

Night of Love 311

[Chapter 311 Honest](#)

In the dark, Henry gazed at Crystal.

Crystal wanted to move, but he intertwined his fingers with hers.

The atmosphere was appropriately romantic for him to have sex with her, and he wanted to, but he didn't.

Burying his face in her neck, he whispered, "I have something I need to tell you, Crystal."

"What is it?" Crystal's voice quivered slightly.

Turning around and lying on his side, Henry pulled her into his embrace.

After what they had been through, he knew that he only needed to hide the truth to seize her heart and body easily.

However, he was afraid of losing her.

He admitted in a hoarse voice, "I met Lara just now."

Crystal frowned.

Henry smoothened the crease of her brows and added, "She's pregnant, and I've sent her to Hulcaster. I know you won't be happy, but I want to give her a chance. What do you say, Crystal?"

He proceeded to inform her of Jason's matter.

After listening to the whole story, Crystal stayed quiet for a while.

Just as Henry thought she would oppose the idea and wanted to say something, Crystal nodded. "Okay."

He didn't expect her to agree that easily.

Crystal lay flatly on the bed and continued, "Since she wants to keep the child, I can tell she cares for them. Why would I say no?"

Her calm and relaxed appearance made Henry want to have sex with her.

Ever since he pretended to have recovered his memory, he didn't dare to touch her, fearing she would feel disgusted.

As he had talked things out with her, his old habit was kicking in again.

Crystal wrapped her arms around his neck and indulged in pleasure with him. Henry felt that his body was on fire. If I still can't get it up, I'm not a man-

"You haven't recovered your memory, have you, Henry?" asked Crystal abruptly.

Immediately, Henry stopped what he was doing and stared at her in disbelief. How does she know? I've been putting on a rather convincing act.

After straightening her pajamas, Crystal turned on the bedside lamp and kicked him. "If you had recovered your memory, you would've killed Lara! You wouldn't have been so kind as to help her!"

Henry did not know what to say.

Opening the drawer of the bedside table, Crystal took out a notebook from it. When she flipped it open, Henry saw the red words written within. It was the replica of the one in the Miller residence. "You're shameless, Henry!"

Feeling awkward, Henry wasn't sure what to say next.

He was ready to get it on, yet he was exposed by his wife.

And he couldn't figure out what Crystal was thinking.

Her cheeks were red as she tried to speak as calmly as possible. "I'm really okay with helping her, but I'll look for the doctor in charge of her!"

Of course, she wouldn't show her face because she was still annoyed.

Henry touched her feet and kissed her. "Whatever you say, Mrs. Miller."

Crystal used her foot to rub his handsome face.

Grabbing her foot, Henry threatened, "That's enough, Crystal! Are you trying to-"

She rubbed her foot on him again.

Henry's anger dissipated. "Your foot smells nice too."

Instead of continuing their intimate moment, the couple decided to spend the night chatting with each other.

Crystal rested her head on his shoulder. "I didn't want to tell you, but you were honest tonight. How about we don't keep secrets from each other anymore, Henry? It doesn't matter if you've recovered your memory or not as long as we're still together and in love with each other."

Henry gently touched her lips. "But I still have a question."

"Hmm?"

His voice husky and sexy, he asked, "How did I f*ck you in the past?"

Crystal was speechless. This man!

They talked until very late into the night. Crystal couldn't remember when she fell asleep.

When she woke up the next morning, she saw a fresh rose with dew drops beside the pillow.

She smiled, picked it up, and sniffed it.

Right then, she heard tiny voices downstairs and detected the fragrance of food. She assumed Henry was preparing breakfast.

Crystal stood up and grabbed the notebook.

She had discovered a long time ago that Henry hadn't regained his memory. However, she couldn't resist him, and her children needed a father.

Her phone rang. It was a call from an unknown number.

However, Crystal knew it was from Lara. She answered the call calmly. "He told you everything?"

"Yeah." After moments of silence, Lara continued, "I did fall for Mr. Miller, Mrs. Miller. However, a man like him will never belong to me. Thank you for helping me, Mrs. Miller!"

Crystal couldn't forgive her completely.

However, if Lara must leave a mark on Henry's life, Crystal hoped it wasn't a terrible one.

"You will be well taken care of over there."

Lara sounded as though she was crying.

Crystal added, "I'm not that generous. However, if it means you can start a new life, I'm willing to be generous."

With that, she hung up.

I think I'm different from before. I'm a little more controlling than I was. I wonder if Henry will dislike

She lowered her eyes, smiling faintly.

[Chapter 312 I Want You To Know](#)

After ending the call, Crystal saw Henry leaning against the door, gazing at her affectionately.

She waved her phone. "That was Lara. She has already arrived at Hulcaster."

Henry approached her and bent down to kiss the tip of her nose.

"I've given Remi his milk. He's consuming two hundred and forty milliliters at the moment. The doctor advised that it's time to start introducing supplementary food."

Crystal wrapped her arms around his neck. "What about Skyler?"

"She's eating breakfast downstairs," Henry told her as he leaned in for another kiss.

After sharing a prolonged kiss, he delicately held the tip of her finger and asked, "What type of wedding would you like?"

Crystal chuckled softly. "We've been together for so long already. Are you still going to hold a wedding?"

When Crystal left to wash herself up, Henry sat at the end of the bed and lit up a cigarette. However, instead of smoking it, he stared at it in silence until it burned out.

He had sensed that Crystal still harbored reservations about him.

Her decision to reconcile with him seemed largely influenced by Skyler and Remi, which he found completely understandable.

However, Henry wasn't satisfied with just that.

He wanted Crystal to love him and to depend on him.

When Crystal stepped out of the bathroom, she noticed Henry was smoking.

She was surprised to see that.

Henry gazed at her silently for a few moments before reaching out. "Come here!"

Crystal went over as told.

He pulled her into his embrace and whispered softly, "How about a date tonight, Crystal? I'll demonstrate just how amazing a thirty-four-year-old man can be!"

Crystal relaxed in his arms as she gently stroked his handsome brows.

It looks like the previous incident gave him a heavy blow.

She agreed to the date.

Henry whispered into her ear, "I'll make sure you cry tonight!"

Crystal blushed prettily as she pushed him away and walked out of the bedroom.

Downstairs, Skyler was busy eating when she saw her parents come down the stairs.

They might have come down one after another, but it felt different now.

Skyler hugged her father's leg. "Are you staying with us from now on?"

Henry picked her up and gave her a kiss before humming in acknowledgment.

Skyler hugged him tightly in return.

Observing how delighted the little girl was, Crystal beamed a gentle smile and scooped up Remi. So this is what a family feels like.

Henry treated her well and took good care of their family.

He made the decision to reduce his shares in the law firm. Instead of dedicating excessive time to socializing after work, he chose to invest his free time with Crystal and the children. They frequently embarked on outings together, and as a result, Skyler and Remi thrived.

To the public, Henry was the perfect husband.

Six months later, Crystal returned the management rights of Seeas Corporation to him.

She found that, in comparison to running a business, she preferred a more tranquil life. Most importantly, Skyler and Remi required her care. As the children continued to grow, no matter how many housekeepers she hired, they could never replace the role of their parents.

Many were surprised at her decision, as she had managed Secas Corporation well for almost two years.

Madison was the only one who understood why.

One day, she invited Crystal to their usual cafe hangout. When Crystal arrived, Madison couldn't help but acknowledge that she was the most successful among their batch of girls. Crystal was affluent, had ample free time, and was a mother to a daughter and a son.

Crystal had forty-five percent of Secas Corporation's shares, and Remi was the heir of Miller Corporation.

No one had a more fulfilling life than Crystal.

However, Madison was the only one who dared to ask, "Crystal, did you get back together with Henry for Skyler and Remi's sake?"

Crystal flashed a smile. "Of course not. We're doing well now."

Despite saying that, she stirred her coffee, looking a bit dazed.

Yes, after some time, I've grown accustomed to Henry's companionship. I almost forgot that he lost a portion of his memories. While our relationship may lack a crucial part, it doesn't hinder us from living well.

Henry had mentioned wanting another child, but she disagreed.

She knew he was disappointed but didn't voice his thoughts out loud.

Technically, there was no problem between them, but Crystal could sense that their intimacy had waned. He was occupied with his responsibilities, and she was occupied with looking after the children. At times, she even slept with Skyler.

