

Night of Love 121

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Call Me Your Darling

The entire room fell silent.

The men who had been drinking and playing poker fell silent to look at Crystal.

Audrey remained seated by Henry's side, making it look as if she was the queen of the area.

Crystal was stumped.

If she were to say that she was joining in on the fun, someone would point out that she was not invited to the event.

Yet, the relationship she had with Henry was not enough for her to say that she was there to catch him red-handed in cheating.

Zachary had a fight with her a while back, so he was the first to target her. In a sarcastic tone, he said, "Oh my, what winds brought you here, Crystal? Why don't you stick around and have some fun with us?"

Crystal turned to Henry, who was dressed casually that day in a black shirt and a pair of black pants.

At that moment, he was sitting on the couch, smoking.

The promiscuous way he acted was something Crystal had never witnessed.

Henry glanced at Crystal, but he did not do anything to help her out of the awkward situation. Perhaps he was unhappy.

All of a sudden, Audrey leaned over to peck a kiss on Zachary. With a half-smile on her face, she said, "Zachary, stop teasing Miss Winters. I doubt a girl like her can be this uninhibited."

Crystal tightened her fists.

Again, someone was implying that she was reserved and not a good sport. Are Audrey and Henry parroting each other?

Henry's gaze was dark the entire time.

After a while of staring at Crystal, he finally said, "Crystal, go back first." His words embarrassed Crystal. It made her seem as if she had come to catch him red-handed in cheating but did not have the ability to actually confront him on the act.

Zachary snorted, feeling amused and vindicated.

Right then, someone else said, "All right, all right. Let's not pressure Crystal anymore. Let's go back to what we were doing before." With that said, the scene turned lively again.

Just then, a voice softly said, "I can be uninhibited!"

It was so soft it nearly went unnoticeable to everyone.

Nevertheless, Henry heard it, and he knew that Crystal was the one who spoke.

Narrowing his eyes, he ordered in a sterner voice, "Go back first, Crystal."

No one dared to speak after that, for even a fool could tell that Henry was upset.

They guessed that it was because Crystal was humiliating him by not heeding his words.

Then, Seth's voice broke through the silence. Chuckling, he said, "I'm sure Crystal can be uninhibited if that's what she says."

He then pulled Crystal to his side and filled a glass of red wine for her.

"The loser will have to drink. If you win, you can make any request to anyone. There aren't any restrictions on this."

Henry hissed, "Seth!"

Seth chortled and asked, "Henry, are you the one who's reserved instead? Audrey's already contributed plenty of kisses, but why can't you do this when it's Crystal? Haha! I know, I know. She's yours, so you feel protective toward her, right?"

At—that, Henry glanced at Crystal.

Putting out his cigarette, he leaned forward and uttered, "Let's do this."

It was a simple game of comparing the numbers on the cards.

In the first round, Zachary won. Though he was on bad terms with Crystal, he did not dare to take any risks with the ambiguity of Henry's attitude toward Crystal.

Thus, he chose to kiss Audrey instead.

It was a passionate kiss that made those who looked at them turn red in the face.

After the kiss, Audrey giggled and said to Henry, "If I win, I'm going to kiss you!"

Henry ignored her.

Crystal had gotten the card with the smallest number, so she drank half a glass of red wine.

She was fair, and when she downed half a glass of red wine, a hint of red crept onto her face, making her rosy-checked and even prettier than before. There was no way Seth, who was sitting beside her, would not be tempted by her looks. The interest he had for her was visible in his eyes.

Even a blind man would be able to see it.

Coincidentally, Seth won the next round.

The room turned quiet.

Oh darn. I guess drama's about to unfold, some of the people in the room thought.

Henry threw his card onto the table and turned to gaze at Crystal.

Before Crystal could react to the situation, Seth hunched over to hover over her, his hands propping him up beside her head.

In the next second, he gently brushed the tip of his nose against Crystal's.

Crystal could only look at him helplessly.

Her lashes were lightly fluttering, and the tips of her ears were flushed pink, tempting Seth to get closer to her.

His gaze darkened.

Robert, who was sitting in the corner, flicked the ashes off his cigarette and mused, If I were Seth, I'd kiss Crystal even if it means having my legs broken by Henry

Despite Robert's four-year relationship with Crystal, he had never known what her lips tasted like,

Everyone thought that Seth would not be able to hold himself back from kissing Crystal—only Crystal could see the gentle way he was looking at her.

Seth swallowed. He truly, truly, wanted to kiss her.

But he did not. Instead, he leaned toward her ear and whispered, "I'd like to hear you call me your darling."

The room went quiet again.

With how dark Henry's expression was, no one dared to speak.

Things would be less tense if Seth had just given Crystal a peck. He had crossed the line in asking Crystal to call him her darling. How was Henry going to lay by Crystal's side on the same bed from then on?

Clearing his throat, Zachary said, "Hey, Seth, that's enough."

He then shot Seth a look, asking him to quit it,

Seth lifted his head to peek at Henry, a smile that did not reach his eyes on his face. "Henry said. he's fine with anything."

Henry did not respond to that.

He merely lowered his head to light his cigarette and slowly blew out billows of smoke.

Audrey laughed.

Ha! Crystal probably wants to get Henry's attention, but too bad for her, these games are trivial matters in our circle. It's easy to call someone your darling since it's just all an act. Henry wouldn't care. In the end, Crystal is the only one that will be embarrassed.

Right then, Seth lowered his head again, almost pinning down Crystal save for the fact that he was not actually touching her.

His gaze and voice were soft as he repeated, "Crystal, call me your darling."

Sure enough, Crystal had drunk enough liquor to play along with him.

She gazed right into Seth's eyes as if Seth was the only person in the entire world she could see- as if Seth was the only one she loved since the beginning of time.

Parting her red lips, Crystal said in a low, seductive voice, "Seth, my d-

Before she could say the last word out loud, someone grabbed her hand and pulled her into their

In the next instance, Henry towed Crystal toward the doorway.

The only words he uttered to the others were, "Put this on my tab."

Silence ensued.

Seth tidied himself before shrugging at the others with a smile.

"I told you so. Henry can't bring himself to play along with this. Now that Crystal's gone, Audrey. why don't you call me your darling instead?"

Audrey's face was ashen.

She never thought that Henry would actually care about Crystal to that extent.

I thought he loved me. If he can see me kiss others, why can't he stand hearing Crystal calling someone else her darling?

Once Henry brought Crystal outside, Crystal sobered up from the night breeze.

She then tried to pry away his hand, but he had a tight grip on her. Upon reaching the parking lot, he shoved her into his gold Bentley Continental.

However, he did not drive off right away.

Instead, he gripped the steering wheel and adamantly stared ahead.

"Was Melora the one who brought you here?"

Crystal was feeling down, so she turned her head away and ignored him.

Turning around, Henry studied her side profile for a while. He did not know if it was just, him, but she seemed to be growing prettier with each passing day. Every time he looked at her, he would be taken aback in a different way.

In the end, he stepped on the accelerator and brought them out of the parking lot.

Crystal thought that he was going to drive back to the condominium, but he went down two streets and came to a stop before a nearby five-star hotel instead.

"Get down."

After unbuckling his seat belt, he walked around the car to her side.

Crystal knew what he wanted to do—sleep with her.

But she did not want it.

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If Not Him.

Crystal refused to get down from the car as she remained seated in her spot, looking upward at him.

There was a perpetual look of sorrow etched on her smooth face, and her eyes bore a permanent hint of moisture as if on the verge of tears.

Yet, Henry bent over to lift her into his arms.

“I’ll carry you if you don’t want to walk.”

Fearing embarrassment, Crystal told him to let her down. “I don’t want to be a part of your scandals.”

At that, Henry put her down.

He continued staring at her, raking his gaze from her cheeks to her shoulders, then to her dress.

After a long beat, he hoarsely said, “You’re wearing a nice dress.”

Hearing that, Crystal flushed crimson with rage.

She had been by his side for a long time, so she more or less figured out that he had a high sex drive. Any time she dressed a little nicer, he would be turned on and would want to get intimate with her.

Crystal was not at all honored by that, however.

At the end of the day, she was just a toy to him—Audrey was the one he truly treasured.

When they were at the hotel reception, Henry took out his identification and a few thousand in cash.

The receptionist sneaked a glance at him when she was registering his details,

Henry was a famous man in Barnwood, and he was the top bachelor in the city. However, she had heard that he had a girlfriend. Thus, she guessed that the pretty woman beside him had to be his girlfriend.

With nosy thoughts swirling in her head, the receptionist passed Henry a keycard.

