fuck that!" Nancy shouted. "Get away from me!" She shook the hose menacingly. "And unless you want more of this, you had better leave me alone from now on."

"Nancy!" Paul roared. "Stop it, you stupid woman!"

"You asked for it!" After getting to her feet, Nancy turned the water back on, and she began to force him to retreat. Bit by bit, he inched away from her until he reached the drop that marked the end of the property. He lost his footing, fell into the river, and was swept away by the current.

Paul tried to swim upstream, but it was no use. The current was too strong, and it took him over a short waterfall. There, the water settled, and he was able to pull his waterlogged body to the shore.

Once Paul had regained his wits, he stood up and began to climb up the side of the waterfall. When Nancy saw this, she grabbed a bamboo stick and started jabbing him with it, and after only hitting him a few times, he fell back into the water. Then as he struggled to his feet, she laughed hysterically. "What's the matter?" she asked. "A little water never hurts anybody!"

Paul shook his fist in the air. "I will kill you for this!" he shouted. He began to climb the cliff again, but when Nancy went to shove him back down again, her face lost all its color.

Paul had mysteriously disappeared. He was hiding under a layer of lotus leaves, but she could see neither his hide nor hair.

Nancy stared gloomily into the lake with the bamboo pole in one hand and the water hose in the other. "He has to be here somewhere," she muttered.

Suddenly, she felt a tug on the other end of the bamboo pole. She stumbled forward, and if she had not had the water hose, she would have gone over the cliff. She felt another tug on the pole, and this time she let go of it. It was either that or went over. But now Paul had the weapon, and she was vulnerable.

Paul brought the pole down on Nancy's shoulder, and she collapsed.

Paul hauled himself over the edge. He stood over Nancy and basked in the glory of his success. He spat on Nancy and laughed. "Are you ready to meet your maker?"

Without lifting her head, Nancy said, "You're forgetting something." Then she rolled over, and just as she was about to shoot him in the face with a blast of ice-cold water, she saw something moving among the lotus leaves. It was a crocodile.

When Paul saw the Terror in Nancy's eyes, he jabbed her in the side with the pole and demanded to know what the problem was. "It's a c-c-c-crocodile..." Nancy stammered.

"Is that all?" Paul laughed. He did not believe her.. "You should be more worried about what I am going to do to you. Compared to me, a crocodile is nothing!"

#### **Chapter 1754 - 272: Don't You Dare Run**

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Paul hit Nancy's hand with the bamboo pole, forcing her to let go of the hose. She was all that he was thinking about, so it caught him off guard when the crocodile bit his bottom.

Nancy could not help but laugh. She had warned him, but did he listen? Of course not. She thought - Men are single-mindedly stupid!

Paul cried out in pain, and as the reptilian beast increased its grip on his heinie, the bamboo pole fell to the ground. Had he not had previous experience with crocodiles, this might have been the end of him.

Paul fell backward, and as his weight fell on the beast, it was forced to let him go. Then, when it attacked again, he was ready for it. Paul reached out, grabbed it by the mouth, and pulled it open as far as he could.

Eventually, the skin began to tear where the crocodile's upper and lower jaw met, and there was a loud cracking sound as its articular bone snapped. Blood and bits of bone gushed out of its mouth as it made its retreat into the wetlands.

Nancy could not believe what she had seen. Now that she had seen what Paul was capable of, she was more afraid than ever. A voice in her mind shouted, "Run!" And so, she ran.

"Don't you dare run!" Paul shouted. He prepared to give chase, but as he took his first step, he felt a twinge of pain course down his leg. It was intense, and he could not ignore it.

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When Crystal came down for breakfast, the servants excitedly told her about everything that had happened that morning.

Unfortunately, they did not know what had happened after Paul went outside to find Nancy, so she sent one of her bodyguards to the kennel. "Bring me my dog," she ordered.

Once she had her pet, she took it out into the backyard. And as she stepped off the porch, Nancy came running towards her from the grassy patch of land beyond the garden.

"Crystal!" Nancy shouted.

Crystal met her halfway and asked her if she was alright. Nancy was out of breath and panting, and all she could do was nod. Then, when she was finally able to speak, she asked about the dog.

"He's my guard dog," Crystal explained. "Eric bought him for me."

Momentarily, Paul appeared on the horizon. He was coming from the same direction that Nancy had come from. He was moving slowly, though, and Crystal could see that he had been injured. And that he was angry. "There is nothing more dangerous than a wounded animal," she muttered.

Nancy gave her a curious look. "Come again?"

"It's just something my Dad used to say. Ancient wisdom or something..." Crystal passed the dog's leash to Nancy and said, "Here. I think you will need him more than I will, at least until things settle down."

Nancy accepted the leash with a trembling hand. "Is he safe?" she asked nervously.

"For you and me, it is." Crystal chuckled. "But God help anyone who tries to hurt us. And because he is a male, he will be extra loyal." "What does an animal's sex have to do with anything?" She sounded skeptical.

"Dogs appreciate beauty as much as humans do," Crystal explained. "Didn't you know that?"

Nancy shook her head, and her cheeks turned pink. "I didn't..."

"I specifically asked Eric to choose a nice male dog for me." Crystal smiled. "Did you know that dogs have an eye for beauty?"

"Do they?"

"Yes." Crystal smiled and continued: "Dogs will tease beggars, but they will stop and do tricks for beautiful women like us,"

The dog wagged its tail merrily as if it understood what they were saying and was excited to have the opportunity to prove Crystal's words true.

"She's pretty great." Nancy ran her hands through the dog's hair and asked what his name was.

Crystal's eyebrows wriggled mischievously, and she said, "I call him Wolf. I gave him that name because he is part wolf. He will help you with your 'Paul Problem.'"

"How is that?" Nancy asked. It seemed rather far-fetched to her. "I just watched him tear apart a crocodile. I doubt he is afraid of dogs."

Crystal laughed when she heard that. "That has nothing to do with it," she said. "Paul is allergic to dog hair."

"But how do you know that?" Nancy was stunned.

"Eric told me."

While they were talking, they had been casually watching Paul's approach. Now that he was within spitting distance, Wolf began to bark at him.

Paul cursed under his breath. Then he glared at Nancy and said, "If you obediently accept what is coming to you, I will go easy on you."

"Fuck off!" shouted Nancy. Beside her, Wolf's volume increased tenfold. "I don't owe you anything, and I'm done submitting to your will!"

"You bitch!" Paul roared. "I'll teach you!" Suddenly, Wolf lunged at Paul, and if it were not for his leash, he might have torn the man's throat out.

