

## Night of Love 161

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#### This Night Was Beyond Gentle

As Crystal reached the end of her sentence, tears welled up in her eyes, and she couldn't hold them back any longer.

After all, she had once loved him deeply, and perhaps, even now, there were remnants of those feelings stirring within her heart.

Despite the person before her having numerous flaws, a volatile temper, a reserved nature, and a penchant for intimate encounters, Crystal couldn't deny the truth of her feelings-she genuinely liked him!

Nevertheless, despite her fondness for him, Crystal remained steadfast in her commitment to exercise restraint and maintain control over her emotions. She was resolute in protecting herself from the potential pain that could arise from giving in to her feelings.

As Henry tenderly wiped away the tears from the corner of her eye, Crystal's crying intensified. At that moment, she couldn't contain her emotions any longer.

He pulled her into a tight embrace as he leisurely lit a cigarette.

Henry leaned back on the couch, taking slow drags of his cigarette. His suave and charismatic demeanor was irresistible, enough to make any woman want to throw themselves at him.

Crystal maintained a wordless silence, finding solace in his embrace as tears cascaded down her cheeks.

As her tears moistened his shirt, the warmth and dampness created a subtle discomfort for him. Nevertheless, Henry chose to endure it. Understanding the significance of allowing her to release her emotions freely, he remained patient and accommodating to her every whim.

Having smoked over half of his cigarette, he finally asked in a gentle tone. "Shall we give it another try? But this time, we'll take it slow. If you're not comfortable with it, we won't proceed. I just want you to feel at ease."

Crystal remained silent.

Henry could sense her hesitation and was well aware of the reservations she had toward him.

Being a busy man, Henry had never been involved with any woman prior to Crystal. This fact shed light on his demeanor, as he never displayed a sense of urgency to surrender to desire.

However, when a woman he had developed feelings for continued to appear in front of him, it would be foolish for Henry not to seize the opportunity.

He had a rough idea of Crystal's thought process. After all, he had witnessed her going on dates with Ritchie, attending art exhibitions, and admiring fireworks together. However, from Henry's perspective, those activities held little meaning for him, and he couldn't relate to them.

He genuinely believed that only weaklings would choose such venues for their dates.

Nevertheless, Henry felt relieved knowing that Crystal and Ritchie's relationship had only lasted ten days.

If Crystal had been dating Seth during that time, things might not have looked promising for Henry to win her over!

Being aware of her desires, he knew exactly how to fulfill them.

"Shall we... go to a concert tomorrow?" Henry proposed.

Crystal was inclined to decline the offer as she had no interest in going out with him.

Henry, on the other hand, was well aware of her vulnerabilities. He lit another cigarette, took a long drag, and exhaled the smoke in her direction. "If you're not in the mood for a date, how about we go to a hotel instead?"

His suggestion sparked anger within Crystal.

She stood up abruptly, wanting to leave. Sensing her immediate reaction, Henry swiftly reached out and grasped her hand. "I'll take you home," he said softly. "Wait for my call tomorrow. I'll have Jamie book our tickets."

This time, Crystal remained silent, but there was a subtle shift in her demeanor, suggesting that her resolve to reject him was beginning to weaken.

Henry felt a slight frustration as his desired outcome wasn't achieved, but he understood the importance of patience when pursuing someone.

He then sent her back to her condominium.

Since Henry had made it clear that he was willing to put in all his efforts to pursue her, he demonstrated great thoughtfulness toward her and was not afraid to show it

The next day, when Crystal woke up, she discovered her white BMW parked downstairs. Henry's driver had arrived without disturbing her sleep and patiently waited by the car. Crystal couldn't help but feel a twinge of guilt for keeping him waiting.

She took the car keys from him and thanked him.

Knowing exactly what to say in that situation, the driver informed her, "Mr. Miller specifically instructed me not to disturb you, Miss Winters."

Crystal acknowledged his words with a subtle nod and thanked him once again before getting into the car.

As she settled in, her phone rang, and it was Anna on the other end.

Anna informed Crystal that Henry had paid a visit and had brought along a collection of lavish supplements as a gift.

The purpose of her call was to inquire about the sudden visit and express her curiosity and uncertainty about Crystal's relationship with Henry.

Crystal gently caressed the steering wheel and spoke in a soft tone. "You can keep the gifts."

Anna was delighted to hear that, for she genuinely liked Henry and hoped that he and Crystal would have a future together.

After ending the call, Crystal stared at her phone, a swirl of emotions coursing through her.

Henry was like a poison concealed within a deliciously tempting exterior, a seductive mix of danger and allure. Crystal was acutely aware of the potential toxicity that lay beneath his captivating facade, yet the intoxicating sweetness she experienced in his presence made it incredibly challenging for her to resist his charms.

In the end, Crystal mustered the courage to send a brief message to Henry on WhatsApp, expressing her gratitude with a simple: Thank you, Mr. Miller.

Over the course of the following week, Henry consistently demonstrated remarkable gentlemanly behavior.

He spent a week accompanying Crystal to explore Barnwood, indulging in refined art and dining at renowned restaurants. He also took Crystal to the Malarnorn restaurant she had previously visited with Ritchie.

They even coincidentally ran into Ritchie and his fiancée during their visit, which created an incredibly uncomfortable atmosphere.

Crystal cast a piercing gaze at Henry, her voice barely above a whisper as she questioned, "Did you plan for us to run into them?"

Henry laughed heartily, his face filled with joy. "Yes! I brought you here to witness the true nature of your ex-boyfriend. Look at them. They seem so perfect together!" he replied with a hint of satisfaction in his voice.

Ritchie spotted them too, and despite having a well-off and beautiful fiancée by his side, he appeared absent-minded when he spotted Crystal. It took him a while to snap out of it and respond to his fiancée's words, his eyes lingering on Crystal for just a moment longer than necessary.

Crystal was at a loss for words as Henry's childish behavior had started to get on her nerves.

On their way back, Crystal took a seat beside him, quietly observing his profile as he fastened his seatbelt. With a gentle tone, she asked, "What drives your concern for Ritchie? I'm curious."

Henry turned to look at her.

After a prolonged silence, he responded in a low voice, "Because I am well aware that someone like Ritchie fits your ideal criteria for a husband. If it weren't for his domineering mother, the two of you would likely be married by now."

Crystal didn't offer any counterargument, silently acknowledging the truth in his words.

The man, feeling a bit uncomfortable, didn't want to delve deeper into the topic. As they arrived at Crystal's home and she prepared to exit the car, Henry gently reached out to stop her.

"It's Christmas Eve in two days. How about spending the night at my place? I'll have Marie prepare a scrumptious meal for us."

Crystal hesitated for a moment before replying, "I have a dinner event at the music center that I'll be attending that day."

In a gentlemanly manner, Henry reminded her, "Try not to drink too much. I'll come pick you up once the event is over."

The man rarely stooped to such humble gestures. As such, Crystal found it difficult to reject him and let out a soft hum of agreement in response.

Pressing her against the car seat, Henry leaned in closer, his breath warm against her skin as he gently pressed his lips against hers. Their kiss grew more intense, filled with longing and desire. After a while, he pulled back slightly, his voice husky with emotion. "Dress beautifully on that day. Crystal," he whispered. "Let's make it a memorable Christmas Eve, our first one together."

Crystal looked at him with surprise.

Outside the car, delicate snowflakes danced in the air, creating a picturesque winter scene. They fell gracefully from the sky, their ethereal beauty enchanting the surroundings.

The softness of the snowflakes brought a touch of gentleness to the night, and at that moment, there was a connection between them, as if the falling snowflakes were bridging the gap between them.

Henry had a knack for setting boundaries.

After escorting her upstairs, he didn't insist on staying. As he descended the stairs, Crystal felt an irresistible pull to the window. She approached it and gazed out, watching Henry's retreating figure.

On a wintry night, with the sky blanketed in snow, the air turned frosty and mist formed with each exhale.. The soft glow of streetlights reflected off the glistening snow, casting a dreamlike ambiance over the scene.

Under the faint glow of the streetlight, Henry leaned against his sleek gold-colored Bentley Continental, a faint plume of smoke curling from the end of his cigarette. Every breath he took exuded an undeniable air of masculinity.

As Crystal cradled a warm cup of cocoa in her hands, her gaze fixated on him in serene silence. She couldn't help but note that the night seemed to be adorned with an air of tranquility and tenderness.

After finishing two cigarettes, Henry flicked the cigarette butt away and extinguished it under his shoe. As he lifted his gaze, his intense stare locked onto Crystal.

Caught off guard, she didn't manage to hide in time and found herself locked in a gaze with the man.

Henry's gentle laughter echoed in the quiet night, his smile carrying a touch of mischief and masculine charm.

He waved at Crystal before stepping into his car

The car engine purred softly, but the gold Bentley Continental didn't leave immediately. Moments later, Crystal received a text message from the man: Missing me already?

Even though the message contained only a few simple words, it had a captivating effect on Crystal, leaving her restless throughout the night.

If it weren't for the memories of the tumultuous night, she might have impulsively thrown herself into his arms without hesitation.

She had tasted the sweetness of love in the past, and despite her fears and reservations, she couldn't deny the desires that stirred within her as a woman. The tantalizing anticipation created by Henry's actions and the lingering chemistry between them had ignited a growing temptation inside her.

After their intimate encounters, Crystal could sense that Henry wouldn't simply let her off the hook on Christmas Eve.

She wasn't sure if she was anticipating the day to come, but she did take her time to carefully select her outfit and adorn herself with accessories.

She wore a champagne-colored silk gown that gracefully draped over her body, enhancing her alluring figure. The gown accentuated her curves in all the right places, exuding an air of elegance and sophistication. Over the gown, she draped a lightweight, white down coat, adding a touch of sophistication and warmth to her ensemble. The coat could easily be removed to unveil her graceful curves and add a hint of allure to her appearance.

As she delicately applied her makeup, Crystal felt a slight flush on her cheeks, mingled with a tinge of self-reproach. She couldn't deny the fact that she had been enticed by Henry's irresistible charm and seductive ways.

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### Do Not Torture Me

The banquet was organized quite impressively.

The exquisite cuisine surpassed all expectations, and the grand venue had the capacity to accommodate up to two hundred guests. Emelia had even managed to secure the attendance of a renowned host from Barnwood. The overall atmosphere was nothing short of spectacular, leaving everyone in high spirits.

As one of the partners, Crystal had the responsibility of socializing and engaging with the guests, which often involved sharing drinks and exchanging pleasantries.

However, she wasn't alone in navigating these interactions as Madison drank quite a number of drinks on her behalf.

At that moment, both of them were touching up their makeup inside the restroom.

Crystal cast a worried glance at her friend. "You drank quite a lot earlier. Are you okay, Madison?"

"It's not a big deal. What's the worst that could happen?" Madison arched her eyebrow and playfully tugged at her collar, revealing a hint of her chest. "Pretty seductive, isn't it? Charles is quite fond of this. Whenever we're in bed, he likes to act like a playful dog and nibble on any part of my body he desires."

As she spoke, she giggled.

However, Crystal knew her friend wasn't doing well.

Madison hadn't truly moved on from her failed marriage with Zachary. Those sexual encounters were merely a temporary escape, a way for her to distract herself from the pain and emptiness she felt

inside. But when she woke up from her drunken slumber, the hollow feeling in her heart would return, haunting her once again.

