

Midnight III 81

Chapter 1563 - 81: She Played His Game

Crystal walked out of the VIP ward and into the white marble-tiled corridor. The corridor was very long, and the nurses' station was at the end of it, around the corner from the elevator. As Crystal approached the corner, she happened to overhear four nurses gossiping. She heard Nathan's name, so she slowed her pace to hear more.

The first nurse had her phone open so that everyone could see a picture of a good-looking man. "Who is he?" the second nurse asked.

"Don't you guys watch the news?" the first nurse scoffed. "He is only one of the wealthiest bachelors in the city! Here, I'll show you another picture of him.." The nurse swiped left, and a second image appeared.

"He's hot!" the third nurse agreed, "but he's nothing special. Almost all of the upper-class bachelors around here are hunks. Doesn't the media have anything better to report on?"

"It's newsworthy because it has to do with the popularity ranking list," the first nurse explained. "This is a picture of Anthony Johns. He's the son of that catering tycoon, and he's in fourth place." She pulled up another image. "Third place goes to Owen Lane, the leader of the cultural industry. He looks quite scholarly, right?"

The other girls smiled lustily and nodded their heads.

The first nurse brought up a new image and said. "This is Alex Smith. He's in second place. He's the son of the motor industry mogul/real estate magnate. But do you know who's number one?"

"Who?" the nurse asked.

"I'll give you a hint," the first nurse said. "He is amazing, good-looking, and his family made their fortune founding banks and the securities field. Can you guess?"

When none of the other nurses replied, the first nurse pointed to the VIP room at the end of the hall and said, "It's Eric Bush."

The third nurse gasped and said, "Wow!

He's hot! Even in traction!" The fourth nurse hadn't spoken until now, and the other girls were startled when she did.

Her name was Maggie, and she was typically too shy to join in conversations. Maggie's face turned pink as she spoke. Finally, she said, "Forget about those four. They're old news. There is an even wealthier bachelor, but he isn't on the list. If I tell you his background, though, I'm afraid that you guys will all be frightened."

The first nurse: "Really? Is his background that terrifying??"

The second nurse: "Who on earth is he, and how do you know so much about him? Is he one of your relatives?"

"I wish he were," Maggie replied. "If he were, I wouldn't have to work here with you guys. He did go on a blind date with my cousin, though. You could call him 'Handsome,' a 'hunk,' or say that he is 'good-looking, but none of those words would do his looks justice. There are no words that could describe his looks. He is a bit of a recluse, though. Few people have seen him."

The first nurse: "Is your cousin Amy Fowler the hostess of the TV station?"

Maggie: "Yes! That's right! And if you saw them standing together, you would think they were made for each other!"

"Since he is so well endowed, why does he need to go on a blind date?" the third nurse asked.

Maggie shrugged and said, "I don't know. I'll have to ask Amy about that the next time I see her. Anyway, I think it's about time I told you the man's name." Maggie paused for a dramatic effect. "His name is Nathan Davis. He is the CEO of Brilliant Group."

The second nurse: "Brilliant Group? Wow!

That company is a big deal!"

Crystal did not listen to the rest of the conversation. She didn't understand the upper class, and she wasn't interested in their lives. She had only slowed down because she'd heard Nathan's name, and she was surprised to discover, not just that he was famous, but that he was dating some rich television hostess. I will have to question him about this tonight - thought Crystal.

Crystal was about to press the button that would summon an elevator when Richard suddenly stepped out of Eric's room. When he saw her, he grinned like an imp, raised his hand as if it were a gun, made a triggering motion with his thumb, and made a sound that imitated a word that can be read as a gun firing; "BANG!"

Richard's neck was wrapped in gauze, and he was wearing a hospital gown. From across the room, he shouted at Crystal: "Little beauty, it seems that we were destined to meet again. I hope you didn't think that I would forget about what happened. Enjoy what time you have because when I get out, playtime will be over."

Crystal chuckled. "Do you think you can manage to hold your bladder next time?" she asked.

Richard scowled and made a mock lunge in Crystal's direction, and when she didn't flinch, his face turned red from anger and embarrassment.

Crystal rolled her eyes at him with disdain as she pressed the button to summon the elevator. She had no interest in getting into an argument with him. After all - It takes an idiot to argue with an idiot.

The elevator arrived almost immediately. When its doors opened, Crystal walked in with her head held high, and as she was leaving the hospital, she received a text message from Serenity. It said: "Hey, Crystal! You've been gone for a long time. Is everything okay?"

Crystal: "It's all good. I had to walk Eric to the hospital, though, which was a real pain in the ass. He is in traction and has to stay at the hospital, so at least he won't be bothering me for a while. It's a Cervical dislocation."

Serenity: "I thought he's faking..."

Crystal knew that Serenity's conclusion was right, but she just played with Erick's game.

Crystal: "Me too... I'll talk to you about it more when I get to school. Okay?"

Serenity: "See you soon."

Chapter 1564 - 82: You Tried To Kill Him

By the time Crystal arrived at the university, she had missed the first class, and the second class was nearly finished, so she waited for Serenity in the cafeteria. Once they were together, they greeted each other warmly, and then a very serious expression appeared on Serenity's face.

Crystal frowned and asked, "What's wrong?"

"It's nothing, really," Serenity replied. "I just keep thinking about the accident. I have this nagging feeling that things aren't quite what they seem. Does that make any sense?"

"I have the same feeling," Crystal admitted.

She wanted to tell her friend about Richard, but she didn't want to make her any more worried than she already was. "Anyway, let's go get something to eat. I don't know about you, but I'm hungry. I feel like a hungry best this time and ready to have a portion of good food to fill my tummy,"

Serenity nodded, but just as they were getting up, Crystal's phone rang.. "Hold on," Crystal said as she pulled her phone from her pocket. It was Evan Henry, her half-brother. Why is he calling? - she wondered. After a moment's hesitation, she accepted the call. "What do you want, Evan?"

Evan: "I have something to tell you. Where are you?"

Crystal said, "I'm at school, at the 2nd Canteen." That's curious - she thought as the line went dead in her hand.