Paul was not afraid of the dog in a traditional sense. He was afraid of how his body would respond to Wolf's hair. His allergies were bad, and he had lost his EpiPen in the water. Should he be attacked, his face would swell up, his throat would constrict, and his body would break out in small red sores. Without his EpiPen, he could die.

"Who said that you could have a dog on the premises?" he shouted.

"It was Eric," Crystal replied.

Paul watched in horror as Nancy hugged the dog. Now, she was as much a hazard to his health as the dog was. How does she know that I am allergic? - he wondered. It was one of his only weaknesses, and he kept it a secret. He lifted his eyes to meet hers and said, "You will regret this." And then he walked away.

Once he was out of sight, Nancy turned to Crystal and said, "I want to leave this place..."

"Where do you want to go?" Crystal asked, "Where could we go? This whole island is under Paul's control, and he won't let us leave."

"I know." Nancy sighed sadly and said, "I should be in Seattle, though. I can't imagine what my father is thinking. He probably thinks that I deserted him..."

Crystal hugged her friend, and as they pulled apart, she said, "You don't need to worry about that. I called the hospital this morning, and they said that your father is still in a coma."

"That's even worse," Nancy cried. "Now, I don't even know if he will live or if he will die!"

"There, there.." Crystal patted her back and said, "I will figure something out. Don't I always?"

## **Chapter 1755 - 273: He Wouldn't Care**

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When Crystal told Nancy her idea, her eyes widened, and she shook her head. "No," she said, "I cannot involve Noah in this matter. I do not want to involve anyone else in this unless we must."

"Fine." Crystal sighed and said, "We will only use Noah as a last resort. Anyway, we also have Nathan, and if I can get word to Vic, we might find that we have more options than we realized; if he will help, that is."

"It shouldn't be a problem." Nancy giggled, and her cheeks turned red. "I can tell that he has a crush on you. If you play along with it for a few days, he is sure to go along with whatever you say. As for your father, with a little bit of help, we shouldn't have any problems having him transferred to Kuerto. After all, you are his next of kin."

Suddenly, a servant came running down the hallway. When she saw them, she stopped, and without taking a moment to catch her breath, she said, "Miss Smith, there you are. I have found you at last. Nathan is still refusing to eat. Will you come and talk to him?"

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Eric had already watched the video of Crystal bathing Nathan, so it came as no surprise to him that she had returned to his bedroom. He could not understand why Crystal was visiting Nathan. She had begged him to rescue her from his clutches. But now she seems more interested in him than she is in me - Eric thought, and it infuriated him to the point where he wanted to kill his rival.

He looked down at the vial of dr\*gs in his hands and thought - Tonight, winner takes all! With one fell swoop, he planned to take possession of Crystal and have his revenge on Nathan.

Crystal sat on the sofa in Nathan's room, and she was flipping through her book. She did not need to look up to feel the heat of his eyes on her. She sighed deeply, her heart fluttered, and she cursed her traitorous body. He had treated her badly, and she knew that he was in bad shape. Nevertheless, she was drawn to him. Finally, she closed the book. "Have you had enough?" she asked him.

He took a bite and chewed, and it took him a few minutes to swallow. It was just porridge, so she suspected he was stalling. "I could never get enough of you," he replied.

"How long are you going to be eating that bowl of porridge?" Crystal asked impatiently.

"I am an injured man," Nathan whined. "I am going as fast as I can."

Crystal doubted that was true. "Eat faster!" she hissed. "And quit staring at me."

Nathan smiled, and he continued to stare at her as he slowly ate.

"What the Hell are you looking at?" Crystal yelled.

"You," Nathan replied. "How did you sleep last night?"

"I slept fine," Crystal replied. "What do you care about?"

"Didn't you enjoy your husband's caresses last night?" Nathan asked.

Crystal scowled. "You are so annoying." What she wanted to do was drop the book on Nathan's head.

"And unless we torture you, what we do in bed is none of your business!"

Crystal could not find the words to describe Nathan's childish, possessive behavior. "I am someone else's wife now," she continued. "Why can't you get that through your thick skull?"

"It must be on account of how thick my skull is," Nathan replied in a tone that was intended to make a joke of her and her question. "Now, where is my puppet?"

"I'm working on it," Crystal replied. "Don't rush me."

"Fine, then." Nathan patted the edge of the bed and asked her to sit with him. "I have something that I want to give you. It's a reward for taking such good care of me."

Crystal was immediately suspicious. As far as she knew, he had no possessions. "Give it to a servant and let them bring it to me," she insisted.

"Do you have to be so defensive?" Nathan smiled and said, "In my weakened state, you have nothing to fear from me."

Crystal remained hesitant, and her distrust showed on her face.

"Come on," he urged her on. "What are you waiting for?"

Crystal put down her book and walked slowly over to him. Then, when she reached him, he took her by the arm and pulled her into his embrace. He tried to kiss her, but she pulled away just in time to stop him.

"Nathan, what are you doing?" she gasped as she realized that he had been playing possum all along. He was nowhere near as weak as he had made himself out to be.

"That's your reward," he replied. "Do you like it?"

"I don't care for your stupid reward," Crystal replied angrily. "And you damn well knew that I wouldn't, so knock it off and let me go."

"You're lying." Nathan tightened his grip on her and said, "You do want me."

"You may not believe it now, but you will once you're watching me fuck his brains out right in front of you!"

Crystal's words stung him, and when she pulled away, this time, he was unable to stop her. "You c-can't d-do that," he muttered. "It's inhumane..."

"Whatever. Tell it to the pigs. Maybe they will care!" She grabbed his mostly empty bowl of porridge, and as she headed for the open door, she said, "Have a good rest."

Nathan shouted for her to come back, but she paid him no mind.

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Wolf fell in love with Nancy almost immediately, and he was happy to wait with her in the kitchen while Crystal took a bath. She had just finished feeding him, and now she was sitting beside him stroking his fur.

Suddenly, a servant walked in. She looked at Nancy and said, "Just an F.Y.I.: Paul has returned, so you may want to be on guard."

Nancy scratched behind Wolf's ears. "I'm not worried," she replied. "I have Wolf." As if to prove her point, Wolf barked twice and scampered into the living room. He was only gone for a second, though, when the sound of a gunshot echoed through the castle.

No! No! No! No! No! - thought Nancy - He wouldn't dare... Or would he...?