Crystal patted the woman's shoulder. "You've drunk too much, Madison."

With a smile, Madison pushed her hair behind her ear and subtly changed the subject, asking Crystal about her own private matters.

While John was in the hospital, Madison paid him a visit and coincidentally ran into Henry. It was during this encounter that she learned that Crystal and Henry had not completely parted ways.

When she asked Crystal about it, the latter answered truthfully, "We haven't reconciled yet, so there's that. We're still just friends with benefits."

Madison paused for a moment before informing her, "Audrey's getting married! The wedding is happening in a couple of days. The Miller Family went to the Kingdom of Brundela to attend the wedding, but Henry chose not to go. It seems like he wants to maintain some distance."

Crystal was slightly stunned. I didn't know that.

As Madison had consumed quite a lot of alcohol, she rested her head gently on her friend's shoulder and let out a weak cry. "I feel like both of our hands are tied. Crystal. We fell in love with men that we shouldn't have!"

She felt disappointed in Zachary, and her relationship with Charles was nothing more than a friends-with-benefits arrangement.

However, as time went on, she couldn't help but develop genuine feelings for Charles.

It wasn't something she wanted, but it happened anyway.

With teary eyes, Madison said, "Don't end up like me, Crystal. Marry a good man!"

Crystal knew her friend had drunk too much.

To prevent Madison from causing a scene, Crystal gave Charles a call. Initially, Charles assumed the caller was Madison, so he said, "When are you going back? My luck with the cards is souring. I've lost a lot of money."

Crystal answered, "It's me. Madison's tipsy, so can you come and pick her up?"

Without delay, he tossed his cards onto the table and exclaimed, "Where? I'll be right there."

Charles arrived soon after, wearing casual yet neat clothing. As he walked in, a faint scent of a woman's perfume lingered around him.

Crystal didn't like that.

Upon seeing Crystal, Charles greeted her enthusiastically before grabbing Madison, "Mrs. Jenkins!"

"There's nothing between me and Ritchie anymore. Don't call me that in the future."

Her response earned her a playful grin from Charles.

He didn't mention the commotion Ritchie had caused the previous day, but he could still crack a joke or two with her. "Whether you're with Henry or Ritchie, you'll always be a close friend of mine," he joked.

"You don't have to worry about me," Crystal assured him. Then, her tone softened as she turned to Madison. "Take care of Madison, okay?"

Charles was slightly stunned.

He couldn't help but be surprised by the depth of care Crystal showed for Madison, considering his previous perception of Crystal as a cold woman.

A sigh slipped from his mouth before he brought Madison away.

After sending Madison away, Crystal returned to the restroom to wash her hands.

Zachary is the scion of the affluent Cramer family, which explains his rich-kid personality. Charles has similar characteristics to Zachary in that regard, but I still hope he'll take good care of Madison. I worry for her.

She gazed out of the window, watching the night view of Barnwood for a long time.

While the streets were lively because of Christmas, perhaps many people had no homes to return to.

It was then Henry called.

His voice sounded unbelievably tender during the winter night. "Do you want me to come up?"

Crystal wanted to maintain a clear boundary between her personal and professional life. Hence, she said, "Just a moment. Wait for me in the car."

A faint smile appeared on Henry's face.

The woman's countenance was slightly flushed, which she assumed was likely due to the red wine she drank.

By the time she arrived downstairs, it was nearly ten at night.

Henry's golden Bentley Continental was parked outside the hotel. He stood below a streetlight and to Crystal's surprise, he was not engaged in his usual act of smoking.

His handsome mug attracted the attention of many women.

When Crystal arrived before him, he hugged her and muttered, "I've missed you for the whole night."

No woman disliked hearing those sorts of things, including Crystal.

Raising her head, she stared at him with wet eyes.

Henry opened the door for her and helped her in.

The car was sufficiently warm, so Crystal removed her coat after entering the vehicle. Then, she turned her head around, placed her coat in the backseat, and noticed Henry's intense gaze fixed upon her.

"What's the matter, Henry?"

Henry touched her body and spoke hoarsely. "You look alluring without your coat."

Crystal blushed at his words.

"Jamie told me Mr. Winters has left the hospital."

She nodded, wanting to thank him, but he pressed his slender finger on her lips.

"Tonight, we'll focus on our date." A grin settled on his countenance.

Leaning into her seat, Crystal stared at the man's handsome face, Henry has been holding back for a long while. I wonder how he'll torture me tonight. Just the thought of it turned my legs into jelly!

Henry didn't drive the car at high speed.

Since the previous night, snowflakes had been gently falling, adding a touch of enchantment to the city of Barnwood. The streets were adorned with a delicate dusting of snow, creating a picturesque scene as they made their way through the city.

The couple remained silent on their way home, likely because they were both thinking about their upcoming intimate moment.

It might also be because they hadn't had sex for a long while, so they felt a little awkward.

Crystal didn't expect that Marie was still in Henry's condominium when they returned.

Marie already knew about Crystal's arrival, so she greeted giddily, "Greetings, Miss Winters."

While Crystal felt embarrassed, Henry casually handed Marie a thick monetary gift from his pocket. "From Miss Winters."

When Marie realized there were ten thousand enclosed within the envelope, her face lit up with a wide smile as she offered congratulatory words.

Instead of exposing the truth, Crystal spoke with Marie politely before the latter left.

The couple then headed to Opulent Pearl, where an extravagant dinner was already served at their table.

While Crystal laid her coat down, Henry poured two glasses of red wine for them.

He grinned. "Don't accidentally spill the wine on my pants this time. Otherwise, you'll have to, you know



Crystal gestured for him to refrain from completing his sentence.

In response, Henry peered at her and nodded. "Fine. Let's eat!"

He was serious about pursuing her, so he respected their dinnertime and just ate.

It pleased Crystal to be taken seriously. While she kept wanting to ask him about Audrey's marriage, Henry didn't bring it up, so she didn't bring the matter up.

Sometime after dinner, she saw a newspaper in a trash can with Audrey's wedding photo on the front page.

She was stunned when she saw that. Audrey really is married...

Suddenly, Henry hugged her from behind and whispered in her ear. "What are you looking at?"

Then, he, too, saw the picture in the newspaper. "My parents went to the Kingdom of Brundela with Melora, he explained.

Of course, Crystal didn't ask him why he didn't go. I'm not that stupid. Besides, tonight is supposed to be a happy occasion.

That minor incident didn't affect Henry's enthusiasm. Before Crystal could react, he turned off most of the lights in the living room, leaving only the small red one on.

An amorous atmosphere filled the room under the dim lighting.

Crystal wrapped her arms around the man's neck, thinking he wanted sex.

However, he didn't and merely embraced her. "I'll play the piano for you."

She didn't know he was capable of that, but of course, she wasn't going to say no.

Although, she didn't expect he would put her on his lap.

Slightly tilting her head toward him, Crystal uttered anxiously, "Henry..."

The man simply held her chin and planted a kiss on her lips. Their smooching lasted for a long while, causing the surrounding temperature to rise.

The kiss sapped Crystal of her strength before she lay in his embrace, her cheeks flushing. Thank goodness for the dim lighting. Otherwise, he would've laughed at me.

It was then he started playing her favorite song, Moonlight Lovers.

As the snow continued to gracefully fall from the sky, Crystal and Henry found themselves nestled inside the cozy confines of his condominium.

Crystal nestled her head against his neck, feeling the comforting warmth of his embrace. At that moment, all her reservations and defenses seemed to melt away.

Despite her attempts to guard her heart, she couldn't deny the growing affection she held for him. The realization that she had always harbored feelings for him only deepened the intensity of their connection.

The influence of liquor also heightened her emotions.

The same could be said for Henry, though he didn't act like a youngster. Instead, he insisted on providing her with a wonderful night.

While sitting on his lap, Crystal was very aware of his physical reaction.

She had her needs as a woman, too. After two hours of remaining still on his legs, she was desperate for some intimacy. I want him to kiss me!

"Henry!" exclaimed Crystal lustfully.

Even though he could tell what was going on with her, he feigned ignorance and asked, "What's the matter. Crystal?"

Crystal's desires and emotions overwhelmed her as she gave in to the intensity of the moment. Unable to resist any longer, she turned toward him and passionately kissed him.

As the snowflakes danced outside the window, the couple's passionate kiss was reflected in the floor-to-ceiling window, creating a beautiful and ethereal image.

Abruptly, Henry lifted her onto the piano, causing the instrument to shake.

"Henry... Henry, don't torment me like this!" The combination of Crystal's pleading voice, tears, and the melodious piano filled the room with a mix of vulnerability and desire. Her face flushed with both embarrassment and longing, but at that moment, her focus was solely on Henry. She yearned for him to push boundaries, fulfill her wildest desires, and surrender herself completely to the intensity of their connection.

Henry was even more like a beast that night,

Henry's demeanor became more primal, his actions and words dripping with raw desire. Leaning in closer, he passionately kissed her, his voice husky as he whispered, "Savor it, Crystal. It's a whole new level of pleasure."

In response, Crystal opened her eyes and peered at him.

Tears filled her eyes, making her appear pitiful.

Henry was about to engage in something he had never done for a woman before, but his desire for Crystal's happiness outweighed any reservations.

Her eyes were blindfolded by him.

While her vision remained dark, he worked his magic on her.

She trembled slightly with fear, repeatedly calling out his name in a mix of anticipation and apprehension.

"Henry..."

[Chapter 163](#)

## Daughter Of Joshua

Crystal felt as though she was floating above the water, completely immersed in a new and exhilarating experience. The passion and intensity that Henry brought to their encounter turned her world upside down, leaving her craving for more.

After turning on the lights, he leaned in to kiss her, his gaze fixed on her blushing face. "You look absolutely stunning, Crystal. Would you like to see it?" he whispered.

Crystal continued to shield her eyes, refusing to look.

Henry swiftly carried her to the bathroom in the master bedroom, and in a moment of passion, Crystal leaned in and forcefully bit his shoulder.

After gently placing her in front of the sink, Henry placed his hands on her slender waist and gazed at her reflection in the mirror, admiring the alluring sight before him.

"Your face is now redder compared to before," whispered Henry next to her ear.

She wanted to escape, but just as she turned around, he spun her back toward the mirror.

The man gently pressed his fingers on her tender cheeks, guiding her gaze toward the mirror.

Crystal was aware of her disheveled state at that moment. Though her clothes remained tidy, her mind was still in disarray from Henry's performance.

I know he doesn't fool around with women, but he always belongs to that circle. I suspect he knows about women better than Charles and the others. Is he performing better than most in other aspects because he's a remarkable man doing an excellent job as a lawyer?

She closed her eyes and pleaded, "Don't be like this, Henry!"

Feeling a mix of emotions, Henry held her tightly, his gaze fixed on their reflection in the mirror. With a tender touch, he smoothed out her skirt and spoke in an impatient tone. "Don't go back home. I won't push you further. Let's spend the night together.

They needed to spend time with their families on Christmas, so he wanted her to stay the night.