“The keycard to three–six–zero–one. Enjoy your stay, Mr. Miller.”

Henry took the keycard from her.

Despite being in a hotel and about to engage in a private activity, Henry remained unbothered by the gazes of the others.

In contrast, it was Crystal’s first time being in a hotel with a man. She was stiff and awkward from the moment she stepped into the lobby.

Once they were in the elevator, Henry pinned her against the wall and grabbed her chin before kissing her.

Crystal was unable to avoid him, for every time she shifted away, he would press his knee against her.

Crystal's body went weak.

Henry chuckled softly.

Both were panting heavily by the end of the kiss, and the veins by the end of Crystal's brows were even throbbing faintly.

Henry reached out to gently touch the spot.

All of a sudden, he recalled the deep gaze Crystal had cast Seth earlier back at the club when she was in Seth's arms.

A sense of discomfort swelled in his chest, and as he placed his forehead against hers, he asked, "Would you have called Seth your darling if I didn't take you away from the club?"

At that, Crystal opened her eyes and fixed her unfocused gaze on him.

It took her a while before she could digest what he asked her. Knowing that she could not escape the topic, she decided to make him ill at ease.

Hugging Henry, she leaned closer to the crook of his neck and whispered, "Of course."

Henry stiffened.

Crystal let go of him and leaned against the wall instead. "If not him, then who? You?"

It was clear that she was provoking him, but Henry still fell for it.

There were numerous women who wanted to sleep with him, but he was not interested in any save for Crystal. They had done it many times now, but he still found himself burning up every time he locked eyes with her watery orbs.

It was a sensation that Audrey could never let him experience.

Audrey was gorgeous, too, but there was something aggressive about her beauty. Furthermore, their past experience meant that Henry had never fantasized about sleeping with her or felt impulsive around her.

Crystal's beauty was tender and soft, enticing him to hold her tight in his arms.

Alas, the elevator they were in was a public space, so he had to hold himself back.

All he did was caress her face, staring at her with such intensity it was as if he was trying to take in every inch of her face.

They did nothing, but the temperature in the elevator was rising.

With a chime, the elevator doors slid open.

Henry held Crystal's hand and opened the door to their suite.

He then carried her to the floor-to-ceiling window before switching on just one night lamp to drink in the sight of her in the dim light.

After what seemed like cons, he cupped her face and kissed her.

Right in the middle of their intimacy, Crystal abruptly turned away and started struggling.

She felt wronged, still.

What does this mean? He's always flirting with Audrey, but he'll come to me whenever he has physical needs to be fulfilled.

Henry continued kissing her chin as he muttered, "What's the matter? Weren't we fine a moment ago?"

Crystal rested her head against the glass and squeezed out, "I wasn't looking for you tonight."

"I know, but does that matter? Do you not want it? Crystal, you want it too. That's what your body is telling me."

Henry was particularly aggressive when it came to sex, and Crystal could not stop him from getting his way.

Soon, they were in the midst of their passion.

He could not stop thinking about the feelings Seth bore for Crystal and about the yearning Robert had for her, so he was far rougher with her than usual.

Crystal was reluctant the whole time, but Henry went on. He had never been this impulsive before.

When it concluded, Crystal felt uncomfortable, but she was so tired that she simply wanted to sleep.

Nonetheless, after staring at the ceiling for a long while, she climbed out of bed.

"Henry, you didn't use protection!"

Henry covered his eyes with one arm as he pulled her toward him with his free hand. "We don't do it that often. Moreover, you're in your safe period right now."

In the dark, Crystal softly persisted, "What if I get pregnant? Will you let me have the baby?"

Then, in a sobbing tone, she continued, "Henry, I won't abort the baby."

If she were to get pregnant, she was going to bring the baby into the world regardless of whether or not Henry wanted it.

The night sky grew darker.

Henry wanted to sleep. It had been a long time since he had done it with her, so he did not restrain himself that night. However, Crystal's refusal to sleep made it difficult for him too.

The lights in the room switched on, and he got out of bed to put on his clothes.

"I'll get it from the pharmacy."

Crystal sat up as well. Biting her lower lip, she muttered. "Do buy a... tube of cream when you're there as well. I don't feel too well."

Henry's gaze darkened, and she looked away. "It hurts a little."

After that, Henry got down from the bed, put on his shirt, and pulled up his pants zipper.

Twenty minutes after he went out, he returned with a box of pills and a tube of cream. He was stiff when he passed them to Crystal.

He had never bought those things for a woman before.

Crystal had never taken those pills nor used the cream before either.

Hence, she sat on the bed and read the manual before reaching out to open the bottle of water on the bedside table. Then, she downed the pill.

Henry watched her from the side of the bed.

Crystal was calm, not at all hysterical like the women in soap operas would be. He could not stop himself from asking, "Will that... kill my... you know?"

Crystal gave him a glance.

She was surprised that he seemed hesitant, but she ignored his question.

After putting on a robe, she got out of bed to use the cream in the bathroom.

Henry stopped her, a tint of red on his face. "Just do it here. I'll help you."

Crystal did not agree to that, of course.

They were not... that close yet.

However, Henry lifted her back to the bed and insisted. Crystal was troubled through the entire process. Once it was done, she wrapped the blanket around herself and said, "I want to sleep."

After briefly tidying up the bed, Henry hugged her from the back.

Crystal was tired, so she just let him hold her.

When the sun was about to rise. Henry felt a wave of heat coming from his arms.

When he shifted, he realized the heat was emanating from Crystal. He guessed that she was having a fever.

Fortunately, he had some common sense to figure out that he was the cause of her ill state, so he patted her cheek and said, "You're having a fever. I'll take you to the doctor."

By then, Crystal was already in a feverish daze.

Opening her eyes, she fixed her tearful gaze on him, appearing as fragile as glass.

Henry's heart skipped a beat.

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Henry Is Serious

Crystal rested her head on the pillow, and she seemed to have become a lot weaker due to her sickness. "I don't want to go to the hospital," she muttered. I can't bring myself to go to the hospital because of this. That would be so embarrassing.

Hearing that, Henry caressed her cheek before taking his phone from the bedside table and calling Jamie. "Jamie, send me a doctor."

"Yes. My hotel room number is 3601."

"No. The doctor is for Crystal. She's sick."

Jamie was shocked, and it took him a long time to snap back to his senses. Why aren't they home but in a hotel? Mr. Miller sure knows how to spice things up!

Jamie was good at what he did, so he immediately found a good family doctor and brought the doctor to Henry.

When they arrived at the hotel room, Henry opened the door for them.

Before the doctor could say anything, Henry frowned and asked Jamie, "Why did you bring a male doctor?"

Jamie was confused. Does the doctor's gender matter?

Instead of inviting them in, Henry instructed Jamie, "Get me a female doctor. Not only do I need her to be a good doctor, but I also need her to have respect for one's privacy."

Henry knew Crystal would feel embarrassed easily.

As quick-witted as ever, Jamie instantly found a well-respected gynecologist in Barnwood. As it turned out, the gynecologist was truly skillful. Instead of an IV drip, the gynecologist merely prescribed Crystal some oral medications.

By noon, Crystal's body temperature had returned to normal.

However, she was worn out, so she continued sleeping.

Jamie also stayed at the hotel, and he was in shock as he helped tidy up the presidential suite.

Meanwhile, Henry was working on the phone on the couch in the bedroom. After a while, he approached Crystal and touched her hands. Her fingertips are so soft, so it's obvious she rarely does house chores. However, I told Marie to take a break since Crystal moved in. After that, Crystal did all the house chores and never complained once.

Suddenly, Henry recalled the days when they had just moved in together. Those days were blissful. Back then, she would blush whenever I looked at her. I knew she liked me. Note, however the rarely blusher in front of me. When Seth asked her to address him as her husband, though, I saw that familiar shy expression of hers.

Henry was having a hard time coming to terms with what was happening.

At around four in the afternoon, he brought Crystal back to the condominium, but she still felt nauseous.

Hence, Jamie summoned the doctor again.

After checking over Crystal, the doctor said the morning–after pill was to be blamed for Crystal’s condition.

Upon sending everyone off, Henry returned to the bedroom. When he saw Crystal lying on the pillow, he couldn’t help thinking about what had happened the night before. I had so much fun last night, and I don’t think I’ve ever felt that way.

Despite that, he was rather remorseful because Crystal had fallen sick.

As he caressed her cheek, he said, “I won’t let you take the pill again.”

Embarrassed, Crystal averted her gaze.

Seeing that, Henry leaned in to kiss her, and he only retreated when he saw her blushing.