Crystal spaced out quietly.

Madison held her hand and asked softly, "Crystal, do you still love him?"

Love? Of course I do,

Crystal was still in a daze when her phone rang. It was a call from Henry.

He should be heading home from work, as Crystal could hear the traffic noise in the background. His voice remained gentle, as usual. "I just got a call from Dad, and he mentioned that he took Skyler and Remi with him. Where are you? How about going to a concert?"

Crystal told him, "I'm having coffee with Madison."

After a brief pause, Henry let out a soft chuckle. "Seems like you're too busy to keep me company. Mrs. Miller, I'm feeling sorry for myself!"

Madison quickly mouthed, I'm fine if you leave!

However, Crystal thought that it had been some time since they last met.

Upon Crystal's return to the mansion, she found the hall brightly illuminated. A spread was laid out on the dining table, and it appeared that Henry had prepared it.

He was seated on the couch, engrossed in reading a finance newspaper.

Despite hearing her footsteps, he didn't look up.

Crystal shrugged off her coat and sat down beside him. "Are you upset?"

Placing the finance newspaper aside, Henry pulled her into his lap and kissed her, a hand wandering underneath her skirt. His voice was hoarse as he said, "You're back late, Mrs. Miller. You've neglected me!"

He had been too busy that it had been over ten days since they last had sex.

They had a harmonious relationship. If Henry desired intimacy, Crystal would seldom refuse him.

However, his actions grew bolder, as though he wanted to ravage her right there and then on the couch. Crystal stopped him and said softly, "The housekeepers will see us."

He nuzzled his nose against hers, his voice husky. "I've asked them to take a break from work. Besides, they're not kids anymore. So what if they catch us? It's perfectly normal for couples to have sex on the couch from time to time."

He was too insistent, so Crystal caved in eventually.

Henry was thirty-five years old, a man in his prime. Clearly, having sex once wasn't enough to satisfy his desires.

After that, he brought her upstairs to the bedroom, where they had sex for a couple more times. He finally stopped past midnight.

The night was dark, and Crystal drifted into a restful sleep due to her exhaustion..

Henry had exerted a lot of energy and should feel tired, but he couldn't fall asleep.

He shut his eyes, recalling the video of Crystal back then.

In truth, he wasn't a lustful man who would force his wife to have sex with him. It was just that it had been some time since they reconciled, yet Henry could still detect that Crystal was holding back.

Back then, she forgave him easily.

They got back together and opted not to hold a wedding, choosing instead to live harmoniously.

Yes, a harmonious life.

It was not that leading a harmonious life was undesirable, as he was aware that ninety percent of married couples followed this path. They would raise their children together and engage in intimacy occasionally when they needed to release built-up tension.

However, the more amicable their relationship became, the more Henry felt a sense of emptiness.

He wasn't certain if Crystal still loved him.

Henry wasn't the type to express his love every day. Regardless, he would shower her with gifts on her birthday, Valentine's Day, and even the children's birthdays, along with declarations of his affection.

Nevertheless, she seldom reciprocated by saying she loved him.

Henry had the urge to smoke, but he was aware that Crystal despised secondhand smoke, so he suppressed his craving.

Lying behind her, he ran his hands across her body.

After some time, his desire surged, leading him to have sex with her yet again.

Throughout the ordeal, Crystal didn't wake up.

Early in the morning, Crystal woke up.

The couch was in disarray, strewn with their clothes, so she tidied it up.

She was shy and didn't want the housekeepers to talk about them in private.

Henry was fastening his necktie as he descended the stairs. Upon noticing the now-empty couch, he let out a hearty chuckle. "The housekeepers won't say anything even if they see that. You're in your thirties, so why are you still as shy as a young girl?"

Crystal prepared breakfast for him.

Her expression was tender, indicating her good upbringing.

Henry wrapped one arm around her and gave her a gentle kiss. "There's an express letter for you on the coffee table," he informed her.

After that, he sat down and sipped on his coffee calmly.

Crystal cast a glance at the express letter, which had arrived from Hulcaster. Inside, there was only a photograph of Lara.

Lara was eight months pregnant, standing beside a shelf in the library.

Her background was an elementary school in the outskirts.

Crystal flipped the photograph and saw a letter addressed to her by Lara.

Mrs. Miller, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for helping me secure this job. I love it, and it feels like I belong here. My current tranquil life brings me a sense of serenity unlike before. Moreover, I've found my life partner. He's an upright man and also a teacher at this school. He's willingly taken on the role of a father to my child, and we've officially registered our marriage. I can't thank you enough for giving me this second chance. Mrs. Miller, you might not be aware, but when Mr. Miller agreed to assist me, I had hoped that my situation might somehow touch his heart or affect your relationship negatively. However, when his assistant informed me that you had graciously agreed to take me in and ensured the best treatment, tears of gratitude overwhelmed me. I had felt like a fool. This is goodbye, for real. I genuinely wish you nothing but happiness! Please take care!

Crystal read the letter several times, her heart burdened with emotion. Despite the intimate moments she shared with Henry the previous night, it wasn't enough to alleviate the weight on her heart.

Gently, she placed the photo aside.

Henry guessed, "Is it from her?"

“Yes,” Crystal replied.

She placed the photo back into the envelope and kept it in a safe place.

A while later, she broke the silence. “Lara is married.”

The news caught Henry off guard. He hadn’t been in contact with Lara and had no knowledge of her current situation. However, noticing Crystal’s reddened eyes, he playfully teased her, saying. “It just goes to show how important a woman’s looks are. Despite being pregnant, she still managed to find herself a husband!”

Crystal glared at him.

She still felt upset as Lara reminded her of Audrey.

They had both left indelible marks in her life.

However, Crystal thought that Lara was different from Audrey. She was prepared to forgive Lara because the latter didn’t harbor ill intentions, despite inadvertently scaring Skyler while attempting to get closer to Henry that one time.

Crystal said in a low voice, “I can’t bring myself to like her, though.”

Henry came over and gave her a gentle hug.

Rather than dwelling on the topic of Lara, he embraced her and inquired gently. “What about me, Crystal? Do you have feelings for me?”

Crystal returned his hug and sighed. “Yes, I do.”

Henry caressed her hair. “Okay, stop crying. After breakfast, let’s go pick Skyler up and bring her to school!”

On the way to pick up Skyler, Crystal suddenly inquired, “Next week, our university is hosting a celebration. Will you be available?”

Henry was driving with one hand, and he held her hand with his other as he replied, “I’m always available, Mrs. Miller.”

For the remainder of his life, he belonged to Crystal.

He would patiently wait until the day she told him she loved him.

The gold Bentley Continental slowly drove into the Miller residence. They had just stepped out of the car when they sensed something off.

Henry closed the car door and made his way into the hall.

Inside, he noticed several police officers in uniforms, evidently preparing to commence their questioning.

“Dad, what happened?” Henry frowned.

From where he was seated on the couch, David's shoulders sagged. In a hushed tone, he revealed, "Melora has been kidnapped."

Henry froze.

Numerous possibilities raced through his mind. Eventually, he let out a soft chuckle and responded, "Maybe she's off having a good time somewhere or enjoying a drink. She can be quite foolish at times. What would anyone gain from kidnapping her?"

Julia was covering her face, sobbing quietly.

David glared at him. "How can you say that about your own sister?" he retorted.

The police officers couldn't help but laugh out loud. They shook hands with Henry and said, "Mr. Miller, we'll let you know once we receive any updates."

Henry nodded. "Thank you!"

After the police officers departed, he took a seat on the couch and cast a glance at Crystal, who had entered the living room behind him. Slowly, he asked, "Crystal, who do you think kidnapped Melora?"

Are they after her money or her looks?"

Crystal was speechless.

He knows who did it but is deliberately asking me?

[Chapter 313 Alfred And Melora 1](#)

The luxurious room was dimly lit.

Melora lay on the soft bed, unable to move.

She could discern the faint scent of aftershave lingering on the pillow-the same brand that man always wore.

This was her third time getting kidnapped this month.

Every time, the man would kidnap her and blindfold her. He would use his necktie to bind her wrists, forcing her to sleep with him.

However, he never had sex with her.

He would only hug her to sleep at night and occasionally touch her.

