

Night of Love 241

[Chapter 241 Cutting Ties](#)

Crystal blushed furiously and pushed Henry away, sputtering, “No!”

It was impossible for her to fall back asleep now. She headed to the walk-in closet to change.

Henry followed her inside.

They had been married, and he had seen her changing multiple times.

Crystal was unbothered by his presence. After she slipped on a sweater, she felt him hugging her from behind. He mumbled, “Secretly, you’re still blaming me, aren’t you, Crystal?”

She did not refute him.

Some things simply took more time to forget than others.

She replied softly, “We both need time to deal with this, Henry.”

He hummed gently in agreement, glad that they were getting along much better now. When they were alone, he refrained from doing any inappropriate gestures. Crystal was too important to him. Not only was she the woman he wanted, but she was also the mother of his child, Skyler.

Everything else could wait for its appropriate time and place.

Just then, Henry’s phone rang.

It was a call from David. Henry kept an arm around Crystal’s slender waist while answering his phone. “Dad?”

David sounded rather displeased as he barked, “Bring Crystal here, Henry!”

Before Henry could ask any questions, David had him pass the phone to Crystal.

He said some things to Crystal, who nodded and replied, “All right. We’ll be there in a while.”

David hung up.

“What did he tell you?” asked Henry.

Crystal explained, “The Quinns are causing a fuss over there. They insist I do a bone marrow match test with Joshua.”

The news infuriated Henry.

She can’t possibly be a match, and even if she is, are they going to force her to donate her bone marrow to Joshua?

Crystal noticed his expression and shot him a small smile. “What’s wrong? You seem to have formed some opinions about Joshua?”

Henry promptly took off his bathrobe and put on a clean suit.

While he changed, he said, "You'll know once you go back! It's some unpleasant business. My dad and Joshua aren't on the best of terms!"

His words tipped Crystal off that there was more to the situation than he had let on

Henry and Crystal returned to the Miller residence with Skyler in tow.

As they stepped through the front door, they were greeted by the sight of Georgina throwing a tantrum. Rhea and Audrey were also present.

Georgina wept and wailed, "Joshua wouldn't be infertile now if he didn't risk himself saving Melora. He's ill now, and all we're asking is for Crystal to go for a test. How can you be so cold-hearted and turn us away?"

Henry handed Skyler over to Crystal before asking her coldly, "Why don't you beg the Lodge family for help, then?"

The Lodge family?

Georgina's expression soured once she thought of Alfred.

In the meantime, Henry helped Crystal to settle into a couch and added sneeringly, "Your fear of begging the Lodge family for help is nothing more than an admission of guilt toward Crystal. Why not repent over your past actions instead of causing a ruckus at the Miller residence?"

Undeterred, Georgina insisted through gritted teeth, "But Joshua once saved Melora's life!"

Julia's patience snapped. She retorted, "Yes, Joshua had indeed saved Melora then! But do you know why Melora fell into the water in the first place?"

The Quinns were stunned by her outburst.

Anxiously, Audrey clenched her fists. Didn't the fever affect Melora's memories? Did she somehow remember what happened?

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Julia spat disgustedly, "Your daughter Audrey pushed Melora into the water! Back then, David and I had doubts about what happened, and two years ago, we hired a hypnotist to see Melora. Melora successfully recalled her memories of what happened, proving that Audrey was the culprit!"

Naturally, Audrey would never admit to her crime.

She looked toward Henry and protested, "I didn't do it!"

Everyone ignored her claims.

The revelation put Georgina at a horrible disadvantage. She had been counting on using Joshua's deed to pressure Crystal into donating her bone marrow.

Henry frowned and declared. "Crystal can't be a suitable match!"

What?

Georgina was unconvinced.

She looked at Crystal suspiciously and asked her in anguish, "Are you like your mom? Do you still hold a grudge against Joshua? Is that why you refuse to save him?"

Scoffing, Crystal announced, "I've registered as a bone marrow donor since I was twenty! You would've known by now if I was a match for Joshua."

A devastated Georgina slumped to the ground..

She looked at Crystal blankly. The young woman suddenly seemed like a stranger to her.

What will I do if she can't save Joshua?

Georgina's gaze slowly traveled to Skyler.

Hope sparkled in her eyes as she muttered, "Skyler is blood-related to Joshua too. Maybe she--"

Before Crystal could say a word, Henry interjected angrily, "What are you suggesting? How dare you get Skyler involved in this!"

At the same time, he kicked Georgina, sending the oblivious woman rolling across the floor.

The whole fiasco made David's head hurt.

He used to think of Joshua as a decent man, but it seemed the Quinn patriarch could not even keep his family affairs in check.

David took matters into his own hands. He stepped in between Crystal and Georgina, and declared, "We wouldn't stop Crystal from helping you if she was indeed a suitable and willing bone marrow donor. But she will never agree to a bone marrow match test as Joshua's daughter. And Skyler... she's simply too young. How could you even suggest using a child as a donor?"

Still, Georgina refused to give up.

Meanwhile, Rhea pleaded, "Please, David. We have been friends for years."

David merely returned coldly, "You probably mean how you leached off our family! I bet you and Joshua knew about Audrey pushing Melora into the water but kept it a secret from us to manipulate us into repaying your 'kindness' all these years!"

Their actions nearly broke Henry's family apart.

How much have we suffered because of them? Yet now that the Quinns are in trouble, they're shamelessly coming here. to demand our help as though they've done nothing wrong!

David promptly summoned the butler and instructed. "Never open the door for any of the Quinn family members again."

[Chapter 242 Giving Skyler A Family](#)

Joshua heard David's order to forbid the Quinn family members from entering the Miller residence when he arrived.

He stood awkwardly at the front door and asked shakily, "Are you really cutting ties with me, David?"

Spying Joshua's pale, sickly complexion, David felt a twinge of guilt.

Still, David had other roles to prioritize.

He was the head of the Miller family, Crystal's father-in-law, and Skyler's grandfather. His family could not afford to be entangled with the Quinn family any longer in order to protect Crystal and her daughter. David hardened his heart and nodded. "That's right! Our friendship ends here!"

Joshua leaned heavily against the door handle, looking as though he was about to fall at any moment.

Is my decades-long friendship with David fated to end as well? What have I done wrong? Why can't I seem to hold on to the people who matter to me?

He did not realize he had mused out loud, and David replied, "As a man, you should've been more decisive! If you had chased after Krystal after her misunderstanding, you wouldn't be in this state today! You loved one woman but felt sorry for another, and that led you to make more and more mistakes! Today, you want to acknowledge Crystal as your daughter, yet you selfishly expected her to welcome Audrey with open arms. Joshua... what a mess you've made!"

Joshua blanched before looking toward Crystal and Skyler.

He was thankful, at least, that he still had an opportunity to see them.

Joshua only had one wish before he died. He asked Crystal hesitantly, "Can you call me 'Dad' once?"

Crystal stared at him calmly.

She was never one to drag her feet about things. She rejected his request and said, "Take care, Mr. Quinn."

Hearing that, his expression paled even further.

A wry smile curved his lips, and he took a pretty trinket out of his pocket. It was a crystal toy that he had bought for Skyler. Alas, his hands shook so much that he lost his grip on the trinket, which shattered into pieces as it fell to the ground.

One of the crystal shards happened to cut Skyler's calf, drawing blood.

Henry hurriedly carried Skyler and pressed a tissue against her wound. Then, he said to Crystal softly, "There's anti-blood-clotting medication in her bag!"

Crystal quickly found the medication in Skyler's bag and fed a pill to her daughter.

Blood continued to seep out of the wound on Skyler's leg. The child was frightened of blood and whimpered in pl

in her father's embrace.

Henry gazed at his daughter tenderly and tried his best to comfort her.

His annoyance at Joshua was also palpable in his gaze.

Meanwhile, Joshua was taken aback at the turn of events.

He only wanted to give the child a toy and did not mean to cause her any harm.

David's heart ached as he witnessed his granddaughter's discomfort. He said to Joshua coolly, "I won't blame you since you didn't mean it. Joshua... just go. Don't bother Crystal from now on. She has suffered enough. Let her live her life in peace!"

Joshua left, feeling utterly dispirited.

At the door, Georgina could not help but grumble, "It's just a small cut! What's the big deal? Henry looked angry enough to kill you!"

Rhea jumped in and added, "That child is way too pampered!"

To his credit, Joshua remained silent.

Once they were gone, David reached over and carried Skyler.

He planted several kisses on his granddaughter's head and cooed, "Does it still hurt?"

"Yes!" Skyler's face was scrunched in pain as she whined. "Blow on it, Grandpa."

David acceded to Skyler's request easily and blew lightly on her leg.

It looked so out-of-character that the young girl eventually smiled.

David adjusted his hold on Skyler and said to Crystal, "She looks like a carbon copy of you, but she behaves exactly like Henry!"

He sounded incredibly proud as he spoke.

Crystal smiled weakly in reply, but her heart swelled with worry.

Henry held her hand comfortingly and said, "Skyler has Rh-negative blood and hemophilia. I'm Rh-positive, so I can't give her my blood. Her blood type is also rare in the blood bank, so we need to raise her more carefully compare to other children."

The implications in his words were loud and clear.

One of them had to sacrifice their career to become Skyler's full-time caregiver.

Crystal mumbled in agreement.

Sensing that the topic was too heavy, Julia shot her son a sidelong glance and invited Crystal to have tea with her in the garden.

Soon enough, only David, Henry, and Skyler were left in the living room.

David continued to hold Skyler in his lap. He looked at his son and asked, "What are you thinking. Henry? Are the two of you not planning to introduce my precious Skyler as a Miller?"

Exasperated, Henry explained, "Dad, there's a process to this. I can't possibly drag Crystal to the marriage registrar this instant! Plus, I think it's great that we're living together now."

Beside them, Skyler chimed in, "Mommy always sleeps with me!"

Henry was speechless at his child's admission.

David glared at him and questioned, "That's how you're raising Skyler?"

When he turned to his granddaughter, his demeanor changed entirely. He declared sweetly, "Your grandpa will fix their relationship!"

Skyler giggled in amusement.

She settled comfortably in her grandfather's lap and planted kisses all over David's face. Occasionally, she pressed her cheek against his stubble-covered jaw.

David's affection for his granddaughter only ballooned.

His expression turned serious as he asked Henry. "When will you take over my position at the company, Henry? Since Crystal is pursuing her own career too, why don't I look after Skyler for you?"

Henry knew exactly what David was suggesting.

He sipped some coffee and replied carefully, "Dad, I'm busy enough with Seeas Corporation. If I have to manage Miller Corporation too, I'll probably die from exhaustion!"

David chuckled and said, "Nah, it won't kill you! You look pretty energetic to me!"

The shrewd old man already knew that Henry and Crystal didn't behave like a married couple and were only putting on an act for Skyler.

My son is useless!

On the other side, Julia was having tea with Crystal.

A stringent skincare routine kept Julia looking as elegant and beautiful as ever. Sadly, her brows were always crinkled with concern over Henry and Crystal's recent troubles.

Until now, Crystal still could not bring herself to call Julia "Mrs. Miller."

Instead, she addressed Julia as her mom and poured tea for her. The crease in Julia's brows instantly smoothed out.

Julia said gently, "I've been wanting to visit you, but I was worried I would disturb you! Crystal... of course I hope you can forgive Henry, but I can't deny he made a huge mistake in the past! If you're still upset at him, you have my full support to teach him a lesson or two!"