Crystal’s eyes brimmed with tears when she lifted her head to look at him. “Henry... I think it’s about time you stop,” she murmured. We have chemistry, but it has been so long, and the person he loves is back. He seems to enjoy Audrey’s company. Thus, I think he should set me free. That’s the best solution for everyone.

Henry kept mum and stared at her. Stop? I want more! So far, she’s the only woman I want to sleep with! Silence ensued, and the atmosphere turned awkward.

Crystal didn’t want to beg him, so she uttered in a choked voice, “From now on, I won’t go to the hotel with you anymore.”

Henry gulped and once again recalled what had happened the night before.

As the atmosphere in the room became tense, his phone suddenly rang.

It was a call from a childhood friend, so Henry answered the call and put it on loudspeaker. “What is it, Charles?”

Charl Jenkins chuckled and asked, “Let’s go out tonight, Henry. What do you say? What happened last night was a buzzkill, but Audrey has organized another gathering tonight. We’ll get Seth to offer his apology! By the way, you didn’t do anything harsh to Crystal, did you? It’s normal for women to throw a tantrum once in a while. She’s jealous because she cares about you! I know your temper too well! If you want, you can ignore her for a few days, but that should be all. Don’t go overboard.”

Henry didn’t reply, Instead, he flashed Crystal a half–smile.

Crystal was so angry that her neck reddened, and she threw a pillow at Henry. “Who said I was jealous? Henry, you’re free to go have fun with whomever you want. It doesn’t concern me!

In response, Henry chuckled lightly and answered, “I didn’t say anything. Charles said it.

Charles fell silent when he heard the conversation between the couple.

After a long while, he changed his tone and said, "You're there too, Crystal? Haha! I was joking!"

With that, he lowered his voice and said, "Henry, let's go! It's rare for Audrey to come back. Don't be a buzzkill, okay?"

Charles was sure Henry would join the gathering, and the former knew Crystal wouldn't dare to stop Henry from going out. No one in our group is dating a control freak. They're always obedient and meek enough not to meddle too much in our affairs. Those that have bad lempers never last long.

In the end, Henry uttered flatly, "Count me out! I'm not interested!"

Charles was surprised. "Henry, I was told to convince you."

"Crystal isn't feeling well. I'm staying home to take care of her," Henry replied honestly.

Charles was utterly stunned. We've always been taken care of by women. Why is Henry taking care of her? It's not like he's a doctor! Wait... Could it be?

In a deep voice, Charles asked, "Henry, are you serious this time?"

Henry showed Crystal respect and chuckled faintly before hanging up the phone.

With an attractive smile on his face, he looked at Crystal and asked, "Do you find my actions satisfactory, Miss Winters?"

Crystal ignored him. Henry is compromising and being nice because that's a trick men commonly use! If his feelings were sincere, he would give me a stable relationship instead of mere physical interactions.

However, their relationship became better after he relented and took care of her.

Over the weekend, Henry was either taking care of her or working in the study. He even went downstairs to feed the dog.

Knowing that Crystal wasn't feeling well, he didn't take advantage of her, but he kept kissing her.

He would then smile mischievously whenever he dragged her into a haze of lust.

Over those couple of days, Crystal felt as though things had returned to how they were back then. Deep down, however, she knew it was merely an illusion. He's only being caring and nice because of his lust... He doesn't care about me!

After taking two days to rest, Crystal felt a lot better, and she suddenly felt like drinking a cup of coffee.

As she was brewing her coffee, the doorbell rang.

Henry was in the study, so Crystal opened the door, thinking it was Melora.

However, Crystal froze when she opened the door and saw Audrey.

Audrey was smiling, and she didn't seem as mean as the other night.

Even so, Crystal still didn't dare to look Henry's first crush in the eyes.

Having no plans to stop them from seeing each other, Crystal invited Audrey in and went to the study to ask Henry, “Ms. Quinn is here. Would you like to see her?”

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Apology

Henry was taken aback. “Audrey?”

Crystal nodded in response.

Henry stared fixedly at Crystal’s face, seemingly searching for something in her expression.

However, Crystal had her poker face on.

In the end, Henry lowered his head to continue going through his documents. “Bring her here,” he said indifferently.

The moment Crystal turned around, he immediately lifted his head to look at her retreating figure.

Meanwhile, in the living room, Audrey was taking a look around the high-end condominium.

Jealousy soon overwhelmed her when she saw the Morning Dew piano. Rumor has it Ludwig used that piano to play songs for his beloved wife. If Henry has given the piano to Crystal, does it mean he loves her? That’s impossible! I refuse to accept it! Besides, I know Henry. He likes minimalistic designs. He can’t possibly stand letting her stay here and filling the place up with her presence!

When Crystal arrived back in the living room, she waited for Audrey to notice her presence. before saying. “He’s waiting for you in the study.”

Audrey smiled meaningfully in response and lifted the folder in her grip. “I’m here to talk to Henry about a financial case. You wouldn’t mind, right?”

Crystal smiled faintly in response. Fortunately for me, I’m not Henry’s wife! Otherwise, I would be livid!

“I’m making coffee. Would you like to have some?” Crystal asked magnanimously.

A hint of delight flashed across Audrey’s beautiful eyes as she responded, “Thank you.” With that, she went to the study.

Shortly after, a formal conversation could be heard coming from inside the study.

Crystal wasn’t interested in that, so she went to the kitchen to continue making her coffee.

Since there was a guest around, she brewed an extra cup of coffee.

As Crystal was filling up the cups, Audrey came up to her and said casually, “I saw the Morning Dew piano. I wanted that piano as my birthday present when I turned twenty-two.”

Crystal knew exactly what Audrey meant. Audrey is merely telling me I’m getting her unwanted goods.

“The piano is in the living room. Do you want to have a go at it?” Crystal smiled.

Audrey’s expression changed right away. Oh I thought Crystal would be a pushover

“Miss Winters, do you know what Henry gifting you the Morning Dew piano and the white dress during Melora’s birthday party means?” Audrey lowered her gaze and smiled.

Hearing that, Crystal looked at Audrey cluelessly.

Audrey then whipped out her phone and showed Crystal an old photo.

Henry was twenty–four when the photo was taken, while Audrey was twenty–two. In the photo, Audrey was wearing a white dress and leaning against Henry. Needless to say, they looked like a match made in heaven.

The Morning Dew piano was placed behind them, but it was there for an exhibition.

Right away, Crystal noticed how different Henry looked four years ago. Back then, he looked so youthful and gentle. In fact, he looked like every girl’s dream guy.

Audrey smirked when she saw Crystal keeping mum. “Miss Winters, you’re nothing but my substitute. No matter how hard you try, that’s all you’ll ever be. Since I’m back, you have no reason to stay by Henry’s side anymore!”

Crystal took a sip of coffee when she heard those words. Yikes! The coffee is piping hot!

She then lifted her gaze toward Audrey and replied calmly, “If you could reclaim the Morning Dew piano and Henry, I would be extremely grateful.”

At that point, Crystal no longer wanted to be in a relationship with Henry. just want to start anew.

Those words left Audrey momentarily stumped. I don’t believe her! She’s challenging me, isn’t she?

In the next second, Audrey lifted her cup of coffee and smiled gleefully. “Miss Winters, some tricks are required when it comes to reclaiming a man. Hence, don’t blame me for doing this to you because I hate you to the core!”

As Audrey was talking, she started pouring her cup of coffee all over her arm before letting out a loud scream.

“Why did you pour coffee all over me, Miss Winters? It’s so hot! Henry! Henry!” Audrey looked at Crystal devilishly and flashed a triumphant smile.

In response, Crystal lowered her gaze to look at her own cup of coffee. It’s such a shame!

“Ms. Quinn, I admired your father, but I didn’t think Joshua would have such a despicable daughter! You can pursue Henry all you want. However, I won’t let you frame me! By the way, I added ice to your cup of coffee, so I doubt the temperature is high enough to burn you for you to

gain Henry’s sympathy.” Crystal flipped her hair gently and smiled at Audrey.

“Therefore, let me give you a hand!”

With that, Crystal slowly poured her piping hot coffee all over Audrey’s delicate arm.

As a result, Audrey’s arm turned red immediately, and she started crying and screaming out loud.

Little did she know that Henry was standing at the entrance to the kitchen, and he was staring frostily at Crystal.

Crystal eventually lifted her gaze, and their eyes met.

“I admit to my crime, Henry!” Crystal grinned.

Henry walked up to the ladies and brushed past Crystal.

“Miss Winters, do you really want to leave me so badly? Did you think you could anger me by burning Audrey?” he whispered as he walked past Crystal. Does she want to leave me so she can be with

Seth?

Crystal didn’t answer him. Well, I guess he saw everything.