A series of footsteps echoed at the door. The opposite side of the bed dipped, and gentle fingers made contact with her cheek.

She was a gorgeous woman.

His hands finally stopped roaming around her body as he gazed at her greedily.

Melora made no attempt to struggle or break free. The necktie serving as a blindfold gradually became damp from her tears. "Alfred, you're getting married soon, aren't you? Why do you kidnap me repeatedly like this? Do you consider me your mistress?"

The man was startled to realize that she knew his identity.

Melora was sobbing softly. Of course she knew it was him. She had recognized his distinctive scent instantly.

Perhaps he couldn't bring himself to restrain her too tightly as she managed to wriggle free from the bonds that had tied her wrists together.

After removing the blindfold, she locked eyes with him.

Her chest was heaving.

Gazing at the man she had loved for years, Melora parted her lips and spoke with a quivering voice, "Mr. Lodge, I may not be clever, but you can't continue deceiving me. Regardless of the circumstances, I won't accept being a man's mistress!"

Over six months ago, she got drunk, resulting in a night of passion with him.

Following that, whenever he traveled to Barnwood, they would occasionally meet for sex since he didn't have a girlfriend. After all, they had a child together, and he had asked her to wait for him for two years.

Filled with joy, she had assumed that they would eventually marry.

However, her world came crashing down when she read in the newspaper that he was getting married to someone who wasn't her.

Even so, he would still have sex with her.

Gazing at her tear-filled eyes, Alfred pulled out a cigarette and lit it up in frustration.

He yearned to tell her that she only needed to wait for six more months, that the news of his impending wedding was false.

Yet, he understood that a woman didn't have an abundance of time in her youth to keep waiting for him.

Alfred's Adam's apple bobbed several times.

In the end, he sighed softly. "I'm sorry, Melora."

He tenderly drew her close, but Melora didn't want his touch.

She glared at him, her eyes red with anger and hurt.

He knew she loved him very much.

Her love was a mixture of adoration and admiration, coupled with memories of their lovemaking sessions.

Gently patting her head, Alfred spoke in a husky, tender voice, "I've prepared breakfast. Go wash your face. Leslie will arrange for someone to give you a ride home later." His tone held a blend of a lover's concern and a fatherly warmth.

With that, he hastily departed from the bedroom, as though he was fleeing from something pursuing him or as if he feared he might regret his actions the very next moment.

After stepping out of the bedroom, Alfred came to a stop in the corridor.

He punched the wall, his blood staining the pristine white surface.

Throughout his life, he had imposed too many restraints on himself, to the point where he was unable to spend the rest of his life with the woman he loved.

This isn't a manly way to live at all!

At first, he believed he could move on and had made the difficult decision to break up with Melora a few years ago. However, when they crossed paths once more, he was stunned to discover that Melora had given birth to his son. He had thought that two years would be enough for him to let go of everything and concentrate on taking care of them both. Yet, he had reneged on his promise.

In the bathroom, Melora was squatting beside the toilet bowl, crying without a sound.

She knew to cry like this was unbecoming of her, but she couldn't stop herself. After all, she would have to feign nonchalance once she returned home.

She would have to be a good daughter and a good mother to Berthold again.

To the public, she would have to be a top model.

Melora, you can't cry after leaving this house.

In her daze, she stumbled upon a pack of cigarettes, likely left behind by Alfred. She lit one and reminisced about her initial encounter with him.

Back then, she was still young and innocent, while he was already a man admired by many.

She could never forget that night when eight Audis pulled up at her house. More than ten bodyguards surrounded the elegant man who entered her world then.

He stood in the Miller residence's hall, looking sophisticated and regal.

On that day, Melora overheard people saying that he was Alfred Lodge from Coldbridge. He also happened to be Crystal's uncle.

As she descended the stairs, her father instructed her to greet him. She looked at Alfred's youthful countenance, perplexed as to why she should address him as an elder when he only appeared to be in his thirties.

However, both David and Henry seemed afraid of him.

She couldn't help but wonder if he might avoid causing trouble for Henry and agree to allow Henry to be with Crystal if she behaved obediently and followed his wishes.

That day, she was wearing a white dress.

If she wasn't mistaken, it was her pajamas.

Just like that, she stood atop the stairs and greeted him softly, "Mr. Alfred!"

Hearing that, he turned over his shoulder.

There was Crystal had

devising that he heart raced when they have face the hat they the a handsome unce Ather acknowledging her greeting with a gruen be returned to hot conversation with David

Melors had ever seen someone talk to David in such an unruffled manner

Aber that. Alfred left

David told her that Alfred was a sly fox, but Henry said nothing. She disagreed with David as Alfred seemed like a polite gentleman.

At that time, she marveled at the existence of such a handsome man in the world and belt entirely at ease in his compatry

She knew she had taken a liking to Alfred.

[Chapter 314 Alfred And Melora 2](#)

Never in Melora's wildest dreams did she know she'd run into Alfred again soon, and in such an awkward situation too.

The next day, Melora enjoyed coffee with a companion in a cafe located on the first floor of a luxurious five-star hotel.

Her closest friend, Lynette Leitz, sat across from her. "Are you okay now? Why would you take three sleeping pills for a b*stard like him?" she asked worriedly.

Melora responded quietly, "I had no clue he used to date Crystal. He's truly a deceitful man. Whenever I think about how he lied to her for years, I get the urge to stab him to death."

She sniffled and added, "Fortunately, Crystal didn't lose her virginity to him!"

Lynette burst out laughing in anger.

Is she a fool?

They were engrossed in their conversation, completely unaware that a few well-dressed individuals were seated at a table just two away from them. Among them were Alfred, Leslie, and several of their associates.

Leslie was the first to discover them.

He lowered his voice and reported, "Mr. Lodge, that's the daughter of the Miller family."

Alfred sipped on his coffee nonchalantly.

He had spotted her earlier and had overheard the conversation between the young women, which made him realize Melora was quite naive.

Alfred was a busy man, and women would often flock to him.

He hadn't planned on talking to her and made to stand up. At once, his subordinates rose to their feet hastily.

"Melora!"

Without warning, a handsome man appeared out of nowhere and gripped Melora's wrist.

It was none other than Robert.

When his affair became public knowledge, Melora steadfastly ignored his calls and chose not to entertain his explanations.

She even took pills, and he only got to meet her today.

Melora flung his hand away and frowned. "That hurts!"

Robert wanted to win her back.

His mistress might be compliant, but he was merely using her to have fun. Melora, with her influential background and innocence, remained his ideal wife.

He adopted a more humble stance. "Can we talk?"

Lynette burst out, "What's left to discuss? You do have a mistress, don't you? Now that it's out in the open, do you expect Melora to simply forgive you since she's a good-tempered person?"

Even though they were in a high-end cafe, Lynette gave him the middle finger.

Alfred had been on the verge of departing, but he decided to stay and observe the unfolding scene, finding it interesting. He even commented to Leslie, "Take a look at the younger generation these days."

Leslie, skilled in the art of flattering his employer, quickly feigned offense upon hearing the comment. "You're only in your early forties. You're still quite youthful!"

Alfred merely flashed a smile.

Right then, a physical confrontation broke out, likely stemming from their disagreement.

Melora was fine, but her bag had fallen to the ground from the chair, causing its contents to be strewn across the floor.

Among the items scattered on the floor were approximately eight lipsticks and a collection of charming accessories, including a cute lamb keychain.

Most importantly, there was a small milk bottle.

The atmosphere instantly grew a little awkward.

Alfred was pretty surprised.

He was aware that Melora was two years older than Crystal, so it was surprising to see her carrying a milk bottle and cute accessories with her.

Is she still drinking milk?

Leslie had the privilege of witnessing the faint smile that appeared on Alfred's lips, an unusual occurrence. It was evident that Alfred found the situation quite amusing.

Tears had welled up in Melora's eyes.

Feeling humiliated, she bit her lip and declared, "Robert, our engagement has been called. off!"

Robert was about to protest when Alfred spoke up. "Pick up her stuff for her!"

Her milk bottle couldn't be seen by everyone else.

Leslie agreed cheerfully and began gathering Melora's belongings, carefully placing them back inside her bag before zipping it shut.

Melora stared at Alfred, clearly surprised to see him there.