She clasped Crystal's hands as she spoke.

Crystal was no match for the warmth and sincerity in her former mother-in-law's words.

She looked up and met Julia's gaze.

Just then, Henry arrived and stopped beside Crystal. He placed his hands naturally on her shoulder and said tenderly, "Lunch is ready. Let's go back to eat."

Crystal hummed in acknowledgment.

They seemed to get along well, which delighted Julia, yet there were still other concerns in her mind.

While Melora occasionally called her family, she never came home for a visit.

Later that afternoon, Skyler stayed at the Miller residence while Crystal headed out to meet Madison for afternoon tea.

Henry, who was headed to his office, offered her a lift.

In the car, he turned to Crystal and asked, "Are you tired?"

Crystal shot him a faint smile and asked, "Because of Skyler?"

Henry silently ran his hands across his seat belt. He was worried that seeing Audrey earlier that morning brought back unpleasant memories for Crystal.

He was more than ready to declare his unwavering love for Crystal, yet she did not seem to care for his affection.

Henry had never felt so lost in his life.

He wanted to make her the center of his world, yet he had no idea if she would accept his proposal.

Mistaking his question to be about Skyler, Crystal closed her eyes and replied, "She's too adorable!"

Why would I ever feel exhausted around her? I would sacrifice anything for my daughter.

Henry stopped talking and stepped on the gas pedal. A while later, he pulled up outside a cafe.

To show how much he prioritized Crystal, he would also respect her friends.

He alighted from the car with her and said hello to Madison. He even patted Madison's son on the head before leaving.

After he left, Madison smiled and commented, "He's really a different person from before!"

Crystal got herself an iced coffee and stirred it before taking a sip.

Only then did she ask wryly, "How so?"

Madison whispered, "He's just completely different! Henry used to be as distant as the moon and impossible to approach. Now, he's slumming it out with us common folks."

She gave her friend a thumbs-up and praised, "You have done a good job!"

Crystal smiled meekly in response.

Madison patted her hand and continued, "Don't think of it as nothing! To be honest, he's treating you very well! You should accept him after a few more tests here and there. Just look at that body and that face. Where else will you find a man like that?"

Blushing, Crystal retorted, "Should I be with him just because of his looks and physique?"

Madison glanced at her son and dropped her volume further, whispering conspiratorially, “Judging by his body, I bet he’s pretty gifted in bed too!”

Crystal almost spat out the coffee in her mouth.

She quickly glanced at Rupert.

Thank goodness this child isn’t as perceptive as Skyler!

Crystal opened her mouth to reply to Madison, but she froze a second later as she spotted something out of the corner of her eye.

That’s Melora!

[Chapter 243 Melora Has A Kid](#)

Next to the café was a milkshake bar.

There was a long queue at the door, and Melora was standing in the middle while holding a two-year-old boy by the hand.

They had probably waited for quite some time because the child began to throw a tantrum, prompting Melora to scoop him up into her arms.

As Crystal silently observed the scene, she could feel tears gradually welling up in her and her chest tightening.

Melora has been pampered from a young age, and I doubt she even knows she has to wait in line to buy food and drinks. I can’t believe she’s now carrying a little boy and queueing under the scorching sun with the rest of the crowd. She has also swapped out her fancy outfits for a simple white shirt and washed jeans, huh? More importantly, she has lost so much weight it’s impossible to tell she used to live a sheltered life...

Crystal shut her eyes.

Madison, who had followed Crystal’s gaze, was equally dumbfounded. “Isn’t that Melora? W- Why does she have a child?”

Hot-headed as usual, the woman wanted to drag Melora home when Crystal pulled her back. “Don’t!”

I’ve been through the same predicament and know how Melora feels. It wasn’t easy for her to have this child, and I’m sure she’s deliberately staying away from home because she wants to protect him. She was probably afraid that her parents would be disappointed in her and force her to have an abortion...

“Don’t make a scene, Madison!” Crystal added.

Just then, the driver brought Skyler to Crystal after the girl refused to stop clamoring for her mother.

Upon seeing the teary-eyed Crystal, Skyler leaned against her and carefully wiped her tears away.

“Don’t cry, Mommy!”

Needless to say, Madison was full of envy. “Daughters sure are more considerate!”

“Stay here. I’ll go check on Melora,” Crystal said softly. “By the way, don’t let Charles know about this. I’m worried Melora might panic and run away again.”

Madison knew the gravity of the situation and nodded. “Okay. Have a good talk with her.”

Crystal took Skyler’s hand and walked toward the milkshake bar.

Melora had just bought her milkshake and was about to leave with her child when she heard a voice behind her. “Melora!”

Melora stiffened.

She slowly turned around, only to find herself face to face with Crystal and Skyler.

Melora’s lips quivered slightly.

Oh, my goodness. It has been two years since I last saw Crystal and Skyler. Alas, seeing them brings back memories of that man...

After a while, she finally greeted Crystal.

Her voice was always so full of grief and hurt, and she wanted nothing more than to bury herself in Crystal’s embrace and sulk like a child.

Crystal, too, felt a wave of sadness as she approached Melora and caressed the little boy’s head.

The next second, she turned to her daughter. “Skyler, meet Aunt Melora!”

Skyler’s face instantly lit up. “Aunt Melora!”

Melora had a frog in her throat as she gazed at Skyler. Wow... It feels like I’ve returned to that fateful night three years ago.

“Look how big you’ve grown!” she finally said, pecking Skyler on the cheek before turning to Crystal. “This is my son, Berthold!”

Crystal handed Skyler to Melora and carried Berthold in her arms.

Looking at the boy’s fair, porcelain skin and dark brown hair, Crystal could immediately tell who his father was.

“His hair is brown like mine!” Skyler exclaimed.

For a moment, an awkward silence filled the air.

Skyler raised her head and met her mother’s gaze. “Mommy, you can cuddle him for as long as you like. I won’t be jealous. I promise!”

“All right,” Crystal replied with a gentle smile. “Why don’t you follow your aunt?”

Even though Melora was visibly flustered, Crystal wasn’t about to let her go. “Come on. Let’s go to your place.”

After walking for almost fifteen minutes, the group turned into an alley and entered a rental unit that was only forty square meters.

The house was messy, with magazines and clothes strewn everywhere and nothing decent in sight.

Crystal's heart ached so much that she was almost on the verge of tears.

Melora poured a glass of water for her and let the two children share the milkshake. Judging by the fact that she had only bought one milkshake for Berthold after braving the long queue, it was clear that she wasn't well-off.

Crystal hugged Berthold and uttered, "Your brother told me you haven't been home for two years. Is it because of the kid?"

Melora hummed in response.

"I only found out I was pregnant after we had gone on our separate ways! He doesn't know about it, and it's not like he can marry me, either."

Not wanting to defend anyone, Crystal remained silent.

Melora and Berthold. The boy is already two years old, yet he's still not part of the official family register!

After calming herself down, Crystal said, "I want you to come home with me!"

For a while, Melora kept her head lowered. "I can't go back with you, Crystal! What happens if I do? There's no way my parents and brother will raise Berthold without questions. They will want to seek justice for me..."

"Is that wrong, though?" Crystal asked.

Melora froze.

Crystal ruffled Berthold's hair and continued, "You guys can't live here forever."

Melora refused to budge.

She carried Skyler and kissed her gently. "You've grown so big now, Skyler. This is our first meeting, but I don't have much to give you..."

She removed her necklace.

It was the only item she had taken from the Miller residence when she left, but she didn't mind giving it to Skyler.

That was the last straw for Crystal as she turned her face away and broke into tears.

Before long, Melora was sobbing too.

Upon seeing the adults in tears, a frightened Berthold began wailing. Skyler quickly stroked his brown hair. "There, there. Christopher said that tough boys don't cry!"

Berthold stared blankly at the girl as she leaned in to kiss him.

He's so cute! He's fair and has brown hair like me!

Since Crystal couldn't change Melora's mind, she put the latter's mind at ease by promising she wouldn't say a word to Henry.

Before leaving, she handed Melora whatever cash she had, which amounted to more than ten thousand, and said she'd drop by again the next day.

Melora accepted the money, much to both their surprise.

After all, never in their wildest dreams did they imagine that a pampered princess like Melora would one day be happy to receive a mere sum of ten thousand.

Crystal could no longer stand the sadness gnawing at her.

Upon leaving the old building, she stood under a tree and wept bitterly.

Skyler quickly leaned against her mother and hugged her leg.

Even after picking the little girl up, Crystal couldn't stop crying.

Skyler caressed Crystal's head. "Daddy would be so sad if he knew about this."

Slowly but surely, Crystal recomposed herself.

No matter what Melora says, I can't let her and Berthold live in such an environment. That said, I can't tell her father either... He'd be so heartbroken if he learned about their situation! I suppose I'll have to leave it to Henry to settle this...

"When your daddy gets home tonight, I want you to tell him that you met Aunt Melora and that I cried, okay?" Crystal instructed as she patted Skyler.

The latter cocked her head and pondered over her mother's words.

"Mommy, why can't you tell Daddy yourself?"

Crystal instantly fell silent.

I don't even know where Henry and I are in our relationship. How can I possibly cry in front of him?

When she didn't get an answer, Skyler merely shook her head. Adults sure are complicated!

It was eight o'clock in the evening when Henry finally returned home from working overtime.

Crystal was giving Skyler a piano lesson, her taupe-colored long dress accentuating her slender waist and calves in the dimly lit room.

Skyler's piano-playing skills had undeniably improved.

Henry sat beside Crystal and was about to tease her when he suddenly froze.

Upon realizing the man's presence, Crystal asked gently, "Have you had dinner?"

Henry couldn't help but chuckle. "I'm not used to you being so gentle all of a sudden... I'd love to have a plate of spaghetti!"

Crystal strode to the kitchen.

After tossing his coat aside, Henry lifted Skyler into his arms. "What happened to your mommy?"

Thankfully, Skyler remembered the mission she was tasked with.

"Mommy cried today!" she replied as she sat on her father's lap and pouted.

Henry furrowed his brows.

"Mommy met Aunt Melora and an adorable little boy," Skyler continued without missing a beat.

Melora? Little boy?

Even though Henry was seething with rage, he kept his composure and patted Skyler's head. "From now on, you have to tell me if your mommy cries again."

Just then, Crystal walked back into the room with a plate of spaghetti and was even considerate enough to set down a fork for Henry.

He knew better than to ask Crystal questions in front of Skyler, so he quietly finished his dinner.

Later, when Skyler had fallen asleep, he walked into the little girl's room and clutched Crystal's hand.

"Skyler told me you cried today. You're a grown-up and a mother now. Why are you still crying? Is it because I've been neglecting you?"

Crystal instantly sat up. "Just ask what you want to ask. Why do you have to say that?"

"Didn't you get Skyler to pass the message to me?" Henry replied, a smirk on his face. "I have to show you some concern first, don't I?"

Crystal turned to look at her daughter.

Once she was sure the little girl was fast asleep, she carefully lifted the blanket off herself.

"Let's talk outside," she whispered.

To her surprise, Henry stopped her.

"Don't get out of bed. You can say it here. Our conversation won't wake Skyler up."

After much consideration, Crystal said, "I saw Melora today!"

Henry pretended not to know a thing. "That's good news! Where is she?"

Crystal scrutinized the man's expression.

I don't dare to tell him the truth... After all, his precious sister suddenly has a kid now. Who can take such a huge blow?

Crystal tried her best to appease the man by gently patting his shoulder. "Don't be mad... but Melora has a kid."