The canteen was busy over the lunch hour, and it was very loud. There was the clatter of people eating and talking and the sound coming from the flat-screen televisions that were mounted around the room. Crystal looked up at the nearest screen and was greeted by Amy Fowler's smiling face broadcasting from the newsroom of whatever station she worked at. Crystal frowned as she stood up.

"Evan Henry's looking for you?" Serenity asked.

Crystal: "Yeah. He's going to meet me here. I don't know why..."

They made their way through the line, and when they got to the protein, Crystal pointed out the steaks and said, "You should have one. They're delicious!"

"Come on," Serenity scoffed. "I'm not a pig."

You're such a schemer! It would be best if you wanted me to be fat. But look, my clothes barely fit me. You're as thin as a rail, though. You should have the steak, and I'll stick to my salad!"

Crystal shrugged and asked the cook to add steak to her tray. Then she turned to Serenity. "Why do you care so much about your figure?" she asked. "Who are you trying to impress?"

Serenity: "Come on. Girls should treat losing weight as a lifelong career."

Crystal chuckled. "YOLO!"

"YOLO, my ass!" Serenity grunted. They made their way to the cashier, paid for their food, and returned to their table. They began to eat, and when they were about halfway through their meals, Evan appeared in the doorway of the cafeteria. Serenity saw him first, and she waved him over.

Evan was wearing a suit and a pair of leather shoes, and he had his jacket hung over his arm like a true gentleman. He sat down beside Serenity so that he could face Crystal. He scowled at her steak and asked, "Is this your lunch? It's a bit much, isn't it?"

"Never mind my food," Crystal grumbled.

"What I eat is my business. Just tell me why you're here!"

Evan smiled and said, "The Henry Group's stock plummeted this morning."

Crystal: "That's great, but so what?"

Evan: "Crystal, do you want to buy into the Henry Group? This is the best time for you to do it,"

Crystal: She raised her head and stared at him for a while and replied, "Yes. It looks like the company is in big trouble that causes the price to dump in the stock market,"

Evan: "Then now would be a good time to buy into it! There is no reason why you can't negotiate for a good price."

Crystal: "Negotiate? When Todd forced me to sign the waiver, he never negotiated with me! He even forgot that I am his daughter, or should I say, he never cared what would be my future at all,"

Evan: "Dad didn't deal with you fairly, but that was because you were trying to kill him!" Evan brutally reminded her of the thing she did.

Crystal: "It was Henry who wanted to kill me first!"

Evan: "We did not, and Todd was a Father to you!"

Crystal: "He wasn't, though! He may have put up the genetic material, but that's all he's ever done for me! At no point did he ever do his duty to me as a father."

Evan: "As long as Henry's family blood runs through your veins, Todd is your Father, and no amount of ill will can change that."

Crystal: "If I had a choice, I would have a complete blood transfusion. Todd's blood makes me feel dirty."

Evan realized that the conversation was going nowhere, so he tried to change the subject. He said, "Anyway, are you willing to give up the acquisition?"

Crystal ignored the question, turned to Serenity, and asked if she was ready to go. Serenity nodded, and they stood up together, gathered their trash, took it to the garbage bin, and made their way towards their next class. Despite the drop in the price of shares, Evan's speech could not convince Crystal to change her mind. This business between them wasn't about money anymore. It had become a personal vendetta.

When Crystal and Serenity entered the classroom, they were blinded by the light coming through the windows. They shaded their eyes with their hands and quickly found their seats.

In Brilliant Group HQ - After the meeting, Nathan returned to his office. He received an email notification just as he sat down, but he ignored it because he assumed it was work-related. Andy was right behind him, and once he was seated, Nathan said, "Make a separate table for the UAV plan we discussed in the meeting. I need it by the end of the day."

Andy: "No problem."

Chapter 1565 - 83: I Can Go Home Myself

Almost as soon as Andy left the room, Nathan's phone rang. He looked at the caller ID and saw that it was Alex. He brought the phone to his ear and said, "Hey, Alex. How can I help you?"

Alex: "Nathan, did you watch the video I sent you yet? I need to know if the girl in the video is your girlfriend?"

Nathan: "What video are you talking about?"

Alex: "I emailed it to you. Hurry up and take a look! We'll talk after."

After saying goodbye to Alex, Nathan opened the email and played the video. It was about twenty minutes long, and although the lighting was poor, he could still see what had happened.

Someone had recorded everything that had transpired on the night that Crystal had rescued her friend from certain assaults and possibly murder.

Now Nathan knew how Crystal had injured her palm, and it bothered him that she hadn't been open with him about what had happened.. It made him angry that she could have gotten hurt, and he wouldn't have been able to protect her. "I treat her like a treasure," he told himself, "but she talks and acts as if her life has no value!"

After watching the video, Nathan was no longer in the mood for working, nor did he feel like calling Alex back, so he took Andy's car key and drove the Buick to the Olman University, and he arrived just as the

afternoon sessions were letting out. He parked on the road and stared at the gate without blinking. It wasn't long before the object of his love and hate appeared.

Nathan waited until Crystal and Serenity had passed the driver's side door, and then he jumped out of the car, startling both of them quite badly. Crystal glared at him, and he could tell she was angry, but Serenity seemed to think it was quite funny. She giggled and pushed Crystal into Nathan's arms. Then she said, "I've got to get to work. Take good care of her for me, okay!"

Nathan caught Crystal in his arms and said, "She's in good hands." Then, he walked her around the car and "helped" her into the passenger seat.

Once Nathan was in the car, Crystal turned to him and said, "I can go home by myself. I'm a big girl. I just turned eighteen yesterday, in case you've forgotten!" When he didn't reply, she began to pout. Finally, after a few minutes of awkward silence, she asked, "Have you been waiting for a long time?"

Nathan started the car, but he still did not open his mouth.

Crystal was confused. What's up with him? - she wondered. Not knowing what else to do, she placed her bag between her legs and pulled her seatbelt over her shoulder. She cleared her throat and tried again. "Why are you driving a Buick today?" she asked. "You scared the shit out of me when you jumped out at us." As she spoke, she looked around at the car. There was a photo of Andy and a woman clipped to the dashboard. It is Andy's car - she realized, but she couldn't imagine why Nathan was driving it.