Crystal took a deep breath, allowing herself to calm down. She opened her eyes slowly, feeling a slight warmth spreading through her cheeks. Tonight feels like the melting of the winter snow. It's hard for any woman to resist his romantic gestures, but I don't want our relationship to rush ahead too quickly.

She hesitated before replying, "I think I should return."

While Henry was somewhat disappointed, he still respected her decision. Softly, he requested, "Stay with me for a little longer. I want you by my side, Crystal."

Crystal felt her cheeks burning upon hearing that.

When she left, the redness had spread to her neck. I have a feeling the techniques he employed while we were living together were child's play and that he had never been serious before.

Late at night, Henry drove the gold Bentley Continental into Crystal's residential area.

When the car came to a halt, he took a quick glance at the time. "It's already three in the morning. Should I spend the night at your place, Crystal?"

Henry refused to release her as he kept hugging her in the vehicle.

It was a touching hug.

Moments later, Crystal uttered softly, "I'm heading upstairs now, Henry."

He lowered his gaze, which was tinged with lust, at her. "Will you move back to my place after Christmas?"

Crystal was stunned for a moment before she rose from his embrace. I know tonight has been rather erotic, which is why he's making that request. Honestly, I don't blame him. I was the one who didn't explain things clearly.

After running her slender fingers through her hair, Crystal contemplated the situation and spoke thoughtfully. "Don't you think we're doing fine as we are, Henry? If you desire intimacy, I can fulfill that for you. But as for other aspects of our relationship... let's discuss them in due time."

Henry's expression turned solemn as he reflected on his past experiences.

He had always been the one pursued by women, and he had grown accustomed to that dynamic. However, this was his first time genuinely courting a woman and putting her needs before his own. He had strived to please her intimately that night, wanting to provide her with a memorable experience.

Sitting upright, Henry placed his hands firmly on the steering wheel. "Am I lacking in that aspect? What I truly desire is a genuine and proper romance, Crystal."

Crystal remained silent. I can't trust him completely. Even if Audrey is married, I still feel uneasy. Besides, I don't think it's wrong for me to protect myself.

Fury ignited in his eyes as he spoke harshly, his words laced with bitterness. "You weren't this cold when I was bringing you pleasure, Crystal! Are you trying to discard me now that you've had your fun?"

Pinching her cheek, he continued, "Should I remind you that--"

Crystal slapped his hand away fearlessly. "I didn't ask for it! You did it on your own accord!"

In response, Henry peered at her.

If this conversation continues, it won't end happily. I need to leave now. With that thought in mind, Crystal pushed the door open and got out of the vehicle.

Just as she tried to pull away, Henry gently pulled her back into his embrace, his voice filled with remorse as he whispered near her ear, "I'm sorry, it's my fault. I was too impatient. I truly want to be with you, Crystal, not just as friends with benefits."

While he didn't want to get married, Crystal did.

He wanted to keep living together with her, and if no major conflict sparked between them, he would be willing to wed her. After all, she was a good match for him.

Thus, he didn't want to let her go.

Unfortunately for Henry, his attempt at coaxing Crystal failed, and she remained steadfast in her decision to leave.

Henry hugged her forcefully, disallowing her to slip away.

In the end, he pressed his hand on her small head and smirked. "Are you going to ignore me after you had your fun? Who do you think is toying with whose feelings, Crystal?"

Crystal was so furious that her veins were bulging on her forehead. Amusingly, Henry found it attractive and pecked her bulging vein.

He refused to let her leave, no matter how much she struggled.

As such, he spent the night with her in the vehicle.

Despair flooded her heart because she couldn't resist his charm. Just a little effort from him was enough to make her surrender.

However, she refused to admit it.

When the sun rose, Crystal awoke from her slumber, only to find herself nestled in the man's embrace.

His phone kept ringing, but he seemed tired and didn't wake up.

In response, Crystal gave him a gentle nudge. "Your phone's ringing, Henry."

When he was roused, he aimed his captivating eyes at her before planting a kiss on her supple lips.

"You have... a call." Crystal panted. I can't help but wonder if he's always so eager to kiss me because he hasn't met a woman for cons. Still, I'll be lying if I say I don't feel anything when he keeps desiring my body.

Smiling, Henry released her.

He was prepared to accept the call when he saw the name of the caller and hung up.

Crystal was shocked before she realized what had happened. Audrey called him.

Wordlessly, she tried leaving the car. However, Henry pulled her back and locked her in his arms. "I've no relationship with her, Crystal! She's married."

Crystal gave a slight hum in acknowledgment. He may not have anything to do with Audrey anymore, but Audrey's still clinging to him. Otherwise, she wouldn't have called him so early in the morning on the third day of her new marriage. Is she that eager to contact her first love?

Meanwhile, in the Kingdom of Brundela, Audrey was wearing a sexy nightgown while sitting in her room.

She could hear the amorous giggles of a man and woman coming from downstairs.

While she was aware of her husband's extramarital affair with the housekeeper, she ignored it because she never liked him.

A cold look swirled in Audrey's eyes as she stared at the letter in her hand.

It was delivered from Barnwood by a successful jeweler who was temporarily awake after being treated. He delivered the information Joshua wished to know with a letter.

Joshua had been attempting to locate his biological daughter, and that jeweler had found the lead he was looking for.

The letter included a picture of someone Audrey was very familiar with-Crystal.

## [Chapter 164](#)

Try Again

Henry keeps refusing my call. Has he... fallen for Crystal? I can't believe she's Dad's biological daughter! How can this be? How can she snatch away everything that belongs to me? Audrey sneered. So what if she's Dad's biological daughter? Once I destroy this evidence and eliminate that half-dead jeweler, no one will learn the truth, and I'll remain the apple of my father's eyes!

A chuckle escaped her lips as she tore the letter into pieces.

Downstairs, her husband was engaged in a passionate night with the housekeeper. They paid her no mind. as their lustful moans echoed throughout the house.

Nevertheless, Audrey didn't care that her husband was ignoring her.

Back in Barnwood, Henry had been busy socializing as it was the end of the year. It had been days since he met with Crystal.

Meanwhile, Crystal was celebrating Christmas with John and Anna.

"The water pipe's broken!" exclaimed Anna from the kitchen. When she stepped out, her apron was soaked through, and water droplets were dripping on the ground.

John swiftly said, "Change your clothes quickly. Don't catch a cold."

The care he displayed toward her warmed Anna's heart.

As she sauntered toward her bedroom, she said to Crystal, "Can you call someone to fix the pipe, Crys? We won't be able to have dinner like this.

Crystal nodded and made the call.

Half an hour later, the doorbell rang, and she went to open the door. They sure arrive fast-

When the door was opened, she saw Henry standing outside in a dark blue shirt, gray wool trousers, and a gray, branded coat.

He appeared mature and stunning in that attire,

Stunned, Crystal blurted, "Why are you here?"

The man's gentle gaze landed on her. "I've finished my work."

Just as Crystal wanted to speak with him outside, Anna stepped out of her room after changing into a new

set of clothes and saw him. "Henry, you're here!"

Henry used that opportunity to enter the living room. After he stylishly set the gifts in his hand down, he handed his coat to Crystal. "If I weren't busy with my work, I would've visited Mr. Winters sooner."

Joyously, Anna said, "You don't need to buy anything! Your presence here is more than enough!"

Staring at Crystal, Henry uttered slowly, "I should do this since this is our first year together."

Anna could tell the hidden meaning behind his words.

Silently, she shifted her sight to John, signaling him to go by the book.

Of course, John understood his wife's message.

While Henry genuinely wished to court Crystal, their parents hadn't met each other yet. Thus, the couple wouldn't conform to local etiquette regardless of whose family they were dining with at Christmas.

"It's to be expected at this time of year. Show Henry some hospitality, but don't keep him around for too long. He still needs to have dinner with his family later tonight," John said with a grin on his face.

"Can you call and ask why the plumber isn't here yet, Crystal?" Anna asked while pouring their guest a cup

of coffee.

Without delay, Crystal attempted to return to her room to make the call because she didn't want to handle Henry.

However, he swiftly interjected, "No need for that. I can fix it."

Anna beamed. "You know how to do this, Henry? In any case, I don't think you should. It'll dirty your clothes."

"It's fine." Henry rolled up his sleeve and grabbed the tools.

In response, Anna gestured for Crystal to stop the call and accompany Henry.

After the couple ambled into the tiny kitchen, they shut the door.

Crystal squatted next to Henry and watched him fix the water pipe with skill. A hint of surprise flitted across her face. "I didn't expect you'd know how to do this."

Gazing at her, Henry grinned. "I know many things."

Crystal blushed. Can this man behave himself for once?

But it wasn't an exaggeration of his skills at all. He did fix the water pipe fairly quickly.

While Crystal had heard of the saying “Men are the most charming when doing things” before, she had never experienced it. At that moment, though, her heart was pounding as she watched him finish fixing the pipe.

Henry put the tools away and smiled. “What’s the matter? Never seen a man as handsome as me before?”

Reflexively, Crystal attempted to stand up.

Instead of letting her go, he whispered, “I need to head home for dinner later. Let’s go on a date-after this. I have a present I want to show you.”

Hesitation swirled in her eyes. I am touched, but....

Henry gazed at her before kissing her cheek.

“Are you done yet, Henry?” Anna pushed the door open just then and happened to witness that scene.

Crystal’s cheeks burned with embarrassment as she wondered how to react. Meanwhile, Henry rose to his feet and washed his hands. “Madam Anna, I wish to buy something with Crystal for Christmas later. I’ve been quite busy recently and didn’t have the chance to shop with her.”

Anna agreed. “Of course. You youngsters should spend more time outside.”

After Henry finished washing his hands, he tidied his shirt.

Politely, he informed the older woman, “I’ll have Crystal home before dinner. Also, I would like to bring her to meet my family on Friday. I thought it’d be better if I mentioned this first.”

Suppressing her joy, Anna encouraged Crystal to change her clothes and go on a date with Henry.

Ten minutes later, Crystal settled into the passenger seat of the gold Bentley Continental.

Biting her lip, she said, “I didn’t agree to meet your parents.”

Henry lit a cigarette and left his left hand hanging outside of the window. “Don’t you think you should meet my parents after I met yours? Or do you think marriage isn’t something one needs to tell their parents about?”

Enraged, Crystal turned her head toward him.

He grabbed her head with his right hand and kissed her

The deep and passionate kiss lasted for a long while before he pressed his forehead against hers. “We don’t need to tell them about our private life, but not when it comes to marriage.”

Crystal didn’t want it to happen that quickly. “Didn’t you say you have a present for me?”

Grinning, he extinguished his cigarette and drove the car.

The man only made a single stop during the journey to his condominium.

He bought a pack of cigarettes and a small box of condoms, placing them conspicuously on the dashboard.



An infuriated Crystal turned her gaze away. "This is the present you're talking about?"

Henry buckled his seatbelt.

Upon hearing what she said, he smirked and brushed his finger on her reddened cheek. "Who said I'm using it on you? Or is it your first thought to have sex with me when you saw it?"

Crystal rolled her eyes. What a shameless man.

After turning his attention back to the road, he coughed. "Erm... I don't perform too badly in bed, right, Crystal?"

Crystal couldn't answer that question.

After all, he was the only person she ever had sex with. However, she could guess that his sexual need was greater than the ordinary man's, and he performed better than the average.