Wolf was whimpering when he stumbled back into the kitchen, and his fur was matted with blood. A moment later, Paul appeared, and he had a shotgun in his hand.

Nancy jumped to her feet and stepped between Paul and Wolf with her arms crossed beneath her breasts. "You are a brute!" she hissed. "Only an unloving monster would think about hurting an animal!"

"Unloving?" Paul scoffed. "You need to take a look in the mirror. You are the only one in the room that would hurt a pregnant woman?"

"Michelle set me up," Nancy shouted. "And if you were thinking with your brain instead of your p\*\*\*s, you would see that."

Paul smirked. "You tried to feed me to a crocodile!"

"I warned you about the crocodile," Crystal reminded him. "It's not my fault that you were too stupid to heed my warning."

Paul was getting angrier by the minute. He looked at his rifle and then at Nancy. "You deserve to die for the things that you've done," he shouted, and there was murder in his eyes.

Suddenly, Wolf appeared at Nancy's side, and he began to bark frantically.

Paul smiled as he nudged the dog with the barrel of the gun. Before he could pull the trigger, though, Nancy grabbed the barrel and pulled it up so that it was pointing at her chest. She said, "You can shoot him, but you'll have to shoot me first."

Paul nodded and said, "So be it."

**Chapter 1756 - 274: The Precious Wine**



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Paul's heart began to beat fast as he prepared to shoot his ex-wife. A slight sheen of sweat appeared on his forehead, and as his hand began to tremble, his confidence faded. He did not know if he could shoot her. His life would be so much easier if he did, though.

He could go back to his normal life, marry Michelle, and have the children that he had always wished he had. But he could also imagine Nancy's life spilling out through a hole in her chest in front of him, and that disturbed him.

He had wanted to teach her a lesson.

It had never been his intention to kill her, but she had boxed him into a corner, and he did not know how to back out of it without losing face.

"Are you going to shoot me or not?" Nancy mocked him.

"Not," Paul muttered in defeat as he lowered the rifle. "I will get that dog, though. You just wait and see- and then I will eat him!"

"Hell no!"

"No?" He raised an eyebrow. "If you want to keep him alive, you'll have to beg for my forgiveness. Then I want you to start thinking about how you are going to make it up to me."

"Why should I apologize?" Nancy scowled and said, "I didn't do anything wrong."

"You ungrateful woman!" Paul roared. "No more games!"

"Whatever." Nancy turned her back on Paul, and then she shouted at a servant to call for a doctor. Wolf had been lucky-the bullet had barely grazed him - but his wound still needed to be treated. Otherwise, it might get infected.

Nancy knelt beside her dog. She ran her fingers through his hair and said, "Don't be afraid, Wolf, I am here. I will always be with you."

Paul frowned as he watched Nancy. He was reminded of a time when she had cared for an injured bird. She was a genuinely kind person, and that infuriated him because he knew that she thought she was better than him. He wondered - Why is she so kind to the dog but so cruel to Michelle and me? "Listen," he hissed. "If you don't want me to eat the dog, then you had better make me something to eat!"

Nancy turned and glared at Paul. She wanted to kill him. And then I would be the one eating you- she thought angrily.

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Once the doctor was finished patching up Wolf, Nancy started preparing lunch for herself and Paul. If serving him a meal would pacify him, she was willing to do that.

As she was cooking, the servants set the table. They helped her bring out the food, and when everything was ready, Nancy called everyone: "Lunch Time! Get it while it's hot!" Paul sat down first, and Crystal shot him a look of complete disgust. By now, Nancy had told her everything that had happened that

morning, and to say that she was unimpressed would have been the understatement of the year. She scowled and nearly chastised him herself when he served himself a double portion of every dish on the table. Now, everyone would leave slightly hungry.

Paul noticed the look she was giving him, and he said, "If you want me to leave that mutt of yours alone, you need to tow the line. And quit it with the evil eye. You're going to ruin my appetite!"

As if on cue, Wolf appeared, and he began to go from person to person begging for food. Nancy was going to give him a bit of boiled egg, but Paul shouted at her to stop. "Do not feed that beast from the table!" he roared. "Animals do not belong at the table!"

Then what are you doing at the table? - Crystal thought. She giggled, but she knew better than to share her thoughts with the group.

Nancy stared at her friend nervously. It was impossible to predict what might trigger Paul. "How's the food?" she asked. "Do you like it?"

"It's good," Crystal replied. "It's a shame that someone took twice their share. Now there is not enough to go around...I suppose he could use some bulking up, though..."

Suddenly the room went quiet. Nobody could believe that she had the audacity to say such a thing.

"What is that supposed to mean?" Paul grumbled. "I am just as big as Eric. Am I not?" Crystal laughed. "If you say so, Boss..."

Eric responded with a smile. "Shall we have a competition?" he asked. Without waiting for an answer, he went back to his meal.

That is some weird- thought Crystal - it is like he suddenly forgot what he was saying...

Nancy watched as he ate. He had a contented look on his face, which was a little disappointing. She had switched his meat with hard dog snacks that were intended to grind teeth, but Paul did not even notice. He seemed to be really enjoying them when he gobbled them up.

Paul looked up and asked, "How was this beef prepared?"

Nancy's heart began to beat fast, and her forehead broke out in a sweat. What am I going to tell him? - she wondered. She opened her mouth, and nothing came out. Finally, she said, "It's a secret, but I am glad that you like it."

"It's a bit crunchy," Paul admitted. He smiled, finished the last two bites, and washed them down with a glass of milk. Then, after wiping his mouth, he turned to Crystal and said, "By the way, I have something for you. It will help you celebrate your marriage to my friend." He snapped his fingers, and a servant appeared with a tray. On it, there was a bottle of wine with a red bow around its neck.

A bottle of wine?" Eric snorted. "You are too generous. I couldn't accept such a lavish gift."

Paul laughed and said, "You can, and you will. And why not? If it were not for you, I would not be alive today."

Nancy looked intently at the bottle and wondered how much it was worth. She thought it was probably a lot. Otherwise, they would not be making such a fuss over it. "How old is it?" she asked.

"I've kept it for over 40 years," Paul said, "But it was already old by then; I don't know how old, so don't ask. I do know, though, that a mouthful of this wine is worth a building."

The servant quickly took the wine and carefully put it on the table. She was afraid of accidentally breaking it.

Crystal suddenly spoke up. "This makes no sense," she said. "You said that it has been in your possession for over forty years, but you aren't even thirty years old yet!"

"It has been in the family for over forty years," Paul explained. "I apologize if that wasn't understood. My father gave it to me."