Even Lynette couldn't help but gawk at him. Who is this? He's so handsome and has a temperament unlike others! Despite his fair skin and gentlemanly looks, he is giving off an intimidating vibe.

A long silence later, Melora greeted, "Mr. Alfred!"

Alfred remained seated in his chair, initially reluctant to rise.

However, when she addressed him as "Mr. Alfred," he inexplicably stood up and approached her. She raised her head, looking at him with eyes filled with tears.

She looked like a lost puppy waiting to be collected.

Alfred had the urge to pat her head, but he tamped down that feeling and asked calmly, "Feeling well enough to be up and about today, are we?"

A faint noise escaped Melora's throat as she continued gazing at him.

Lynette was about to faint from excitement. This man might be handsome, but please control yourself, Melora. Be more dignified!

However, Alfred didn't mind her staring.

It had been a long time since he last saw someone gazing at him innocently, like a little rabbit.

She looked like one, too.

Despite her height, she possessed stunning curves.

When their eyes locked, Robert couldn't bear it any longer. He could feel the intimidating presence exuding from the man. He demanded, "Who is he? Is he your new lover? Melora, didn't you try to kill yourself because of your feelings for me?"

Clearly, he felt resentful.

Robert was an arrogant man. When he dated Melora, he always held the upper hand, knowing that she was deeply in love with him. Consequently, when news of his affair became public, he didn't consider it a significant issue.

He assumed he could simply end things with his mistress and persuade Melora to return to him.

He had no inkling that one day, she would look at another man with such infatuation.

Yes, indeed. It was infatuation.

Alfred paid Robert no heed. To him, Robert was just like Joshua.

Raising his hand, he ordered calmly, "Bring this man out!"

Robert was stunned.

Immediately, a group of eight imposing bodyguards approached them. They were clad in professional attire, complete with wireless earpieces. The leader addressed Robert politely, "Mr. Lodge requests that you depart."

Mr. Lodge?

Robert couldn't figure out who Alfred was, but he found the latter quite familiar.

Nonetheless, he was a tactful individual. He patted his suit jacket and said to Melora, "We'll have our conversation another time!"

Melora averted her gaze.

She had no intention of speaking to him. There was nothing left to discuss, as she had made up her mind to move on and forget about him.

The corner of her eyes turned red.

After all, he used to be the man she loved.

Alfred noticed her eyes turning red, though he merely smiled and got ready to leave.

Suddenly, someone tugged at his shirt.

It was Melora, staring at him earnestly as she spoke softly. "Mr. Alfred, I need to talk to you. Can I treat you to a meal?"

Alfred frowned slightly.

He wasn't actually free as he had to meet a few people a while later.

Yet, perhaps he had been alone for too long, for he didn't decline the charming young lady's invitation. "Let's go," he said to her before leaving the cafe.

His subordinates went after him. He might be wearing casual clothes, and with his fair skin, he looked like a gentleman. However, it was obvious he was a big shot.

Melora grabbed her bag and hurried after him.

Lynette immediately pulled her back. "Are you nuts? How dare you get involved with someone like him?"

Melora licked her lips. "He's Crystal's uncle. Don't you know Alfred Lodge from Coldbridge? He often appears in the news."

She took off like lightning after saying that.

Lynette was dumbstruck.

Mr. Lodge? He's a major player in the southern region, overseeing the most cutting-edge technology in the country. He's a prominent figure even among prominent figures! I can't believe I had the chance to see him today!

[Chapter 315 Alfred And Melora 3](#)

In the elevator, the bodyguards surrounded Alfred.

Melora was crammed in a corner of the elevator. She had just ingested three sleeping pills, and had her stomach washed, and just looking at her gave others the vibe that she was weak and delicate.

She forcefully squeezed toward Alfred.

Those ferocious-looking bodyguards stopped her, leaving her feeling aggrieved.

Seeing that, Leslie could not help but chuckle.

"Let her over!" Alfred uttered.

A path instantly formed before the man. Melora squeezed her way toward him and pulled a funny face at those bodyguards. It was quite an adorable sight.

Alfred could not help but think of the small milk bottle in her bag.

A soft chuckle escaped his lips.

Surprisingly, his tired body felt rejuvenated. Could it be that this young lady actually holds so much power? I feel so much more relaxed now!

Alfred's hotel suite was exceedingly spacious. It was roughly about three hundred square meters in size.

There was even a small gym inside.

As he was busy, he called for lunch upon heading in. Without delay, Leslie went to make the necessary arrangements.

In less than thirty minutes, the chef brought in a table of delicious food. Busy looking through documents, Alfred did not raise his head to see and merely muttered, "Girls nowadays love spicy food. You don't mind, do you?"

Melora quickly shook her head. "No! No!"

How would I dare...

The three ate together. It was clear Leslie was Alfred's confidant. He was attentive at setting the right mood and occasionally made some playful banter during the meal.

In truth Melora could not handle spicy food that well.

She had barely eaten a few mouthfuls when she felt her throat burning and her eyes welling up with tears.

No longer able to hold it in, Melora stirred the spicy seafood stew in her bowl and ranted in a low voice, "Why are we eating inside a hotel suite? It'll probably take a long time for this smell to fade, won't it?"

Hmph! Girls love spicy food, he says. It's obvious he's the one who loves it!

Alfred had, in fact, long noticed it. However, he did not mention anything about it. He thought it was quite interesting to see how Melora's face was bright red.

He cast Leslie a glance.

The latter instantly understood what Alfred meant and said with a smile, "That's because it's not too convenient for Mr. Lodge to dine in, given his identity. You don't seem to like the food here, though. How about I order something else for you?"

Melora's eyes were filled with tears. "I want some fried chicken and milkshake!"

After a slight pause, she added, "Crystal used to cook fried chicken for me frequently!"

She's even making use of Crystal...

Alfred softly chuckled. This silly girl isn't that dumb after all.

"Order a plate of fried chicken and a milkshake for her," he instructed.

Leslie was quite surprised. Mr. Lodge has never had such a good temper. It's always the people around him who are accommodating him. Since when did he ever coax a young lady like this? And what's more, fried chicken and milkshake, huh?

Regardless, Melora eventually got both.

She sat on the couch before the floor-to-ceiling windows, enjoying the food she requested. Alfred had always had a small appetite, which was probably why he could maintain that figure even after working for twenty years.

He merely sat there, his gaze fixed on the strikingly stunning Melora.

The Miller family truly raised her well. She tried to kill herself yesterday and was still in a squabble with her ex-fiancee earlier. Yet now, she's happily enjoying her fried chicken. She really lives a carefree life, doesn't she?

Alfred was unexpectedly a little envious.

After lunch, Leslie leaned in and whispered, "Mr. Lodge, the people are here. Do you want to meet them now?"

Alfred nodded in response.

Leslie was somehow apprehensive. "Do you want to go to the study, or..."

Alfred gave it a thought. "Just do it here. It's not anything important, anyway!"

Hearing their conversation, Melora flashed a bright smile while swinging her legs. "Mr. Alfred, go ahead with what you have to do. We'll talk about our matter later after you're done."

Leslie could not hold back his laughter.

This young lady... What is there for her to talk with Mr. Lodge about?

Alfred did not utter a word, however.

Subsequently, he received several groups of people. They were all elites in their thirties to forties.

It was quite an imposing scene to behold!

Amongst them was an exceptionally gorgeous and alluring woman. Before she left, she glanced at Melora and queried, "Mr. Lodge, who is she?"

Alfred did not like others prying and responded coldly, "A junior of mine."

Melora had wanted to plead on Henry's behalf.

Uh... But Mr. Alfred has so many people to receive. Doesn't he feel tired at all?

Eventually, she succumbed to her exhaustion and fell asleep on the couch while hugging a cushion tightly.

As night fell, Alfred finally sent off the last group of people.

He was overwhelmed by exhaustion, but he had the habit of drinking a glass of red wine. When he was tired to relieve the fatigue.

The suite was dimly-lit.

Alfred had changed into a fresh set of clothing. It was a formal black attire, making him look extra poised and steady.

Holding the wine glass in his hand, he gazed at the young lady on the couch. The lights outside seeped in through the floor-to-ceiling windows, creating a kaleidoscopic array

around her. It was a breathtaking sight to behold.