While she remained silent, her blush was an obvious answer.

Everything that happened next unfolded naturally.

After all, adult couples only needed a glance to grasp their partner's sexual urge.

Just as they entered the condominium, Henry pulled the woman into a hug from behind. I love her slender waist. As he pressed her body against hers, he mused aloud. "The living room or the bedroom?"

Crystal was disoriented by his kisses.

Lifting her head slightly, she uttered, "Bedroom. Henry, don't..."

## [Chapter 165](#)

### Diamond Ring

By then, Henry had been suppressing his urges for a long time.

Hence, he was practically glued to her body for the entire afternoon. Crystal had lost count of how many times he had orgasmed.

By the time she woke up, it was already dusk.

Golden rays of light spilled into the room, illuminating the bedroom in a warm glow.

Crystal couldn't muster any strength to sit up, nor did she want to.

"You're awake?" asked Henry.

In response, she faced him and noticed that he had put on nicer clothes following his bath.

He looks handsome in a suit. Crystal blushed and hastily wrapped the blanket around her exposed body as she sat up. "What time is it?"

Seated by the edge of the bed, Henry gently caressed her delicate cheek with his hand and whispered, "We did it four times."

“Enough, Henry!”

Grinning, Henry yelled in the direction of the door, and within moments, the audible footsteps of something traversing the floor echoed through the room.

Crystal looked at the man, who was wearing a charming grin on his face. “Tell me if you like my present.”

Just as he ended his sentence, a white dog bolted into the bedroom.

It was Snowy, the dog that Crystal often fed.

Snowy was sporting a new look with trimmed fur and an elegant collar around its neck. Crystal’s eyes lit up with delight at the unexpected sight, yearning to embrace Snowy in a warm hug. However, she hesitated, mindful of her current state of undress.

Henry scooped Snowy up in his arms and carefully retrieved an object from the dog’s collar. With a reassuring tone, he mentioned, “I spayed it already. It’s yours from now on.”

Crystal’s attention was wholly focused on Snowy, so she didn’t notice the item in his hand. This is indeed an amazing present!

Snowy instantly recognized her and obediently allowed her to touch it.

After indulging in some playful moments together, Henry playfully shooed Snowy out of the room. Then, he gently took hold of her hand, a mischievous glimmer in his eyes, and whispered, “There’s one more surprise for you.”

Nestled within the palm of his hand gleamed a flawless pear-shaped diamond ring.

Crystal was stunned by the sight before her.

In the afterglow of their intimate encounter, her heart and body still awash with a pleasant warmth, she felt an overwhelming joy upon receiving the diamond ring.

As a symbol of significance and love, the presence of the diamond ring held a special meaning, particularly for women.

With a soft voice, Henry inquired, “Do you like it? I can put it on for you.”

Her heart raced as she leaned on his side, still wrapped in the blanket. “Henry..”

“You don’t want it?”

Why won’t I want it? There are no women in this world who’ll reject this! Besides, the man I love gave this to me... Crystal extended her gracefully curved fingers, laying them out flat in front of him, creating an atmosphere steeped in romance.

Henry proceeded to slip the ring onto her middle finger.

It fitted her like a glove.

However, a flicker of disappointment flashed through Crystal's eyes as she noticed that he didn't place the ring on her ring finger as expected.

As he leaned in for a tender kiss, he whispered, "I promise to change its placement after our wedding, all right?"

Crystal raised her head, allowing him to smooch her. The special gift left her with a profound sense that their relationship had taken on a more serious and committed tone, not only for her but also for him. I know Audrey's still around, but I'm willing to try with him. I really like him. Perhaps there's a nice future ahead of us.

When a woman's guard was lowered, she would often find herself becoming more daring and uninhibited in her romantic relationship. With Henry gently pulling her out from under the blanket, she blushed shyly but obediently settled into his lap, engaging in a passionate make-out session with him.

Her coffee-colored hair scattered on her fair back.

By the time it was over, it was already half past five in the evening

As Crystal dressed herself, she couldn't help but recollect that they hadn't purchased anything during their afternoon together, as they had devoted their time to intimate encounters.

Hugging her from behind, Henry smiled. "I asked Jamie to buy something for us. It's sitting in the living room right now. Bring it back home with you, all right?"

Crystal was flushed with embarrassment. Jamie was here? When? Did she know we were...

"Jamie isn't unfamiliar with relationships. So what if she knows?"

Her heart pounded.

Henry kissed her earlobe and stated with difficulty, "I really don't want to send you home!"

After a while, Crystal pushed him away. "I need to return home, Henry."

"Mhm." As he held her, he helped tidied her wool dress.

"I'll pick you up on Thursday to spend a night with you. Then, I'll drive us to my home on Friday for a meal with my family. What do you think?" While speaking, he couldn't help but brush his hand against her body. "You look great in this dress. You should wear the same one next time. It's convenient."

His voice oozed with a sense of mature masculinity.

Not only had Crystal gotten used to that, it even aroused her easily.

Then, Henry carried her downstairs.

He displayed remarkable thoughtfulness by escorting Crystal back home and assisting in transporting the "purchased" items to her living room. Moreover, he warmly greeted her parents once more, treating them and Crystal with the utmost respect.

Crystal was reluctant to let him leave but still went downstairs to see him off.

Underneath the illuminated night sky filled with fireworks, he gently kissed her.

Despite not sharing a dinner together on Christmas, Crystal would reflect on that day in the distant future, cherishing it as the most extraordinary day they had ever experienced together.

It was a day without Audrey or anyone else.

On that day, Henry solely belonged to Crystal.

Upon Henry's return to the Miller residence, the clock displayed seven in the evening.

He handed Snowy to the housekeeper.

When Melora noticed his return, she zipped toward him and held his hand. "Where's my gift, Henry?"

Henry handed it to her.

With a radiant smile, Melora inquired, "Where did the white dog come from? I can't tell what breed it is."

Henry entered the living room and noticed Robert's presence.

He casually dropped himself onto a couch and spoke in a relaxed tone. "It's the dog from downstairs. Crystal grew fond of it, so I decided to make it a part of our family. She'll be responsible for taking care of it going forward."

Melora sniffled. "That's why you're being so kind. You're doing this to please Crystal."

As Julia emerged from the kitchen and noticed her son's return without Crystal, she grumbled, "Jamie informed me that you went to Crys' house. Why didn't you bring her back here to join us for dinner?"

"I'll do it on Friday," responded Henry.

That delighted Julia. I knew that the fortune teller was accurate in his prediction. I need to repay him at a later date.

Robert had been observing from the sidelines, his expression distant and cold.

Henry has been acting pretty laid-back since the moment he returned. This must've meant he had sex so many times that he didn't want to move anymore. I'm certain he did it with Crystal today. Seeing that he's planning to bring Crystal over on Friday, I think they've decided to get married. Do I need to call her Mrs. Miller in the future?

As those thoughts formed in his mind, he tightened his grip, feeling a chill coursing through his body.

"Why aren't you eating, Robert?" Henry gently placed a piece of meat into Robert's bowl and expressed his concern, "You seem to have lost weight lately. You should eat more, or else Melora will be worried sick!"

Melora retorted, "I will not!"

That snapped Robert out of his thoughts.

Henry's face lit up with a grin as he turned to his sister. "I'll take you to play with fireworks later. Let's take some pictures and share them with Crystal."

Delighted by the exciting plan, she turned to Robert, her eyes gleaming with anticipation. "Robert, could you please take a picture of Henry and me later? Make sure to capture his dashing looks so that Crystal will be captivated and eager to marry him."

Robert paled at her words.

A faint smile appeared on Henry's face as he witnessed this interaction, and he casually revealed, "By the way, I gave her a ring today."

## [Chapter 166](#)

### You Are The Only Man I Love

On the night of New Year's Eve, Crystal received the most exquisite display of fireworks.

Henry set off a lot of fireworks in the courtyard of the Miller residence.

Melora circled him with a sparkler in hand, looking beautiful and bubbly. Henry likewise wore a smile on his handsome face, making one's heart skip a beat.

Soon, the clock struck midnight.

Crystal received a phone call from him, in which he greeted, "Happy New Year, Crystal."

She leaned against the window, gazing out at the dark night with warmth brimming within her.

"Happy New Year to you, too!"

Thereafter, they did not hang up the phone but chatted occasionally.

Crystal could hear the voices from the man's side.

She could even hear Robert speaking, but Henry occupied her entire body and mind right then, so there was no space for anyone else.

When she fell asleep at two o'clock in the morning, she did so accompanied by Henry's voice.

As she was all groggy, she mused inwardly.

This will be a good year!

A few days later, Henry came over to pick Crystal up.

Naturally, John and Anna allowed it.

After getting into the car, Crystal shrugged off her jacket. "Where are we going?"

With a hand on the steering wheel, Henry turned to her.

Since it was technically still Christmas, she was wearing a red wool dress. It rendered her bare skin snow-white and incredibly alluring.

His voice turned a touch hoarse. "You look beautiful!"

At that compliment, Crystal could not help blushing.

Taking her hand gently, Henry said nothing further. He merely drove his Bentley Continental toward his condominium.

As soon as they arrived at the condominium, Crystal looked for Snowy.

Henry hugged her from the back. "It's at the Miller residence. You can see it tomorrow."

He was burning so hotly that Crystal could not quite stand the heat.

Deep within, she had a vague idea of his desire. However, her reservedness as a woman did not allow her to be intimate with him so quickly. It went without saying that Henry saw right through her.

Hugging her, he coaxed her tenderly and murmured a lot of sweet nothings.

Crystal felt that no woman would be able to resist it, so she eventually caved in.

Following their reconciliation this time, their coupling felt even better than it did previously..

In the past, he had always been worried about her inexperience. But this time, things were somewhat different. He no longer had any qualms about using immodest and titillating techniques on her.

Crystal had been intimate with him multiple times, and she gradually surmised that he liked things a bit rough.

If a woman loved a man, she would indulge him in bed.

Their bout of passion that night overturned everything she had ever imagined.

Her whole world was filled with Henry's handsome countenance, and his passionate voice echoed in her ears.

Their passions burned hotly for the entire night.

Early in the morning, Crystal slowly opened her eyes.

She was greeted by Henry's magnified striking face right before her.

He had indulged his desires for the whole night, yet he was still as handsome and energetic without a trace of weariness.

The sight of him reminded her of the events last night. Any scene was sufficient to make her flush bright red.

"Morning Dew!" Henry greeted intimately, planting a kiss on her.

Then, he continued, "It's time to wake up, my Little Morning Dew!"

Crystal could not resist wrapping her arms around him and kissing him fervently.

Pressing his lips against hers, Henry mumbled, "I really want to take you, but we'll be late if we tarry any longer. Let's go and buy some gifts together, okay?"

Crystal's eyes sparkled like diamonds.

It was a look that was only present in the gaze of a woman in love.

Henry kissed her eyes. After pondering for a moment, he instructed, "Go and change. Robert will be there as well. You're not allowed to wear that dress."

In truth, women loved it when men were openly jealous because of them.

Pecking him on the lips, Crystal confessed her love to him for the very first time.

"You're the only man I love right now, Henry."

Henry stared at her. A while later, he abruptly chuckled and slipped his hand under the covers.