Audrey didn’t know how close Henry and Crystal truly were, so she threw herself into his embrace and pleaded in an alluring tone. “Henry, it seems like Miss Winters doesn’t like me! I’m in so much pain. Would you come to my house to keep me company, Henry? I have two bottles of wine there. Perhaps we could drink wine under the blanket together and talk...

Crystal was in awe when she saw Audrey seducing Henry right before her. She’s so pretentious! I should’ve burned her with an even hotter cup of coffee and showed her the cruelty of the real world!

Meanwhile, Henry was staring fixedly at Crystal. It doesn’t seem like she’s planning to explain herself. Well, I guess she’s really trying to push me away.

With that in mind, Henry lowered his gaze to look at Audrey. “Let me send you to the hospital.”

Audrey refused and grumbled, “Do you not care about me, Henry? I want red wine! I want you to comfort me!”

In response, Henry gently shoved her aside and walked away. “Maybe you should let Crystal take care of you! She’s good with bandages,” he uttered flatly.

Audrey stamped her feet in anger when she heard that. Needless to say, she felt threatened by Crystal. How dare the pour coffee all over me? I don’t get it! Isn’t Henry just fooling around with Crystal Why isn’t he pleasing me? Afier all, I’m from a prestigious family!

Henry waited outside the kitchen for quite some time, and although Audrey had already left the kitchen, Crystal was still nowhere to be seen.

Hence, Henry went back into the kitchen and asked, “Are you not coming along?”

At that moment, she had already cleaned the place up and was just brewing a new batch of coffee. “Go ahead. This is the perfect opportunity for you two to have a catch-up session.”

Henry was displeased when he heard that. We’ve been enjoying each other’s company over the past couple of days, no? Furthermore, we had fun that night. However, I guess it’s only normal for her to throw a tantrum. After all, she isn’t feeling well, yet Audrey just had to irritate her.

With that in mind, Henry hugged her from behind and asked, "Are you angry? I'm not even angry at you when you've poured coffee over her. I'll return to spend time with you, okay? Would you like to drink red wine or coffee with me tonight? We'll have a talk under the blanket."

[Chapter 125](#)

I Never Touched Her

Crystal bit her lip.

What a shameless man!

At the same time, she felt quite sad. To be honest, Henry did not give a hoot about Audrey or her.

He simply enjoyed her body.

As of now, he was still interested in her, and that was why he was willing to coax her.

As for Audrey, he looked down on her, perhaps even hated her. However, he kept her at arm's length, occasionally letting her come closer to give her a slither of hope. It was as if he was toying with her!

Upon arriving at that thought, Crystal felt calm.

She replied coolly, "We'll talk when you get back!"

For a moment, Henry stared at her back before he left.

Audrey, who had been waiting for him at the door, was pale.

She had seen everything.

It was obvious Henry cared a lot about Crystal from the way he coaxed her. In the past, all these belonged to Audrey. From what she witnessed with her own eyes, she realized that Henry's heart now belonged to someone else.

Even so, Audrey refused to give up.

She said softly, "Why don't you come over to my place for a drink?"

Henry did not reply until he was inside the car. "Audrey, I won't deny that your recent antics of pursuing me are thrilling for a man, but we both know that it's just for fun. It means nothing!"

Audrey's face paled.

Henry then lit a cigarette.

He puffed out a ring of smoke and looked at her.

"What we had was in the past. There's nothing between the both of us anymore! Even though we've parted ways, I'm still friends with Mr. Quinn, so please don't make things difficult, Audrey."

Audrey's lips trembled.

"Is it because of Crystal? Are you in love with her?"

He said nothing in response. There was no need for him to share his private life with Audrey.

After a long moment of silence, Audrey chuckled.

“Henry, I wish you all the best.”

Crystal thought that Henry would stay out all night. After all, he was with his ex-lover, and that was Audrey’s intention for visiting as well.

To her surprise, Henry came back home around one in the morning.

At that time, Crystal was already deep asleep.

He removed his coat before embracing her from behind and nibbling her neck.

His hands began to explore her body, causing Crystal to groan response.

Henry asked in a hoarse voice, “Are you feeling better?”

Crystal grabbed his hands to stop him.

“It still hurts.”

Henry was restless. Even though he had satisfied himself the other night, a hot-blooded young man like him would want it every night.

He could not help but want to kiss her.

Crystal was troubled, so she turned her head away. She sounded like she was about to burst into tears as she protested, “Henry... I’m sleepy.... Stop it... Henry, I don’t feel like it!”

She finally blurted out her true feelings. Henry leaned on one arm and looked down at her.

He knew what was bothering her,

His dark, inky eyes stared at her for a while. In the end, he could not help but rub his nose with hers.

“Crystal, I’ve never touched her. Not in the past and certainly not now.”

Crystal was embarrassed and furious that her concern had been exposed. She looked away and said, “How do I know that?”

Thankfully, Henry was in a good mood that night.

He nibbled the tip of her button nose, finding it adorable.

“I have a way to prove it. Miss Winters, do you want to give it a try?” teased Henry.

He then grabbed her hand and brought it to his lower region.

Crystal let out a soft shriek and tried to struggle.

Her futile attempt to resist only made it more enticing for him.

He continued to taunt her, "Now you know. I didn't use it on other women. I have been saving it for you, Miss Winters. Let me know when you will be willing. hmm?"

Crystal was about to burst into tears.

Her nose started to turn red.

Henry leaned closer to her ear and made a shameless request in a husky voice.

Crystal refused, but he was not letting up. In the end, she caved.

In the midst of their passion, his phone rang.

Although there was no caller ID, Crystal could guess that it was Audrey.

She turned her back toward him and said softly. "Answer it!"

Henry took one look at his phone before hanging up. He then turned his phone off.

Afterward, he did not attempt to bully her anymore. Instead, he just hugged her from the back.

"From now on, I won't see her again. We'll go back to how we were before, okay?"

There was no response from Crystal.

Then again, he had been on his best behavior that night, and she fancied him too. It was hard for her not to be moved since he was giving in to her.

Nevertheless, she maintained her dignity and did not respond.

However, when he started fondling her body again, she did not turn him down....

Life became hectic for Crystal after that.

Things between Henry and her seemed to reach an impasse. He hardly ever went to social gatherings anymore. Even if he did not come home, he was busy at work.

As for Audrey, it was as if she had disappeared from their lives,

Crystal behaved indifferently toward Henry.

Two nights ago when he wanted to have sex with her, she did not push him away. She allowed him to enjoy himself, but she was less enthusiastic in bed.

Henry only slept with her once that night.

After the deed, he leaned back against the headboard for a cigarette and said nothing.

However, his eyes told a different story.

Crystal felt like she had nowhere to hide..

Ever since Audrey returned, their lovemaking had not been the same.

Soon, the music center was about to open, and Crystal received several gifts. Boxes of various colors adorned her table.

Crystal took her time and opened up all the presents before recording them down.

In the future, she would have to return the favors..

While Crystal was reaching for a golden-glazed box, she noticed the familiar-looking handwriting.

She looked again and saw that the gift was from Henry.

Crystal was astonished that he would send his present to the music center. Then again, it was a lovely surprise. Any woman would be pleased.

She opened the present up gently.

Initially, she thought it was some jewelry. The gift turned out to be a pair of butterfly specimens that were a thousand years old.

There was a distinct difference in the sizes of the two butterflies.

One should be a male, and the other should be a female.

Judging from the bright colors and animated posture of the specimens, they had been well- preserved. They were definitely rare to come by.

The present came with a card.

Crystal opened it up, and there was only one sentence.

A gift for my little Morning Dew.

In the end, Crystal was a young lady, after all. Although she was still disappointed and guarded against him, it was difficult for her not to be thrilled with such a thoughtful gift and sweet words.

As she ran her fingers across the card, she could feel the resistance in her melting away.

Just then, her phone rang. It was Henry.

After a moment of hesitation, Crystal answered the call.

Henry's gentle voice rang out. "Have you received my present? Do you like it?"

Crystal answered with a hum.

"These butterflies existed during the ice age, and this is the last pair of specimens left. Henry, how did you know I liked this when I was in high school?"

To that, Henry chuckled.

At that moment, he was seated in his office and idly twirling his leather chair.

He did no answer her question. Instead, he said, "Do you want to have dinner at the condominium tonight? The mansion has sent some food over. We'll have some red wine together. How about that?"

Crystal was not an innocent little girl.

It was obvious that Henry's invitation was a prelude to something more intimate, and he wanted her to be more passionate about it as well.