Henry stared at the woman's hand.

Ha. How can I not know what she's up to? If it were any other day, I'd only be too happy to carry her into the master bedroom. I'm sure she wouldn't reject me, either. Tonight, however, I'm not in the mood for that...

Henry's eyes were ablaze with fury, but he still managed to keep his tone light-hearted and casual. "That's a good thing! She was alone when she ran away, but now she can return with her kid!"

Crystal knew Henry well enough, so when the man was about to leave the room, she hastily grabbed his hand. "Let's visit her together tomorrow."

Henry continued to burn with anger.

I can't believe how gentle and accommodating Crystal is because of Melora. I bet she'd even let me have my way with her... I don't even know if I should laugh or cry at this.

The next second, he pulled her under him and kissed her roughly.

Although Crystal felt somewhat uncomfortable, she barely put up a fight and let Henry do whatever he desired.

When the kisses reached the back of Crystal's neck, Henry suddenly stopped and panted lightly. "Have an early night. We'll visit her tomorrow."

Upon hearing that, Crystal heaved a sigh of relief and closed her eyes.

However, seeing the woman being so compliant was far too much for Henry to resist. He locked their lips together again in a fiery embrace.

In the middle of the night, Henry promptly changed his clothes and slid out of the house.

After driving to the old alley and stepping out of his car, he suddenly felt a stinging sensation in his eyes.

So.... this is where my baby sister lives, huh?

A few minutes later, he knocked on the door.

There was a long pause before Melora's voice rang out. "Who is it?"

"It's me! Open the door," Henry replied, holding a cigarette in one hand.

Melora slowly opened the door, only to turn ashen when she saw her brother.

"H-Henry!"

[Chapter 244 Whose Child Is It](#)

In the cloak of the night, nestled in the narrow alley, stood an age-worn dwelling.

Henry's gaze was fixated on his younger sister, who he had doted on for many years. He examined her attire, plain to the point of austerity, and the crumbling structure that served as her shelter.

His eyes throbbed with a sting that could not be suppressed, and the fingers that clutched his cigarette trembled subtly.

Taking a deep drag of his cigarette, he stepped inside the place and scanned around. "Where's the kid?"

Melora was taken aback. "Has Crystal told you?"

Henry responded in a helpless tone, "Do you expect her to help you keep it a secret and watch as you continue living in this squalor? Whose child is it?"

Up until that moment, he was truly oblivious to the identity of the child's father.

Melora wouldn't let him in the room.

Henry extinguished his cigarette, exhaling the last puff of smoke. "Who is it?"

No matter who the father was, he wanted to beat him up so badly and break his teeth.

Melora blocked the door, pleading in a hushed voice, "Berthold and I are doing fine. Henry, I can support him on my own. Please don't ask anymore!"

Henry's eyes reddened.

He was but half a step away from her. With an outstretched arm, he pulled her to the side and entered the room.

The bedroom was of meager proportion, not even covering ten square meters.

An aged bed and a tiny desk housing several dozen magazines was all it contained.

Henry flicked through the trashy magazines, all showcasing Melora on the cover, the young lady of the Miller family.

He swallowed hard, making his way toward the old bed.

On it, lay a small child, slumbering peacefully.

His skin was fair, and he had a full head of dark brown hair.

Henry's eyes turned bloodshot at the familiar eyes and unique hair color.

He no longer needed to ask Melora who the father was, as there was no need to do so anymore!

Henry whirled around, his eyes burning holes into his little sister.

Melora's lips quivered, and her face contorted in distress as she pleaded, "Henry, don't look for him! Don't... I've broken up with him."

Henry reached out, tenderly touching the little boy.

He paused and asked gently, "Him? Which him? Melora, tell me."

Melora covered her mouth in shock.

It dawned on her that Henry must have realized who the father was.

Henry's voice was dangerously low as he said, "When did you two become a thing? Do you understand what you're doing? He's at least ten years older than you. A man of his stature, in his forties and still unmarried, has had his share of meeting women from all walks of life, so why would he be attracted to a greenhorn like you?"

Melora was crushed.

She knew she had been punching above her weight.

Henry didn't ask anymore. He took off his coat, put it on little Berthold, and gently lifted.

"Henry!" Melora clutched his arm, begging.

In the dim light, Henry's expression was as calm as still water. "Either you come home with me now, or I call Alfred to pick you and your son up. You decide."

Melora had no choice.

She packed some clothes and followed Henry.

As they descended the stairs, Berthold awoke.

He stared at Henry with a hint of fear in his expression, but he didn't cry.

Henry patted his head, assuring gently, "I am your uncle. Your mommy is here too."

Seeing Melora, Berthold relaxed, closing his eyes.

Henry's heart ached as he delicately placed the little boy into the child seat in his car, then turned to his sister.

Melora silently slid into the car, murmuring, "Could you not tell Mom and Dad for now?"

"You're afraid now?"

Henry let out a sneer and closed the car door. He made his way around the front of the car and got in. He was infuriated and wanted to smoke. However, he refrained from doing so out of consideration for the small child.

After a long silence, he gently stepped on the accelerator.

Half an hour later, the car slowly pulled into the mansion's grand entrance.

He hadn't intended to disturb Crystal for she had her own worries. The sound of the opening and closing of the door stirred her awake. She slipped on her robe and quietly rose.

Standing in the stairwell, she saw Henry holding Berthold, with Melora trailing behind.

Crystal froze for a moment.

Henry spoke in a hushed tone. "Let Berthold sleep with Skyler tonight. You go and talk with Melora."

Crystal nodded.

As she ascended the staircase again, she opened the door for him.

With Berthold nestled in his arms, Henry entered, gingerly tucking the tiny boy into the warm bed where Crystal had laid.

Perhaps the bed was too soft, or the day had been too long, for the child drifted off without stirring.

Skyler awoke just a sliver, her eyes cracking open into slits before she rolled over, pulling Berthold close to her as if she was cuddling a puppy.

Their faces, fair as porcelain and finely chiseled, were strikingly similar, as were their dark brown hair.

Henry felt his heart soften at the sight.

He caressed Skyler's head and patted Berthold. "This child takes after his father."

Crystal, taken aback, wore her guilt on her sleeve.

Turning back, Henry spoke in a tender voice. "You must have figured out who the old scoundrel is, right?"

His words came out more vulgar than he intended.

Crystal said softly, "Don't let the children hear you. We'll talk tomorrow."

He shot her a fierce glare, but times had changed.

Crystal who was once frightened now wore an armor of courage. "Don't take your anger out on me," she warned him boldly as she exited the room. "I had nothing to do with this."

Henry eased the tense look on his face.

He grasped her hand. "Stay with Melora. I'll head to the study for a smoke."

Again, Crystal agreed with a nod.

In truth, they had unresolved matters between them, grievances yet addressed. Yet, when faced with the situations at home, they instinctively leaned on one another for support.

What am I to do? After all, I am Melora's brother, and Crystal is her sister-in-law.

temper. Crystal led Melora to the guest room. Softly, she began, "Don't mind your brother's Let's freshen up first. Let me prepare some snacks for you- your favorite fried chicken."

Just as Crystal was about to step out, Melora held on tightly.

A tidal wave of emotion washed over her heart.

Patting Melora's hand, she reassured, "You should have come back sooner. Your brother is really angry."

Melora called out in a soft voice, "Crystal."

Crystal straightened her hair gently and said, "I'll go prepare something for us to eat. You take a bath first. Everything you need is in there."

Melora nodded.

Crystal then went to prepare the snack. By the time everything was ready, Melora had come downstairs.

She was dressed in her own cotton pajamas, the kind where the vibrant colors were nearly washed out.

Crystal noticed.

She held back any remark and beckoned with a tremble in her voice, "Come and eat. Everything here is your favorite."

Melora sat down and began to eat.

Unlike before, she was silent, no longer the chatterbox who couldn't stop talking like a print machine on a roll.

Crystal simply kept her company.

After finishing the meal, Melora's eyes were filled with tears. "Crystal, I'm scared. He couldn't marry me back then, and now... I've nearly forgotten him."

How could she dwell on it?

For the past two years, she had single-handedly raised their child, living a tough life worrying about sustenance like milk powder and rent.

Melora and Alfred had shared good times together. However, they were swept away by the winds of time just like fleeting clouds.

Occasionally, she would spot him in the newspaper. He was still the dignified and spirited. Alfred Lodge.

Meanwhile, she, Melora Miller, had lost her youthful radiance. Moreover, the passage of time had tamed her.

In a gentle voice, Crystal said, "Your brother will, after all, need to vent his anger. But he would never hurt Berthold." She could not promise Melora anything.

The poor girl nodded tearfully.

After settling Melora in, Crystal went to see Henry in the study.

She pushed open the heavy door of the study. The room was dim, save for a single wall lamp that was lit.

Henry sat behind the desk, smoking. The ashtray before him was filled to the brim, a clear sign of his inner turmoil.

Crystal closed the door behind her, walked to the window, and cracked it open.

She murmured, "You're smoking too much! Aren't you afraid of choking?"

Henry watched her in silence.

Tonight was different from any other night, as Crystal voluntarily approached him, sat on his lap, and tenderly embraced him.

Henry snuffed out the cigarette and leaned into her shoulder.

They sat in this shared silence for a long while before he finally spoke in a hoarse whisper, "Crystal, have I failed? If I hadn't insisted on going to Kingdom of Brundela back then, your uncle and Melora may not have had the chance to get together. Those days Alfred spent in the hospital must have been a breeding ground for their affection."

Crystal asked softly, "Would you have agreed?"

Henry pinched her waist lightly, "Why don't you ask my parents this? Seems like you think I'm easier to convince, so you're laying the groundwork with me, planning to make me persuade my parents later, right?"

Crystal didn't deny it. She slowly leaned her face into his. Henry's face was burning hot.

After a long pause, he asked again in a low voice, "Are you speaking on behalf of your uncle or pleading for Melora?"

Crystal shook her head.

She hugged him tightly, her voice soft and tender. "Neither! I'm doing it for the child."

Henry remained silent.

Crystal was clever. She could read his thoughts.

Indeed, his only concern now was for the child, angry as he was with both Melora and that old fool. She played her card right by softly mentioning the child. In a way, Crystal had him. figured out perfectly.

Cupping his handsome face, Crystal gently kissed Henry, saying, "Regardless of everything, can we maintain the dignity of the child? He is destined to grow up in the Miller family, go to school, get married, and have children."

She was truly persuasive. Crystal looked deeply into his eyes. "He shares your bloodline, after all."

A soft chuckle escaped Henry's lips.

Pulling her closer, he rested his forehead against hers. "But he does look strikingly similar to that scoundrel."

Crystal offered no retort.

She kissed him softly, melting his defenses with her feminine tenderness.

Holding her slender waist, Henry ran his hands up and down, his voice barely a whisper. "Crystal, do you think

you can resolve this situation by offering yourself? Let me tell you, even if we make love tonight, it won't change anything. Besides, I hope for our reconciliation. to be genuine, our intimacy a natural progression of our mutual affection... not for the sake of anyone... but simply because we desire each other."

Crystal stopped her advances.

She leaned into his shoulder, feeling the warmth radiating from his neck, the rhythm of his heartbeat, and whispered, "Henry, it seems you've developed much stronger self-control."

There was a hint of disagreement in his deep-set gaze.

"Crystal, you are my wife, and I want to respect you. I want you to feel truly comfortable, to savor every minute and second spent with me as a cherished memory."