"Let me check whether you're lying."

Being teased by the man, Crystal inexorably lifted her body.

"Didn't you say we're going to buy some gifts together?" she implored.

Henry stopped but continued gazing at her intently through narrowed eyes as though he wanted to see through her clothes.

His scrutiny had Crystal go weak at the knees.

She took the initiative to kiss him before purring, "We'll continue this when we come back at night."

Laughing softly, Henry withdrew his hand, his salacious look making Crystal avert her eyes.

When she went to the dressing room to choose an outfit, her feelings were wholly different compared to before.

In the past, she was a tad averse to those expensive jewelry and clothing, feeling that it made her seem like Henry's mistress. But now that their relationship had changed, she found it sweet when she picked an outfit.

Keeping within the confines of appropriacy, she chose a light purple wool dress and a pair of pearl earrings.

By the time she stepped out after washing up, Henry was already waiting for her.

"We'll go out for breakfast."

She wore no makeup, her face tinged with a faint hint of crimson. Henry loved her natural look.

He then drove off with her.

It was right after the New Year celebrations at the moment, so there were few people at the shopping mall.

Crystal chose an LV scarf for Julia, a limited-edition handbag for Melora, and an expensive diamond-encrusted pen for David.

When it was time to foot the bill, Henry wanted to pay with his card.

However, Crystal objected in a low voice, "I'll pay instead. It isn't appropriate for you to pay for these."

Henry pinned his gaze on her. A teasing smirk slowly curved his lips.

Uneasiness swamped Crystal, and her face heated slightly.

The sense of discomfiture lingered within her all the way to the Miller residence

After bringing the car to a stop, Henry turned to her and pinched her cheek lightly. "It's not embarrassing to buy gifts for your future parents-in-law and sister-in-law, Crystal. How could you be so shy? Who was the one who kept riding me, refusing to get down last night?"

Just when Crystal was about to blow up at him, the car door swung open.

Melora leaned close with Snowy in her arms, very much enthusiastic. "You're here, Crystal!"

Thus, Crystal had no choice but to let Henry off the hook.

Alighting from the car, she handed the gift to Melora. "This is for you."

Before Melora had taken a look at it, she shrieked, "How did you know that I like this?"

Seeing that, Henry burst out laughing.

Verily, she's hopeless!

Subsequently, he led Crystal into the house to meet David and Julia. The instant they stepped into the living room, they were greeted by the sight of Robert on the couch.

With that, the couple who once dated met again.

The look in Robert's eyes was unfathomable.

Crystal had given thought to the fact that she would never be able to be rid of Robert if she were to get together with Henry. But then, she loved the latter. Besides, she felt that Robert was a distant past of hers.

Furthermore, they never had a physical relationship.

Henry went upstairs to seek David out while Melora played with the puppy in the courtyard. Hence, Robert and Crystal were the only ones left in the living room.

A contemptuous smirk bloomed on Robert's face.

"You've made up your mind to marry Henry?"

"Can we please be civil, Robert?" Crystal asked coldly.

"No!" Narrowing his eyes, Robert added, "Do you think I can stand seeing the two of you putting on a public display of affection daily?"



Despite having braced herself for that answer, Crystal was inexorably saddened.

“Actually, Robert, the four years we spent together were nothing. To me, they were merely a scam. Letting me off and sparing yourself is best for us both.”

Robert swept his gaze down her, glimpsing the diamond ring on her finger.

For a moment, he plunged into a trance. A long time passed before he queried. “You’re... getting married?”

Crystal was just about to answer when footsteps sounded from the second floor.

Henry and David slowly descended the stairs.

Henry, who was walking in front, fixed his eyes on Robert. Then, he glanced at Crystal, whose eyes were red-rimmed. His gaze turned indecipherable.

### [Chapter 167](#)

Some Suffering

The atmosphere turned awkward.

Crystal knew Henry’s character and was afraid that he would be mad.

Unexpectedly, he didn’t get angry. Instead, he walked over to her and asked gently, “What’s wrong?”

Crystal shook her head.

The gaze she trained on him was filled with complete trust.

Henry smiled before looking over his shoulder at David. “Dad, this is Crystal,” he introduced as he wrapped an arm around her shoulder. “Meet my dad.”

David was over the age of fifty but looked young for his age. Henry must have gotten his facial features from his father.

Crystal respectfully greeted David as the latter slowly walked down the stairs.

At that moment, Julia also joined them. When she noticed David had stayed silent, she elbowed him and said, “The child is greeting you. Why are you putting on airs?”

David’s gaze deepened.

I knew Henry had brought a woman back on Melora’s birthday, but he didn’t introduce her to me, so I paid her no heed. I never thought they would end up together.

David’s gaze was sharp as he assessed Crystal from head to toe.

She looks pretty and demure. I heard she’s doing well in her career too.

David looked favorably upon a woman like that but didn’t show it on his face and nodded impassively. “This is her first visit, and it’s still the festive season. Where is your gift for her?” he said to Julia.

Julia gave Crystal a monetary gift. Other than the thick stack of cash, there was also a weighty, golden maiden figure.

Crystal was curious about the figure.

Julia kindly explained, "I know you're a Virgo, so I got that made for you."

Crystal thanked her with a smile.

Henry looked at her with a half-smile. Crystal was slightly irritated at him but was touched at the same time.

Melora joined them after playing with the dog.

Robert was the only one not in a good mood in the living room. He knew Henry's and Crystal's relationship had stabilized.

David felt great throughout the meal and even drank a small cup of liquor.

Julia didn't stop him, surprisingly.

Crystal was slightly apprehensive, but Henry unexpectedly took good care of her.

"Crystal, this stew is good for your health. I know you like this dish as well."

His consideration moved her. When she lifted her gaze, it was met with Robert's malicious stare. Instantly, she knew what Henry was doing.

He's putting on a show for Robert!

Despite her anger, she couldn't do anything about it.

Beneath the dining table, Henry placed his hand on her thigh and brushed it gently.

Robert could see everything from his angle.

Crystal flung Henry's hand away, but he placed it back in the same spot immediately after and even copped a feel.

She turned to look at him.

Henry's eyes were the features of a mature and licentious man.

As he chatted about the stock market and economics with David, there wasn't even a glimpse of what his hand was doing beneath the table showing on his face. She placed her hand on his to stop it.

A split second later, he intertwined his fingers with hers.

Robert's face was white as a sheet as he watched their interaction.

He didn't expect the woman he dumped could make him feel so much pain and misery one day.

After the meal, they had coffee.

The men talked about business while the women conversed about their personal and social lives.

Julia was overjoyed.

She decided to take Crystal and Melora to the mall and the cafe where her friends usually frequented for some coffee and dessert.

It's the festive season, so shouldn't I show off my daughter-in-law?

Julia had gone upstairs for a change of clothes when the housekeeper reported, "Mr. David, Mr. Quinn is here."

David was stunned. "Joshua? I thought he was still in the Kingdom of Brundela?"

He shot to his feet and immediately hurried toward the front door.

Despite the festive season, Joshua looked dreary.

He saw Crystal the minute he stepped into the living room. Standing there, she seemed like a part of the Miller family. He didn't know how to voice the words lodged in his throat.

David ordered the housekeeper to serve Joshua coffee.

Joshua finally calmed down after taking a sip of the dark drink.

He was hesitant to speak. After all, Henry looked as though he had settled down, so Joshua thought it might cross a line if he made his request.

Nevertheless, Audrey was his only daughter. Thus, he still had to say it regardless of how difficult it was.

"David... Audrey is getting a divorce. Her husband abused her and broke two of her ribs. She is in a bad mental state right now. Rhea and I brought her back to Barnwood to get away from that negative place. I'm sure she'll go through with her divorce, but her husband's identity is slightly problematic, so I would like Henry to represent her in court... and give her some advice. Audrey listens to him."

Joshua's gaze was pleading by the time he finished.

David didn't reply immediately, for it was Crystal's first visit. He couldn't ignore her feelings like that.

Hence, he pondered for a long while.

Joshua, on the other hand, couldn't wait another minute longer.

He turned his teary eyes to Henry. "Henry, please help me. Rhea and I only have Audrey. If anything happens to her, Rhea can't take it."

Crystal felt coldness wash over her before Henry could say anything.

Henry glanced at her and smiled faintly at Joshua. "Mr. Quinn, do you think it's appropriate for me to be her lawyer?"

Anxiety flooded Joshua at Henry's implication, and he immediately blurted out, "Henry, I know you still have feelings for Audrey!"

The air froze.

No one could imagine Joshua would say something so rude with Crystal still in the room.

Henry opened his mouth to retort when Julia came down the stairs.

It was obvious she had heard Joshua's accusation when she gently rebuked, "I can empathize with you as a parent, Joshua, but Henry is already in a relationship with Crystal. Thus it's inappropriate for you to make such a remark."

Joshua moved his lips to speak, but Melora rudely interrupted, "If Audrey is going to court, we can help her financially. Why does Henry have to go? If you keep holding on to the favor we owe you, Mr. Quinn, have Audrey jump into the water then. I'm sure my dad will save her!"

Joshua's face paled. Embarrassment marred his features.

David reprimanded, "Melora, apologize to Mr. Quinn now!"

Melora begrudgingly apologized to him.

David softened his tone and said, "Please don't take Melora's words to heart. She's still young. As for the divorce proceedings, I'll discuss it with Henry and give you a reply."

Joshua had no choice but to accept it.

He couldn't help but cast a pleading gaze at Crystal when he left.

Crystal's body still felt cold to the touch.

She was sympathetic but wasn't that magnanimous, so she chose not to look at Joshua.

Disappointment flooded Joshua.

After he left the house, the living room fell into a dead silence. Everyone felt uneasy about the sensitive topic.

David slowly finished his cup of coffee, then gazed at the son he was proud of and Crystal. "Come to the study with me, both of you."

Crystal and Henry followed David up to the study a few minutes later.

It was apparent David's mood had plummeted, but his gaze was gentle when he looked at Crystal. His tone was casual when he spoke as if speaking to a family member.

"Brew some coffee, Crystal."

Crystal was taken aback by the request.

However, she wasn't dumb. She knew behind his kindness, David would request her sacrifice and tolerance. Making a scene was futile.

Hence, she silently made coffee.

David said nothing while she did so.

He quietly studied her.

She seems gentle and obedient. I'm sure she had a good upbringing. She's much better than Audrey.

David quite liked Crystal. Moreover, he had dated many girls before when he was in his youth as well. He didn't want to hurt her, but Joshua had risked his life to save Melora.

He had to return the favor.

Crystal poured them coffee, and Henry's gaze darkened as it trained on her.

He started, "This is inappropriate, Dad!"

David put his palm up. "Listen to me, Henry."

He lowered his head and stared at the coffee, looking as if he was immersed in his thoughts.

"To be honest, what Joshua did for Melora isn't something we have to repay with everything we have, but there is something you don't know, Henry. Rhea's sterility wasn't the only reason they adopted Audrey. Joshua became infertile when he was in the cold water for too long."

Henry and Crystal were baffled by the news.

Henry said, "You never told me that before, Dad!"

A bitter smile curved David's lips.

How can I tell anyone about something so sensitive unless it's absolutely necessary?