"Since this wine is so precious, why are you willing to give it to us?" asked Crystal.

Paul smiled and said, "Eric and I have known each other for years, and I want to show him how much he means to me. Are you guys going to open it?"

Eric nodded. He planned to get Crystal drunk tonight.. Then he could slip the ra\*e dr\*g into her drink and do something to her, just like what Paul had done to Nancy.

#### **Chapter 1757 - 275: Do You Want Me?**

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As evening approached, the servants were given instructions to move Nathan upstairs. He was to be put in the room next to Eric's. There was a door between the rooms, but it was no longer in use, and bookcases had been set up in front of it on either side. Once Nathan was set up, these barriers were removed. This way, when Eric took' Crystal's that evening, he would have a front-row seat to the 'show.'

Downstairs, Paul, Nancy, Crystal, and Eric were casually drinking in the living room. Up until now, they had been having cocktails, but the time had finally come to open the bottle of wine that Paul had gifted to the newlyweds.

When it came to pouring Nancy a glass, though, Paul refused her.

"Hey!" she hissed. "Why aren't you giving me?"

"Who do you think you are?" Paul sneered.

"Do you think you deserve a wine as fine as this?"

Ever the diplomat, Crystal turned to Paul. "Shouldn't you be getting back to Michelle? I would imagine that she is starting to miss you by now?"

"You do not need to worry about whether she is lonely or not," Paul replied sneakily. "I would kindly ask you to mind your own business." There was nothing kind about his words.

Crystal humphed but said nothing. Just's and Q's, she thought resentfully. By now, she realized that nothing she could say would be of any help.

Nancy watched jealousy as Crystal sipped the wine. "How is it?" she asked.

"It's no different from regular wine," Crystal replied. "Do you want a sip from my glass?"

Nancy waved off her friend's request. "Thank you, but I'm good. There is an odd odor to it. Can you smell that?"

When Paul heard that, he stomped on Nancy's foot. He stepped on her so hard that, as a reflex, she gave him a good kick in the shins.

Paul grimaced in pain, but he did not complain.

"Are you sure that you don't want a sip?" Crystal asked.

"I'd rather die than drink it," Nancy replied.

"Have it your way." Crystal finished the glass, and Eric topped it off for her. Then, after a few sips from the fresh glass, she stood up suddenly. Her cheeks were red, and she had a giddy expression on her face. "I have an announcement!" she said. "I'm drunk!" And as she sat down again, everyone laughed.

Crystal was having a great time, but eventually, she began to feel nauseous, and it showed on her face.

"What's the matter?" Eric asked. "Don't you feel well? Maybe you should get some rest..." Without waiting for her to answer him, he got up to help her stand.

"My hero," Crystal muttered. She was really drunk now.

Eric picked her up, and as he carried her up the stairs, he said, "Little thing, you are such a lightweight."

Eric wondered what Paul had put in the wine. He had only had a little bit, but even he was feeling its effects. He was a little dizzy, and his whole body was warm.

Once they were upstairs, Eric kicked open the door to the master bedroom and laid Crystal on the bed. Then he pushed her bangs aside and kissed her forehead. "I wish you had come to me willingly." He sighed and said, "But any port in a storm, right?"

"Any port," Crystal replied incomprehensibly.

Eric felt guilty about what he was about to do for a moment, but the moment quickly passed, and he chastised himself for his weakness.

A feverish excitement rose within him. Eric had never wanted a woman so badly. He did not know whether it was the dr\*gs in the wine or if it had something to do with Crystal, but he actually had a hard-on. "I can't believe it!" he exclaimed. He was extremely proud of himself.

Suddenly, Crystal began to undress him feebly. Her equilibrium was shot to Hell, and her hands were shaky. He appreciated her enthusiasm, though, and it wasn't long before she had gotten a few buttons undone.

All Eric could think about was his erection. A thing so rare should be cherished - he thought. And he felt an urgent desire to be inside of her. He needed her somewhat sober, though. For the video to have any value, she needed to struggle, otherwise, it was just another vanilla flavored sex tape.

Eric laid down beside her with a determination to wait. It wasn't easy, though. His erection was rock hard, and it was begging to be set free.

Crystal wiped the sweat from her forehead and asked, "Why do I feel so hot?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Shall I fan you?"

"Would you?" Crystal wondered. She yawned suddenly, and as she stretched her arms, her breasts strained against her top. They were magnificent, and her nipples stood out like sore thumbs. Just looking at them sent Eric into a frenzy of lustful thoughts and fantasies. Then her eyelids gradually closed.

In her drunken state, Eric became Nathan, and she was suddenly incredibly damp. She heard her name and her whole body trembled.

Eric looked at the door that separated this room from the one that Nathan was in. It is almost time - he thought. But time seemed to be going excruciatingly slow.

Crystal stroked his chest eagerly. Where is it? - she wondered. She did not know what she was looking for. Rather, she was driven by an instinctive desire that had taken over her body.

Eric smiled. "My little goblin," he whispered. "Watch where you are touching me. Are you so eager? If you keep flirting with me like that, I can't help but bully you."

In the trance that Crystal was in, she thought that she was with Nathan. It was the medicine, and she was doing things that she would not have otherwise done.

Eric ran his hands through her hair and said, "This is the first time that I have seen you so eager. You're so cute, Crystal."

In the next room, Nathan began to stir, and when he awoke, the first thing he heard was the sound of the bedsprings in the next room over.

Eric sensed that Nathan was awake and smiled maliciously at the secret door that separated the two rooms. He turned back to Crystal. "Do you want me?"

"I want you," she replied. "I do! I do! I do!"

"Call me 'My husband, and I will give you what you want.'"

Why would I call Nathan 'My husband?' - Crystal wondered, and suddenly it seemed that the room was circling around her. She felt dizzy. It was hard to think, and she thought that she might be sick.

Now that she had started to sober up, though, the dr\*gs began to kick in harder than before. Ignoring the turning in her stomach, Crystal clutched at Eric's shirt with her dainty hands. Then, without warning, she jumped on top of him and began to rip his clothes off.

Eric smiled and said, "Wife, I am ready. Tonight, I am yours, and I am fully at your disposal." As he spoke, he stretched and folded his hands under his head. Just as he did this, though, he accidentally touched a

sensor. The bed made a mechanical whirring sound, and then his hands and feet were clamped in place. His brow wrinkled, and the smile at the corners of his mouth froze. "Paul..." he muttered. "What have you done?"