How can there be someone who can sleep so well? She's innocent and clueless... She doesn't seem the slightest bit wary at all!

Perhaps because his stare was too intense, Melora soon woke moved into a kneeling position on the couch.

She rubbed her eyes and

She had a slender figure, and with her long white dress and silky black tresses draping over her back, she appeared incredibly stunning. In fact, she looked nothing like a child.

After getting a clear look at the man before her, she called out adorably, "Mr. Alfred!"

"You're awake?"

Alfred put down his wine glass and lifted the corners of his lips into a faint smile. "Aren't you afraid about sleeping in a stranger's room? And a man, at that."

Melora's cheeks had a rosy hue, possibly from sleeping too long.

She scratched her head lightly and replied matter-of-factly, "I'm not scared. You're Crystal's uncle... And I call you Mr. Alfred!"

Alfred took a step forward.

He could touch her silky long hair as long as he reached his hand out.

However, he only stood there.

Melora knelt on the couch, tidying her unruly hair. "Mr. Alfred, how old are you?" she uttered softly.

A few images flashed through Alfred's mind as he looked at how she knelt on the couch.

He let out a light chuckle.

Seeing that, Melora was in a slight daze. Mr. Alfred is so good-looking when he's smiling! Frankly speaking, she had many good-looking men around her. Henry, specifically, had outstanding features that hardly anyone could win against. That said, she thought a smiling Alfred was unlike any other-he was attractive and oozed masculinity.

Her heart started racing.

No way! Melora, you can't possibly fall in love with Crystal's uncle, can you? Can't you be a little less useless?

She was, undoubtedly, struck dumb by the possibility of that wild thought actually being a fact, so much so that she completely forgot her initial motive for meeting the man.

Alfred gently fastened his cufflinks. "It's getting late. I'll send you back."

Embarrassed to say anything else, she merely followed behind the man.

Arriving at the hotel's underground parking lot after stepping out of the private elevator, Alfred opened the door of a black Lotus, then signaled to Melora to take a seat inside.

Sitting beside him, she softly asked, "Mr. Alfred, where's your secretary? And didn't you have many bodyguards following you?"

Alfred lowered his head and lit a cigarette.

He had exceptionally fair skin. Coupled with how the corners of his eyes grew slightly red while he was smoking, he looked somewhat like a scoundrel disguised as a gentleman.

Puffing out smoke, he flashed a faint smile. "This is a personal trip, so there's no need for me to bring them along!"

P-Personal trip... Sending me home is a personal matter?

Once again, Melora found her heart racing. She could not even put her hands on her lap properly as they were trembling so much.

The black sports car sped down the roads.

At about nine, the vehicle arrived outside the Miller residence.

Melora placed her hand on the door handle, her legs feeling like jelly. She turned her head. and softly said, "Thank you, Mr. Alfred. I..."

Alfred rested his hand on the car window, silently smoking.

Moments later, he threw the cigarette butt away and said in a deep, raspy voice, "At my age, I'm not suitable for young girls."

Melora bit her lip. "I'm twenty-seven. I'm no longer a young girl!"

Alfred lightly stroked the steering wheel with his fair, slender fingers.

His smile, though polite, had a hint of wickedness to it. "You still bring cute accessories and a small milk bottle around with you. What are you if not a young girl?"

[Chapter 316 Crying For Mister Alfred 1](#)

Melora fled from the teasing, but Alfred remained in his spot.

As he sat in the car, he slowly inhaled his cigarette and watched the slender figure disappear behind the black-decorated door and into the night.

He could not help but be reminded of someone-his sister, Krystal.

Krystal had died young, and she never got to meet with her kin before her death. That was something Alfred could never get over.

He had seen Crystal's photo.

Crystal turned out to look much like the Lodges with her fair skin and chestnut-colored long hair.

Nevertheless, Alfred found traces of Krystal in Melora.

No, that's not quite right. Melora seems a little dumber than Krystal.

Alfred held the cigarette between his fingers, forgetting about it until the ashes fell onto his pants. A lonely smile crept onto his face when he glanced at it.

What's going on with me today? I just met a silly kid. Why do I feel so melancholic?

He remained still in his seat for a long while before finally starting his car to drive back to his hotel. When he entered his suite, he found Leslie pacing around like a cat on a hot brick. Upon seeing him, Leslie hurried over to him and chided, "Why did you go out by yourself? What if something happens to you?"

Alfred sat down on the couch.

Even though he was exhausted, his noble demeanor remained—he would never fully relax himself.

At the same time, he reached out for a couch cushion, but just as he was about to put it back to its original position, he suddenly lifted it to sniff it.

There was a hint of fragrance on it.

It was not perfume but the natural scent of a woman.

It was sweet, like oranges.

Alfred arched a brow and softly chuckled. "If something were to happen, then I could leave all this mess behind. That would be perfect! You have no idea how tiring it is for me to meet all these people and worry about all these things all the time."

Leslie brought him a cup of tea and patiently listened to his grumbles.

He knew that he was the only one Alfred would ever say such things to.

To the outsiders, Alfred would always seem impeccable and invincible.

After ranting for a bit, Alfred got ready to shower.

Leslie kept his shirts away before abruptly saying, "Shall I invite Miss Hopper over to keep you company?"

"Miss Hopper" was none other than Ingrid Hopper, a renowned opera performer.

She had excellent looks and figure, and she appeared to be on the same wavelength as Alfred. In the past, Alfred would occasionally meet with her when he was at Barnwood.

Alfred was already on his way to the bathroom when he heard that. After a moment of contemplation, he answered, "No, I'm not keen on that."

Leslie followed him and gently persuaded him, "You're too hard on yourself sometimes."

What?

Alfred turned around and uttered, "Did she put you up to this? She's a good woman if not for her scheming tendencies. She's beautiful, but being with her makes me feel as though I'm in a diplomatic meeting. It's exhausting."

Leslie fell silent.

Sure enough, the pretty young woman had pleaded with him to put in a good word for her. Though Leslie felt that she was a good individual, it was Alfred's opinion that mattered. Clearly, Alfred did not think much of her.

Soon, the sound of running water came from the bathroom.

Leslie wisely retreated from the room. At the end of the day, there were personal matters that a man in his forties had to deal with himself.

Indeed, Alfred was busy with something.

After reaching his climax, he supported himself with a hand against the tiled wall and lowered his head to wash his body.

His body clearly needed it, and there was a beautiful woman who was waiting for him to her, but he was simply not in the mood for her. In fact, during that moment of impulse, the image that emerged in his head had been Melora kneeling on the couch.

How innocent she is. She doesn't understand men at all.

At the Miller residence, Melora took a nap.

When she woke, she found her brother, Henry, sitting by the side of her bed.

She moved over to put her head on Henry's thigh before sweetly muttering, "Henry, how are things between you and my sister-in-law?"

Henry squeezed her cheeks. "Well, you're still calling her your sister-in-law."

The truth was that his father did not quite agree with his and Crystal's relationship when Crystal's relationship with Robert was exposed. After all, the relationships involved seemed a little odd now, and as a father, it would not be good for him to side with either one of the children.

Thus, he decided it was best for both his children to break it off with their partners.

However, Crystal's uncle, Alfred, had come to their family to kick up a fuss, agitating David's own temper. In his fury to counter the Lodge family's arrogance, he decided to let Henry marry Crystal again.

Henry yearned for Crystal, and he was unwilling to let her interact with Pete. Furthermore, Seth was in Hulcaster too.

Yet, Melora was equally important to Henry.

As he combed her long hair, he muttered, "Have you really made up your mind?"

Melora pressed closer to him and mumbled a "yes."

More questions tried to leave Henry's mouth, but he swallowed them before they could be voiced out loud. Lynette had called him, and he had found out about what happened the day before. Therefore, he guessed that, with Alfred's standing and identity, Alfred also saw Melora as just a kid.

That man was the personification of elegance, after all.

Furthermore, Melora would recover faster if she was more preoccupied with matters.

The siblings were on great terms with each other, so Henry had lunch with her before going to the firm.

On the other hand, despite having lived twenty-seven years on earth, Melora had never worked before.

In the afternoon, she lounged around at home until it was too boring for her to stay in the same place anymore. Hence, she drove out. Ultimately, she ended up in the lobby of the hotel where Alfred was staying.