[Chapter 126](#)

It Was Her Imagination All Along

Crystal sat in silence. The air was heavy with unspoken words.

Henry was still patient with her. He broke the silence with a gentle offer. "I can pick you up tonight if you'd like."

After a long pause, Crystal found herself responding in a resigned manner. "Sure, why not?"

Deep down, she knew Henry would spare no effort to get what he wanted.

He had desire burning inside him, and he was doing everything to win her over. She couldn't figure out how he seemed to understand women so well. However, when he finally made his move, she knew she didn't stand a chance of saying no.

That night turned out to be an absolute whirlwind of romance and passion, surpassing any they had experienced before.

Henry's sweet nothings filled every nook and cranny of the condominium.

Their bodies intertwined as they tumbled through the night, surrendering to the moment.

Crystal couldn't deny it—the pleasure and sensory fireworks she experienced with Henry were beyond anything she had ever known.

Early in the morning, Crystal woke up to find Henry by the bedside, tying his tie.

When he noticed she was awake, he leaned down and kissed her gently.

"Are you really going to the opening banquet?" Crystal asked softly, her eyes shining with a newfound clarity after last night.

Henry nodded. "There's a trial that might delay me, but I can make it there around nine in the evening. How will you introduce me then, Miss Winters?"

Crystal wrapped her arms around his neck and said something in Brundelan.

A flicker of surprise crossed Henry's eyes, but due to time constraints, he had to hold back his passionate response.

He had a trial in the morning and quickly left.

Crystal felt a bit sore all over her body, but since the music center was managed by her and Emelia, it wouldn't be fair to leave Emelia to handle everything alone. Thus, after resting for a while, she got up and prepared for the day.

She had a hectic day entertaining the parents of prospective students and it wasn't until six in the evening that she finally had a moment to rush back to her apartment and change into a suitable outfit for the banquet.

She slipped into a pale pink gown that accentuated her slim waist. After that, she tied up her chestnut hair, then adorned her ears with a pair of elegant pearl earrings. It was undeniable that she looked stunning.

After finishing her makeup, Crystal blushed as she admired herself in the mirror.

She couldn't help but wonder if she deliberately chose this look to cater to Henry's taste. After all, she was aware of what he liked, and she knew he would be eager to hug her in this attire.

She didn't dare to follow along those lines of thought.

Shaking off those thoughts, Crystal tidied up and headed downstairs, ready to leave.

This was an important day for her, and her father and Anna would be there, Henry had also expressed his desire to meet them. Despite trying to keep her emotions in check, she couldn't deny that she was secretly excited.

Maybe this time, Henry would treat her differently.

Perhaps he is sincere this time...

Sitting in the car, Crystal sent him a WhatsApp message.

I'm heading to the hotel. Message me when you arrive.

After about ten minutes, she received a brief "Okay" from Henry. Knowing he was busy, she didn't bother him further.

She drove alone to the hotel where her parents and friends had already arrived. There, she greeted and mingled with everyone.

After waiting for some time, Anna noticed that Henry was still missing. She pulled Crystal aside and asked in a low voice, "Where's Henry? Wasn't he supposed to come?"

With a light smile, Crystal replied, "He might be delayed due to a court hearing."

Anna breathed a sigh of relief. "Oh, I see. I thought you two had another disagreement."

Crystal remained silent, but her demeanor made it clear that she had been pampered by Henry. Anna, being experienced, carefully observed her and held back from asking further questions.

At that moment, Emelia approached them, holding a gift list in her hand.

"There are two cash gifts that I don't think are appropriate, so I want to let you know."

Crystal didn't think too much and took the list. "What's wrong with them?"

After reading the list, she fell silent.

Robert had given her five million, while Seth did the same.

Emelia cleared her throat. "Are they in cahoots, or are they trying to provoke each other?"

Crystal pondered for a moment. "You're right. It's not appropriate for me to accept these. I'll return the money to them later."

Emelia gave her a thumbs-up and praised her for looking beautiful. "You look great in pastel-colored dresses. Every time you wear them, you stand out from the others. It must be because of your complexion, Crystal. Your complexion is exceptionally delicate."

Crystal smiled lightly. She glanced at the time; it was already over half-past eight.

Henry should be here soon....

She didn't want to disturb him while he was working, so she didn't call him,

After a while, the clock struck nine.

Soon, it was already half-past nine.

Henry still hadn't arrived. Anna couldn't hold it in any longer and pulled Crystal aside, asking softly, "Why isn't he here yet? Your father asked about him."

Crystal walked to the terrace and called Henry's phone.

It was switched off.

Her face gradually lost color.

She forced a smile at Anna and said, "Perhaps he's on his way."

Anna held onto a glimmer of hope but could see Crystal's embarrassment. She comforted her in a low voice, "I'll come up with an excuse for your father. Crystal... Don't think too much about it."

Crystal softly murmured, "Yeah."

Then, Anna left.

Crystal remained on the terrace. After hesitating for a moment, she dialed Jamie's number.

Jamie was surprised to receive her call. "Henry left at half-past eight."

Crystal thanked her.

Maybe Henry is stuck in traffic...

She still held on to hope, hoping that on this important day in her life, he would appear and say, "Congratulations, my Little Morning Dew."

However, he didn't.

The lively banquet continued until half-past ten, and soon guests started leaving one by one. Even John and Anna arranged for transportation and departed. Still, Henry didn't show up.

His phone remained switched off.

Crystal knew about Henry's job nature and his meticulous personality. He rarely turned off his phone.

She had a vague feeling in her heart, but she didn't want to believe it.

After spending these past few days getting along so well, she didn't want to think that he would let that person ruin their relationship... She thought that when they met, they would have a good talk.

Crystal left with Emelia in the end.

As she sat in the car, lightning suddenly tore across the sky. The night sky lit up as if it had been ripped apart, a sight that was both awe-inspiring and terrifying.

Rain poured down like a waterfall...

Crystal dialed Henry's phone again.

It was still switched off.

She lowered her gaze and started the car...

It rained heavier.

The windshield wipers swung back and forth incessantly, and the visibility became very low. Crystal felt her heart grow restless. It was dangerous to drive in such heavy rain.

After driving for a while, she parked the car on the side of the road. There was a hotel nearby, and she hesitated whether to stay there for the night. However, she remembered Henry.

His phone was switched off.

Could something have happened to him?

Crystal took out her phone and considered calling him again to see if his phone had been turned on.

However, as she held the phone to her ear, her gaze froze.

Across the street, a golden Bentley Continental was parked on the side of it, and through the window, Crystal caught a glimpse of Henry.

He sat there silently, wearing an expression she had never seen before. It was a mix of confusion and pain.

Then, the car door swung open...

Out stepped a slender and graceful figure. It was none other than Audrey.

Of all times, Audrey chose this rainy night to act recklessly and ran in the rain. Within seconds, Henry got out of the car and strode toward her quickly. He reached out his hand to grab her, and she fell into his embrace.

Crystal's grip on the phone tightened.

So, this was why he had turned off his phone. This was the reason he stood me up!

The windshield wipers continued their rhythmic swiping...

Everything appeared clear yet hazy before her.

She saw Audrey clutching Henry's waist, and she also saw that he didn't push her away....

Audrey seemed to be crying.

Henry gently rested his hand on her head, his expression filled with uncertainty and pain.

Watching the couple who once shared a passionate relationship with each other, Crystal couldn't help but let out a soft, bitter laugh. She was laughing at herself for overestimating her place in his life!

[Chapter 127](#)

She Thought He Was Serious

At that moment, Crystal realized she had never been taken seriously.

He never cares about me!Haha!How foolish I've been, thinking I hold a higher place in Henry's heart than Audrey. It's really stupid!How could I have believed his words and actions were genuine?How could I have thought that he would want to meet my parents?It was all my imagination!

Crystal's lips trembled...

She didn't want to witness the passionate embrace of those former lovers anymore. Every second of their embrace felt like a brutal stab in her heart.

Her heart felt like it was dripping with blood.

It was pure agony!

She tightened her grip on the steering wheel. At this point, she didn't care about the terrible weather or the dangers of driving in the torrential rain. All she wanted was to escape from this brutal scene that she witnessed.

However, Henry spotted her....

They locked eyes through the rain.

Crystal sat in the car, while he stood in the rain with his crush in his deep embrace.

Time seemed to freeze.

Crystal's eyes welled up with tears, and she couldn't bear to look at him anymore. She lowered her head and let out a soft chuckle.

It was truly agonizing!

She wanted to drive away, but Henry pushed Audrey away and hurried toward her. He reached out his hand to open the car door, but she had locked the doors.

Henry tapped on the driver's window, calling out her name desperately.