Crystal spied on Nathan from the corner of her eye. He had a stern expression on his face, and his lips were pressed tightly together as if he was angry. As she watched him, she suddenly remembered that he was going on blind dates. Thus, she reasoned, if anyone had any right to be angry, it was her - and that made her so mad that before long, the grim expression on her face nearly matched the one on Nathan's face. He is such an asshole! - thought Crystal.

Nathan drove Crystal to the Beverly villa, and once they were in the house, he seized her wrist, dragged her into his room, and threw her on the bed. "Damn it! - she thought - Not Again! She raised her head to scold him, but he pressed her down on the bed and would not let her up.

"You!" Crystal pushed him away and shouted, "What the hell?"

Nathan: "Crystal Smith, do you think that no one cares about you? Do you think that you have no family, so you can risk your life whenever you want?"

Crystal was confused by his words. She thought that they sounded too familiar to be original, and a sense of *deja vu* washed over her.

"If so," Nathan continued, "then what the hell am I? A husband by a technicality?" At this moment, anger flamed in his heart, and he wanted to kill Richard for the things he had put Crystal through. How dare that dirty man touch my woman! - he thought. If something had happened to her, he would have never been able to forgive himself for not being there to protect her.

Nathan was sitting on Crystal's chest. He had her hands pinned above her head, and his face was about a foot from hers. It was beet red, and the veins in his forehead were practically pulsing. This was as angry

as Crystal had ever seen Nathan, but beneath the rage, she thought she saw another emotion lurking. Is he afraid? - she wondered - Has he been worrying about me?

Now Crystal finally understood what Nathan had been talking about. Somehow, Nathan had learned about the events from the previous night. Crystal softened her tone, and in a gentle tone of voice, she said, "I'm sorry I didn't tell you. I didn't want you to worry about me."

When Nathan heard that, he was stunned for a moment.

"Normally, I wouldn't have done something so foolhardy," Crystal explained, "But I couldn't stand by and do nothing while they hurt my friend. It won't happen again. I promise."

Nathan frowned. "I want to believe you," he said, "but you don't make it easy..." Crystal opened her eyes wide, and with a look of child-like innocence and a bright smile, she said, "You have my word. If you need me to, I'll even put a stamp on my promise."

Nathan: "A stamp? Huh?"

Crystal suddenly raised her head and kissed Nathan on the lips.

"Is this an invitation?" Nathan said with interest. He smiled as he let her hands go.

Chapter 1566 - 84: Woman You're Playing With Fire Again

Nathan lowered his head to kiss Crystal, but just before their lips touched, she slipped her hand between them. She ran her finger playfully across his lips, smiled, and said, "Don't forget our one-month agreement. You promised me that you'd be good? Can you keep your word?"

Nathan's heart sank, and a frown appeared on his face. His hand lowered, and he lifted her shirt to touch the soft flesh between her bra and her pants, lingering on her cute little belly button. He slipped his hand into her pants and sighed as his fingers touched her soft, sparse pubic hairs. No, he told himself - Be strong. "You are literally killing me," he said as he pulled his hand out of her pants.

"Not literally," Crystal scoffed. "Surely, not literally. You will live. I promise!"

I could take her by force at any time - Nathan reminded himself - but as much as I want her cunt, I want her heart even more! He stared into her stubborn eyes, and his desire to conquer her increased ten-fold. "Before this month is over," he said, "You'll be begging to have me.. You won't be able to restrain yourself. You'll see!"

Crystal smirked and said, "We'll see." Despite her show of attitude, she hadn't expected him to control himself, and she was quite relieved. Nathan did have a point, though. He was good-looking and charming, and at times he was able to put a spell on her so that her body responded to him even when her brain did not want it to. Her biggest fear was that she would give in to him, get pregnant, and have to be a mother at such a young age. After all, she was still going through puberty.

Crystal could feel Nathan's swollen member pressed hard against her pubic mound, and she asked, "Does it hurt when it gets all big and hard like that? I... I am just curious," She stammered after questioning him.

Nathan sighed and said, "He's a beast. After that, he'll calm down, but right now, he's very angry."

Crystal tilted her head, gave Nathan a serious look, and said, "If you can't stand it, you can always say Uncle. Besides, it's not good for your health to restrain yourself for too long."

Nathan snickered and said, "I said you wouldn't be able to restrain yourself, but I didn't expect you to change so quickly." He pressed down harder on her with his swollen member and began to rock up and down, applying more pressure to her wet core, and she moaned as he dry-humped her. "If you want me to break my promise, I can, but you will have to accept the consequences. Woman, you're playing with fire again,"

Crystal was quiet for a while after that, and Nathan continued to hump her. He brought his hand up under her shirt and grasped her breasts, and he was surprised to discover that she wasn't wearing a bra at all. He caressed her breasts, squeezed them, and teased her nipples. Occasionally, Crystal moaned, and she appeared to be lost in the pleasure of his touch, but she was still thinking, considering her options.

Nathan smiled as he pleased her. Finally, he thought she would have to accept that they were doomed to be together after this! He watched her closely, and as he brought her to climax, he slowly pulled the band-aid off of her wounded hand. The three-centimeter-long cut had begun to heal, but the skin around it was white where the adhesive had been, and it occurred to him that she must have gotten it wet.

Crystal frowned and pulled her hand away. He had stopped humping her, but she wasn't done with him yet, so she gripped his buttocks and thrust her pubis against the beast. "Don't stop," she cried. "Please, don't stop!"

"No!" Nathan snapped. He pushed her away and rolled off of her. Then, without another word, he went into the bathroom to get the First Aid Kit. When he returned, he found Crystal in bed, staring blankly at the ceiling. From his angle, she looked adorable and much more like the child that she had been just a few short years ago than the young adult he imagined she would one day be. Her cherub-like lips were slightly parted, and she was pouting. More than anything, she reminded him of being an over-tired adolescent trying to solve a particularly tricky equation.

Nathan walked to the side of the bed, touched her palm, and asked, "Does it hurt?"

Crystal shook her head.

Nathan smiled and put down the medicine box. First, he sterilized her wound with alcohol, and then he applied Polysporin. As he was doing this, she said, "I'd like to ask you something, but you need to promise to tell the truth. Can you do that?"