Eric could not think of anyone else that could have been responsible for such a nefarious deed.. Then, to make matters worse, Crystal leaned over and vomited all over his chest.

### **Chapter 1758 - 276: How The Table Has Turned?**

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The pungent smell of puke spread through the air, and it was made worse by Crystal's inability to stop vomiting. Eric was upset, but he tried to be patient. He knew that this was not her fault. After all, she had not dr\*ggged herself. He said, "Crystal, stop puking and help me take my clothes off."

Crystal's vomiting fit tapered off until she was just dry heaving. She looked at him for a moment, and then she said, "I'm sorry, but I need to go to the bathroom first." Her throat felt like it was on fire, and her cramps were unbearable.

Without waiting for Eric to reply, Crystal stumbled out of bed and began to crawl towards the door. When Eric saw the direction she was going, his eyes went wide.

"Hey!" he shouted. "Honey! You're going in the wrong direction. That's not the door to the bathroom!"

On the other side of the door, Nathan could hear everything that was being said, and he called out to his love. "Crystal!" he cried. "Can you hear me?"

Crystal frowned when she heard Nathan's voice in the next room. She thought - If Nathan is in the next room, who did I just throw up on? By now, she was feeling feverish, and nothing was making sense. She had a good idea, though, that once she opened the door, she would understand everything.

When Eric saw that she had not changed her course, he began to struggle against the metal cuffs that bound him to the bed. It was of no use, though, and he was not surprised. After all, Paul was all about efficiency and perfection. Eric remembered his friend once said, "Anything not worth doing well is not worth doing at all."

Finally, he gave up. He tried calling Crystal again, but she did not seem to hear him, so all he could do was wait and see what would happen once she opened the door.

Nathan watched the door with anxious anticipation. He regretted the way he had treated Crystal, but he had not realized what he had until he'd seen her with another man. And by then, it had been too late.

The first time Crystal showed her love for Eric, his heart felt like it had fallen into an ice cave. When he hit bottom, his chest caved in, and it became hard to breathe, especially when he thought about them together. If I am forced to watch them make love - he thought - then I will surely die...

Nathan thought that the punishment that Eric and Crystal had thought up was beyond cruel. His heart was numb, and his purple lips pressed tightly together. He could hear Crystal, but he refused to allow himself the luxury of hope.

The sound of the doorknob turning seemed to tear Nathan's heart asunder. If he were able, he would kneel before her, make compromises, and burn any bridges she asked him to.

Nathan shuddered, and his hands clenched into fists. How did I get here? - he asked himself - And how did I let things get so bad? If he were able, he would tie her up and haul her away.

The door opened, and he could tell right away that Crystal was drunk. Of course, he knew that she had been drinking, but he had not expected her to be so corked.

For some reason, Crystal was not surprised to see him. She looked him in the eyes, and she seemed drawn to him. As she stumbled forward, Eric shouted at her to "Get back, here!" But she paid him no mind.

Eric had sent his guards away before carrying Crystal upstairs, a decision he was now regretting. Because of his mistake, no matter how loud he shouted, no one would hear his pleas for help.

Crystal finally reached the bed. She reached out her hand and slowly touched Nathan's face; his eyebrows, eyes, nose, lips....

Nathan opened his mouth, and she drew two fingers into his mouth. He began to suck them gently, and a pleasurable shiver ran down Crystal's back. He nibbled on them, and there was a moment of slight pain, but it was nice. She felt a warmth in her loins. It spread out to the rest of her body as he caressed her left breast with his right hand.

Finally, Crystal could bear it no more, and she threw herself recklessly into the bed. She began to tug at Nathan's clothes, but she accidentally bumped his abdomen with her elbow in her hurry.

Nathan gasped and cried out in pain.

Crystal froze.

Nathan looked up and frowned slightly. "What are you doing here?" he asked. "It's too hot," Crystal explained, and she began to tug at her clothes.

Nathan could tell that she was not herself, and his eyebrows furrowed. "Have you been dr\*ggged?" He did not feel comfortable taking advantage of her. If they were to make love, he wanted it to be completely consensual.

Crystal was so focused on taking off her clothes that she did not hear what Nathan had said. Once she was naked, she tried to get his pants off, but she could not undo his belt buckle. She could feel his erection, and her inability to access it infuriated her.

Nathan's frozen heart came to life again as she massaged his manh\*\*d. It beat wildly, and it occurred to him that she had rescued him from the ice cave it had fallen into - And as she smiled at him, all his concerns slipped away. "Slow down and be gentle," he said. "I am still in recovery..."

Crystal nodded. Then she slipped off the bed so that she could take off his trousers and underwear without hurting him. Nathan uttered a sigh of relief as his soldier stood to attention, and she gave it a little kiss.

From the next room, Nathan could hear Eric shouting angrily, and he smiled wickedly.

My, how the tables have turned - he thought. Crystal climbed back onto Nathan's chest, and they both moaned in satisfaction as the two became one.

For a while, they did not f\*\*k or make love. Crystal leaned forward, and with her bare breasts pressed tightly against his chest, she held him. It was nice just to lay there together.. Connected and as still as they were, Eric's shouting seemed like it was a million miles away.

### **Chapter 1759 - 277: Do You Know Who I Am?**

Nathan kissed Crystal's neck, and she shivered. "Do you know who I am?!" he asked. Crystal was no longer listening, though. Her libido had just kicked in hardcore. Thus, the time for talk was over.

"Crystal!" He gasped as she fucked him harder than he had ever been fucked before. "Slow down..." He was used to being the one on top - the one in control - which meant that he was completely outside of his safety zone.

For many hours, Crystal used and abused Nathan until finally, they were both spent. Then, with him still inside her, she fell asleep and swiftly slipped into a pleasant dream. In it, she was making love to him. Unlike what they had done, this was gentle and full of tender loving care. Some part of her knew that she was dreaming, though, and she hoped that she would never wake up.

Unfortunately, as the sun began to rise, Crystal did wake up. She opened her eyes and let out a confused cry for help. Nathan was facing her, and their faces were close enough to kiss. She did a quick body scan and was appalled to discover that his p\*\*\*s was inside her. What the f\*\*k is this happy horseshit?!?! - she wondered unhappily. "What is going on?" she demanded. "What the hell did you do to me?"

"Don't you remember anything from last night?" Nathan asked, appalled. "You did everything that was done! My body is weak. I didn't have the strength to do anything to you, with or without your consent... If anything, some might say that you assaulted me..."