"Crystal!"

"Crystal, open the door!"

Crystal turned her head stiffly and met his gaze, her eyes filled with tears. She knew how unseemly and undignified she must appear...

However, she no longer had the strength to hide her feelings.

Henry stared at her in shock, then pounded on her car door. Raising his voice, he shouted,

“Crystal, open the door!”

Rainwater poured into his mouth, drowning out his words.

Crystal felt that this entire spectacle was ridiculous. It’s rare to have this vain guy apologize and explain things to me... but I don’t want it anymore!

She gently pressed on the accelerator, and the white BMW slowly drove away in the rain.

Water splashed from the wheels, creating ripples upon ripples.

Henry was forced to take a few steps back.

He stood in the rain, motionless.

In his mind, all he could see was Crystal, her eyes red from crying....

How long had she looked at me? How long had she been crying?

Audrey ran over.

Looking in the direction the white car left, she spoke softly. “Henry, I’m sorry for making your girlfriend angry! I didn’t mean to... I was just upset and wanted to drink. I just couldn’t handle things!”

Henry remained silent.

He wanted to smoke, but when he took out the cigarette, the tobacco was already damp.

Angrily, he threw the pack away, cursing under his breath.

Audrey leaned against him cautiously. “Henry, if it weren’t for me impulsively throwing your phone into the water, Crystal wouldn’t be this upset.”

Henry walked toward the Bentley Continental without any expression.

He was soaked and messed up the car, but he didn’t really care.

Audrey got into the car.

She wanted to say something, but Henry coldly stated, “Audrey, this is the last time! If you can’t handle things yourself, call 911.”

Audrey burst into tears.

She sobbed and stuttered, “Henry, a—are you abandoning me too? H—Henry, you’re the only family I have in Barnwood!”

Henry glanced at her sideways.

Joshua called him just now, asking him to check on Audrey. Initially, Henry had planned to settle her down and then go and see Crystal. However, Audrey kicked up a fuss by drinking, threatening to overdose on pills, and even throwing his phone into the fish tank...

Henry's expression remained blank. "I'll send you back!"

Crystal didn't return to her condominium.

The rain was pouring too heavily, and she didn't want to go back to that place either...

She parked her car in front of a hotel.

As she stepped out of the car, she was completely drenched. Her face was pale and her teeth were chattering.

The receptionist quickly checked her in and handed her the keycard and some tissues.

"Miss, your room is One Eight Zero Four."

Crystal wiped off the water from her body and murmured her thanks.

She headed to the room and started running the bath.

Then, she tossed the beautiful dress into the trash can because it had been soaked with rainwater' and stuck together. It was a complete mess, just like her.

Crystal had a good soak in the bathtub.

Her mood was terrible, and she couldn't help but feel the urge to have some alcohol.

After downing half a glass, she leaned against the edge of the tub and chuckled softly... She didn't want to, but whenever she closed her eyes, all she could see was Henry embracing Audrey.

She remembered how he had told her that he wouldn't see Audrey anymore and that they could still be together like before.

He even gave her those beautiful specimens, trying to please her and making her so moved that she ended up spending the night with him.

It had only been a few days.

Yet, he was holding Audrey just now and looking at her with so much affection.

Crystal laughed through her tears.

Serves me right! I was the one who believed him and I was the one who couldn't help but fall for him! I actually thought a man like Henry would develop real feelings for me!

Crystal remained in the bathtub for half an hour, feeling completely drained of energy.

Suddenly, the doorbell rang.

Crystal thought it was room service and got up, wrapping herself in a bathrobe.

However, when she opened the door, Henry was standing there.

He didn't look any better and was completely drenched too.

Crystal stood in his way, blocking him from entering.

Henry's gaze was deep, and his voice was hoarse. "Crystal, let me in."

Crystal moved to the side, letting him in.

They needed to talk. The current situation required certain things to be clarified.

Henry took a towel and dried his face. Afterward, he reached out his hand toward Crystal.

It was a gesture of tenderness, but Crystal remained unmoved. She spoke softly. "Just tell me what you have to say! There's no need for all this."

Henry could tell she was angry.

He had lived with her for some time and knew she had a bit of a temper. Usually, it blew over without much consequence, but considering what happened tonight, she might stay upset for quite a while if he didn't explain or appease her.

He walked up to her, saying in a low voice, "I didn't want to see her. It was Mr. Quinn who asked me to check on her. He said Audrey was in a bad state."

Crystal listened to him in a daze.

Henry gently stroked her face. "You have every right to be angry. Audrey threw my phone into the water, so I couldn't call you."

Crystal lowered her gaze and let out a soft laugh.

She looked up at him and said, "Henry, are you clearing the air or trying to deceive me?"

Henry furrowed his brows slightly.

Men of his status usually didn't have to explain themselves to women, let alone act so humble.

Crystal laughed again.

"Are you sure you really couldn't make a call? You just didn't care that much! Henry, even if Audrey fell out with you, you still have the old bond of your fathers' friendship and the memories of your youth together. I have nothing! Right, I'm just a woman who slept with you anyway."

Crystal's eyes turned red as she spoke, but she stubbornly refused to cry.

It wasn't worth it to shed tears for someone like him!

"You're not just that!"

Henry's brows furrowed tightly. He wanted to touch her, but she didn't let him. She took a step back and met his gaze.

Her voice was soft yet resolute. "You're right, I'm not! Henry, which woman who sleeps with you would also cook for you, tie your tie, send your dry cleaning, clean up after you, and even fill the bathtub for you?"

[Chapter 128](#)

Let Us Break Up

The room was deathly quiet.

Suddenly, the words tumbled out of Crystal's mouth. "What woman who simply sleeps with a man prepares dinner for him to come home to? Didn't you take advantage of me, Henry!"

Henry swallowed.

He did not know how much pain his indulgences had caused Crystal.

He stared at her.

After a long time, he said softly, "I didn't know it bothered you so."

Crystal gave a self-deprecating laugh.

Returning his gaze, she said bluntly, "I take it seriously because it bothers me. I can't stand the thought of it, Henry. So what?"

Suddenly, she regained her calm. Her voice fell flat and lifeless.

"Let's break up, Henry."

Henry stared at her.

A moment later, he spoke. "Are you breaking up with me over what happened tonight? Has it occurred to you that things between us are not going to end if I didn't want them to, Crystal?"

Crystal's eyes grew red.

Of course I know that.

She knew all too well what Henry was capable of. He did not want to get married so he could keep having fun. On the other hand, she, Crystal Winters, must have been the most interesting woman he had come across, seeing as he was still not sick of her yet.

What a scum. Go to h*ll!

Clenching her fists to restrain herself, Crystal maintained her nonchalant tone.

"We don't have to break up. If you are ever in need of anything, Mr. Miller, I'm only a phone call away."

Henry stared at her. His tone was light. "So you saying that you would come to the apartment and sleep with me if my needs arise? Are you moving out of our home, Crystal?"

As soon as he spoke, he took a step forward and pinned Crystal against the television cabinet.

The screen illuminated their intertwined figures and made them look particularly odd at his amorous advances.

Henry's patience was wearing thin.

He had never accommodated any woman to this extent.

Frustrated, he grabbed her sharp chin and kissed her forcefully.

However, Crystal was not in the mood.

Still, she did not shove him away. Instead, she wrapped her arms around his neck passionately and returned his kisses. Soon, Henry felt hot all over.

He stroked Crystal's face. "Let's do it," he rasped.

Crystal returned the gesture. She stroked his chiseled cheek.

Then, she straightened up. "We're not going to do it in the apartment," she breathed in his car. "A relationship like ours is only worthy in a hotel room. Also, never say 'our home' ever again because it ruins a good memory."

Henry froze.

Bracing himself up, he stared down at her.

Despite her pale pallor, her brows looked delicately beautiful.

However, she did not look moved at all. Her earlier passion with him had only been an act.

He caressed her brows gently with his slender fingers—his favorite spot.

Crystal quivered.

Henry was irritated. Though he had needs, his masculine pride did not allow him to continue.

Leaning over, he nipped her ear.

"You're absolutely right, Miss Winters. Though I have broken up with Audrey, his father remains my friend, and we will never quarrel to this extent. You may move out if you wish, but don't regret it, sweetie."

Then, he added cruelly, "You must feel awful, having been deprived of my candy cane after having it for so long."

Unlike men, women could never say things like that.

Crystal flushed crimson with rage.

Henry chuckled softly.

Standing at the foot of the bed, he adjusted his belt in front of her. There was a hint of mockery in his languid movements.

There it is. His true colors.