Crystal couldn't listen anymore.

Isn't he supposed to be angry? Where is all this tender talk coming from?

She rose from his lap, quietly adjusting her nightgown. But Henry pulled her back, and their lips pressed in a long, languid kiss. After a while, he murmured, "Sleep in the master bedroom tonight."

Crystal did not refuse this time.

As a matter of fact, she knew he was not in the mood for anything more tonight.

As she lay in the grand bed of the master bedroom, she reflected quietly. The problem between Henry and her was primarily their emotional struggles.

As for Melora and her uncle, the situation was far more complicated.

Crystal pondered a lot. In the twilight between sleep and wakefulness, she heard the sound of a car starting from downstairs.

She froze for a moment, immediately rising and running upstairs.

Henry's car was already gone.

She quickly asked the housekeeper, "Where did Mr. Miller go?"

The housekeeper shook her head, indicating she didn't know.

At this point, Melora came running down the stairs, her face ashen. She, too, had guessed something.

Crystal softly reassured her, "Don't worry, I'll ask Jamie."

It was late at night, and she was careful not to disturb anyone, her voice especially courteous.

Jamie promptly informed her, "Mr. Miller has arranged a private jet to fly to Coldbridge."

Crystal thanked her before hanging up.

She turned to Melora and said, "Your brother has gone to Coldbridge."

Melora clutched Crystal's hand tightly. "Crystal, I'm scared."

Crystal felt helpless too. Henry's phone was already off. There was no way to stop him from going to Coldbridge.

She hugged Melora and softly suggested, "Perhaps... we should let them have it out?"

[Chapter 245 I Want To Know Your Stance](#)

Early in the morning, a shiny black sedan pulled up at the gate of the Lodge residence in Coldbridge.

The car rolled to a stop and a slender figure got out of the vehicle.

Upon seeing him, the housekeeper respectfully greeted, "Good morning, Mr. Miller."

Henry frowned. "Where's Mr. Lodge?"

The housekeeper didn't know how to respond after sensing something was off.

Just then, Alfred exited the house. When he saw Henry, he asked nonchalantly, "What brings you here so early?"

Henry gritted his pearly white teeth and sneered. "I'm here to see you, of course, Uncle Alfred!"

Alfred glanced at his watch. "What a shame. I have a meeting to attend soon. The driver is already waiting."

Henry blocked Alfred's way and uttered with a mirthless smile, "This won't take much of your time, Uncle Alfred. You won't be late even if you depart after we're done talking."

Alfred furrowed his brows.

Henry lowered his head and lit a cigarette. Then, he took a few drags before stubbing it out and said, "I'd like to talk to you about Melora, Mr. Lodge!"

Mr. Lodge?

Alfred shot a look at his secretary, and the latter immediately retreated and even sent away all the housekeepers.

After everyone left, Alfred also lit a cigarette.

As he was standing in the wind, the smoke he puffed out momentarily obscured his handsome facial features before swiftly dispersing with the wind.

After a long while, he asked hoarsely. "How is she?"

Henry sneered. "How is she? A girl who's already thirty-one years old, yet refuses to return home or get married, insisting on staying outside in a run-down-forty-square-meter rented flat. How do you think she's doing, Mr. Lodge?"

Alfred's slender fingers that were clutching the cigarette trembled subtly.

As a prominent figure, he was not one to wear his heart on his sleeve.

However, hearing about Melora's news after over two years caused a stir in his heart, leaving him unable to maintain his indifference.

He guessed that Henry must've figured something out.

Alfred's voice turned huskier as he spoke. "W-Why won't she return home?"

Henry glared at him. The malicious look in his eyes seemed to expose his desire to tear Alfred into pieces.

Indeed, he was there to settle the scores with Alfred.

However, Henry wasn't planning on revealing Berthold's existence. Melora was the Miller family's daughter and Henry's younger sister. She had no reason to use the child to bind a man by her side.

Henry riveted his eyes on Alfred and asked, "How long did you sleep with her?"

Alfred arched his brow.

The secret he had kept for three years was finally exposed.

He took a deep drag and was silent for a long while before responding, "A little over half a year. It started when Crystal was hospitalized. Then, we interacted with each other on and off for another six months."

Henry took a walk down memory lane. Crystal went abroad, while Alfred frequently went to Barnwood on business trips during that six months. Now I know.

Henry scoffed. "Mr. Lodge, before you did such a thing, did you ever consider your and Melora's age and that our families are related by marriage? Indeed, you could disregard all these things since it's not illegal. for you to sleep with her, but have you ever asked yourself conscientiously, during the many times you've bedded her, was there even once that you did so because you wanted to marry her instead of simply to satisfy your own carnal desires?"

Alfred's gaze was dark with inexplicable emotions surging within.

He could not find the words to refute Henry.

Henry put out his cigarette, took off his coat, and tossed it aside. Then, he began rolling up his sleeves and chuckled coldly. "Stumped, are you?"

Alfred knitted his brows. "Are you trying to fight me?"

The disparaging smile on Henry's face widened. "Do you have a problem with that, Mr. Lodge? Let me tell you. I'm here as Melora's elder brother now. She may be naïve and timid, but I'm no pushover. I'm asking you now. What are you planning to do?"

Alfred had always been decisive.

He couldn't be with Melora in the past, and now that they had separated for over two years, there was even less reason to involve her in his complicated life.

Alfred quietly stubbed out his cigarette and said, "There's absolutely no way for us to be together!"

Hearing that, Henry threw a punch with all his might, showing no mercy.

Alfred took the blow head-on, and soon, a bruise formed on his cheek.

Henry's knuckles swelled slightly, but he swung his fist again.

At that moment, Leslie, who had been hiding at one side, hurried forward to intervene. "Please calm down, Mr. Miller. You and Mr. Lodge are family, so there's no need to get angry early in the morning.

Henry brushed him aside and started brawling with Alfred again. "B*stard! Melora is sixteen years younger than you! How could you have done

that to her?"

"And where do you get off? Do I need to remind you of what you did to Crystal? Why don't you clean up the mess that you made first before confronting someone else?" Alfred snapped.

It was a bout of tit for tat, no quarter given!

The housekeepers in the house, watching from a distance, all knew it was Henry and Alfred fighting, but they couldn't fathom why.

Leslie, as quick-witted as ever, hastened into the house to get reinforcement by alerting Lucia.

Lucia hurried over and saw her son and grandson-in-law exchanging blows ferociously.

Both parties were going at it with all they had, showing signs of injury on their faces and bodies.

"Stop" Lucia bellowed.

Alfred was the first to stop, and he took a step back while fixating his gaze on Henry. "We'll discuss this matter another day. I have a meeting to attend now."

Henry wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth, replying tauntingly. "How do you plan on attending a meeting in this state, Mr. Lodge? Aren't you afraid of being jeered at and tarnishing your impeccable image?"

Alfred did not respond.

Lucia stood between them and scolded her son, "Are you aware of your age and Henry's? You've always been mature and composed, so why did you fight with Henry? Not to mention doing it in front of the housekeepers. How are you going to keep order here in the future?"

She was obviously biased.

Alfred was cursing Henry and his entire family inwardly but kept up a gentle façade while placating his mother. "It's something to do with Crystal. Don't bother yourself with this matter, Mom.

Lucia disagreed, "Aren't they getting along quite well now?"

Alfred scratched his nose.

Henry helped Lucia to take a seat. As Lucia was very fond of him, he decided to expose Alfred right then and there. "He... He dated my little sister for over half a year!"

Alfred was at a loss for words, while Lucia was instantly stunned.

She picked up her cane and swung it at her son, scolding him, "Tell me. Is that true? I knew something was wrong. You've always acted high and mighty before Henry, yet you've been silent today. It turns out you've done something as disgraceful as this. I'll beat you to death today to apologize to their parents!"

She didn't hold back her strength while teaching her son a lesson.

Alfred's back stung after taking a few hits.

He had always been filial and didn't dare to anger Lucia further, so he got on his knees and confessed, "It's my fault. I couldn't control myself, but we're really not suitable to be together."

Lucia was taken aback.

She didn't expect Alfred to admit his doings so readily.

She remained quiet for a long time before saying in a low voice, "Perhaps the first time was an accident, but you dated her for half a year. How do you explain that? Alfred, with your capabilities and charisma, you should realize how easily a young woman would fall for you. Now you're abandoning her just like that. How do you expect her to live her life in the future?"

Lucia was utterly disappointed. She got to her feet, wanting to return to the house.

Henry quickly helped her get up.

Lucia gazed at him and said softly, "I'll find a day to visit Barnwood and apologize to your parents and sister in person. Alfred is at fault in this matter. I'll definitely give your family an explanation."

Henry had arrived at the Lodge residence with rage burning in his chest, but at that moment, he couldn't help but tone down his anger and volunteer, "I have been impulsive too."

Lucia shook her head. "What wrong have you done to stand up for your little sister?"

Henry added with an undertone, "I don't mean to demand anything. I just want to know Uncle Alfred's stance. If he doesn't have feelings for Melora, I'll arrange for her to go on blind dates after this."

Alfred's heart twitched. Blind date....

The words greatly stirred his heart, causing complex emotions to churn within him.

Henry calmed himself and stood before Alfred, speaking in a flat tone. "She didn't say anything, but I could feel she really likes you and is deeply hurt. If you see her now, you may not even recognize her. Uncle Alfred, Melora lived a pampered life in the Miller family. She had never washed a dish or done any housework, b-but she..."

Henry choked up.

He did his best to pull himself together before continuing. "If you don't want to be with her, quit bothering her!"

Alfred was in a tumultuous state of mind. I used to really like that innocent girl. We broke up because we weren't suitable for one another. Our past is being dug up now, and it's not that I don't want to see her. It's just that what difference will it make even if we do meet? Our relationship had already ended more than two years ago.

Alfred spoke in a low voice. "I have wronged her. Tell her she can demand any compensation she wants."

Henry's gaze darkened.

He chuckled wryly. "The Miller family don't need you to compensate us in any way. All I want is for you to make a stand. Now that you've admitted you aren't suitable to be together with Melora, I know what to do next. I'll go back and tell my foolish sister to give up on you as soon as possible, then obediently go for blind dates. She may not encounter another man as competent as you, but it won't be that difficult to find someone who genuinely cares about her."

With that, Henry turned around and left, leaving Alfred rooted to his spot in a daze.

Leslie contemplated briefly before saying, "Why don't you get yourself cleaned up first, Mr. Lodge? You have a meeting to attend soon."

Still, Alfred remained distracted.

After some time, he suddenly flew into a rage. "Meeting, my foot! I don't even have the freedom to love a woman. What's the point in attending a meeting?"

[Chapter 246 Who Do You Worry About?](#)

When Henry got back to Barnwood, it was already ten o'clock in the morning.

The mansion was quiet,

Skyler had gone to school and Crystal was carrying Berthold while talking to Melora.

At that moment, the frustration in Henry's heart eased a lot.

He stared at Crystal for a long time before carrying the child from her hands. He then said to Melora calmly. "We will bring you home now."

Melora looked a little anxious when she heard that.

Then, she turned to Crystal.

Henry snorted and said, "Oh, so you're scared now? You are already raising a kid out there on your own, so why weren't you afraid back then, hm?"

Melora didn't dare to make a sound.

Crystal then held Henry's arm while using a tissue to gently wipe his handsome face. She asked in a low voice, "Did you have a fight at Coldbridge? Any update?"

She was very gentle and considerate. Of course, Henry knew what she was up to.