He sighed and continued, "Joshua does have an illegitimate child outside of the family, but do you think he can acknowledge the child with his current status and identity?"

Henry stayed silent.

The corner of David's lips curled into a resigned smile, "Henry, it's reasonable and fair if you take on this case."

He turned to Crystal and said gently, "Crystal, this will cause you a bit of suffering, but I'm willing to compensate you in other means. Rest assured. It's impossible between Henry and Audrey. You have to trust him on that."

Crystal wasn't someone who didn't know any better.

For someone with David's status to treat me so kindly, it's evident he considers me his daughter-in-law. It'd be selfish of me if I object.

Crystal was unwilling, yet she had no choice but to be generous at that moment.

She looked up at Henry and saw him staring back at her.

After a long while, Crystal said softly, "I trust him."

David liked Crystal, so he felt bad at having to wrong her. He gifted her a house as compensation, but she didn't accept it.

[Chapter 168](#)

Not Home

Henry pulled Crystal close into his arms after stepping out of the study but remained silent.

Crystal felt somewhat aggrieved.

Nonetheless, it was still Christmas, and she was staying at his house, so she didn't feel it was appropriate to throw a tantrum.

Leaning on his shoulder and catching whiffs of the pleasant aftershave on him, she asked in an undertone, "What time will you be back?"

Henry had to go to the law firm later to negotiate with the lawyer hired by Audrey's husband.

After briefly pondering, he replied, "I'll be back before dinner to accompany you for a meal. Then, we'll return to the condominium together. Crystal, this matter won't affect our lives."

Crystal forced a smile.

In the afternoon, Henry left with David.

Initially, Julia planned to take the two girls out, but she was no longer in the mood to do so.

The atmosphere in the Miller residence became somewhat stifling.

Crystal waited for the entire day, but Henry didn't come home.

He did call to tell her to eat first and have the driver send her back to the condominium, saying he would be back late.

Crystal didn't probe further for a specific time.

She couldn't help but behave slightly indifferently to preserve her pride and dignity, given that matter involved Audrey.

At eight o'clock at night, Crystal was ready to take her leave with Snowy. Julia felt very apologetic.

Crystal smiled faintly. "It's all right."

However, only she knew of the bitterness that filled her chest for the entire day.

After she got into the vehicle, the driver didn't start the car immediately.

The next second, the door to the backseat was abruptly opened from the outside, and Robert's figure came into view.

The driver, knowing his place, understood the newcomer had something to discuss with Crystal, so he tactfully kept quiet.

Robert rested his hand on the roof of the car while gazing at Crystal. "I have something to say to you."

Crystal was in a foul mood in the first place, so she had no intention of dealing with him.

Robert caught her arm and forcefully dragged her out of the car.

The night wind buffeted their figures.

Crystal glared at him. He lit a cigarette, looking at her through the rising smoke. "You still want to be with him even after all this? A transnational divorce lawsuit like this could last two years. Are you willing to see Henry always being around his ex-lover? He will have to go to the hospital to take care of her whenever she harms herself. Do you really want to be in such a relationship? Can you bear such grievances?"

Crystal despised Robert's straightforwardness, but everything he mentioned was on the mark.

Crystal responded calmly. "Robert, I don't think whether I'm doing well or not is any of your business."

All of a sudden, he slammed the roof of the car, startling the driver.

Illuminated by the moonlight, Robert's grimace appeared frightening as he questioned her, "Crystal, am I that heartless of a person to you, someone who doesn't wish you well? But have you considered that I actually want you to be happy?"

Robert was probably overly agitated as the cigarette between his fingers could be seen trembling. "F\*cking think with your head. Even Seth would be a hundred times better for you than him!"

Colors drained from Crystal's face.

Staring at her for a moment, Robert piped up tenderly, "Crystal, perhaps you can give me another chance. I won't let you down again."

She returned to the backseat of the vehicle and said impassively. "It's too late, Robert."

With that, she instructed the driver to start the car.

The driver sighed and gently stepped on the accelerator.

Crystal remained silent on the way. The young driver couldn't help but utter, "Don't worry, Miss Winters. I won't blabber about what happened tonight."

Crystal didn't respond.

She didn't seem to care that much anymore at that point.

After returning to Henry's condominium, she helped Snowy to settle in and waited for Henry to come home.

However, he didn't return even as she waited till midnight.

The night grew silent, with only Snowy keeping her company, trotting in circles around her feet.

Crystal sat before Morning Dew and played all the pieces she could remember. Still, Henry hadn't come home.

Snowy got tired and nestled at Crystal's feet.

The scenic and magnificent night view of Barnwood opened up before Crystal as she sat in front of the piano, but she felt utterly depressed.

She reconsidered her relationship with Henry and realized she could no longer back out of it.

Henry didn't come home that night.

The next morning, Crystal left the condominium with Snowy and returned to her own place.

Henry probably went back afterward as he called to ask about her whereabouts.

She grasped her phone, not knowing what to say.

Possibly swamped with work, Henry could only utter a few sentences before having to hang up because of another incoming call.

Just like that, the two didn't meet for the subsequent few days.

During that period, something came up at the music center again.

After the official opening of the music center on the preselected auspicious day, Emelia invited Crystal to her office for a cup of coffee alone. Noticing her pale countenance, Crystal couldn't help but express her concern.

"Crystal, I've been diagnosed with stomach cancer." Emelia spoke in an undertone.

Holding the coffee mug, Crystal blinked at Emelia upon hearing that.

Then, tears streamed down her cheeks.

She didn't wipe away her tears and instead asked softly, "Did you get a second opinion?"

"Yes. I've been to the best hospitals in the country. Crystal, I plan to go to Sumanthova to recuperate, but I don't want to give my shares to others. If it's possible, I want you to take over. I have no other demands as long as I can recoup my investment capital." Emelia grasped Crystal's arm.

When Crystal placed down her coffee mug, even her fingers were shaking.

She waited a long while before saying, "I'll accompany you to Sumanthova."

Emelia shook her head.

She had always been a tough woman and still had aspirations at that moment.

She and Crystal established the music center. Although she had fallen ill, Emelia still hoped Crystal could carry on with the business.

Subsequently, Emelia spoke a lot.

However, Crystal couldn't possibly buy all the shares in Emelia's possession as that would set her back by more than ten million, and she didn't want to ask for that money from Henry.

That night, she went back to have dinner at John's place.

Anna showed her concern when she sensed Crystal's dampened mood.



Crystal mentioned Emelia's condition and matters related to the music center. John asked Anna, "How much money do we have left? Let Crystal use the money."

Anna returned to the room and counted their savings.

They had several million, but the amount was far from being sufficient.

Therefore, Anna suggested, "Miss Long is having a hard time now, and this music center is also something you two worked hard to set up. Why don't we do this? This condominium your dad and I are staying in can fetch around twenty million. We don't need to stay in such a huge house. An eighty square meter apartment would be sufficient for us to live in."

Crystal didn't agree to it.

In the end, John made the final decision. "We'll do as Anna says."

Crystal felt very guilty, but Anna comforted her tenderly, "You're our only child, so these things will eventually be passed down to you anyway."

The condominium was located in a prime area with many interested buyers.

As a result, the place was sold within three days.

After the Wintorses moved into a smaller house, Anna handed Crystal the passbook with ten million. "Give this to Miss Long and remember to gift her something. She has taken good care of you all these years."

Crystal nodded and said, "Once I earn back the money, I'll buy you a bigger house."

Anna smiled. "In that case, your dad and I will be waiting for you to provide for us."

Crystal still had some savings on hand.

She invited Emelia to meet up in a cafe. In just a few days, the latter had lost quite a bit of weight.

Emelia wanted to order coffee, but Crystal stopped her. "You're not allowed to drink that since you're sick!"

Emelia merely grinned in response.

Crystal handed her a check worth twelve million and an additional five-hundred-thousand check. The second check was a gift from Crystal, but Emelia refused to accept it.

Crystal gently held her hand. "I'll wait for you to come back."

She decided to hold onto those shares temporarily, and when Emelia returned, she would transfer those shares back to her.

Emelia didn't have many relatives, nor did she have a husband or children.

She could've left the country without attachments, but after listening to Crystal's words, she choked up and scolded the latter jokingly, "You're so mean. I was thinking of settling down overseas with a handsome man and never coming back here again, yet you're using the music center to hold me back!"

The two laughed, but sadness lingered within their chests.

Crystal thought to herself depressingly. How much time does Emelia have left now that she's been diagnosed with late-stage stomach cancer? I don't even know when we'll see each other again or under what circumstances we'll be reunited

That meal she shared with Emelia was considered a send-off. Still, Crystal didn't expect she would bump into Henry there.

Now that she thought about it, she hadn't seen him for almost an entire week.

They rarely conversed, even on the phone.

They couldn't help but lament inwardly after running into one another again.

Henry wasn't alone. Jamie and two other strange men trailed behind him.

Crystal fathomed he was working, so she merely nodded at him.

She wanted to send Emelia home, but Emelia shook her head in refusal.

Emelia was a shrewd woman and could sense at first glance the estrangement between the couple, so she flashed a faint smile and said, "I'll take a taxi."

Crystal could only help Emelia hail a taxi and watch her get into the vehicle.

Emelia's figure was so emaciated that she was completely obscured from Crystal's view upon getting into

the taxi.

Sorrow surged within Crystal as she stood amid the night for a long while.

"Crystal." She turned around and saw Henry standing behind her, his figure illuminated by the neon lights.

He exuded an air of elegance that even the most dazzling light couldn't overshadow.

She paused for some time before asking, "Are you done with your work?"

Henry hummed in response.

He took the car keys from her and uttered gently, "You don't seem to be in a good state, so let me drive you."

Crystal didn't object.

After getting into the car, he asked, "Should we go to my place?"

She leaned against the back of the chair and replied in slight exhaustion, "Snowy is at my place, so you should drive yourself home first."

Sensing her indifference, he frowned slightly.

However, he didn't let his displeasure show and instead said, "Let's spend the night at your place, then. You can take a rest later. I'll walk Snowy."

Crystal went along with his suggestion. If I object, I'll look petty and seem like I care too much.

Henry appeared to be in the mood to chat with her. "Did you have dinner with Miss Long? I noticed she didn't look well."

Crystal nodded and recounted everything to him.

When she was done talking, Henry stopped the car beside the road. The traffic light ahead happened to have turned red.

Staring ahead, he asked in a low voice, "Why didn't you tell me when you needed money?"

The Winters family even sold their house and moved into a smaller place.

As a man, there was no way Henry wouldn't take that matter to heart.

Crystal looked down. "Henry, I don't really want to spend your money now."

Silence ensued.

After a long while, he asked again, "Is it because you lack a sense of security?"

She didn't reply to that.

In fact, she didn't regret her decision. Those overly intimate and heart-fluttering nights they shared had prompted her to agree to his request. She had mustered all her courage to accept that relationship, and even though her bravery persisted, traces of cowardice had also crept into her heart.

## [Chapter 169](#)

### Calling His Name

Back at Crystal's condominium, Snowy wagged its tail and greeted her.

Crystal took off her coat and patted its head. "Good dog!"

Snowy wiggled its tail excitedly at the compliment, showing that it wanted to go out and play. Crystal handed the leash to Henry. "You take it for a walk around, and I'll make you some pasta."