Why am I here?

Melora was dumbfounded, and her cheeks were heating up.

Just the night before, he had said that little girls like her were unsuitable for him. Pah! Who wants to be a match for him? It's just because he's Crystal's uncle... It's just because he's a little more handsome than the average guy.

Right then, a black Audi with the plate number "XX8888" drove toward the road.

That was Alfred's car.

Melora blinked for a second before tailing him.

In the Audi, Leslie was seated in the front passenger seat. He glanced at the rearview mirror and muttered, "It's Miss Miller's car."

Alfred had his eyes closed when Leslie spoke.

Hearing the other man, he slowly opened his eyes and said, "Just ignore her."

Around an hour later, they arrived at a public cemetery.

Two days before, Alfred had come here. However, it was John's death anniversary that day, so Alfred thought of paying his respects. Alfred held much gratitude toward John, who not only took Krystal in but also took such good care of Crystal and treated her like his own daughter.

Alfred brought wine for John and a bouquet of lilies for Krystal.

It was a hot day that day, but Alfred remained unmoving even when his white shirt was soaked with sweat.

Beside him, Leslie held the umbrella for him, quietly keeping him company.

Melora, who had followed them, initially sneakily watched them. But soon, as she was wearing heels, she grew tired and crouched down.

She had never seen a man as sad as this.

He shed no tears, but the heavy air of sorrow that surrounded him broke her heart.

After a long while, Alfred abruptly said, "Why are you still hiding there? Come over here."

Is he talking to me?

Melora was rather taken aback, but she stood up and inched over. After greeting Alfred, she found herself towed toward him by a powerful hand on her arm.

It was only when she stood by Alfred's side did she realize he was quite tall.

Without heels, Melora was a hundred and sixty-eight centimeters, but beside him, the top her head only reached the side of his cars, so she guessed that he was taller than a hundred and eighty-five centimeters.

Alfred caressed the photo on the tombstone.

In the photo, Krystal remained forever young, smiling without any worries.

A gentle smile appeared on Alfred's face. "John, Krystal, this is the Millers' daughter and Henry's little sister. If you two were still around, you'd be able to see Crystal's wedding. Don't worry. I'll make sure Crystal marries a good man."

With that, he stood up and patted Melora's head. "Say your greetings."

Melora was a little startled. It took her a beat before she stammered out, "H-Hello, I didn't mean to interrupt. Um, my brother will take good care of Crystal, and if he doesn't, my will beat him up."

A chuckle escaped Alfred's lips.

Unexpectedly, his initially gloomy mood was lifted a little.

Melora turned to look at him and whispered, "Mr. Alfred, you're okay about Crystal being in a relationship with brother?"

As Alfred began walking toward the exit, he said, "Did I say that?"

"You did! You can't go back on your words!"

She caught up with him. Despite herself, she held his arm and swung

[Chapter 317 Crying For Mister Alfred 2](#)

Alfred lowered his head to look at the pair of fair hands.

Yet, his gaze went unnoticed by her as she continued holding his arm while they walked out of the cemetery.

Leslie, still holding the umbrella and trailing after them, was silent in contemplation.

The night before, Alfred had said that he was not interested in Ingrid's company. Perhaps it was not because Ingrid was boring, but because he had encountered someone better than everyone else paled in comparison.

When they were on their way back, Alfred told the driver to take Melora's car.

Melora sat beside Alfred. She was rather talkative and not at all fazed by what happened the night before.

Leslie drove with a smile, thinking, It's rare that Mr. Lodge isn't getting irritable.

Mid-journey, Alfred received a call from his university friend from Barnwood about a gathering in the afternoon.

After speaking for a while, Alfred suddenly turned to Melora.

He chuckled and went on, "You all must be doing this on purpose. You know that I'm single, but you still want me to bring a female companion. Aren't you trying to make life tough for me?"

The person on the other end responded to Alfred's words, but Melora could not hear what they said.

Alfred proceeded to stretch his arm to touch his car seat. "All right, all right."

He ended the call.

If it was another day, Leslie would have definitely arranged for someone to be Alfred's female companion-someone sensible and obedient. However, there was another woman in the car, and Leslie could not tell what Alfred's plan was, so he said nothing.

Sure enough, once Alfred tossed his phone aside, he turned to Melora to say, "Join me for a meal."

Melora hesitated. Mr. Alfred's friends are probably a whole bunch of old men too, right?

Alfred added, "If you go, you'll get monetary gifts."

At that, Melora agreed to it.

After returning to the hotel, Alfred had a change of clothes.

He was still wearing his usual white shirt and black slacks, but he undid two of his shirt buttons and rolled his sleeves up to his elbow to reveal his defined forearms.

His body was one that women would fall for.

After that, he drove the black Lotus and brought her to an obscure upscale clubhouse that only members could enter. The average person could not come to this establishment, for they would not know about it in the first place.

The Miller family was wealthy, but they were in a different social circle, so Melora had never been to this clubhouse.

The manager dared not stare at Alfred as he led them to a private room. All he said was, "Enjoy yourself, Mr. Lodge."

Alfred inclined his head.

Then, the gilded carved doors slowly closed. Alfred leaned against the doorframe and lit a cigarette.

It was clear that he was a frequent visitor to the clubhouse.

The room was big, around eight hundred square meters. The dining room was separated from the entertainment area. There were over a dozen people seated by the table when they arrived, and they were all waiting for Alfred.

Just as Alfred was done with his cigarette, a man dressed to his nines came over with a glass of red wine.

“Alfred, you’re a tough man to invite.”

The man was handsome, though his eyes gave him a frivolous image. When he turned to Melora, he chuckled. “Where did you find this girl from? She looks pretty!”

Alfred blew out a ring of smoke. “She’s a young family friend.”

The man did not believe him, however.

Who would? After all, men like them would only bring their lovers to such gatherings. Though Alfred was not married, he would have confidantes.

Earlier in the morning, Ingrid had called, hoping to find out more information about Alfred

However, Alfred smiled and said, “I’m not pulling your leg. She’s the Miller family’s daughter and Henry’s little sister.”

The men in the room were shocked.

The little sister of the legal world’s Grim Reaper? Why did Alfred bring her here?

Alfred reached out to pat the top of Melora’s head. “The girl said she wanted to learn more about the world, so I brought her with me. Cease the nonsense, all right?”

He then prompted Melora to greet the others. “This is Eras Yonder. You can call him Mr. Yonder.”

Right then, a gorgeous woman walked over. She looked young, maybe even younger than Melora.

She appeared intimate with Eras.

Not knowing how things worked between Alfred’s group, Melora sweetly greeted, “Mr. Yonder. Mrs. Yonder.”

The woman chuckled, and so did the rest.

Eras then laughed and asked where Alfred had found her. Though the woman was laughing as well, she was a little stunned. How many young women could remain as innocent as Melora?

The atmosphere during the meal was merry, and the people were not reserved around each other.

Instead of a meal, perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a social event. These prominent figures needed a way to maintain their connections with each other.

Among the group, Alfred was the one with the highest standing.

He had several resources regarding the new energy source. Any simple project he could offer them would let them live the rest of their lives without the need to worry about their financial status.

Of course, Alfred had use for them too.

Someone who wanted to curry favor with the Miller family and Henry came over to toast Melora, but Alfred shielded her from them. Without beating around the bush, he told them, “She isn’t well-acquainted with those affairs.”

Therefore, the others stopped trying.

When Alfred went to the restroom, Melora followed him out. Everyone in the room could tell that there was something else about their relationship, but since Alfred said she was merely his young family friend, they were going to say nothing else about it.

As Alfred washed his hands, Melora leaned in to whisper, "Mr. Alfred, I think they're a little afraid of you."

Alfred turned off the golden faucet.

He had drunk a little more than he wanted, so he was smoking to sober himself up.

As the smoke rose, he mulled over Melora's words.

Indeed, although these people were his classmates and they were not indebted to each other, all of them hoped to ride his coattails.

It was lonely at the top.

While they were fearful of him and were respectfully calling him "Mr. Lodge" now, if he were to ever fall from grace, they would crush him and leave him in pieces.

Only a silly young woman like Melora would make everything seem so simple.

As a matter of fact, Alfred was starting to regret having brought her here.