He then answered lightly, "I had a fight indeed. But I didn't say anything about Berthold. If he really wanted to know, he would..."

After a brief moment of pause, he added a sarcastic remark. "Isn't he always well informed?"

Crystal glanced at Melora, who did not dare to utter a single word.

How pitiful!

When Henry went up to freshen himself up. Crystal followed behind. She spoke up when they entered their bedroom. "It's the right decision to not say anything. If Uncle Alfred really cared about Melora, he would find out sooner or later."

Henry was already half-naked at this point.

He turned around with a smile. "You're helping both sides now, Crystal, why didn't I notice this about you previously?"

Crystal helped him select a set of clothes. "Don't you use this to judge me. I can choose whether I want to care about this matter or not..."

Just as she was finishing up her sentence, her body was being hugged by someone.

Then, she was being pushed to the cupboard.

Henry's arm hugged her slim waist, and he caressed her face with his other hand. "Of course, you have to care! You are Melora's sister-in-law, and you are usually the one with the most ideas. You have to help me keep an eye on her, hmm?"

Crystal put her hands on his shoulder with a slight smile on her face. "Aren't you scared that I might be biased toward Uncle Alfred?"

Henry then stepped forward and whispered into her ears. "Tell me, since I fought with him, who do you care about more?"

He was deliberately teasing her.

Crystal felt aroused, and she muttered with her lips on hers, "None of you."

Henry then chuckled in a low voice.

He felt much better and was in the mood to flirt with her. Perhaps due to the tension in the past couple of days, he felt an urgent desire to want to be close to her. Even though time was not abundant and it might not have been the best moment, he gently slipped his hand under her clothes, providing her with pleasure for a while.

After it ended, Crystal rested her head on his shoulder, breathing hard.

Henry hugged her gently and said after a long while, "Don't go later. My dad is hot-tempered so he might say something harsh."

Crystal shook her head.

Her eyes were wet as she spoke in a low voice. "Dad might feel better if I go."

Henry remained silent and didn't move upon hearing that.

Crystal then looked up. "What's wrong?"

He caressed her earlobes and said in a hoarse voice, "You just called him Dad... Crystal, I'm still your husband in your heart, right? We can go back to how we used to be, right?"

Crystal's ears turned red at that.

She then patted his hand away. "We are talking about something serious here."

Henry knew when to stop as well. He lightly pinched her earlobe and walked into the bathroom with his clothes.

Henry and the others reached the Miller residence at nearly noon.

The butler was so excited that he rushed in to report. "Melora is back!"

"What?" David stood up happily and waved his hands, and said to his wife, "She's finally back after so many years out there!"

Julia was very excited as well.

When the two of them walked out of the house, they saw a black Maybach in the garage.

Henry then opened the back door....

Melora got down while holding a young boy.

David and Julia were stunned.

Even the housekeepers and butler did not dare to make any sound.

After a long while, David finally spoke up. "Melora, is this child yours?"

Melora lowered her head and just hummed in response.

David was infuriated and wanted to teach her a lesson but Julia stopped him. "She's finally back. Please hold back your anger for now. Also, everyone is here, so please consider Melora and the child's feelings."

David then glared at Julia.

Everyone sat down after entering the living room. Henry then handed Berthold to David.

David was still mad so he glared at Henry and said, "You think I'll let this go for the sake of the child? She literally had a child alone out there..."

David suddenly glared at Berthold.

Then, he looked at Crystal... They had similar eyes, fair skin, and dark brown hair... They looked exactly the same!

David suppressed his anger with a sigh. "Alas!"

Julia also noticed it, and her face was full of concerns.

What now?

David caressed the little boy's adorable face. He liked the child a lot, so he made up his mind and said, "Henry, take care of this matter."

David was upset no matter what.

When he looked at his precious daughter, then at her simple clothing, he was heartbroken.

After some time, he said in a low tone, "Come back home. You can't possibly stay at Henry and Crystal's place forever. They have their own private lives too.... Your mother and I will take care of your you."

He didn't scold or blame Melora, but he sounded upset for sure.

After that, he went to his study alone.

Tears rolled down Julia's eyes as well. "You two are always making me worried."

Melora bit her lips and said, "Mom, I'm sorry."

Crystal then quickly hinted at Henry.

Soon, he went up the stairs.

Opening the door of the study, he could see smoke everywhere. It was quite strong.

child with

Henry opened the window and put out David's cigarette. "You've reduced smoking these few years for the sake of Skyler's health. Why are you smoking now once Melora is back? Are you too happy?"

David looked at his son and smirked coldly. "Happy? Do you see any happiness on my face? Just look at her! When has she ever failed to do something that would surprise us? It was the same with Robert and now... Alfred! She's even gotten herself a child now!"

Henry made some coffee for him while he was complaining.

He put it in front of David and replied, "I went to Coldbridge yesterday and had a fight with Alfred. He didn't know Melora has a child."

David sighed. "So it means he doesn't like Melora?"

Henry took a sip of the coffee and said, "I wouldn't say that. If he really doesn't like Melora, he wouldn't maintain this sort of relationship with her for half a year... I think Alfred might think they are not suitable for each other. Don't you know Melora's character well, Dad?"

This was why Henry didn't tell Alfred about Berthold's existence.

The Miller family could definitely raise this child.

David was silent after hearing what Henry had said.

someone

He was still shocked and couldn't understand how his precious daughter could be involved with as ruthless as Alfred. The two families even had a close relationship due to their relationship by marriage!

After some time, David said, "Don't make things difficult for Crystal. It's not easy to be stuck in the middle. Don't risk your relationship with her."

Henry nodded. "I know."

He suddenly grinned and said, "Although Crystal didn't say anything. I can see that she wants Melora and Alfred to be together."

David responded by saying, "It's because she is kind! Women always look forward to a happy ending."

After they finished their talk, they went downstairs together.

David put away his gloomy face and hugged Berthold lovingly. His face looked so much like Skyler and Crystal.

David held the child and said to Crystal, "Henry is going to the office. Leave the child here with me, and you can accompany Melora to the mall to buy her and Berthold some things. Their current situation is really unacceptable."

Then, he kissed Berthold gently.

Crystal nodded. "No worries. I will,"

Henry smiled and pinched her face. "You are indeed acting like the daughter-in-law of the Miller family!"

Crystal patted his hands away.

However, Henry didn't mind. He turned to Melora and said, "If you run away again, I'm gonna break your legs!"

Melora looked at him with teary eyes.

On the other hand, Berthold looked a little scared in David's embrace.

David felt bad for his precious grandson, so he scolded Henry. "Why the hell are you being so loud to her? You have scared Berthold!"

Henry only grinned in response and then glanced at Crystal. Then, he left.

Crystal had lunch at the Miller residence, then brought Melora out.

It had been two years, and Melora had mellowed down a lot.

Crystal was very caring toward Melora and took her to some niche brand stores that were not too expensive. They were definitely not comparable to the ones Melora used to wear before.

She bought a lot of stuff for Melora and Berthold in just half a day's time.

When they were having coffee, Crystal took out a black card and placed it in Melora's hand. "Henry asked me to give you this. This is his supplementary card."

Melora didn't dare to accept it.

Crystal closed Melora's hand and said, "He might look fierce, but in fact, he loves you very much. Stay at home or even our place. Skyler likes Berthold as well."

Melora nodded in response.

Crystal had a bracelet designed by a famous designer in her hands.

There was a rare pearl on the bracelet.

She then put it on for Melora and said gently. "Melora, I'm glad that you're back!"

Melora caressed the expensive pearl with tears in her eyes.

She knew what Crystal meant-she wanted Melora to be herself instead of being so careful and behaving like an outsider.

Melora then broke down in the crowded cafe while Crystal hugged her...

[Chapter 247 Let Us Meet](#)

At nine at night, Crystal finally returned to the villa.

The warm yellow light spilled from the hall, casting a cozy ambiance in the dim foyer.

Skyler sat playing the piano with Henry by her side.

He wore a classic three-piece suit, and when the jacket was taken off, his well-proportioned figure would be revealed. Upon seeing Crystal, he gently swirled his wine glass and inquired, "How was your outing?"

Crystal set down her bag and sat on the couch, gently massaging her sore legs.

At that, Skyler wanted to run over to her mother.

She had initially learned to play the piano to find her mother, but now, it no longer mattered.

However, Henry put his hand on her chestnut-colored hair and solemnly said, "Play this piece five more times."

Skyler turned speechless.

Daddy, you're so mean! You weren't like this when you wanted me to help you court Mommy!

Hence, Skyler continued playing the piano at a much faster rate than usual.

Crystal was both amused and exasperated. She said to Henry, "She's only around five years old. Why do you need to pressure her like this?"

Henry crouched down before her and massaged her feet. His voice was low and gentle as he said, "She's talented, Crystal. I've always wanted to apologize to you, but no matter how many apologies I make, your feet can never go back to how they were. So I want Skyler to have another option."

Crystal was silent as she stared at him.

She rarely looked at him like this. In the past, she had always avoided developing any romantic feelings for him again..

After a long time, she whispered, "Even though that's the case, don't push her too hard. I want Skyler to live freely, and besides, with you around, she'll be fine in the future."

Henry smiled faintly. "It's rare to have some merits in Miss Winters' heart."

They then changed the topic and discussed Melora for a while.

Henry seemed to have thought about it a lot during the day. He held her fair foot and murmured, "I won't force you to do anything because of Melora's situation. They are them, and we are us."

Crystal looked at him, who was illuminated by the lamp.

Her gaze held a touch of tenderness, genuine and unfeigned, as she looked at Henry.

Henry's heart skipped a beat.

His voice was husky as he asked, "Do you have any affection for me now?"

Crystal reached out to gently touch his attractive face. "Perhaps I do have a bit of affection for you." A soft chuckle escaped Henry's lips.

But before their emotions could fully envelop them, Skyler was done playing the piece five times and rushed over to her father, seeking a foot rub.

Henry, ever indulgent, embraced his daughter, attending to both her feet and her hands.

Skyler's jealousy subsided, replaced by a sense of bashfulness, as she nestled in her father's arms.

Crystal affectionately touched the little girl's head and remarked, "She really adores you."

With a playful tap on Crystal's nose, Henry teased, "Even though you're an adult, you still get jealous because of a child."

That night, Crystal slept with Skyler as usual.

Henry stopped urging her to move to the master bedroom, and neither did he ask her to sleep with him. She had not pushed him away despite what he did during the day in the walk-in closet, so that meant she was not as hostile toward him anymore.

He was in no rush.

This time, he was going to take it slow with her.

He was resolute in pursuing a genuine and proper romantic relationship with her.

Meanwhile, Melora was standing on the balcony.

Julia was taking care of Berthold, so perhaps that night was the most untroubled night she had for years. She should be happy, but after everything she had gone through, she could no longer be the carefree Melora she once was.

Right then, her phone, which was in her room, rang.

She went back inside to pick up the call. It was a call from an unfamiliar number.

Without dwelling much on it, she said, "Hello?"

The person on the other end of the line was silent for a long while before they hoarsely uttered, "It's me."

Melora's whole body froze.

It's... Alfred.

She never thought she would receive his call, especially since their breakup was unpleasant. If anything, she had left the relationship in despair and resentment.

Her lips moved slightly, but she could not think of what to say.

In contrast, Alfred seemed much calmer as he asked softly, "Your brother said you hadn't been home in two years. Is that true?"

Melora felt a lump in her throat.