As outstanding or famous as he was, despite his reputation of being the Grim Reaper of the legal world or of the financial genius, he was invincible when it came to being a womanizer.

Crystal aimed a furious kick at him.

He caught it easily. Grabbing hold of her, he closed in.

“Don’t move! I actually do feel sorry for you, Crystal. You wouldn’t want to play those tricks.”

Crystal’s eyes glistened with tears.

Henry drew close once more. Though he still yearned for her, he turned away while gritting his teeth.

He left, slamming the door loudly behind him.

Crystal could tell that she had displeased the powerful man, but she did not think his mood was any of her concern.

Too tired to move anymore, she pulled the quilt over her and fell groggily asleep.

When she awoke, she found a pillow between her arms.

Out of habit, she moaned, “Henry...”

In a daze, she opened her eyes.

It’s not him! How could it be him? We had a huge fight last night.

Crystal rubbed her eyes, which felt dry and uncomfortable. She was about to wash her face when Emelia called.

“I have something important to talk to you about, Crystal.”

Crystal leaned back onto her pillow. “What is it, Emelia?”

There was a hint of excitement in Emelia’s voice, laced with a little sheepishness. “It turns out that the owner of the music center we used to work at is migrating, and he wants to sell it. I made some inquiries and found out that it costs something in the neighborhood of thirty million.”

Crystal froze.

“Are you thinking of acquiring it, Emelia?”

Emelia laughed. “I can’t do it by myself! That is why I’m talking to you. It’s a good opportunity,

Crystal. If we manage to grab it, we can secure at least thirty percent of the market in Barnwood.”

After hesitating for a moment, she asked, “How are things over at your end, Crystal?”

Crystal was optimistic.

As she was familiar with the operations of the music center, and the teachers were elites in the industry, it was an endeavor in which she was certain they would not make a loss. However...

She opted to tell Emelia the truth.

“Henry and I had a fight,” she said softly. “I can only invest three million at most.”

Emelia was not surprised.

Well, Henry stood her up last night. It was obvious that they would end up in a fight.

Furthermore, she heard rumors that his first crush had come back.

Emelia remained hopeful. “All it takes is a word from you. We can have a fundraiser if we don’t have the capital. I would put aside my pride to get us the money.”

Crystal was touched.

She was grateful to have such a person pull her up when she was down in the dumps and prevent her from falling further.

“Don’t worry, Emelia,” she said softly. “I will find a way.”

Hearing that, Emelia gave her a few more words of encouragement.

In the end, Crystal felt much better. It doesn’t hurt as much now.

She got out of bed, had room service procure a set of clothes from the departmental store of the hotel, and prepared to leave after washing up.

As she did not trust a courier with Robert and Seth’s checks, she opted to deliver them herself.

Crystal drove to Seth’s company and left his check at his reception.

Seth was in a meeting.

By the time he received the check, Crystal had driven off.

He called her to complain, “Don’t you even have the time for lunch with me, Crystal?”

Crystal has always been good to me.

“Another time, Seth,” she said gently. “Just let me know when.”

Seth was standing before his windows on the thirty–sixth floor, toying with the blinds with his slender fingers. His voice was hoarse.

“If you break up with him, consider me, Crystal. I won’t make you feel unloved.”

Crystal fell silent.

She guessed that Seth and his clique had heard about what happened the night before.

She felt a little uneasy.

“No pressure, Crystal,” he said gently. “I just want to let you know that I’m leaving the choice to you.”

[Chapter 129](#)

The Professional Miss Winters

No woman would be unmoved after hearing what Seth said..

Crystal felt flustered.

She did not know how or when she hung up.

All she remembered were Seth's parting words. "A little time and effort to win a girl's heart is nothing. I've waited a long time, Crystal. A little longer makes no difference."

Crystal stopped the car.

She stroked the steering wheel.

She did not know how to reject Seth, who, given his excellent qualities and background, did not need to wait for her.

I have been with Robert for four years, and am now entangled with Henry.

Crystal did not think she was good enough for him.

She sighed softly, then exited her car.

Up ahead was Sloan Group-the last place she ever wanted to visit.

Naturally, Crystal did not wish to see Robert. She left the check with the receptionist and told her, "Please hand this to Mr. Sloan."

The rec

receptionist had been working at Sloan Group for six years. Thus, she knew Crystal. Oh, Mr. Sloan's ex-girlfriend!

Though the outside world thought it was he who had cast her aside, the version of the rumor circulating the company was that Robert changed his mind after getting engaged. He wanted her back, but she turned him down.

Mr. Sloan has been behaving pretty erratically of late.

The receptionist was polite to Crystal. "Don't worry, Miss Winters. I will make sure Mr. Sloan gets it." As soon as she made that promise, she glanced behind Crystal.

"Mr. Sloan

Crystal turned around slowly.

Robert was standing behind her. She did not know how long he had stood there.

"Thank you for your kind gesture, Mr. Sloan," Crystal said calmly. "I appreciate it."

As there was no need for small talk between them, Crystal turned to leave after those words.

Robert caught her arm.

"Crystal!"

His tone was urgent. It sounded as if he was afraid that she would disappear.

Crystal flung his hand aside. "Watch yourself, Robert."

He gave a bitter smile.

Then, he let go of her and lowered his voice. "Come for a seat in the lobby. I'll have my secretary make us some coffee. There are too many people here, Crystal. You wouldn't want to cause a scene, would you?"

Crystal glanced around the place.

There were indeed quite a few employees watching them surreptitiously.

If I don't listen to him, he might do something.

Five minutes later, they were seated in the lounge in the lobby.

Robert personally made Crystal a cup of premium coffee. "How many cubes of sugar would you like?" he asked gently.

"One."

Robert handed it over, then seated himself across her.

Crystal gazed at him.

Robert looked much thinner. It was plain that he was having a rough couple of weeks. Crystal of the past would have been sad to see him like that, but the sight no longer affected her.

So much has happened in the past one year.

Crystal sighed.

Robert was gerufe. "Have a sip, Crystal. I'll make you another cup if it doesn't taste good."

She remained cold.

"Say what you want, Robert. I'm not here to reminisce about the old time."

"I know."

He sounded forlorn.

Looking up, he met her gaze. "That five million is a gesture of goodwill on my part. Don't turn me down, Crystal. I'm only trying to make amends by doing something nice. Won't you even give me the opportunity to do that?"

Crystal had had an unpleasant night and she still felt dizzy.

Within the span of an hour that day, two men had confessed their love to her, with one of them being her unfaithful ex.

Crystal did not wish to continue speaking to him.

For all his words, Robert has not given up on me.

She stood up. "Thank you for your hospitality, Mr. Sloan," she said stiffly. "I must leave now as I have matters to attend to."

Robert stopped her.

He met her gaze. "After what happened last night, are you still sticking with him?"

Crystal's expression stiffened.

Despite her embarrassment, she did her best to put on a smile before him. "That is none of your business, Mr. Sloan."

Robert knew what a rare opportunity it was.

He lowered his voice. "I know you want to acquire the music center, Crystal. Let me help you."

Afraid that she would misunderstand, he hastily added, "I don't have any other motive. It's just a kind gesture."

Crystal was not that naïve.

She smiled faintly. "Thank you for your sweet thought, Mr. Sloan." Then, she left.

Robert watched her departing silhouette.

He remained motionless for a long time. I noticed how red her eyes were. Did she cry over Henry?

The thought made him uncomfortable. After a long time, he pulled out his phone to make a call.

"I need a favor, Mr. Xander. Make contact with the music center. Negotiate the deal. I'll pay for it. When it's over, you can pick any project I have on hand."

Robert hung up.

His gaze flickered meaningfully.

He yearned to see Crystal. She was not the same as she used to be. In fact, he found her more feminine. Even having her by his side for a chat made him feel good.

Crystal left Sloan Group..

She found a real estate agent and rented a unit spanning five hundred square feet.

After signing the contract, she checked the time and discovered that it was almost eleven. She was certain that Henry would not be at home.

Crystal decided to head back and take her things.

However, she was surprised to see Henry there in the middle of the workday.

Crystal opened the door and entered.

Dressed casually. Henry was sitting on the couch reading some magazines. It was plain that he had not gone to the office.

When he saw Crystal, a spark glinted vaguely in his beady eyes.

However, he did not speak. He was waiting for her to concede by speaking first.

Crystal felt very uncomfortable.

She cleared her throat. "I'm here to collect my things."

Henry ignored her. He kept his attention on his magazine. His indifference made Crystal feel even worse.

She scuttled into the master bedroom.

When she was packing, she realized that she did not have many belongings of her own as Henry had most of the clothes and skincare products bought for her.

Crystal did not want to take any of those things with her.