The question had been begging to be asked for a long time, but until now, Crystal hadn't dared bring it up. On the one hand, she was afraid that he wouldn't tell her the truth. But, on the other hand, he was afraid that he would tell her the truth, but she wouldn't like it.

"What is it?" Nathan asked.

"It's nothing..." Crystal replied.

Based on her hesitant attitude, Nathan guessed that she must be trying to ask him something that she was uncertain about, so he didn't push her.

After a while, Crystal looked away, and tears began to run down her face. "Why did my mom kill herself?" she cried. "They say she was depressed, but she wasn't! She was happy! Or at least she seemed to be... was she actually depressed, but I was too much of a selfish brat to notice?"

Nathan sighed. He knew this day would come, but he was caught off guard because he hadn't expected it to arrive so soon. He finished dressing Crystal's wound, and then he gave her the First Aid Kit. "Here," he said. "Put this away first, and then we'll talk."

Crystal took the box and ran it into the bathroom.

Chapter 1567 - 85: Cut The Chase

As Crystal was putting the First Aid Kit away, she heard Nathan's feet on the stairs. At first, she thought that was strange because he had just said that he would tell her about her Mother. Maybe he thought we would be more comfortable in the living room - thought Crystal, and she followed after him. When she got downstairs, though, she saw that he'd gone outside.

Crystal frowned as she looked out the front window, and she was shocked to see Carlos's BMW parked in the driveway. He was getting out of the car, but Joyce was already halfway to the house.

Crystal gasped - What the fuck are they doing here?!?!?! The last time Carlos had been here was more than ten years ago, and the only reason for his visit was to help finalize the divorce and the division of property between her Father and Mother. Crystal had only been seven at the time, but she'd known why he was there. Why he was visiting today, though, was a complete mystery.

Crystal rushed out of the house to see what was going on, and when Carlos saw her, he called her name. Before he could say anything more, though, Joyce raised her fist in the air and shouted, "Crystal Smith, you dirty bitch! Todd Henry brought you, and in thanks, you're trying to tear him down! You are an ungrateful slut! Do you really think you can buy the Henry Group?"

Joyce rushed towards Crystal, and she was about to slap her across the face.. Before she could follow through, though, Nathan caught her wrist with his left hand. He placed his hand on her chest and shoved her so hard that she was thrown to the ground. Until that moment, Joyce had been so focused on Crystal that she hadn't even seen Nathan. Now her mouth hung open like a fool. "N-Nathan... D- Davis..." she stammered. "I d-didn't s-see you there...."

Joyce struggled to get up, and then she brushed the dirt and grass off her buttocks and the back of her legs. As angry as she was at Crystal, she didn't dare attack her again if Nathan had her back. She turned to look at Carlos, but his face was completely void of emotion, and she could not tell what he was thinking. Then she noticed how tightly his fists were clenched at his side, and she couldn't help but smile. He is angry- she thought - Good! After protecting Crystal for three years, he has every right to be angry!

There was a cold chill in the air, and the tension between the two parties was palpable. Then, suddenly, one of the BMW's back doors opened, and Crystal groaned as she watched Todd step out. "Oh, fuck!" she muttered. Because of the tinted windows, she hadn't seen him.

Todd turned to Joyce and said, "I have no idea why you insist on being so rude. It is embarrassing." Joyce's face turned red from anger and embarrassment as Todd turned to Nathan. "Are you going to invite me in?" he asked. "I have something to discuss with you." Nathan nodded and gestured for him to follow him into the house.

Crystal made eye contact with Nathan, and he comforted her with his eyes. Then he took her hand and led her into the house.

Once they were in the living room, Crystal and Nathan sat in the love chair, and everyone else sat on the couch opposite them. Nathan sat with his legs crossed with one arm on the armrest and the other rested possessively on Crystal's thigh. He looked calm and confident, and he seemed to care very little for whatever business Todd was here to discuss.

Nathan looked at Todd, smiled, and said, "Cut to the chase, Mr. Henry. I don't have all day. So why are you here?"

Todd: "I'd like to discuss the acquisition..." Nathan: "Is there a problem? Can you not afford the terms we agreed to?"

"It seems that I cannot," Todd admitted. "Our stocks plummeted this morning, and they are unlikely to recover fully. Our shareholders are in a panic. Would you consider releasing me from my contractual obligations? I am begging you for mercy."

Crystal smirked. The sound of her Father groveling was like music to her ears. The Henry Group was in trouble, but it was Todd's fault, and once the company hit rock bottom, Brilliant Group would be in the perfect position to swoop in and purchase all of the shares for next to nothing. After that happened, her father would be her employee! Oh, how the mighty have fallen! - thought Crystal.

"You are talking to the wrong person."

Nathan turned to Crystal and said, "This is your department."

Crystal crossed her arms beneath her breasts, and her smirk turned into a shark-like Cheshire grin. "I'm listening," she said.

Todd turned to Crystal, and she could see the fear in his eyes. After what he had done to her, he knew that she had every right to hate him and no good reason to show him mercy. He had hoped to bypass Crystal and talk directly to Nathan by coming to the house, but he had failed to comprehend the amount of authority he had vested in Crystal. And from the look in Nathan's eyes, he could see how much he loved her. "Crystal," Todd pleaded. "Daddy was wrong. I shouldn't have treated you the way that I did. Can you forgive me?"

Crystal glared at her Father. She knew that all he cared about was the deal and his second family. She hummed and hawed for a moment as she pretended to think the matter over. Then, in a low tone of voice, she said, "I have no Father. My Father abandoned me sixteen years ago. He has a new son and

daughter now. If you think that you are my Father for some reason, I hate to break it to you; you are mistaken."

Joyce shook her fist at Crystal. "Crystal Smith!" she hissed. "Watch your tongue!"

Crystal smiled coldly and said, "This is my home, who said you could speak? Whenever you open your mouth, even your Father is embarrassed."

"That's not true!" Joyce shouted. Crystal shrugged but said nothing, and her calm demeanor infuriated her half-sister. Joyce began to stand up, but Todd put a hand on her to stop her. "That will be enough for you," he said firmly. "Sit down and shut up! The adults are talking now."

Joyce promptly sat back down, crossed her arms beneath her ample breasts, and began to pout. The sight of which made even Carlos laugh.