Crystal frowned unhappily, and as her ire began to rise, she felt his manh\*\*d twitch and turn to stone inside her. "Why are you hard?" she asked irritably. "Are you having dirty thoughts?"

"You don't know what's in my head." Nathan chuckled and said, "Never mind the why just don't go anywhere. I waited on you all night long. Will you satisfy me now?"

Crystal felt cold suddenly. She did not want to leave him, but she knew that she had to. So, she gently pulled away from him. Her muscles twitched as the head of his p\*\*\*s ran up the length of her vulva and rang her bell, but she tried to pay it no mind.

"I felt that." Nathan smiled and said, "You obviously want more."

"Shut up!" Crystal hissed. "I do not want more! Not now, and not ever!"



"Tell the truth and shame the devil." He had a shark-like Cheshire grin that stretched from one ear to the other. "I won't laugh at you," he promised.

Crystal bit her lip, and as she began to get dressed, she tried to map out the events of the previous night. She remembered drinking, but after that, everything was black. There were flashes of memory, but when she put them together, they made no sense.

What happened to Eric? - Crystal wondered. After being on her feet for a minute, she began to feel dizzy again, and she had to sit down.

The servants had incense burning in the room 24/7. It was supposed to help with Nathan's recovery, but it made Crystal feel sick to her stomach, and while it was burning, she could barely think straight. She mentioned it to Nathan, and he had one of the servants remove it.

The servants had just begun their morning rounds, and they seemed unsurprised when they found Crystal half-naked on the floor. As if this happens all the time - thought Crystal worriedly. And on the tail of that thought: What the Hell have I gotten myself into...?

Once the incense was gone, Crystal stood up, walked to the window, and let in some fresh air. She stood there for about ten minutes, and during that time, nobody spoke. Then, finally, Nathan broke the silence. He asked her if she was feeling better and if she would help him get his pants and underwear back on.

She looked him over, and what she saw disgusted her. She was ashamed of what she had done with him. "I am going to have a bath," she replied coldly. "I'll send a servant to take care of you."

Nathan's pupils dilated, and when he spoke, Crystal was taken aback by the aggression in his voice. "Don't you dare let another woman touch me!" he growled. "You did this to me. Now take responsibility for your actions!"

Crystal sighed. "If I get you dressed, will we be even?" she asked.

"Even?" Nathan scoffed. "Hardly! Help me take a bath. Then dress me, and then we will be even."

"Nice try," Crystal smirked.

Suddenly, Eric called out to Crystal, and she rushed into the next room.

Eric's eyes were bloodshot, and he had a troubled expression on his face. Never had he been so cowed in his life, and he was so upset that he felt like killing himself. His wife had spent the night with another man, and not only was it all his fault, but he had been forced to lay there and listen to it all. He was angry at himself, but he was even angrier at Paul. If it were not for Paul's bad idea, none of this would have happened.

When Crystal saw Eric, her first thought was that he had given her to Nathan for the night, but that did not sit right with her. Eric wouldn't do that - she thought - Or would he? It occurred to her then that she did not actually know a lot about her new husband.

As she got closer to him, she saw that he was chained to the bed, and right away, she knew that her theory was incorrect. "Who locked you up like this?" she asked.

Crystal wondered if she had been the one to do it. She doubted it, but with her memories being as scrambled as they were, it seemed that anything was possible.

"Just get me out of these cuffs," he whined.

Crystal stood at akimbo. "You haven't told me who locked you up."

"Does it matter?" Eric's expression was cold. "You cheated on me last night. I'm so angry!"

Crystal glared back at him. "I can see that you're angry," she said. "But you had better aim your venom at someone else. I am sure that you had more to do with my altered state than you are admitting."

Eric was speechless.

"And wasn't it you that set up Nathan in the next room?" Crystal continued.

Eric felt like crying. What she said was true. Nothing had gone the way that he had planned. Now, all he could do was try to save face, and the main way he could do that was by refusing to admit that he was at fault in any way. "Just help me out of these cuffs," he said again.

Crystal laughed. "You are not going anywhere until I have some answers!"

"Crystal!" Eric raged. He pulled at the cuffs that held him to the bed, but it was useless. "You are going to regret this!"

"Threaten me if you want." Crystal walked over to the foot of the bed and gave the cuff a good tug. Eric winced as pain shot up his leg and landed in his testicles. "I like seeing you like this," she said. "And even if you weren't chained to the bed, I still wouldn't be afraid. After everything I have been put through, nothing scares me."

Eric was taken aback. He had never seen her like this. "Are you going to keep me restrained like this forever?" he asked.

"For now, at least." Crystal shrugged.. Never in her life had she felt as in control of a situation as she did at this moment. She smirked and said, "While you're locked up in isolation, why don't you work out some of your inner demons?"

## **Chapter 1760 - 278: I Will Only Allow You To Touch My Body**

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From his bed in the next room, Nathan could hear every word that Eric and Crystal had said, and from what he heard, he was able to glean the truth: Eric had planned to torture him, but the plan had backfired, and Eric had gone from being the bully to being the victim.

Nathan let out a laugh so deep that it caused his chest to vibrate. He had not laughed so heartily in a long time. His laugh was so loud that it echoed off the castle walls, and each gale was like an ice pick in Eric's ears.

"Nathan!" Eric shouted. "Get your chuckles in while you can because I will have the last laugh. You may have won this battle, but I will win the war!"

"You are hilarious." Nathan smirked and said, "The war is over, and I am the victor."

"You're the victor?" Eric scoffed. "I have won. She has married me, and now she is my wife. Are you such an idiot that you cannot see that?"

"I am no idiot," Nathan replied. But maybe you are blind. Surely, you realize that Crystal can divorce you whenever it pleases her to do so. Personally, I think that day is just around the corner. Then it will be just her and me like it was before. Besides, with all the spunk I dumped inside her last night, she might already be pregnant with my child."

Crystal watched silently as the two men argued. They were acting like children, and it was a struggle to keep from laughing. She felt very dirty, and she did not want to get pulled into their little squabble. She wanted to remain as inconspicuous as possible.

Finally, she was sure that they were not paying attention to her. She made her way to the bathroom, closed the door behind her, and quickly took off her soiled clothing.

Once she was in the bathtub and the water was running, she allowed herself to relax. She did not know what would happen next, but from this safe place, she was able to gather her thoughts without having a panic attack.

After everything that Eric had done, she thought he deserved what he got and more, so she decided that she would not allow him to retaliate against Nathan. It hadn't even been Nathan's fault. The dr\*gs had come from Eric and Paul, but she knew that her new husband would not willingly accept responsibility for his actions.