Right then, a sound came from inside the restroom. It sounded like someone was in pain yet also delighted. At the start, it was unrhythmic, but both parties soon got really into it and stopped caring about where they were.

The restroom cubicle door even started shaking vigorously.

A woman's pleased sounds rang out, sometimes soft and sometimes urgent, mixing with a man's pleased groans.

Melora stiffened.

No matter how foolish she was, she could tell what was happening in the cubicle. They were definitely not a married couple, for a married couple would not be so urgent to do such a thing in a public place, especially when they had a reputation to uphold.

When she thought about the ages of the young women in the room, a sour look crept onto her face.

These men must have brought their lovers here, but Alfred brought me here.

With reddened eyes, she glared at Alfred.

Alfred continued to smoke, but a mysterious look had appeared on his face.

Irrked, Melora gave him a kick.

She had thought that Alfred was a gentleman.

Holding the cigarette between his fingers, Alfred reached out to hold her wrist with another hand. He lowered his voice as he said, "Why are you losing your temper at me when you're eavesdropping on them?"

She gave him another glare. He evidently knew about this.

However, he was distracted by a tingling sensation on her wrist where he held her.

Alfred then extinguished his cigarette, about to bring her away from the restroom.

Just then, the two in the cubicle were done with their business. The man was swift in putting his pants again. When he walked out, he was even telling the woman, "Let's go to the hotel once this gathering is over. This isn't enough."

Melora could only blink helplessly.

In a few seconds' time, the other two individuals would walk out to find them eavesdropping on them.

Alfred's gaze darkened.

He quickly wrapped his arm around Melora's waist and led her into the women's restroom.

The door shut with a loud thud.

Melora's heart was thumping loudly. As she surveyed her surroundings, she bit her lower lip and muttered, "What do we do if we get spotted when we go out?"

Alfred pressed her against the door.

This silly woman's not sensing any danger, huh?

Lowering his head, he brushed his face past her ear and hoarsely said, "Are you afraid of someone else misunderstanding us?"

Melora nodded earnestly.

Alfred chuckled. It did not matter even if others saw them. No one would be shocked by what went on in the cubicle.

Having drunk alcohol, he found the young woman in his arms exceptionally soft to the touch.

As their bodies ground against each other, Melora's breathing turned rapid.

She did not dare to move an inch. Even inhaling made her closer to him. Leaning against him also made her realize that he was not as skinny as she imagined him to be—he was not buff, but he had lean muscles.

His skin was warm, she noticed.

Alfred was no dense man. When he sensed her anxiety, he gently ruffled her hair.

"Are you afraid?"

Melora choked out a sob.

Cupping her face, he whispered, "Call me Mr. Alfred, and we'll go out after."

"Mr. Al...fred."

She could barely squeeze out those words. Her lips trembled, and she could barely maintain her upright position.

Melora had no idea what had gotten into her.

She felt flustered.

Yet, her heart could not lie. She liked him. She liked this man who she called "Mr. Alfred."

Alfred's face approached hers until their faces were a hair's breadth apart.

"I did what you asked," Melora said, close to tears.

Alfred hummed in response before cupping the back of her head to kiss her. She resisted, but he restrained her and rasped, "Behave."

Melora widened her eyes and watched as he assaulted her.

[Chapter 318 Crying For Mister Alfred 3](#)

He was excellent at kissing.

Their lips and tongues intertwined, and he cradled her in his arms, letting her whole body rest against him.

Even though Melora had been in a relationship before, she still couldn't resist the allure of this moment.

When Alfred finally released her, her legs were like jelly. If he hadn't been holding her, she might have fallen to the ground. In the end, she leaned against his shoulder, not knowing what to do.

She had just kissed Crystal's uncle...

Her ears were buzzing.

There was the noise of people having fun in the private room one moment and Alfred's heartbeat the next.

Alfred was beginning to sober up.

Before bringing her here, he had felt conflicted.

Now, in this enclosed space, she was trembling just from kissing him. She was as green and innocent as an unripe fruit.

Though she was lovely, she didn't quite fit into his world.

Alfred gently patted her head, his voice tender. "Melora, I've told you before that someone my age isn't suitable for a young girl like you. You see, even when we're out for a bit of fun, it's all part of social obligations. There's no time for true relaxation."

His voice suddenly turned hoarse. "Don't fall for me."

It was a tender moment, yet he uttered these cruel words of rejection.

Melora had her pride too, and with tears in her eyes, she retorted, "I didn't fall for you!"

It was just a kiss, after all.

She didn't care that much.

At those words, Alfred seemed to breathe a sigh of relief, but there was a hint of disappointment in his eyes. He quickly concealed it with his usual composure.

Later, he bade farewell to his old classmates.

Eras was surprised. "Leaving already? We were waiting for you to play cards together. The game is just heating up."

Alfred skillfully excused himself and left with Melora.

As they sat in the car, both of them felt uneasy.

They remained in silence for a while. Alfred lit a cigarette to ease his troubled emotions.

Melora spoke softly. "Let me drive. I'll take you back to the hotel."

Alfred was quite surprised.

He had been involved with women before, especially those from privileged backgrounds. They often had a temper and had certain expectations, whether it was an apology or some emotional commitment, especially after what happened.

Melora's simplicity and lack of a hidden agenda were a rare luxury.

They switched seats.

Melora silently drove them to the hotel's underground parking lot. Leslie had been waiting there for a while, and as soon as the car stopped and the door opened, he caught a whiff of alcohol. He grinned and said, "Oh, you've had quite a bit to drink, Mr. Lodge! Thanks for your help, Miss Melora."

The alcohol Alfred had consumed was potent, and now he was starting to feel its effects.

He hadn't noticed it before, but now his steps were a bit unsteady.

Leslie suggested that Melora help Alfred up to his room. He explained, "It wouldn't look good if someone takes a picture of him like this!"

Melora agreed.

She figured that this might be the end of their private interactions, especially since they would soon be family.

The three of them stood in the elevator in awkward silence.

Leslie felt the tension in the air and wondered if something had happened during the dinner.

Just as he was thinking this, the elevator stopped on the first floor.

Standing outside was Robert, who appeared rather surprised to see them.

He couldn't help but mock, "Oh, so you didn't answer my calls or want to listen to my explanations because you've found yourself a new man, huh? Melora, how old is he now? He's at least thirty-five years old, right? Can an older man like him satisfy you?"

Melora was furious, tears welling up in her eyes.

She had genuinely liked Robert before, and their breakup had been because of his infidelity.

What right did he have to question her?

However, she couldn't find the right words to retort.

Robert seemed ready to say some more hurtful things.

At that moment, Alfred casually struck a high-quality match, lighting a cigarette. He said nonchalantly, "No matter my age, any woman who ends up with me will definitely be satisfied. As for you, Mr. Sloan, I'm not so sure. You've set off too many fireworks outside; I wonder if you'll go soft at home?"

Robert wanted to explode with anger, but Alfred continued while adjusting his shirt, "You're Robert Sloan, right? I'm Alfred Lodge, Crystal Winters' uncle."

Robert was stunned.

Alfred Lodge?

Crystal's uncle is actually Alfred Lodge?

The realization hit him like a bolt of lightning. He suddenly recalled how he had toyed with Crystal's feelings for four years and used her to send John to prison while currying favor with the Miller family.

He couldn't believe that Alfred Lodge from Coldbridge was Crystal's uncle.

If so, what had he been doing during those four years?

Robert felt lost.

Alfred, concerned for Melora, asked her to accompany him to his suite.

The moment Alfred entered the room, he immediately turned to Leslie and said, "Go check on Sloan Group! If there are any loopholes, have the investigation team go over there tomorrow!"

Leslie, being the shrewd person he was, understood Alfred's bad mood. It was probably more about the young lady and less about Robert.

He smiled and said, "As long as we investigate thoroughly, we'll find something!"

Only then did Alfred calm down.

He unbuttoned his shirt, and as if he had just remembered, he said casually, "Personally arrange for the driver to take her back home."

Now, Leslie was sure that there had been a disagreement between them.

He sensed that something was off and that Alfred was being extra considerate toward Melora.

Even though Alfred had bullied her, he had also helped her out. Nevertheless, Melora wasn't the type to cling to a man. Besides, her feelings for Alfred were still unclear even to her.