She packed her things into a small suitcase, which was light and convenient enough to carry by hand.

When she was about to leave, she found Henry leaning against the door.

He was studying her. "Have you forgotten something, Miss Winters?"

Crystal placed the keys on the bedside table.

Then, she produced the bank card he had given her. Though she had not used it in a long time, she retrieved it from her purse and returned it to him.

Finally, she said lightly, "The expensive jewelry and the clothes are all there. You can have your secretary verify it."

Henry looked displeased.

He gave a light scoff. "Are you not going to feed the dog downstairs anymore?"

Crystal felt a pang of reluctance at the recollection of the little white puppy. Maybe I'll sneak back here to feed it.

However, she said, "No. I'm tired of feeling unappreciated creature."

Henry did not know how to respond to that.

Feeling that she was almost done, Crystal lifted her suitcase to leave.

Henry stopped her by the door. He bent down until the tip of his aquiline nose was so close to her that their breaths mingled together.

Instinctively, Crystal lowered her gaze.

She turned away uncomfortably. "Call me if you need me, Mr. Miller. I'll be here right away."

Henry stared at her.

The gaze he fixed her with was something she had never seen before. He looked angry and frustrated.

After a long time, he let go of her casually as he gave a jeering smile. "How professional of Miss Winters."

[Chapter 130](#)

Compromise.

Crystal angrily kicked him.

Henry doubled over in pain, and Crystal took the chance to walk out of the bedroom, dragging her suitcase behind her.

With his long legs, Henry managed to reach her in two long strides. He grabbed her hand just as she was reaching the door.

Henry gazed at her intensely. "Are you really going to leave?"

Crystal cast her eyes downwards.

"Let go of me!" she insisted.

Henry lowered his head, leaning closer to her. His tone was soft with a touch of surrender when he said, "There's food. Let's eat together!"

Crystal knew his ways.

Whenever Henry wanted to coax a woman, he would use gentleness, and it had always worked in his favor.

Time and time again, Crystal had found herself seduced by his tender affection, unable to pull herself away. In the end, she realized that it was all just a game for him, and she was the only one who had taken it seriously.

Crystal chuckled at her own foolishness.

"I don't want to eat! I'm not hungry!"

Henry furrowed his brows lightly, but he did not let go of her hand.

As they remained locked in this stalemate, the doorbell rang.

Crystal could easily guess who was outside the door. Who else could it be if not Audrey!

She smirked. "Henry, there're plenty of people out there who would kill just to have a meal with. you. There's no need for you to beg for my time!"

Henry griued his teeth angrily.

He released her hand.

Crystal took a deep breath and opened the door.

As she had expected, Audrey stood outside, holding a wrapped gift in her hands.

She took in the suitcase trailing behind Crystal, and her slanted, foxy eyes widened innocently. She seemed genuinely surprised.

“Miss Winters, I’ve come to apologize to you. It’s my fault that you and Henry had an argument. I’m sorry! Did... Did I cause trouble in your relationship?”

Audrey’s false concern and fake sweet tone disgusted Crystal.

She walked past the other woman, ignoring her presence, and headed toward the elevator. Henry’s displeased voice called out behind her, “Crystal!”

They had a heated argument the night before.

However, he had not left for his office that morning. He had deliberately waited for her.

He had already explained himself to her and even tried to compromise. Crystal is so stubborn! Crystal paused, her body tensing up, and her eyes became teary and red.

Lately, Crystal had begun to fall in love with Henry. However, he merely saw her as a fling. If she continued to live with him, cook for him, and wait on him like a devoted wife, then she would hurt herself in the end.

Crystal continued on her way, a determined expression on her face.

She ignored Henry and turned to Audrey instead. “Congratulations, Miss Quinn. Morning Dew, the white dress, and even Henry are all yours now. Are you happy?”

The elevator doors dinged open.

Crystal walked in without another word.

“I’ve already compromised with you!”

Henry stared at the closed elevator doors, his expression pained.

Audrey approached him.

“Did you two fight?” she asked in a gentle voice.

Henry retorted in an annoyed tone, “What are you here for again?”

Audrey gestured at the gift in her hand. “I came here to apologize to Miss Winters!”

“There’s no need for that!”

Henry dipped his head and slid a cigarette between his lips. He took a slow drag and said to Audrey. “I told you last night not to come looking for me anymore. If you’re feeling down, call a hotline or go see a therapist.”

Audrey’s face paled.

She looked quite pitiable. It would have tugged at any man’s heartstrings.

“Henry, are you really going to let this woman come between us? We’ve known each other since we were children! I don’t believe that you care about her at all.”

Henry’s expression hardened.

“Audrey, sometimes it’s cute for women to put on a little pouty act, but when they go too far, it becomes too much!”

He thought of Crystal.

The latter had always been genuine with him.

When she liked him, her eyes would pool with happy tears, and when she did not like him, she did not hide it either.

She simply told him that it was over without hesitating or dragging things out.

Since childhood, Henry had been surrounded by women who admired and pursued him. No one in the had ever dared to throw tantrums or show their temper. Even when Audrey had been angry past, she had never dared to go too far.

Crystal was different from the others. She was always true to herself.

Henry was so infuriated that he felt his heart ache miserably.

He turned, going back into his condominium. Audrey pressed her palm to the door before he could close it. He refused to let her in.

“Audrey, we ended things a long time ago!”

Audrey stubbornly kept her hand on the door.

After a beat of silence, she whispered, “If I break off my engagement, will you give us another chance?”

Henry stared at her dispassionately.

After a long pause, his lips curled into a sneer. “What do you think?”

He pried off her hand and slammed the condominium door shut.

It was quiet inside the condominium.

The faint sound of Audrey’s sobbing could be heard from the other side of the door. Henry paid. it no mind.

He walked into the kitchen.

On the countertop, there were plates of Crystal’s favorite dishes, still warm. He had specially asked the chef to prepare them, hoping to melt her heart and persuade her to forgive him.

However, she had left without even a single backward glance.

The condominium was eerily silent without her presence.

Henry could not bear the sight any longer.

Wordlessly, he dumped the untouched food into a bag. He changed out of his clothes and went downstairs, tossing the bag into a trash can on the way.

She's just a woman! There are plenty of them out there! It doesn't matter to me whether she stays or leaves!! would never waste my thoughts on a woman!

With her suitcase in tow, Crystal drove herself to a small rented condominium.

Although it was much smaller than the space she was used to, it had everything that she needed.

She cleaned up the condominium and made it cozy for herself.

In the days that followed, Crystal and Henry kept away from each other. Neither of them made any phone calls or sent any text messages to the other.

Crystal gradually grew accustomed to living on her own.

She kept herself busy in the music center, arriving early and leaving late but feeling fulfilled.

A week later, there were some developments regarding Emelia's fundraising

A real estate developer who merely identified himself as "Mr. Xander" was willing to invest twenty million. Initially, Emelia had negotiated the deal by herself, but the investor had insisted on meeting her partner.

Emelia went to Crystal's office and explained the situation to her.

She was quite worried by his request. "Do you think there's any ulterior motive?"

The investor had requested to meet Crystal personally. The investor turned out to be polite and courteous. He invited the women to a meal at his expense.

He was every bit the gentleman.

"I've heard that Miss Winters is an excellent piano teacher. My wife and I have a daughter, and we would like to bring her over one day to see if she has any musical talent. If Miss Winters doesn't mind, we would love for her to teach our daughter piano in the future."

With that statement, everything fell into place.

Emelia shot Crystal a look.

The latter smiled and shook hands with the investor. "Thank you for your kind offer, Mr. Xander! It should be Emelia and who are the ones treating you to a meal."

The man smiled magnanimously and immediately signed off on the letter of intent to invest.

Crystal noticed that the payment account came from a newly registered company.

Robin Corporation.

The investor noticed her expression and offered her a meaningful smile.

He shook their hands again. "My wife and I would like to invite Miss Long and Miss Winters over for a meal on Saturday. Please do come!"

The investor then left.

He sat in his car and sent out a WhatsApp message: Robert, it is done!

Robert replied immediately: Thank you, Mr. Xander. I'll buy you dinner tonight.

After seeing the investor off, Emelia held the signed letter of intent in her hands and kissed it repeatedly.

"Mr. Xander is probably investing because of his daughter. Crystal, you are our hero!"

Crystal carefully measured out two scoops of coffee grounds and brewed two cups of coffee.

She frowned as she handed one of the cups to Emelia.

She could not help but feel that things were going too smoothly, and it did not feel right.

While pondering over this, she received a phone call from Seth.

"Crystal, how about treating me to a meal?"