Henry fixed his deep-set gaze on her with a hint of eagerness in his eyes.

Then, he bent down to tie the leash on Snowy and went out for a walk.

The kitchen of the condominium faced the outside. Hence, Crystal could watch Henry while prepping the meal. The clothes he had on complemented his slender, model-like figure perfectly, forming a mesmerizing sight.

Crystal found it difficult to avert her gaze.

When he came back, the condominium was heated to the point that it was becoming too warm.

Henry took off his coat and rolled up his shirt sleeves. Even though he was sitting at a small dining table to have instant pasta, his aristocratic temperament was not at all diminished.

Crystal fetched the newspaper and sat next to him, reading.

However, she found it difficult to focus on the papers. Instead, her attention was drawn to the several new needle puncture wounds on his arm, where the skin was all bruised from the frequent punctures.

Crystal felt a lump in her throat at the sight.

She traced her slender fingers on his arm and looked at him. "Have you had your blood drawn multiple times?"

Henry traced her gaze and responded with a light hum.

Audrey had stirred quite the trouble lately, and both the Quinns and the Millers were affected. Henry had suffered the most. Just as Robert had mentioned, the hospital didn't have enough Rh-negative blood. Hence, whenever Audrey was undergoing an operation, Henry would have to head to the hospital to donate his blood.

Crystal said nothing and gently stroked his arm.

She was concerned about him.

Audrey does not love Henry. Even if she did, her love was extremely twisted and selfish.

Crystal couldn't make her thoughts vocal, of course.

Furthermore, she didn't even know how much Henry still cared for Audrey.

After Henry finished the pasta, he habitually took out a cigarette and was about to light it when Crystal gently slipped it out of his hand.

"Smoke less."

He stared at her with his deep-set gaze.

Crystal lowered her eyes and started to clean up, but he placed his hand on hers.

"Do it tomorrow."

Henry tenderly picked her up and walked straight toward the bedroom. It was clear as day that he wanted her.

"No!" Crystal wrapped her arms around his neck.

Halting in his steps, Henry lowered his head to look at her. In a husky voice, he asked, "What's wrong?"

Crystal freed one hand and lightly stroked his shirt collar, whispering, "You've had your blood drawn multiple times. You should rest and recuperate."

Henry stared at her with his obsidian gaze.

Crystal met his gaze.

Her eyes turned misty as a conflicted look filled her face.

After a long while, Henry casually remarked, "It's going to be all right."

He had always been assertive. Crystal couldn't resist him. Pressed against the foot of the bed, she surrendered herself to him.

Perhaps feeling the strain of his body holding him back, Henry had only managed to do it once.

Lying on top of her, his light panting tickled her ears. Their clothes were left strewn across the floor.

Crystal wanted to get up.

Henry pressed his body down on her and said, "Don't move. Stay with me for a while."

She relented and made no move, pressing her bright little face against his neck, feeling the warmth of his body.

Half an hour later, after Henry was rested enough, he scooped Crystal up from the bed and headed to the bathroom for a quick rinse.

Crystal soon fell asleep out of exhaustion.

In the middle of the night, she woke up to find Henry no longer in bed.

She got up, put on a coat, and walked into the living room. The window was cracked open, and Henry was standing by it, smoking. By his coffee cup, there were seven or eight extinguished cigarette butts.

Upon spotting Crystal, he immediately put out the cigarette in his hand.

"Did I wake you?" he asked.

Crystal padded over and hugged him. "Why aren't you sleeping? Are you bothered by something?"

She was a soft-hearted woman, and so she was willing to make concessions for the man she loved.

Crystal reckoned that if Henry brought up Audrey right then, she was willing to discuss it with him. After all, Audrey was like a barrier between them that they couldn't get over.

However, Henry merely patted her on her head and said, "It's about work."

He led her back to the room, and they went back to bed. Hugging her from behind, Henry couldn't resist kissing her ear.

Thereafter, they got along quite well.

Even though Henry was busy, they would meet each other two to three times a week.

Sometimes, he would stay over at her place, and occasionally when he had to leave early, he would take her to his condominium instead.

The needle marks on his arm were always there.

Crystal never asked where he spent his time when they weren't together, nor did she ask if Audrey had been discharged from the hospital, whether she was still causing trouble, or if she was still holding on to him in hopes of a reconciliation.

When he came over, Crystal would just make him some nourishing food.

Henry would always try to get intimate with her, but Crystal would hold him back.

After all, his body was too weak.

Nonetheless, there were occasional nights when he would receive a call from Joshua and rush to the hospital after putting on his clothes.

On those nights, Crystal would find herself losing sleep as she sat in the living room waiting for him to come back, but he never did.

As the days passed, Audrey escalated the situation well beyond anyone's control, and the fact that the Millers and the Quinns were famous didn't help the matter, either.

John was worried about her daughter and wasn't too keen on Crystal getting together with Henry. After all, his daughter's husband's wealth meant nothing when he always had to spare time for another woman.

Anna was a woman, and she understood that Crystal was going through a tough time.

Hence, she didn't say much.

As for Crystal, she was feeling like a candle burning on both ends.

After exiting the Winters residence, Crystal got in the car to go to the hospital to pick up medicine for her father. That was when Anna came running from upstairs.

"Madam Anna!" Crystal got out of the car when she noticed Anna.

Anna approached her and said softly, "Your father is a straightforward man and is never one to mince his words. So, don't take his words to heart. As for matters of love, it's up to you to decide. Personally, I think no matter how outstanding Henry is, what's the point if you're not happy..."

Crystal lowered her eyes and nodded.

Her eyes welled up with tears, their corners glistening, while the tip of her nose flushed red as she fought to suppress a sob.

Anna felt her heart ache for Crystal.

She reached out to straighten Crystal's coat. "If you like him, give it your best shot. If he ends up disappointing you, don't be too heartbroken. Life is short. Don't waste too much of it."

Crystal nodded again.

Anna patted her and said softly, "Go now. Drive safely."

Crystal gave her a hug before getting into the car.

Crystal drove to the hospital and picked up the medicine.

She didn't expect to run into Audrey there.

A nurse was wheeling her around the hospital for a walk.

Audrey looked terrible. Her face was pale, and her once toned body had become thin and frail, causing the hospital gown to hang loosely on her frame.

Crystal looked at Audrey, who also turned her head to look back at her.

Despite her frail body, her fiery spirit had not diminished.

There were many other paths that she could have taken to avoid bumping into Audrey. Crystal didn't wish to deal with her at the moment and turned around to leave.

However, Audrey called out to her, "Crystal, can we talk?"

Crystal fixed her gaze on the woman.

Audrey asked the nurse to push her closer before raising her hand to dismiss the nurse.

The nurse tactfully left them alone.

Audrey grew green with envy at the sight of Crystal's calm demeanor.

She had been tormenting herself these days, and yet Henry still did not agree to get back together with her. It's all because of this ordinary, undistinguished woman. But it's all right. With our past ties, Henry won't abandon me.

Audrey was about to speak when her gaze landed on the diamond ring on Crystal's finger.

It was a beautiful diamond ring, and yet it was worn on the middle finger.

A cold smirk hung on Audrey's lips. And here I thought Henry values this woman! Even the promises he made to her are only half-hearted.

With a haughty lift of her chin, Audrey sneered, "I heard you want to marry Henry?"

Crystal followed her gaze and looked at the ring on her middle finger.

Her heart skipped a beat.

The reason she had been enduring these days was because she genuinely liked Henry and didn't want to give up easily.

There were also Henry's romantic gestures. When times were good, they were really happy together.

Audrey let out a cold chuckle.

She lowered her head, toying with her fingernails as she nonchalantly said, "Miss Winters, do you believe that with just a phone call, or if I slit my wrist, Henry will leave everything to attend to me? No matter what it is that he's doing with you, he will leave it all behind and rush to the hospital to transfuse blood for me, even if you two were in the throes of passion."

Crystal was appalled by her audacity.

In a cold voice, she demanded, "Audrey, what's your purpose in doing this? You clearly know there's no chance for you two!"

Audrey stiffened.

Her gaze turned frigid as she enunciated her every word. "To get the pleasure of tormenting you both! Especially you, Crystal! Why should you be together with Henry? Not only did you get to be with him, but you're even dreaming of marrying him! Let me tell you, you don't deserve him! You're not worthy!"

Crystal didn't wish to entertain Audrey.

The latter was nothing but a deranged woman.

Crystal knew that the woman only wanted to enrage her right then, edging her to lose her temper and do something irredeemable.

Crystal calmed herself.

In an impassive tone, she replied, "You're the one who's least worthy of all, Audrey. Whether or not I have a future with Henry, I have a clear conscience. Even if we break up in the end, I won't cling to him like you do.""

Crystal felt much better after making her thoughts vocal.

She turned around to leave right away.

Audrey broke into a hysterical wail behind her.

Crystal remained upset for long after she went back.

She wondered if Henry had to face the deranged Audrey every single time he met her.

Then, she brought Snowy to his condominium.

He wasn't back home yet. Crystal made stew and waited for him to come back as she worked on her reports.

Snowy played on its own and would rest by her side when it was tired.

The puppy sometimes watched her with its dark eyes, wagging its tail at her.

Crystal took out a bag of snacks and fed Snowy. Satiated, it took a nap afterward.

She glanced at the time; it was already ten thirty at night.

Right then, Henry opened the door, and he was surprised at the sight of Crystal.

After removing his coat, Henry approached her and bent over to give her a kiss. It was apparent from his voice that he was tired. "Why did you come on your own accord today?"

Crystal wrapped her arms around his neck and said, "I wanted to cook for you."

She took note of his complexion.



As expected, he didn't look well.

Henry seldom talked to Crystal about how he was doing, and she wouldn't ask either, for she was concerned about the Miller family's indebtedness toward Joshua.

However, she had a change of heart after seeing the deranged Audrey.

"Here, have some hot stew first," Crystal said gently.

Henry was reluctant to let her go. He continued to stay close to her and jokingly asked, "So, you're really looking forward to being my wife, huh?"

Crystal blushed crimson at his remark.

"Who said I wanted to be your wife? I'm still young!" she retorted.

Henry kissed her fair neck, and Crystal couldn't help but feel her skin tingle. In a husky voice, he said, "But I'm not young anymore. I'm going to be thirty next year."

Crystal turned his head toward her. Her heart fluttered at the sight of his handsome face.

Henry wished to kiss her again.

He pressed his forehead against hers and mumbled, "Crystal, it's been a long time. Please say yes."

That night, he was especially tender and gentle with Crystal.

As Crystal's emotions surged in the midst of their intense coupling, she instinctively leaned forward and softly uttered Henry's name in his ear, catching him off-guard.

## [Chapter 170](#)

Giving It A Try For I Love You Dearly

Henry pulled her into his embrace and pressed his lips against hers. "Say my name again."

Crystal was reluctant to do so.

Nestling against his shoulder, she inhaled the subtle scent of his sweat, embracing him tenderly.

I'm guessing Henry wants to do it again.

Tracing her slender fingers along his chiseled features, she murmured, "Get some rest, and make sure to have some stew later."

Henry's gaze grew deep and profound. "Are you worried about me?" he asked.

Indeed, Crystal did feel concerned for him.