Chapter 1568 - 86: Was I Too Hard On Him?

Once the laughter died down, Todd looked at Crystal from across the room and forced himself to smile. "I understand where you're coming from," he admitted, "and you have every right to hate me. But this is business. Please tell me what you want, and if it is something that I can do, I will do it. But, as you already know, I am at your mercy."

"Anything I want?" Crystal asked.

Todd: "If it is possible."

Crystal: "I want my mother back. Is that possible?"

"Crystal," Todd whined. "You know I can't bring your mother back, but couldn't you help me- for her sake...?"

"For her sake!" Crystal scoffed.. "My mother wouldn't give a shit about what would happen to the Henry Group, and she would be disgusted if she knew how you'd stolen my inheritance from me! My Grandfather's will is clear. You do not have the right to the stocks he left me!"

Todd: "What's done is done. Can't we leave the past in the past? It's meaningless to talk about irrevocable things. Crystal, I know I owe your mother and you a lot, but you could give me a chance to make it up to you!"

Crystal looked at her Father. He looked a lot older than he had the last time she'd seen him, and he wasn't nearly as cocksure. She finally shook her head. Nothing he did now could ever make up for what he'd done.

Suddenly, Todd fell to his knees in front of Crystal and Nathan.

"Dad! What are you doing?" Joyce cried.

Carlos hurriedly stood up and tried to lift Todd, but he was pushed away.

Todd looked up at Crystal and said, "Crystal, if you don't forgive Daddy, Daddy will not stand up. I will remain here like this until you forgive me."

Joyce: "Crystal Smith, Daddy is kneeling before you. Are you satisfied? Aren't you afraid of going to hell for this?"

Crystal smirked at her half-sister. "He can remain on his knees until hell freezes over," she scoffed. "Besides, penitence looks on him!" Crystal patted her Father on the head as if he were a dog. Then she stood up and walked towards the stairs. Behind her, Joyce began to curse, but Crystal paid her no mind. She went up to her room and closed the door behind her.

It was not in her to forgive their old man.

Once Crystal was in her room, she sat on the windowsill with her chin against her knees and grinned. It felt good to have power over her family finally. Now, no one could bully her, and if she wanted something, she could take it, and no one could stop her!

Crystal felt tired, so she laid in bed, and she quickly fell asleep. As she slept, she dreamt that Nathan had climbed into bed with her, and when she woke up, he was beside her. He had been watching her and lightly running his fingers up and down her arm.

Crystal was startled when she saw Nathan, and he apologized and began to get up, but she said, "No. Stay. Please. I am afraid to be alone," She didn't know why, but she was suddenly afraid to be alone. Something about her Father's submission made her uneasy. Was I too hard on him? - she asked herself.

After a few minutes, Crystal fell back asleep in Nathan's arms, and this time she dreamt of her mother. Her mother had jumped from the room, and her remains had been a bloody mess. And when she next awoke, she was drenched in sweat.

After such a terrible dream, Crystal was glad to have Nathan beside her. She wrapped her arm around him and held him tight. Nathan hugged her back, and she strained her neck so that she could kiss him, first on the mouth and then on the cheek, neck, earlobe, collarbone, and chest. There was sexual energy between them that was undeniable, but this exchange had nothing to do with desire and everything to do with giving and receiving comfort. She just wanted to feel comfortable, and the heat coming from Nathan make her feel a bit better. Nathan groaned, and his lower body was starting to react.

"Crystal, stop, I'm afraid if we continue doing this thing, I might lose control,"

She loosened her arms around his neck and snuggled herself under his armpit.

In the Hospital - Eric Bush was the worst kind of patient. He'd trashed his room. There was hospital equipment, medicine, and pillows everywhere, and Antony had reached the end of his rope with him. In his opinion, Eric was acting like a spoiled brat. He'd driven away every nurse assigned to work with him, and nobody dared enter his room.

Antony sat on the sofa with his legs on the coffee table. He watched Eric with a concerned expression on his face. Eric had a cervical dislocation and was in traction, but Antony worried that he might have brain damage. I'll have to bring it up with the doctor - thought Eric.

Eric turned to Antony. "Who's the new headmaster at Olman University?" he asked.

Antony frowned. "That's a random question, but I'll look it up for you." He pulled out his phone, and after a quick Google search, said, "His name is Owen Lane. It looks like he used to work out of Saint University, but he was recently transferred. Why do you ask?"

Eric: "I want you to contact him and arrange for me to audit Crystal's classes."

Antony: "Give me a break. Don't you think you're too old to be an auditor?"

Eric: "Up yours! I'm still young, okay? Besides, I look like I'm eighteen or nineteen."

Antony laughed. "Sure, sure, buddy!"

Eric: "That's enough! You work for me, so do what I say! I don't need your shit!"

Antony: "Fine. I'll do it. But there's something you need to know: Nathan Davis is her substitute teacher... Can you manage to sit in on one of his classes without causing a scene?"

Chapter 1569 - 87: Why Is It Impossible?

When Eric heard that Nathan Davis was one of Crystal's teachers, his face turned red from anger. He grabbed his necklace and gripped the pendant so hard that the veins on the back of his hand bulged. "That's... impossible," Eric murmured.

"Why is it impossible?" Antony asked. "It's true. Why anyone would want to be a substitute professor at a university when they don't need to be, though, is beyond me. God knows what Nathan thought when he accepted the position."

"Why need to know why anyone does anything?" Antony shrugged. "Anyway," he said, "do you still want me to contact the headmaster?"

Eric scowled. "Don't be dumb!" he shouted. "If my brothers know that I was sitting in on Nathan Davis's classes, my reputation would never recover!" There was a moment of awkward silence between them, and then Eric said, "Bring me a selection of the latest men's wear."

Antony could not keep up with Eric's trains of thought, but he knew better than to argue, and within the hour, he was able to fill the room with a large ensemble of trendy outfits. He summoned the nurses and bodyguards and asked them for their advice, offering a reward of \$100,000 to the person with the best taste.

When the young nurses heard about the contest, they practically lost their minds from excitement, and those that were at home resting rushed into work at tout de suite. They were given an hour to do their best, and then Eric selected the top ten outfits.