It took her a long while to hold back her feelings enough to squeeze out, "Mr. Lodge, why are you calling? We made it clear that we wanted nothing to do with each other."

Alfred's tone carried a hint of tenderness, like how he used to coax her. "Your brother said you were not doing well."

Melora closed her eyes. "I'm doing fine."

Silence ensued.

After a long pause, Alfred softly continued, "I'm in Barnwood. Can we meet at the same condominium?"

At that, Melora flew into a rage.

"Meet? What do you take me for? A wonderful meal that you were once sick of but have regained the appetite for? Or am I just one of your flings? Do you see me as someone you should hide away?"

Alfred's breath hitched, but his voice remained gentle.

"Melora, we're just meeting up for a meal."

Melora restrained herself

Then, she hung up the call.

Late in the night, she cried o

“uttered, “Mr. Lodge, I’m not coming
the balcony all by herself for a long time.

She couldn’t put a finger on when exactly she started liking Alfred. Maybe it was when she spotted him working at the hospital or catching him smoking all by himself late at night. Perhaps it could have been the loneliness she saw in him.

To her, he was Mr. Alfred.

Back then, she feared he might blame her brother, so she constantly stuck by him, doing her best to keep him content.

As time rolled by, he started letting her remain close.

He often burned the midnight oil, and whenever exhaustion caught up to her, she would sometimes doze off on the couch in his cramped office. One night, as she woke up, she discovered him tucking a blanket over her. His face glowed beautifully under the bright light, and she couldn’t resist calling out, “Mr. Alfred.”

After that, they kissed.

Alfred was much older than her—he was a mature man. He never had any trouble winning over a woman’s heart.

That night, he had taken control of the situation, but he did not take her.

For the first time in her life, Melora learned that men could be that skillful. For days after that night, she avoided him, fearing to face him.

He did not come looking for her either.

It was only that night when Skyler was getting sent off and Alfred had gotten drunk did she go looking for

him, worried.

An intoxicated Alfred was a being of charm.

She could not help but kiss him. Then... they did it.

On that narrow couch, she kept calling him “Mr. Alfred” again and again as she indulged in worldly desires below him. At that time, she did not even know how much she liked him, only that everything about him attracted her.

She thought they would only share a night with each other.

But after that, he kept going to Barnwood on business trips.

He invested in a beautiful condominium unit and transformed it into a delightful haven through thoughtful renovations. He made it a point to be there regularly, visiting her whenever he was on his business trips there.

In that house, they were intimate with each other.

He would make food for her to eat before he devoured her.

During that period of time, it was as if she had been bewitched. She knew that she should not fall for him, but he had been so irresistible. He never talked to her about marriage or the future, and yet, she had gone to Coldbridge to see him.

It was then she realized that they could never be together.

They had no legal ties to each other.

All along, the only thing he could give her was the moments of sweet intimacy in that condominium.

He never wanted to publicize his relationship with her.

Alfred sat in his car.

The car was parked downstairs at the condominium, and it was from there that he made the call.

He knew he should not have come, but he could not help himself and specifically made this trip while keeping it hidden even from his secretary,

Alas, she declined his invitation and refused to come.

Still, Alfred went upstairs and opened the door to the condominium, which had already been tidied up.

Everything looked the same, except for the absence of one person.

Alfred, a man known for his shrewdness all his life, seldom experienced such a sense of loss and an intense longing to see someone.

He spent the entire night on the couch.

His mind was filled with memories of their past passion, and he cherished the moments she nestled in his arms, calling him "Mr. Alfred" with every breath.

Never had he encountered such an innocent girl in his company.

Around him, everyone else was manipulative and cunning.

He, too, had long lost his sincerity, but in his early forties, he found himself entangled in a love game with a young woman. He cared for her deeply, but he could not let her get caught up in his dangerous world.

His world was treacherous.

And she was too vulnerable, requiring his undivided attention and protection.

Thus, after that incident, not only did she grow distant and despondent, but he also felt that they were not well-suited for each other. Yet, after more than two years of separation, just as he believed he had moved on, Henry shattered that illusion.

It turned out that he never truly let go.

The first rays of morning sunlight streamed into the condominium.

Alfred got up and prepared breakfast. Then, out of habit, he headed to the bedroom, thinking of doing what he was used to doing, which was waking the young woman up for her to join him for breakfast. She had a hearty appetite and was easily satisfied, always relishing junk food.

But the room was empty, and the lingering fragrance she used to leave behind on the bed was no longer there.

Alfred slowly exited the room and ended up having breakfast alone.

Then, Leslie called, informing him of a meeting at ten

In a composed manner, Alfred responded, "Let's reschedule it for tomorrow. I'm in Barnwood and want to spend time with Crystal and Skyler."

Leslie understood the situation.

He let out a soft sigh, thinking. If there's anyone Mr. Lodge owes anything to in this lifetime, it's only Melora.

Indeed, Alfred went to visit Crystal.

He purchased toys that Skyler adored and went there early. He was glad he didn't cross paths with Henry, who had left on a business trip.

Although Crystal was aware of the circumstances, their encounter felt a bit awkward.

She observed Alfred with Skyler, his face brimming with affection, and could not help but think of Berthold.

In a hushed tone, she asked. "Uncle Alfred, have you ever considered starting a family?"

Alfred chuckled. "What's this? Are you helping your grandmother persuade me to get into relationships?"

Crystal fell silent, quietly preparing coffee.

After a while, she spoke softly. "I can tell that you really love children, Uncle Alfred."

Alfred embraced Skyler and gave her a kiss, replying, "Having Skyler is more than enough for me."

Skyler responded lovingly, planting kisses on Alfred's face and holding his handsome features in her tiny hands. "Berthold is handsome too. He has brown hair, just like me, and fair skin."

Alfred frowned, asking, "Who is Berthold?"

Crystal set the coffee on the table and cradled Skyler in her arms. "He's a boy from the Miller family."

Her words were not entirely false.

Alfred did not dwell on it and forced a smile for Crystal.

He had come to inquire about Melora's situation, but Crystal's lips remained tightly sealed, revealing nothing. Alfred sensed her astuteness and cunning nature.

While Crystal engaged in conversation with him, she tossed her phone to Skyler.

Skyler looked at Alfred and then at her mother.

Crystal gave her a gentle smile, and Skyler immediately understood what she needed to do.

With her delicate fingers, the girl started tapping on the screen to compose a message: Aunt Melora, I miss you! Mommy doesn't feel well, so can you come and take me to kindergarten?

Once she sent the message, she tossed the phone onto the couch.

Alfred did not entirely approve of Skyler's actions. "A kid her age shouldn't be using phones yet."

Crystal peeked at Skyler and smiled. "She does her kindergarten homework on her own. Henry insists on fostering her independence."

Upon hearing that, Alfred fell silent.

He sat for a moment and then decided to leave; after all, he was not in a good mood..

Crystal offered him a cup of coffee before they heard the sound of a car engine coming from the yard. She chuckled. "All right, I won't keep you, Uncle Alfred. I'll visit Granny in Coldbridge with Skyler another day."

Alfred gently patted her head and turned to leave.

Crystal walked him to the door.

At the parking space, a white Bentley slowly pulled in, and Melora stepped out from the back seat. With a smile, she started, "Crystal, Skyler said you weren't feeling well-"

Her words came to a sudden halt, her gaze locking onto that person.

Alfred was equally surprised to see her there, his gaze deep and slightly disoriented.

Melora looked much different from before.

[Chapter 248 She Sure Has Changed A Lot](#)

Alfred stared at Melora in silence.

She sure has changed a lot... Not only has she gotten a lot thinner, but she has also ditched her bright-colored dresses for more mature-looking ones. She has gone from a girl to a woman.

It was at that moment that Alfred knew he still desired her.

He kept his gaze fixated on her face as he said softly, "Long time no see, Melora."

Melora seemed to be a lot more emotional than he was.

She was choking back her tears as she said with all her strength. "Yes, it has been a long time, Mr. Lodge..."

As the two continued on, Crystal found herself feeling a little awkward standing in between them.

She then picked up Skyler and had the driver and a reliable housekeeper send the girl to kindergarten. Being an obedient little girl, Skyler gave her a kiss and said, "Bye, Mommy!"

Crystal kissed her in return as well. "I'll pick you up later tonight!"

Skyler then got off Crystal and went to school holding the housekeeper's hand.

Crystal turned around and cleared her throat softly. "Ill go make some coffee!"

Feeling a little vulnerable, Melora tugged at her arm. "Crystal!"

"You two continue with your conversation," Crystal replied with a smile.

"Come on; let's go inside," Alfred said.

Melora kept her head low and entered the house, only to have him grab her wrist and drag her into the bathroom.

Alfred closed the bathroom door behind him, forming a tight space around them.

Her back was pressed firmly against the bathroom wall.

Alfred kept one hand on top of her head while pinning the rest of her body with his own. She found herself feeling a little dazed when she caught a whiff of the faint smell of tobacco on his body.

Neither of them said a word for what seemed like forever.

After a prolonged moment of silence, Melora said in a trembling voice, "Let go of me!"

Alfred stared at her as he whispered, "I waited one whole night for you last night!"

She looked up at him in shock when she heard that. Not wanting the tears in her eyes to fall, she tried her best not to blink..

She was not willing to cry in front of him anymore. After all the suffering she had been through after going their separate ways, she didn't think it would be right to cry right now.

Things hadn't been any easier on Alfred either.

Alfred stared at the door before shifting his gaze back toward her face. "Why didn't you go home for two years?"

"What does that have to do with you, Mr. Lodge? It should be obvious that I was having fun out there. Who are you to question me about it?" Melora retorted with a faint smile.

Having fun, huh?

Alfred stared deeply into her eyes as he reached out to touch her cheek.

Melora trembled all over the moment his fingers made contact with her face. Even her teeth started chattering uncontrollably as a result.

“Did you find yourself a boyfriend or something? Why do you hate my touch so much?”

Melora’s face went pale as she tried her best to maintain eye contact.

“Y-Yeah!” she muttered with all her might.

The look in Alfred’s eyes turned gloomy when he heard that.

Realizing that he had loosened his grip on her, Melora mustered her courage and asked, “Mind letting me go now, Mr. Lodge? I’m sure a handsome and charming man like yourself would have tons of women throwing themselves at you.”

“Mr. Lodge? You used to call me Mr. Alfred, Melora!”

“That’s because I was too young to know any better back then!”

Melora pushed hard against his chest as she continued, “Crystal will be here soon, so please let go of me! I don’t want us to lose this last bit of dignity we have left!”

Alfred let go of her, and she quickly reached for the doorknob.

“Are you sure you want to cut ties with me, Melora? We could go back to the way we were before! You can continue calling me Mr. Alfred, and I’ll continue looking after you!”

I owe her, so I will try my best to give her whatever she wants, and if she has truly found herself a decent man, then I shall give them my blessings.

Melora nodded slightly and paused for quite a while before replying, “That won’t be necessary. I don’t need you to look after me!”

There’s no way.