She did not know if Paul was home. She thought - If he is, I must figure out a way to drive him out as quickly as possible. Otherwise, he will release Eric. If that happens, I will be the one in trouble...

Her thoughts returned to Eric and Nathan, and she giggled. They were both subdued and helpless, yet they sounded like powerful overlords from the way they argued. It was all false-bravado, and it was hilarious.

Crystal waited until they quit fighting before getting out of the tub. She dried off and dressed in the bathroom, and when she came out, Eric looked at her and said, "Darling, you've finished bathing. I can smell your peach-scented shower gel. Come over and let me get a better whiff of your beautiful hair."

"Thanks, but no thanks!" Crystal grimaced.

"You owe me some rewards." He smiled and said, "You should let me go..."

"What do you know about what I should and shouldn't do?" Crystal asked. She raised her eyebrows. "I think I should do what I want, and what I want right now is to keep you chained to that bed."

Eric's ire began to rise. His face turned red from anger, and he said, "You are making a mistake. Trust me, you do not want to make me angry."

"Is that so?" Crystal asked. "And why is that? I don't care if you get angry. Especially now. So, go ahead and do your worst!"

There was a special incense in Nathan's room, and Crystal brought it into Eric's room, and when he saw it, his eyes went wide. It had the power to make people weak and light-headed.

"Please..." Eric whined. "Mrs. Bush, why are you treating me this way?"

"Revenge," Crystal replied. "This will do what you did to me. Don't you know that turnabout is fair play?"

Nathan resumed his laughter in the next room, and they both turned their heads. "How does it feel to be victimized by your own wife?" Nathan wondered.

"It feels so great!" Eric snarled. "This is what couples do for fun. I am not surprised by your ignorance."

"Nice try." It had been a long time since Nathan had this much fun teasing someone. "Now," he continued. "Why don't you send your wife over so that she can clean my body."

"No way!" Eric turned to Crystal and said, "Darling, I'm hungry. Can you fix something for me to eat?"

"I don't think so," Crystal replied. "Get some sleep, and I'll bring some food later." After speaking, she went into Nathan's room and closed the door behind her.

Nathan's eyes brightened when he saw her. "C-C-Crystal..." he happily stuttered. "You cho cho-choose me!"

Crystal sighed. "Don't get your hopes up. I didn't cho-cho-chose either of you." She checked to see what he needed, and as she walked to the door that led to the hallway, she said, "Have a good rest. I will send a servant to bathe you and care for your wounds. Someone else will come with some food."

Nathan frowned and said, "I will only allow you to touch my body."

Crystal looked to the sky and addressed God. "Why must all men be so irrational?" she asked. She waited a moment to see if He would reply, and then she opened the door and walked out.

Nathan felt his energy slip away as he watched Crystal leave. At the last moment, he said that he loved her, but she did not hear him. A servant closed the door behind her, and he was left alone with his thoughts.

His brow furrowed, and he closed his eyes.

He had not realized how tired he was, and as he slipped into a deep sleep, a voice in his head said, "We've got to find our way back into her good graces and then to her heart."

And in his dreams, all was well.

**Chapter 1761 - 279: How Dare You To Make Me Feel Bad**

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Paul was sleeping soundly on the couch when his cell phone rang. "I should have turned it off before I laid down," he grumbled. The handy phone was sitting on the coffee table, and he glared at it, willing it to stop. It rang six times, and then - Oh, sweet merciful - Jesus - it went silent. - only to begin ringing again three seconds later. Paul cursed as he sat up and picked up the phone. He was ready to freak out, but when he saw who was calling, his anger dissipated. It was Michelle.

Paul smiled as he accepted the call. "Good morning, baby, I was sleeping. Is there a problem?"

"You haven't been home for two days..." Michelle replied. She sounded upset as if she were on the verge of tears.

"Didn't I tell you that I had business abroad?" Paul sighed resolutely. "It is only temporary, so you don't have to keep calling. I will return soon. I promise."

"Can you give me a date?" Michelle asked.

"I can't," Paul replied. "I will be here until I finish my business, but these things take time, and things come up...."

"But I miss you very much... I am alone, and I feel very lonely. I want you to know..."

"I know! I know! I know!" Paul cut her off mid-sentence. He could hear that she was beginning to cry, and he felt somewhat guilty about that. "I miss you too," he finally said. How dare you make me feel bad - he thought resentfully. It would not have been so bad if it were just this one call, but she was calling him over ten times a day.

"I have to go," Paul said, and he ended the call without saying goodbye.

Now that he was awake, he no longer felt sleepy. He stood up and immediately regretted it. He had forgotten about the crocodile that had bitten him, but the sharp pain in his ass served as a quick reminder - and the injury made him think about Nancy. "I wonder where she is," he muttered.

Paul frowned and began to wonder what his motivation for staying at the castle was. Am I here for her? - he wondered. He tried to convince himself that he wasn't, but the thought nagged at him.

There was a servant in the dining room, and once he had her attention, he asked, "Where's Nancy?"

"Miss Carter is walking with Mr. Laurent in the garden," the servant replied. "You can see them through the back window."

Paul nodded and went to the back window, and when he saw that Nancy was holding Noah's hand, he felt like he had been stabbed in the heart. They were walking and talking and laughing. "You can't let this stand," a voice in his head said.

"No," he muttered. "I cannot."

A wicked smile graced his face, and he called for a servant. "Get me my shotgun," he ordered.

\*\*\*\*

After having spoken to Crystal, Nancy decided that it was finally time to get Vic involved. Noah was the only one that had a chance of getting the message out, and she was just about to tell him about their

plan when the sound of a shotgun's blast split the sky. There was a pigeon about three meters from where they were, and it fell out of the sky.

A frightened squawk emerged from Nancy's mouth, and Noah held her in his arms. Her whole body was trembling, and she clung to him as if for dear life.

Nancy had never been this close to Noah before, and with her head pressed against his chest, she could hear the steady pit-a-pat of his heartbeat. She squeezed him as hard as she could, and he flinched. She looked up, and from the grimace on his face, she could tell that he was in severe pain. She had forgotten all about his injuries.

Nancy blushed. "I'm so sorry. I forgot that you were injured."

Noah kissed her on the forehead and told her that it was fine.

\*\*\*\*

Paul's face turned red from rage. He had thought that the shotgun's blast would force Nancy and Noah apart, but it had brought them closer together. "Inconceivable," he grumbled. "I will show them!"