Meanwhile, Antony looked into Crystal's timetable. After hanging up the phone, he turned to Eric and said, "She has lessons tomorrow."

Eric smiled and pulled up his phone so that he could send her a text message. "Hey, girl," he typed. And he pressed SEND. He didn't expect a reply, but it had felt good to send the message, and Eric began to giggle like a mad man.

The way that Eric was looking at his phone reminded Antony of a look he'd seen in the eyes of Jeffrey Dahmer one time when he'd been reading the newspaper and gooseflesh appeared in his arms. Dahmer was a serial rapist and murderer. Eric is such a pervert - Antony thought.

When Crystal woke up the next morning, she was still in Nathan's arms, and he was still asleep. She stared at his face and couldn't help but think that he was indeed the best-looking man she had ever seen. He was even better looking than many famous movie stars. His shoulders were broad. His chest was muscular, and his breathing was deep and even. She loved him as much as he might have wanted to take her by force, he had always been able to get himself under control. He was a gentleman that way.

Crystal touched his eyebrows, nose, and lips, and as her fingers caressed his chin, his eyes suddenly opened. Crystal quickly withdrew her hand, but Nathan smiled and seized her wrist. "What were you doing?" he asked.

Crystal sighed and said, "If you can kiss me, I should be able to touch you. Don't you think so?"

"You can touch me," Nathan replied. "But there are better places to touch. Don't you think so?" Nathan led her hand down the length of his body, and when he pressed it against his flaccid organ, it came to life instantly.

Crystal squealed and drew back her hand. His hard member had doubled its length and girth in seconds, going from soft and malleable to strong and hard. The twenty-centimeter beast was hot as a hot pan and as hard as an iron pillar. "I didn't know it did that!" she said, with a mix of fear and awe.

"That's nothing," Nathan laughed. He kissed her passionately, and then he pulled away. "Time for breakfast," he said.

After breakfast, Nathan drove Crystal to school, and on the way, she received a text from Serenity. It said, "Hey, Girl. I'm going to be late. I just woke up. A group of people played drinking games until 3 a.m., and my boss made me stay late to accommodate them. Then I ended up sleeping through my alarm clock. Save me a seat in the class, okay?"

Crystal: "I will, but I don't think you should be working at the club. Your grades are starting to slip. Why don't you let me help you with your Dad's medical expenses?" Crystal had wanted to offer Serenity money for a long time, but she didn't want to damage her friend's pride.

Serenity: "Thank you, but no. If you helped me now, you'd end up helping me forever, and that wouldn't be right."

Crystal smiled at the message and wrote, "Why not let me help you forever? I have more money than I could spend in a dozen lifetimes!"

Serenity: "Are you cursing me for not being able to get married?"

Crystal was shocked by her friend's unexpected and seemingly random reply, and she didn't know what to say to that. A moment passed, and when she got another message from Serenity, she felt somewhat relieved.

Serenity: "No. Sorry. I didn't mean that. I know you are just trying to help."

Serenity and Crystal went to the 2nd Canteen as usual at noon, but a crowd of grumpy, hungry students blocked their way.

"What's going on?" Crystal asked. She looked in the window. There were people seated and eating, but everyone else was being kept out.

"I don't know," someone said. "I just got a text from my friend, though, and he says the other canteens are open, so I'm going to find somewhere else to eat!"

Upon hearing the news, the students began to make their way towards the various other canteens on campus. When almost all the students were gone, Crystal and Serenity looked at each other, but confusion was all they saw in each other's eyes.

Suddenly, a man in a black suit appeared on the other side of the window. He opened the door, looked at Crystal, and said, "Miss Smith, please come in."

Crystal retreated half a step and said, "No....We can go to another canteen."

The man in black said, "Don't be afraid, Master Bush sent me to invite you and your friend in."

Chapter 1570 - 88: I'm Creeped Out

Crystal looked at the man in black with an expression of shocked dismay on her face. "What is Eric doing out of the hospital?" she asked. "When I left him, he was in traction!!!"

"I am sure that Master Bush can answer any questions you have," the man replied. "If you will follow me..."

"Fine," Crystal sighed. "Lead the way."

To the left of the meal line, several hundred square meters had been emptied of people. Eric was the exception, and he was sitting near the middle of the room with his back to them. He was wearing a white shirt with black borders, a pair of black casual pants, and British shoes. As they drew near to him, he stood up and turned around to greet them.. He smiled and said, "Sweetheart, I'm glad that you agreed to join me!"

Crystal stared intently at the back of Eric's neck. "Why aren't you in the hospital?" she asked suspiciously.

"I want to have lunch with you," he replied. "Is that a crime?"

Crystal: "That's bullshit! What's your deal?" Eric shrugged and said, "The weather is good today, so I decided to take a walk. I happened to be passing by, and I thought that if I bought you a simple meal, it would be a good way of thanking you for saving my life."

"A simple meal?" Crystal scoffed. "You take over a whole cafeteria and call it a simple meal?"

"You should be honored," Eric said.

"Honored?" Crystal laughed. She said, "We both know that I would never have agreed to go out with you, so you had to resort to this." She spread her hands wide. "I don't feel honored. I'm creeped out!"

Eric put his hands in his trousers pockets and stepped closer to her. "I wanted to buy you a meal," he said seriously, "but I also need to talk to you about Richard..."

Crystal was stunned for a second. She looked directly into Eric's eyes and said, "Tell me."

Eric turned his head to the table and chairs that he'd arranged. He'd covered the table with a white embroidered tablecloth, and there was a vase full of orange Juliet roses on a beautiful display, which was simple but romantic. "Sit down," he said. "I'll tell you while we eat."

Eric knew that cafeteria food was shit, so he'd invited a local chef to come in and prepare something special for them. As soon as Eric had stood up, the cafeteria staff had begun to plate and serve their food. It all looked delicious, but Crystal was determined not to be derailed. She smirked and said, "Say it now or shut up."

Eric was speechless. He'd had his ducks all lined up, but it didn't seem to matter because he was shooting blanks. He couldn't believe how easily Crystal rejected his advances. Eric knew that the shortest way to a woman's heart was through her cunt, and it occurred to him that things would go much smoother between them if he got brave and raped her.