I would ever forget what happened back then! I went to surprise him in Coldbridge, but I got kidnapped and spent thirty-six hours all alone in a dark house. Not only did I not have any water, but I wasn’t able to use the restroom either! I just sat there in total darkness while tied to a chair. The kidnappers said they wanted a chip that he had. I was really scared. I thought he would do anything to save me, but he calmly told the kidnappers over the phone that he didn’t know me. When I was rescued eventually, I thought things would go back to the way they were. I was wrong. It was not a big, warm hug from Mr. Lodge that awaited me outside that house. Instead, I saw him standing next to another woman. That was when I realized I wasn’t the only one that got kidnapped. He told the kidnappers he didn’t know me and left me to die while he saved another woman with his chip! I eventually came to find out that I was just one of his many women. There are tons of women in Coldbridge who like Mr. Lodge. They are all much prettier and seductive than I am, so I didn’t even stand a chance. I couldn’t even bring myself to call him Mr. Alfred anymore. He had someone find me a place to stay and entered my room late at night. The first thing he said to me was, “We’re over, Melora.” I looked up at him and asked. “But why?” He sat down on the couch and stared at me in silence before replying, “We’re not suitable for each other.” I had tears in my eyes, but I didn’t try to stop him from

leaving me. "All right, then. Goodbye, Mr. Alfred!" was all I could say. That was the last time I called him Mr. Alfred, and it was also the last time I saw him. He tried to give me a final hug before leaving, but I stepped aside and said I'd be leaving the next day. He froze and stared at me briefly before leaving. I burst out crying the moment he closed the door behind him. On the bathroom counter was a used pregnancy test kit with two faint lines on it. I had wanted to tell him about my pregnancy when he entered the room, but he told me that we were not suitable for each other.

She felt her heart ache as she recalled what happened in the past.

Crystal was sitting on the couch with two cups of coffee in front of her.

"Are you two done talking? Come have some coffee!" she said with a smile when she noticed the tears in Melora's eyes.

"Crystal!" Melora called out to her with a sob and sat down next to her.

She had once liked a man with all her heart, only to have it all be a joke in the end. The worst part was how she still liked him, which was something she couldn't forgive herself for.

Crystal let her lean against her chest in an attempt to comfort her.

The atmosphere grew a little awkward when Alfred came out.

There were some things that he couldn't bring himself to explain to Melora, let alone tell Crystal about. Regardless, it remained a fact that he had wronged Melora.

"Take good care of her. I'm returning to Coldbridge."

He's leaving....

Crystal called out to him and asked, "Uncle Alfred, I asked you a while back if you had thought about starting a family. Well, I'd like to ask you that again now."

Alfred paused in his tracks when he heard that.

He had actually thought about it when he and Melora were dating.

However, things were going so well for him at the time that he couldn't bring himself to give it all up.

Now, he couldn't bring himself to say it anymore.

"Nope," Alfred replied coldly.

Crystal nodded. "Got it. By the way, Uncle Alfred, Granny came and is heading over to the Miller residence as we speak."

Alfred turned around in response.

Melora, too, went pale instantly.

"I didn't invite her over, though. She insisted on coming over to apologize. You know how it is with old people, Uncle Alfred. They tend to be a little more conservative."

As Alfred's gaze fell on Melora, he noticed that she was staring at him.

Neither of them had ever thought that what happened in the past would continue to affect them in the present.

“Let’s go.” Alfred said after a long pause.

Not wanting to share a ride with him, Melora insisted on having the driver take her there instead. Crystal said she wanted to get a change of clothes before heading over, so they headed over in two separate vehicles instead. Crystal also gave Henry a call on the way there and had him head over as well.

Half an hour later, Alfred arrived at the Miller residence at the same time as Lucia.

Lucia had eighteen cars tagging along and twelve housekeepers to help carry the gifts. Despite her claim to have come to apologize, it looked more like she was here to talk about a marriage or something.

Although Alfred was able to boss people around out there, he was incredibly meek and obedient in front of Lucia.

All it took was a glare from Lucia to make him obey her every command.

The Miller residence was incredibly huge, so it had no issues housing twenty cars.

David was playing with Berthold in the garden when the butler came reporting to him.

Berthold was able to keep himself entertained simply by rolling a ball around repeatedly.

When the butler was done reporting, David lit a cigarette and blew a smoke ring into the air. “Let them in!”

The butler quickly welcomed Lucia and Alfred with a smile. “Mr. Miller is playing with Berthold at the moment. Would you two please have a seat at the gazebo over there while you wait?”

Lucia then led Alfred over to the gazebo while David watched on from afar.

Heh! I remember the first time Alfred came over to this house! He made such a grand appearance that one would think he was going to tear the place down! Now, he’s acting all submissively around his mother!

The butler also brought them some drinks as Lucia got closer to the gazebo.

David showed up with Berthold in his arms shortly after. Berthold had gotten all sweaty from playing in the garden, so David took a towel from the housekeeper and wiped his sweat dry.

Lucia was so distracted thinking of what to say that she didn’t notice it at first, but she gasped in shock when her gaze fell upon Berthold’s face.

Wait a minute... Something isn’t right here! This boy’s face and hair color matches that of Crystal’s perfectly! On top of that, his facial features and expressions also resemble that of Alfred’s!

Both Lucia and Alfred were starting to panic when they saw Berthold.

This boy belongs to the Lodge family, but I know for a fact that Crystal isn’t his mother!

Alfred was already in his forties. While he had once thought about having a child, his busy lifestyle prevented him from realizing that thought..

Even so, he had come face to face with a child who resembled him a lot.

He knelt in front of Berthold and asked curiously, "Who is your mother?"

"This is Melora's son!" David told him without any hesitation whatsoever.

Alfred clenched his fists tightly when he heard that.

What? Melora gave birth to my son?

He wanted to reach out and touch his son, but Berthold felt a little scared and pulled away from his hand.

Alfred suppressed his emotions as best he could and stood up straight.

That was when Melora's car arrived. She then came running over and scooped Berthold into her arms.

No further explanations were required at that point.

After what seemed like forever, Lucia asked, "Is this Alfred and Melora's child?"

She had come to apologize to David because Alfred had toyed with David's daughter, only to end up having a grandson instead.

Being in her seventies, Lucia had assumed that she would never be able to have grandkids. As such, she found herself dumbfounded when she saw an adorable grandchild being presented before her.

Suddenly, she felt as though showing up with eighteen cars wasn't enough to express her sincerity.

[Chapter 249 We Have A Kid](#)

In the living room of the Miller residence, David magnanimously said while pointing to Alfred's mother, "This is Grandma!"

Berthold seemed shy.

Nevertheless, he still approached Lucia and threw himself into her arms. Holding the adorable boy, Lucia felt troubled.

Rather than joy, she felt a sense of guilt.

She was already quite old, but she still insisted on holding Berthold, and she even gave him a kiss.

She initially brought gifts to try to fish in troubled waters and bring up marriage on behalf of her son. With the current circumstances, it was a given that all the gifts were for her grandson now.

Alfred sat beside Lucia, his gaze fixed on the child. After a moment, he looked at Melora sitting across from him.

Melora didn't deny it. "Yes, we have a child together."

Alfred gently closed his eyes.

He calculated the timeline and realized he must have gotten her pregnant the last time he visited Barnwood.

Moreover, she must have discovered she was pregnant when she went to Coldbridge.

In what state of mind was she in when we broke up back then?

Alfred desperately tried to think but found that they were trapped at a dead end.

He was no longer a naive young man. Other than her love for the child, she must have resented him for her to leave home for two years and raise a child alone..

Alfred's gaze darkened.

Suddenly, he remembered what Henry once said, "How well can an unmarried woman in her thirties who doesn't come home do?"

While he was lost in thought, Henry returned with Crystal.

Looking at the lively living room, Henry chuckled. "What's the occasion? Why is everyone here?"

He walked over to ruffle Berthold's hair and greeted Lucia.

Lucia was fond of him, not to mention she needed his help now. She couldn't help but favor him even more at the moment.

Henry brought Crystal to take their seats.

He glanced at his father.

David looked at his son too.

They were trying to pass the ball to each other. Neither of them wanted to play the villain in this situation! In the end, Julia called out tearfully, "David!"

David didn't want to lose face in front of his wife. Taking a sip of coffee, he smiled and said to Lucia, "The kids are too immature. Let's see what they have to say."

Lucia gradually stood up to speak her mind.

Crystal thought she shouldn't be there, so she brought Berthold outside to play.

With the child gone, Lucia found it much easier to act.

Alfred was incredibly respectful toward her.

Lucia said sternly, "Alfred, the Millers and the Lodges are in-laws. Not to mention Melora is your junior. She usually addresses you as Mr. Alfred. How could you do such a thing? The kid is already so big, but our family had no clue! Is this how I have taught you to conduct yourself all these years?"

Alfred felt ashamed. "I'm very sorry."

Lucia waved her hand. "You should be apologizing to Melora. Do you need me to tell you what to do?"

Alfred was momentarily stunned.

Without further delay, he approached David and his wife, then knelt down.

The couple was shocked.

They didn't expect Alfred to be so straightforward.

Someone of his status usually wouldn't even apologize, let alone kneel.

David wasn't a stubborn person.

He knew his daughter well. If she hadn't genuinely liked Alfred, why would she go through all the hardships and secretly give birth to Berthold?

Moreover, Henry had already confronted him.

David didn't know what to say, so he gave his wife a look.

Julia didn't want to ruin their relationship. She helped Alfred up and said politely, "Now that you and Melora have Berthold, you two should decide your future on your own."

Lucia felt even more ashamed.

Henry turned to look at his sister. "Melora, what's your opinion?"

Melora calmly stared at Alfred, and he stared back at her.

She knew that he would no longer use their incompatibility as an excuse now that they had Berthold. Through the efforts of both families, he would be willing to marry her.

However, she didn't want to marry him.

Why should she marry him?

Melora's lips twitched, and Alfred guessed what she wanted to say. He immediately cut her off, "Let's talk privately!"

Melora looked at Henry.

Henry took a sip of coffee and chuckled. "Sure, go ahead. He won't do anything to you. Besides, he's not that young anymore to do anything to you!"

Henry was indeed sharp-tongued.

Melora agreed.

It was true that talking in front of the elders wasn't comfortable.

The two of them had their conversation in the small reception room.

Melora stood by the window with her back facing Alfred. She said softly, "I got pregnant the last time we did it. I only found out after we broke up."

Alfred gazed at her back.

He shook his head gently. "You're lying, Melora. You found out before we broke up, didn't you?"

Melora took in a shallow breath.

After calming herself down, she said, "Nothing can escape your eyes, Mr. Lodge. Yes, I found out the night we broke up. I wanted to tell you, but you said we weren't suitable for each other."

In fact, she already knew it was impossible to date him, even if he didn't make it clear.

She still had her dignity.

Alfred didn't lack charming women. How could a little girl like her win his heart? It was wishful thinking!

Melora turned around and smiled faintly. "Crystal once told me she's only staying with my brother for Skyler's sake. After all, Skyler needs a father. But Mr. Lodge, Berthold has never had a father, and he's perfectly fine. We don't need to force ourselves to be together for the child."

She was much more rational than before. "You can visit him in Barnwood anytime you want. I won't stop you."

Nonetheless, taking Berthold to Coldbridge with her was out of the question.

She would never go to Coldbridge again in this lifetime.

She talked for quite some time.

On the other hand, Alfred remained silent the whole time. He sat on the couch and smoked.

Unlike his mother, he didn't think having a child would make things better. He knew that precisely. because of the child, Melora hated him more and was even less willing to forgive him.

Alfred had experienced a lot in life. He wasn't an impulsive person.

Even in the face of relationships, the woman he loved, and his own flesh and blood, he could remain composed.

That was because he had too many things to consider!

After finishing a cigarette, he seemed to have figured out everything. He asked her softly, "Have you made. your decision?"

Melora responded with a hum.