He raised his shotgun and began to shoot down every bird in sight. All the while, he kept his eyes on Nancy. This way, when she looked to see who was shooting, she would be forced to meet his angry gaze.

Finally, she spotted him, and when she did, he shifted the barrel so that it was aimed at Noah's head.

"No!" Nancy cried. "What are you doing?" she took a short step forward and to the side so that she was standing between Paul and Noah. Paul fired a bullet into the dirt at Nancy's feet, and she jumped. A moment later, a wet spot appeared on the front of her pants, and it spread down her leg. She was devastated. She pulled away from Noah, and when he tried to comfort her, she would not let him. "Don't look at me..." she cried.

"How do you like them apples?" Paul shouted, and as he set his gun aside, he started to cackle like a crazy person.

\*\*\*\*

Nancy covered her face with her hands, and for a long time, she refused to let Noah look at her face. She had never been more ashamed and embarrassed in her life. "I'm a grown woman," she wailed. "What business do I have to wet my pants?!?!"

Eventually, Nancy tripped over one of the dead birds, and her survival instinct took over and forced her to stop covering her face. She quickly regained her equilibrium, and she was so appalled by what she saw that she did not even think to cover her face back up.

The ground was littered with dead birds, and most of them had been blown to bits. There were at least twenty of them. She spotted a few that were still suffering, and it occurred to her that it would be up to do the responsibility.

"He's a monster," she said.

"He is," Noah agreed grimly.

## Chapter 1762 - 280: I'm Sick Of Your Games

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Nancy looked to the window where Paul had been, but he was gone.

Noah put his hand on her shoulder and said, "At least Wolf wasn't with us..."

Nancy shuddered. She could easily imagine what Paul would have done had the dog been with them. She turned to face Noah and said, "This has gone too far, but I have a plan to make it stop."

Noah smiled hopefully. "Is there anything that I can do to help?"

"As a matter of fact, there is," Nancy replied. "But I was hesitant to ask...."

"Don't be silly." Noah laughed. "I am at your disposal. Tell me what you need, and if it is within my power to do it, then I will."

"Can you help us escape?"

"You want to escape?" Noah pondered this for a moment. It had not crossed his mind that this would be her request. Then, finally, he said, "Sure, I will help you. What do you want me to do?"

"I have a contact on the outside," Nancy explained. "But I have no way of staying in touch with him. With his help, nothing can stop us."

Noah opened his mouth, but a rifle fired three times in succession before he could say a word. They looked to where the sound had come from and saw Paul approaching them. Nancy was shocked, "Quickly," she said.

"Go. Find Crystal. She will tell you who it is that you need to contact."

Paul fired again, and they both flinched.

They both knew that he was missing on purpose. At any time, though, he could aim.

\*\*\*\*

Crystal waited until she was sure that the incense had done its work before returning to her room. Then, when she saw how weak he looked, she could not help but laugh. She smirked and said, "My, how the mighty have fallen!"

"When will you let me go?" Eric whined.

"Before coming in to see you, I secured Nathan to his bed," Crystal explained. "Once the two of you have learned to be obedient and kind, then I will consider letting you both go."

You will prove that you've learned your lessons by becoming the best of friends."

"Best friends?" Eric sneered.

Crystal had left the door between the two rooms open, and when Nathan heard what had been said, he began to curse. "If that is the case," he shouted, "then we will die in these beds. I would never befriend such a lowlife piece of shit."

"Chill your t\*\*s, boys." Crystal chuckled.

Nathan and Eric both frowned.

"We're not boys," Eric insisted. "We are men and both grown-ups,"

"And we don't have t\*\*s!" muttered Nathan on the other side.

"There." Crystal smiled and said, "Look at that, you two things in common. Anyway, It's supper time."

Eric gave her a funny look. "Darling, our hands and feet are restricted. How will we eat?"

"With your mouth!" Crystal replied. "Obviously."

Eric sighed. "Be reasonable. If you are not going to let us go, then you feed us by hand." He laughed and said, "Let me have a look at what you made. Did you cook it by yourself?"

"Never mind that." Crystal fetched the meals, brought the first dish over to Eric, and sat down beside him. She offered him a spoon full of peas, and he ate them without incident.

Nathan called to her from the other room, and she said, "Hold your horses. I will feed you next."

Crystal brought a bit of meat to Eric's face. He took it, and as he chewed, a thought occurred to her. "I should have a servant do this," she said. "I don't know what I was thinking. I must not have been thinking at all!"

"I won't eat unless you are the one feeding me," said Eric.

"I won't either," said Nathan. "So, what now? Will you feed us, or will you let us starve to death?"

"I'm tempted to let you both starve to death," Crystal admitted. "You are like a couple of hard-headed baboons, and I rather suspect that you actually would starve yourselves on principle. So, it seems that I must feed you..."

"Excellent," Nathan smiled and said, "Feed me first."

"You were already feeding me," Eric grumbled. "You should finish what you started."

"But I'm starving," argued Nathan.

"Bullshit!" Eric's face turned red from rage, and he said, "Between us, you were the last to eat."

Nathan glared at Crystal. "How dare you feed him first! I am the one who is injured and need more food to recover,"

"That's enough!" she shouted. "If you guys cannot act in a civilized manner, you will go hungry." She took a moment to collect her thoughts, and then she said, "I will feed you both at the same time."

"How will that work?" Eric wondered.



"I will give you three bites, then I will give Nathan three bites," Crystal explained. "And I will go back and forth until you are both done eating. Since I have given you some food already, it is Nathan's turn."

Crystal walked into the next room, and when she showed Nathan his food, he humphed.

Crystal gave him a dirty look. "What is your problem now?" she asked.

"My food is inferior to Eric's," he replied.

"What's up with that?"

"You were shot in the abdomen," Crystal reminded him. "You are on a special diet." Nathan smiled and said, "I knew that you cared about my well-being!"

"Don't make me regret this," Crystal said angrily. She brought some pasta to his mouth, but he flinched away from it. "What now?!?!"

"It's too hot," Nathan complained.

"Too hot, my ass!" Crystal shouted. "I am sick of your games."

"Try it for yourself...."

"Fine," Crystal growled. She stirred the pasta, filled her spoon, and brought it to her mouth.

The heat caught her off guard, and she nearly choked. It was actually ridiculously hot, just like he'd said.

"I'm sorry," she muttered. "I will blow on them for you."

Nathan ate two more bites without incident, and then it was Eric's turn to eat again.