Unfortunately, this was neither the time nor the place for such intimacy.

Eric sighed and said, "Richard has hired a lawyer, and he is one of the best lawyers in the country. You are likely to be charged for what you did two nights ago at the club. Things might get out of control. You have to be careful."

"He wants to press charges?" Crystal had never thought about such repercussions. Richard had promised that he would get his revenge at the hospital, but she thought that he was threatening her with violence.

Eric nodded casually, and Crystal asked him, "What should I do?"

A smug smile appeared on Eric's face. He was back in the driver's seat, or at least he thought that he was. "Don't worry," he said.

"I've got your back." Eric drew a cigarette from a pack he kept in his pocket, lit the tip, and took a slow drag. He held it in his lungs for a few seconds, and then he produced a series of circular balls from his mouth. It was a trick that his father had taught him.

Crystal frowned and waved the smoke away in irritation, and her brows furrowed. "You would do that for me?" she asked suspiciously. "But why? We don't even know each other. And if you think I would exchange sexual favors for legal help, you are sorely mistaken." Crystal knew Eric's type. He could have almost any woman he wanted, but it was the woman that he couldn't have that he desired. It had nothing to do with her and everything to do with the chase. Until he had her, he wouldn't give up. Once he had her, though, he would lose interest.

"Do you even regret what happened?" Eric asked.

"Of course, I do!" Crystal chuckled and said, "If the lighting had been better, I wouldn't have missed his carotid artery, and he would have bled out on the floor."

From the tone of Crystal's voice, it would have been easy to mistake her statement for a joke, an attempt at dark humor-while from the look in her eyes, Eric could tell that she was dead serious, and a cold chill ran down his back.

"But I don't regret hurting Richard," Crystal added. "And I don't need your help."

Richard: "It's your funeral. Anyway, now that is out of the way, would you and Serenity care to join me for a meal? There is a lot of food. It would be a shame for it to go to waste."

"I think we'll go," Crystal replied. "I wouldn't want you to think that this kind of behavior is acceptable."

"Have it your way," Eric grumbled. "One more thing before you go, though: "Are you still supporting the mall's charity; the Angel Fund is what it's called. If so, you might want to call it quits. It's not good to be so generous. You might get taken advantage of."

Crystal ignored this advice and said, "Shouldn't you be getting back to the hospital? After all this exertion, there is no way of knowing where your cervical spondylopathy levels are. Then, once you are fully recovered, you can get back to the girls who want you."

"I only want you," Eric said. "I don't care about those other girls. You are the first person in my life that has taken me seriously."

When Crystal heard this, her arms broke out in gooseflesh. She rolled her eyes toward him and said, "Goodbye!"

Chapter 1571 - 89: What's With You Today?

Crystal turned to go, But Eric grabbed her wrist with his right hand. "Wait," he said. "I have something for you." Eric let go of her wrist, and then he took a choker and a pendant from his pocket. The pendant

was a glass eagle with extended wings, and the choker was made from black leather. Before Crystal could react, he reached forward and clasped it around her neck.

Crystal stepped back with a frightened expression on her face. She touched the collar and tried to remove it, but it would not come off. "What the fuck?" she growled.

"You won't be able to take it off," Eric explained. "It is locked, and I have the only key."

Crystal: "But why?"

Eric: "As long as you wear it, you are under my protection."

Crystal: "I don't need or want your protection, nor will I wear your collar. I am not a dog that you can lead on a leash - and if you don't take it off, I will figure out a way to get it off on my own!"

Eric: "You'll regret it if you do."

"I doubt it." Crystal laughed. She turned to Serenity, and she was about to say that it was time to go, but the words caught in her throat. While she'd been arguing with Eric, her friend had taken a seat, and now she was eating. On her plate, there was a salmon steak, asparagus, and basmati rice. "You traitor!" she hissed.

Serenity looked up, and there was a guilty expression on her face. "I'm sorry," she said. "But look at this food! How can you resist the temptation? You are a stronger woman than I am."

Crystal: "You should be ashamed of yourself!"

Serenity: "I'm not, though; this meal is fit for a queen. It is the first time I have eaten anything so fine. If I didn't seize the opportunity, I would have regretted it for the rest of my life!"

Crystal frowned and said, "Fine, you win." Then she went and sat beside her friend and began to eat. Eric had already eaten, and while he watched the girls, he texted back and forth with Antony.

Antony had picked Eric up from the hospital in a pink Lamborghini. It was one of two models that had been built. They were designed explicitly for Eric, and now there was only one in existence. He'd smashed the other into a van the previous day.

Antony was waiting for him with the car in the parking lot. After the meal, Eric planned to bring Crystal outside and present the car to her as a gift. The car was full of helium balloons. When the door opened, the balloons would fly out and create such a romantic scene that Crystal would be overcome by Eric's chivalry - that was the plan. He still hadn't figured out how he would get her outside.

Eric took another cigarette from his pocket, lit it, and began to leisurely smoke. He felt like he was stuck between a rock and a hard place, and smoking helped him think.

Suddenly his phone buzzed, and he pulled it out of his pocket. He'd received another text message from Antony. It said: "How are things going? Should I send someone in to drag her out by force?"

Eric: "That shouldn't be necessary. I should be able to get her out of her own volition."

Antony: "Master Bush, do you think she is playing tricks with you? Women like to play tricks on men. It is in their nature. They can't even help it."

Eric: "I would love to be the victim of one of her tricks!"

Antony: "What if she already has a boyfriend?"

Eric frowned and put his cigarette out on the table. He thought for a second, and then he wrote: "So what if she does? If she were married, I would destroy the marriage to get her. That is how badly I want her!"

Antony: "Your words shock me. Crystal is an 18-year-old girl. There is no way that she's married. That being said, she may have a boyfriend. Unfortunately, I couldn't find out more about her throughout my investigation..."

Eric: "Once this business is over, can you arrange to have her followed. Apart from the limited knowledge we have that she is an orphan and that she comes from a rich family, we know next to nothing about her past. But there is no reason why we can't bring ourselves up to date by tracking her present course."

Antony: "She wouldn't like that..."