Alfred approached her and lifted his hand, wanting to caress her hair like he used to. Yet, in the end, he hesitated, and his hand remained suspended in the air....

After a long while, he finally said hoarsely, "I bet you had a tough time over the past two years."

She nodded. "Yes."

Alfred didn't say anything further. He pulled her into his embrace.

He didn't feel any desire, not even a trace of romantic sentiment. It was more like an elder comforting someone younger. He held her silently, soothing her.

His tenderness was like poison to her.

Melora didn't want to lose herself in it. She gently pushed him away, saying, "In the future, we are only Berthold's parents, nothing more."

Alfred didn't force her.

He spoke softly under the shade of the curtain. "Melora, when I was with you, I never had another woman."

Melora was momentarily stunned, but she smiled faintly in the end. "It doesn't matter anymore."

Alfred and Melora made up their minds and announced their decision.

Lucia was furious. She thought her son was being irresponsible.

On the other hand, the Millers remained relatively calm.

David accepted Alfred's compensation on behalf of Melora, as well as the child support for Berthold. These were things a responsible man should do.

He said to Lucia, "The kids have their own opinions, and that's normal. Besides, I don't think they have feelings for each other anymore after all this time. In the future, we'll still be relatives, and we won't stop you if you want to see Berthold."

Lucia seemed somewhat disappointed.

The kind Julia persuaded Lucia to stay with them at Barnwood for a few more days.

As for Alfred, he was busy with work and had to return to Coldbridge in the afternoon.

This matter was settled for now.

In the afternoon, Crystal sat in the passenger seat when they were out to pick up Skyler. She was lost in thought.

Henry smiled faintly. "This is pretty expected. Melora is soft-hearted. If she hadn't been hurt deeply, she would've gone back to him two years ago."

He continued in his deep voice, "She has changed quite a bit in these two years."

Crystal's heart softened.

She turned her head and teased him intentionally, "Melora sure is courageous. It seems like our efforts for our child..."

Henry gave her a sidelong glance.

He lightly stepped on the accelerator and drove a distance before smiling. "Did we make up? It's been two months, but we haven't had any intimate moments. Do you call this making up?"

Crystal remained silent.

Engaging in a battle of wits with him definitely wouldn't bring her any good.

Both of them fell silent again. They never found closure from what happened in the past.

At a red light at the intersection, Henry gently held her hand and murmured, "Dress up nicely for our anniversary. Do it for me, okay?"

Crystal responded with a soft hum.

She wasn't devoid of feelings. She could sense that Henry had changed significantly.

The way he treated her and their child, including the way he handled Alfred and Melora's matters, showed that he had a lot of self-restraint now.

Now that they were living together and had a child, Crystal was willing to treat him slightly better. Hence, even though she could clearly sense his intentions for their anniversary night, she still agreed.

As for what happened before this, she decided to leave the past in the hands of time.

Crystal didn't realize how important her soft response was to Henry.

It wasn't like he couldn't hold himself back when he had managed to get through three years without a woman-not to mention he was seeing her every day now. What mattered the most was her willingness. her willingness to open herself up to him and trust him!

[Chapter 250 Be My Real Wife](#)

After picking Skyler up, Henry got into the car and fastened his seat belt.

"I've been so busy lately that I neglected Skyler a little. How about I take you all for a meal outside?" he suggested after giving it some thought.

Crystal patted Skyler on the head. "What do you think, Skyler?"

Skyler stretched her legs out and yawned lazily as she replied, "Daddy wants to have a candlelight dinner with Mommy."

The atmosphere grew awkward all of a sudden.

Crystal couldn't help but wonder how Skyler knew that much.

Noticing Crystal staring at him through the rearview mirror, Henry said nonchalantly, "Kids these days know a lot of things, so it's nothing to be surprised by."

Being the talkative girl that she was, Skyler then continued telling Crystal all about the stuff she had heard from her friend in kindergarten.

Of course, she was talking about Christopher.

Crystal felt a little worried and felt there was a need to talk to Henry about this.

She feared that his behavior would rub off on Skyler and become a bad influence on her.

Henry pulled up outside a restaurant about half an hour later.

It wasn't until Crystal got out of the car that she realized it was the Ferropenian restaurant she had invested in.

She then glanced at Henry in surprise, only to have him say with a chuckle, "There are lots of cases where wives pay for their husbands' meals. You wouldn't mind treating me to a meal, would you, Crystal?"

Crystal simply kept quiet.

"Yes, I'll admit that I did this on purpose. I just wanted to leave my mark on your life so everyone will know you're my wife. That way, the other guys who like you will know to keep their distance!" Henry continued softly as they carried on walking.

Crystal had predicted this long ago. "That's not the case for me!"

She was about to carry Skyler out of the car when Henry wrapped his arm around her waist. "Here, I'll do it!"

Skyler had a disdainful frown on her face when she got out of the car.

All Daddy cares about is courting Mommy! Still, it's kind of nice to walk while holding both their hands!

Henry got what he wanted the moment they entered the restaurant.

The employees and frequent customers there knew Crystal was married and had a child.

Henry even started socializing with the employees there.

Crystal decided to let him be and started teaching Skyler how to cut a piece of steak.

Skyler was so good at it that Crystal couldn't help but feel her heart melt when she watched from the side. All she wanted was for Skyler to live her life without being affected by her relationship with Henry. Although Skyler needed a lot of love and care, Crystal didn't find it to be a burden at all.

If anything, she believed it was a form of salvation.

Henry was in a really good mood after staking his claim on Crystal. However, his mood was soon ruined when Seth showed up.

As if that wasn't bad enough, Seth had also brought his girlfriend along. Apparently, that girl was from a wealthy family in Hulcaster.

Seth paused in his tracks when he saw them. "Mr. Miller! Crystal!"

Since he had greeted them politely, Henry decided not to act rashly.

Instead, he wrapped an arm around Crystal as he stood up and said, "Long time no see, Seth! Did you come here to dine with your girlfriend?"

Seth nodded as he shifted his gaze toward Crystal and Skyler.

That girl looks so much like Crystal!

Unable to contain himself, he scooped Skyler into his arms and flashed her an affectionate smile. He was about to kiss Skyler when she beat him to it and gave him a kiss on the cheek.

As Seth's girlfriend walked up to them, Skyler gave her a kiss on the cheek too.

'She's so adorable!' Seth exclaimed as he started to feel emotional.

"Yes, she really is. Crystal and I are planning on having another child to keep her company," Henry said with a smile.

The look in

his eyes turned gloomy when he heard that.

Crystal, too, couldn't help but wonder when she agreed to have another child with him.

Not only did Henry invite Seth and his girlfriend to join them at their table, but he also had a peaceful chat with Seth about the economy before stepping outside for a smoke together.

"You two sure are a sweet couple!" Seth's girlfriend exclaimed in envy.

Crystal simply flashed her a faint smile in response.

Knowing Henry, she didn't want to befriend Seth's girlfriend.

The best thing she could do for Seth was to maintain her distance from them.

For the first time ever, the two men stood next to each other outside the Ferropenian restaurant and had a smoke peacefully.

"Your girlfriend isn't half bad!" Henry said while patting Seth on the shoulder.

Seth blew a smoke ring and asked with a faint smile, "Are you trying to console me because I failed?"

He then turned to face Henry as he continued, "Was it you who arranged that first deal I made when I went to Hulcaster back then?"

Henry kept quiet and puffed away in silence.

"Crystal hated me to death because of you. She genuinely saw you as a friend!" he said with a wry smile after a long pause.

Henry was still bothered by it even to this day.

He knew deep down inside that Crystal never liked Seth at all. Seth was only able to keep her company because Henry went overboard and screwed things up, so he had only himself to blame.

That was why he decided to make it up to Seth.

Having finished smoking his cigarette, Seth tossed it on the ground and crushed it beneath his feet.

Henry had taught him one simple lesson in life-courting a woman without first being capable would only make one a burden to her.

He then walked toward the restaurant while Henry watched from behind..

He couldn't help but realize how much Seth resembled him many years ago.

Everyone said goodbye and went their separate ways after the meal.

Crystal had been very quiet on the drive home,

Not wanting to talk about it in front of Skyler, Henry suppressed his curiosity and kept his thoughts to himself.

Skyler had fallen asleep by the time they got out of the car.

Henry had a gentle look in his eyes as he carried her out of the car while Crystal followed closely behind.

He then carried Skyler into her room and gently lay her down on the bed.

Crystal helped her change into her pajamas and wiped her tiny limbs clean.

Henry walked up to her from behind and wrapped his arms around her waist, pressing his chest against her back as he said, "Let's talk, okay?"

Crystal turned her head slightly. "About what?"

"About Seth. I'm jealous here, Crystal!"

When he returned to the restaurant and saw how distant Crystal and Seth's girlfriend were, he knew that it was Crystal's way of protecting Seth. He also knew that Seth was, to a certain degree, doing the same for

her.

Naturally, Henry got incredibly jealous when he saw that.

As he wasn't the type to beat around the bush, he decided to just voice his thoughts in a direct and straightforward manner.

"Why are you bringing up something that's in the past? Besides, it has always been impossible for me to get together with him!" Crystal replied with a faint smile.

After running his hands all over her body, Henry scooped her up and carried her back to the master bedroom.

Not wanting to wake Skyler up, Crystal eventually went along with him.

Upon arriving in the master bedroom, Henry pinned her down on the bed, interlocked fingers with her, and gave her a deep and passionate kiss.

After kissing for what seemed like forever, Crystal turned her head to the side.

Henry panted softly next to her ear as he whispered, "Crystal, I've been thinking about why I get jealous of Seth so easily. I never even felt this way with Robert."

Crystal shifted her gaze back toward him as she asked, "Why is that?"

Henry reached his hand out and gently traced his finger along her facial features as he replied, "Because he treats you well. No other guy back then, myself included, has treated you as well as he did! That's why I get so jealous!"

Crystal was so mad that she burst out laughing instead.

“Then why don’t you let me go, Henry?”

Henry stared at her long and hard before saying, “You may be back, but it still feels as though you haven’t returned. You’re Skyler’s mother, but you don’t seem to be acting like my wife. I’m not satisfied, Crystal.”

“I can keep you company while you see a therapist tomorrow,” Crystal said.

Henry whispered into her ear, “You’re the one with a problem here, Crystal, not me!”

He then nibbled on her earlobe as he continued, “All I want is for you to desire me and feel horny whenever you see me. Do you know why we haven’t had sex in so long, Crystal? It’s because you never wanted to! You only have eyes for Skyler. Even if I make sexual advances and you start to want it, it will only be because you desire sex and not me!”

Crystal felt speechless when she heard that.

Before she knew it, Henry had taken off his belt and gently tied her wrists with it.

Crystal froze. “What are you doing, Henry?”

Henry gave her a kiss on the cheek and replied with a smile, “Nothing much, really. I just want you to embrace me fully, that’s all!”

He then took off his necktie and blindfolded her with it.

All of her senses were amplified because she couldn’t see.

After kissing her for a bit, Henry knelt beside her and played a recording on his phone, which he placed next to the pillow.

“I’m putting this on repeat!”

Crystal’s face burned bright red after listening to it for a few seconds.

This is a recording he made in Hulcaster a few years back!

“Henry, you b*stard! You’re clearly the crazy one here!” she exclaimed after biting down on her lip.

“I want to tease you until you break because I’m jealous!” Henry whispered into her ear. “I’m going to drop by the study for a bit. I’ll come back to check on you later!”