Captivated by her gentle and submissive demeanor, the desire within him surged, and he rolled over before pinning her down, yearning for another round.

Before their intimate moment could proceed further, however, his phone rang, playing a distinct ringtone reserved exclusively for Joshua.

Naturally, Crystal displayed a strong aversion toward Joshua's phone call.

True to expectations, Henry's face darkened after a brief conversation on the phone. He soon got to his feet and proceeded to get dressed.

Seeing this, Crystal wrapped her arms around him from behind, refusing to let him leave.

"Henry, can't you just ignore her for once? You know she's doing this on purpose. How much longer will you let her hurt you? Shouldn't there be a limit to your debt of gratitude?" she exclaimed.

Isn't he aware that I'm a woman as well? I can't keep pretending everything is fine and make him some nourishing food just to watch him go to the hospital to donate blood for a deranged woman!

When her gaze fell upon the needle marks on his arm, she felt an overwhelming sense of suffocation.

Henry fell silent and simply gave her a passionate kiss that lasted for a long while.

He comforted her, waiting until she had calmed down a bit before reassuring her in a soft voice, "I'll be back soon."

"No, you won't. Audrey won't allow it," Crystal whispered, her voice tinged with resignation.

Her tone grew serious, and she uttered, "Henry, Audrey is not your responsibility! While it's understandable that you want to assist her with the lawsuit, your enabling behavior will only exacerbate her madness."

In truth, what she wanted to convey was that if Audrey was truly experiencing mental illness, she should consider seeking treatment from a mental health professional.

Henry seemed to have grasped her underlying message.

His gaze flickered with profound and inscrutable emotions, making it difficult to discern his true thoughts. Sensing the weight of his silence, Crystal decided to keep the rest of her thoughts unspoken.

In the end, he still put on his clothes and left.

As usual, Henry did not return.

The spring nights were surprisingly chilly, and as the clock struck three in the morning, Crystal found it difficult to remain lying in bed. Although she initially considered returning to her condominium, she hesitated, not wanting to disturb Snowy.

Just like that, she sat motionless in the living room throughout the night.

Over the next two weeks, Audrey's penchant for kicking up a fuss escalated to the point where Crystal hardly saw Henry anymore.

During the only two occasions she met him, he appeared visibly unwell and would doze off the moment his head touched the pillow.

As time passed, Crystal no longer wanted to question him anything.

She knew that throughout the course of their relationship, she was always the one who got the short end of the stick with no way out. In fact, the bond between them had become so tenuous that she found herself sympathizing with him for no reason.

At times, she found herself pondering that, perhaps subconsciously, she had already given up on this relationship and was simply waiting for an eventual outcome to unfold.

Much to Crystal's surprise, David sought her out.

The secretary of Miller Corporation arrived in a car to pick her up personally, respectfully stating, "Miss Winters, our CEO would like to meet with you."

Half an hour later, Crystal found herself sitting in David's office.

The man seemed to hold her in high regard as he dismissed his secretary and personally brewed a cup of coffee for her. Smiling, he said, "I heard from Melora that you enjoy Mandheling coffee. I had my secretary purchase some beans for you. Please give it a try"

Naturally, Crystal was pleasantly surprised by the treatment she received.

However, she was also aware that individuals of David's status rarely stooped to such humble gestures without any reason.

Something's off about this...

As expected, after placing his coffee down, David sat across from her and spoke in a relaxed manner. "Why haven't you been coming to the house lately? Melora talks about you all the time, and Julia is eagerly looking forward to having a meal with you."

Crystal had no idea how to respond to that, for she couldn't see any hope or prospects in her relationship with Henry at the moment.

Being a shrewd businessman, David was well aware of the inner thoughts and emotions of a young woman like Crystal.

Moreover, he was also well acquainted with his son's temperament.

I really like Crystal. She's a stunning woman, and her tenacious spirit surpasses even that of my wife.

With Audrey causing trouble and Henry's absence from home, David knew he had to do something about it.

He slid a letter of invitation across the table to Crystal. With a warm smile on his face, he said, "This is an invitation to join the most renowned music academy in Ferropene. I have no other intentions for doing this, but seeing the hardships you've endured recently, why not take some time abroad to heal your heart? Once your studies are completed and the legal issues with the Quinn family are resolved, all debts of gratitude will have been repaid. By then, you and Henry will be at the perfect age to marry and start a family."

Crystal stiffened up when she heard that.

She wasn't oblivious to the current circumstances, and she understood David's intentions.

Given the longstanding relationship between the Miller family and the Quinn family, I guess it's inevitable that I would have to bear the burden and make sacrifices. By getting me to leave, Audrey would stop kicking up a fuss which will, in turn, alleviate some of the hardships Henry is facing. It seemed like a perfectly arranged solution, taking into account everyone's well-being, but the fact remains that none of this is my fault, yet I'm the only one being sacrificed in the end. Everyone gets a happy ending, while I would have to leave my home and start anew in a distant land.

The mere thought of it caused a pang in Crystal's heart, leaving her breathless with pain.

The opulent office fell into prolonged silence, stretching out for what seemed like an eternity.

Nonetheless, David's demeanor remained calm. It was as if he had an endless reservoir of patience when it came to dealing with this young woman.

Finally, Crystal lifted her gaze and uttered with a heavy heart, "I need some time to consider it."

Her complexion was deathly pale as she got to her feet.

Feeling a twinge of sympathy, David got his secretary to escort her back home.

No sooner had Crystal left than Julia arrived.

Perhaps she had gotten the news from somewhere that Crystal would be here, but by the time she rushed over, the young woman was already gone. Her beautiful countenance was marred with concern as she began to reprimand her husband for the situation.

"Henry should have never gotten involved in Audrey's affairs! The fortune teller warned that he would only have two chances for romantic relationships in his life, and only one of them would lead to a successful outcome! David Miller, I'm telling you right now that if this situation ends up ruining Henry's marriage prospects, I will take Melora and Crystal with me and leave this family!"

She sobbed and added, "I'm going to make sure the two of you live a lonely life!"

David felt helpless as he listened to his wife's tirade.

He offered consolation to her, all while feeling frustrated with his son's lack of initiative.

As a father and a man, he was keenly aware that the main source of conflict in this situation was not Audrey but rather Henry himself.

I can tell that Crystal is genuinely in love with Henry. After all, only love could make a beautiful woman who comes from a good family and has a successful career such as herself wait for him. The real issue here lay with my son, who failed to cherish her or perhaps didn't love her enough.

David's decision was born out of pure helplessness, for he knew that without this arrangement, their relationship would eventually crumble.

As such, he took a gamble, believing in Crystal's unwavering love for Henry.

Crystal returned home with the invitation letter in her hand.

She pondered over it for three days.

During this time, she had a single encounter with Henry, and they simply embraced each other without going any further.

As they held each other close that night, she found the courage to ask herself the pivotal question. Would my fondness and love for him be enough to endure this sacrifice? Although I could entrust my career to capable hands during the two years that I'll be gone, I won't be able to be there for my family, especially my ailing father....

As the morning light broke, Crystal delicately traced her fingers over the ring adorning her hand, reliving the stirring emotions of the day he had presented it to her. The echo of their shared moments filled her heart with bittersweet longing.

In the end, she came to the conclusion that the love she held for Henry surpassed any reservations or sacrifices that lay ahead.

If two years is all that it takes to change our circumstances, then I'm willing to take the gamble. I'll take Dad and Anna with me to Ferropene. Once I'm done with my piano studies, I believe that I'll be better suited for Henry and will have more confidence to face Joshua when the time comes...

As Crystal made this decision, a sense of confusion and uncertainty filled her heart.

However, with Henry's face right in front of her, she felt her raging emotions cool off, for the man's attractiveness had enraptured her completely.

She leaned in and planted a tender kiss on his lips, whispering, "I love you very much, so let's give it a try. Henry stirred when he felt the kiss.

He rolled over and pinned Crystal beneath him before asking, "What did you just say?"

Blushing, Crystal remained silent, refusing to repeat her words.

Henry's gaze burned with intensity as his youthful vigor took over. He knew it was time to make up for his unfinished desires left from the previous night.

In response, Crystal was exceptionally cooperative.

Training his gaze on her, Henry looked at her with a mixture of deep longing and desire.

She wrapped her arms around his neck, drawing him closer for a passionate kiss. Her face flushed with a delicate shade of crimson, her eyes revealing her willingness to submit to him.

After indulging in their lust several times, Henry rolled over and lay beside her.

He chuckled breathlessly and asked, "What's gotten into you today? You're so proactive

He then shifted to the side and gently pinched her cheek, saying, "I heard that when girls reach a certain age of men. Have you been eagerly awaiting this, Crystal?"

"You're the one who's been yearning for it!" Crystal swatted him away playfully before getting up and heading toward the bathroom.

When she came out again, Henry was already by the window engaging in a phone call with Joshua, discussing the intricacies of the lawsuit.

Seeing this, Crystal wrapped her arms around him from behind.

After he hung up the phone, she asked softly. "Will you be able to make it back for Valentine's Day on Saturday?"

Her submissive demeanor made his mood brighten instantly.

He gently caressed her hand and asked in a tender tone, "What gift are you planning to give me?"

Crystal's heart twinged as she thought about the invitation letter, but she kept her voice light and said, "It's a secret!"

Henry turned around and kissed her. It had been a while since they had indulged in such passion, and with him having a free morning, he couldn't resist the urge to continue their intimate session.

Crystal hesitated for a moment before surrendering to his advances.

Later that afternoon, Henry went to the law firm.

Crystal made a phone call to David, and it was evident that he had been eagerly waiting for her call as he picked up almost immediately.

David's tone was as gentle as ever when he asked, "Have you made your decision?"

Crystal made a sound of agreement before adding, "I'd like to take my dad and Anna with me."

David was pleased to hear that and immediately expressed his approval, "That won't be a problem. After all, it's good to have your family by your side. You're a filial daughter."

He then asked, "Does Henry know about your decision?"

Crystal shook her head. "I haven't told him yet. Maybe I'll talk to him in a couple of days..."

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, she wanted to make some special preparations.

After all, this was their first Valentine's Day together. She wanted to cherish it and make it memorable, for she knew that the following two years might not offer them as much time together.

Having once been young himself, David could easily guess the reason behind her decision.

He chuckled warmly and said, "I'll have Julia and Melora accompany you for some shopping. If you ever feel lonely, get Melora to keep you company. She's not usually tied up with important matters anyway."

Crystal shook her head gently.

David was slightly moved, and he found himself saying a few more words than usual. The fact that someone of his status was willing to indulge and comfort others showed just how much he valued her.

Crystal spent the next two days taking care of things and making necessary arrangements.

She sought out a renowned studio in Barnwood to design a black-themed concept and renovate Henry's condominium on Saturday afternoon.

Despite the relatively high price tag of fifty thousand, she didn't feel the slightest pang of regret when swiping her card.

The thought that it was all for their first Valentine's Day made her feel that everything she had done was worthwhile.

Apart from the renovation, she even went to great lengths to prepare some candlesticks, champagne, roses and even had Michelin-starred meals delivered.

The ambiance was filled with romance.

At seven o'clock in the evening, Crystal called Henry. Her voice was filled with excitement as she asked, "When will you be back?"