Eric clenched his fists when he read Antony's message, and it took all of his strength to keep his anger in check. He looked at his phone, reread the message, and wrote: "I DON'T CARE!!!! JUST DO IT." Antony's protective attitude towards Crystal was starting to get on Eric's nerves. I will have to address that - Eric thought unhappily. Antony was in Number One, and he took no pleasure from reprimanding him.

Suddenly, Serenity turned to Crystal and said, "Once we're done eating, I'd like to get some fresh air. We still have some time before class starts. Do you want to join me?"

Crystal thought about it for a minute, and then she smiled. "I think that's a great idea," she said.

When Eric heard this, his heart nearly jumped for joy. Finally, his prayers had been answered!

He nodded to the girls and said, "It has been nice spending time with you both, but I should get back to the hospital."

There was a flower garden in front of the school, and several benches were placed in and around it. Students went here when they needed some peace. Within the garden, there was also a series of interconnected paths.

"Everything is so beautiful here," Serenity said. She knelt to pick up a flower and held it up to Crystal. "Here, put this behind your ear. I'll take a picture."

Crystal scowled and said, "I'd rather not. You know that I don't like taking pictures."

Serenity put the flower behind Crystal's ear anyway and snapped a picture. Then, she laughed and said, "That one's going to Professor Davis!"

Crystal's brow furrowed. "What's with you today?" she asked. "This is the second time you've betrayed me today!"

Chapter 1572 - 90: You Are A Spoiled Brat

Crystal tried to grab the phone so that she could delete the photo, but Serenity pulled it away and stuffed it in her bra so that it was safe.

Crystal glared at her friend and said, "You are such a bitch!"

"I am not!" Serenity laughed and said, "I am looking out for your best interests. You'll see!"

Suddenly, a gentle hand fell on Crystal's shoulder, and she was so startled that she jumped a half-inch off the ground and squealed. She turned around, and when she saw who had touched her, her face turned red from anger. "Jessica!" she hissed. Her hands clenched and unclenched at her side. "What the fuck are you doing here?!?!?"

Jessica smiled sweetly and asked, "Have you had lunch yet?"

Crystal smirked and said, "I know you don't care about my eating habits, so let's skip the pleasantries. Why are you here? Does this have something to do with the Henry Group's stocks?"

Jessica's mouth twitched, and Crystal chuckled. She didn't know why Jessica thought she could succeed where Todd had failed..

There was nothing but cruelty in Crystal's Stepmother's eyes, but she remained composed, graceful, and ladylike. "Crystal," she said. "I know that you are reluctant to go easy on your father. That's understandable. But aren't you afraid of the family's company falling into the hands of strangers? If that happened, we would be ruined, and our legacy would be forgotten."

"You shouldn't worry so much." Crystal laughed and said, "Look at the lines around your eyes. Your worries are causing you to age prematurely, and no amount of Botox will be able to fix the damage you will do to your face if you can't get your nose out of your husband's business."

Jessica's lower lip trembled, and she touched the corner of her eye. "I didn't come here to fight with you," she said. "Your Dad had a heart attack last night. He was taken to the hospital by ambulance, and he is still in the intensive care unit. Your cruelty is killing him. If you still have a conscience, you should show him mercy."

"Should I show him mercy?" Crystal sneered.

"That's rich! Where was he on the days that preceded my mother's suicide? He was gone and never showed mercy to my mother,"

"Your parents were separated," Jessica argued. "And they had been for a decade. Todd had no idea that your mother was depressed! He was busy taking care of the business that time,"

"She was depressed because of what you and my father did to her!" Crystal shouted. All around them, people were beginning to stare, but it was as if the two women were in a world of their own, and they paid the gawking students no mind. "Look at me!"

Jessica glared at Crystal. "What?"

Crystal: "You don't matter, and nothing you could say will have any effect on the way I do business. So I suggest you shouldn't touch your finger on the fire, it will get burnt,"

In a voice that was barely audible, Jessica said, "You are a spoiled brat!" And then she slapped Crystal hard across the face, so hard that her vision blurred, and there was a ringing in her ears.

Crystal lifted her head and gave Jessica a look so dirty that it caused the older woman to recoil. Crystal touched the spot where she had been struck, and then she said, "I will make you pay for that, but not just you. My father will also pay, as will the Henry Group, and when it comes to assigning blame for the devastation that I will cause, Todd will know why I did what I will have done. Just wait and see."

"You think you're smart!" Jessica roared - or tried to roar. Her words had lost any power that they might have had. She was like a balloon that had lost its air, and the fire had gone out of her eyes.

"I am smart," Crystal replied. "Plus, I know how dumb you are. I know you promised Todd an heir, even though you are past the age of fertility." She smirked. "That was dumb. "Dumb. Dumb. Dumb. That's what you are."

"Shut up!" Jessica screamed. Tears were running down her face, and her makeup was smeared. Crystal had broken her and made her ugly.

Jessica tried to slap Crystal again, but this time she caught her arm. "You've lost all power over me," she said casually. "Not that you ever had any real power over me. Now, though, everyone can see what a loser you are. And have always been. You've never been anything more than an old man's mistress."

Crystal was about to walk away, but what Jessica said next made her blood run cold, and her face turned white. She turned around slowly, looked her stepmother in the eyes, and said, "What did you just say?"

Jessica wiped the tears from her eyes, smiled, and in a level tone of voice, said, "If you can't let bygones be bygones and treat your father with a little decency, I will take your mother's ashes, and I will take your Grandfather's ashes, and I will flush them down the toilet. Now, what do you think about that? Not so smart now, are you?"

Crystal gasped. "How dare you?!?!?"

Jessica: "You've driven me to it."

Crystal stared at Jessica. She wanted to pick up a rock and smash her stepmother's head in.

"I do not give in to threats," she said evenly. "I retaliate. So, if I were you, I'd watch my mouth."

Suddenly, Crystal felt Serenity's hand on her arm. "Let's get going," her friend said. "Class is about to begin again."

Crystal nodded and allowed herself to be led back in the direction of the school.

As they went up the steps, they heard Joyce shout, "I may be past the age of fertility, but your mother couldn't be pregnant her whole life!"

Crystal ignored the woman's comments, but later they haunted her. After all, if her mother couldn't be pregnant, then she wasn't her biological mother. But if that was the case, why did they look so much alike?