She thought that maybe it was best not to see him again...

However, when she left, she couldn't help but glance back.

Alfred was holding a bathrobe and watching her, his

"Mr. Alfred."

She softly uttered those words, her eyes slightly moist. She knew Alfred was the type who wouldn't be interested in an immature young girl like her.

Lowering her head, she left with Leslie.

Alfred put the bathrobe down and slowly sat on the couch.

Just now, he had felt a pang of reluctance.

He was surprised because he knew that he clearly preferred women who were more sophisticated and seductive. Even if they were a bit pretentious, he didn't mind as they didn't mind him and knew how to read the situation.

Maybe it had been a while since he had been with a woman...

Just as he was lost in thought, his phone rang. It was his mother, calling from Coldbridge.

Lucia was anxious.

Alfred's found Crystal already, so why hasn't he brought her back yet?

Alfred reassured her and said with a chuckle, "Crystal is on a business trip in Hulcaster Shell head to Coldbridge to visit you after she's done"

Lucia then brought up the topic of his marriage again

"Mom, marriage is a matter of fate. Do you want me to marry a random woman who will quarrel with you every day?"

His mother snorted. "Don't try to fool me! I know you very well!"

She continued to talk, and when Leslie returned, he overheard Lucia's words.

Alfred hung up the phone and asked, "Has she been taken back?"

Leslie nodded, and after some thought, he said, "Actually, if you like her, you could... Well, your age gap isn't that big. Besides, she's pretty and innocent."

Alfred became lost in thought.

He recalled the kiss in the clubhouse restroom and how good it had felt.

After a while, he came back to his senses and smiled bitterly. "We're not suitable for each other! In the future, we'll inevitably become a family, and besides, she's too pure-hearted. It's better not to involve her too much in my matters!"

With that, Alfred took the bathrobe and went off to take a shower.

The next day, Melora slowly descended the stairs.

From the living room, she could hear voices. It sounded like her father and her brother were talking.

David sipped his tea and said wryly, "I heard that Robert has once again caught the attention of the tax bureau. Early in the morning, a whole investigation team went over to investigate him. From the looks of it, he's about to get another harsh punishment from them!"

Clearing his throat, he asked, "Henry, was it your doing?"

Henry had a good idea of what was going on and replied, "It should be the work of someone else. He must have offended someone."

David nodded.

He had his suspicions about who it might be. Besides that person, who else had the capability and the hatred for Robert?

As they conversed, they didn't notice Melora, whose heart was racing.

Is it Mr. Alfred's doing?

Did he really take action in response to those horrible things Robert said?

Suddenly, she wanted to see him.

She hadn't even had breakfast, but she got into her car and drove to the hotel where Alfred was staying. In truth, she hadn't thought about what she would say to him when they met; she just wanted to see him..

When she reached the top floor of the hotel, she pressed the doorbell.

No response came for a long time.

Coincidentally, the hotel manager passed by. He recognized Melora and knew she was Alfred's guest.

The manager informed her, "Mr. Lodge has checked out."

He left?

Melora froze.

The manager could sense the young woman's disappointment and said in a quiet voice, "Mr. Lodge keeps this suite for himself all year round. You can try again the next time he comes."

Melora nodded.

She didn't know how she managed to leave the hotel.

Sitting in her car, she hesitated for a long time while holding her phone, but she never dialed that number. He had left without a word, so she assumed he must not care about her.

Melora, don't you feel ashamed of yourself for following him around like a puppy? Maybe it's better this way...

[Chapter 319 You Are Out Of My League Part 1](#)

The next time Melora saw Alfred was two months later.

Julia was an opera buff.

Her favorite performer, Ingrid, had three performances that month.

Unfortunately, Julia fell sick, so she had no choice but to give Melora the tickets and have the latter present Ingrid flowers on her behalf. On top of that, she instructed Melora to get an autograph from Ingrid.

Since Melora had nothing better to do, she invited Crystal along to the opera.

Crystal readily agreed on account of the recent thaw in her relationship with Henry and the fact that she always doted on Melora. She also invited Madison to join them.

La Scala was the best opera house in the north.

On that particular day, Ingrid played the titular character of the opera Carmen. Her impressive performance was greeted with thunderous applause, yet Melora had mostly been yawning throughout the show.

If it wasn't for the autograph she had to get for her mother, she would have already left halfway. She just couldn't fathom why the performers had to put on thick makeup and wear gaudy costumes.

Isn't it uncomfortable?

Once the show was over, Ingrid left the stage in tears.

However, her expression changed completely the moment she went backstage. While removing her earrings, she instructed her assistant, "I'm not meeting any fans tonight. Tell them to come back some other time."

As someone who came from a long line of opera singers, Ingrid naturally exuded an air of arrogance.

It wasn't a big deal not to meet ordinary fans, but there was someone important in attendance that evening, a fact that put the assistant in a dilemma.

She explained, "It's fine if you don't meet the others, but I'm afraid there's one person today you have to see no matter what."

After taking off the outer layer of her costume, Ingrid asked curiously, "Who is this that I have no choice but to meet?"

“The daughter of the Miller family! She’s here to get an autograph on behalf of her mother, who couldn’t come due to feeling under the weather.”

Ingrid froze abruptly before breaking into a vibrant smile the very next second.

“The daughter of the Miller family? In that case, I must see her... Mrs. Miller has always been a very generous patron. Bring her backstage. I’ll sign an autograph for her.”

The moment she finished, Ingrid swept the curtain aside and headed inside her room from where a crisp male voice could be heard..

Meanwhile, Melora and her companions were led backstage by the assistant.

From the hundreds of flower bouquets that lined the corridor, it was clear how wildly popular Ingrid was.

Thirty-two among them were sent by someone named Mr. Lodge.

Mr. Lodge...

The name caused Melora’s heart to pound furiously.

Is it who I think it is?

Trailing Melora’s gaze, the assistant explained with a smile, “Mr. Lodge is an old friend of Miss Hopper. Whenever he is in Barnwood, he will definitely attend her performance. I heard he’s someone important who doesn’t spare his time for just about anyone. Only Miss Hopper has the honor of him gracing her performance with his presence.”

After listening to the assistant’s remarks, Melora felt a sudden urge to leave.

However, their group had arrived at the entrance of the makeup room by then. The assistant pushed the door open. “Miss Miller is here.”

As the door gradually opened, the sight that greeted them shocked Melora.

Ingrid had already put on a body-hugging gown while her hair was pinned up, revealing a face with features so exquisite that she would mesmerize anyone who saw her.

Right then, she was leaning against a man who was dressed in a white shirt and black slacks. His face was handsome and elegant-looking.

At that very moment, he held in his hand a golden hairpin that he was trying to put on for Ingrid.

Their gentle actions exuded an inexplicable intimacy that made it obvious to everyone what their relationship was.

Frozen to the spot in shock, Melora had never expected to walk in on such a scene.

Alfred has kissed me before... Nevertheless, I’ve never seen this side of him. It turns out that he fancies the sort of stunning beauty that Miss Hopper is. Together, both of them look like they’re a match made in heaven.

Melora wasn't the only one astonished, for Alfred was just as stunned as she was.

Despite Crystal's presence, he put down the hairpin in his hand and called out, "Melora!"

However, Melora kept mum.

Lips trembling, she didn't want to respond to him.

Meanwhile, Crystal gave Alfred a curious look before shifting her gaze toward Melora. As far as she knew, both of them barely knew each other, but the familiarity in Alfred's tone when he called out to Melora was unmistakable.

It was amidst this awkward moment that Leslie suddenly arrived.

He, too, was equally blown away by the sight.

Nonetheless, as Alfred's old hand, he deftly defused the situation by speaking to Crystal. "Miss Lodge, I'm surprised to see you here! Mr. Lodge has missed you and was planning a visit."

Not wanting to escalate the situation, Crystal greeted her uncle respectfully.

Madison, on the same page as Crystal, could also tell what was going on. She quickly broke into a smile and commented, "What a coincidence!"

At that moment, Ingrid interjected with a chuckle. "So, you're Mr. Lodge's niece. Why don't I buy all of you dinner at the restaurant opposite? The food there is delicious."

While speaking, Ingrid opened her fan, releasing a pleasant fragrance into the air.

No sooner had she spoken than Melora replied, "I'm not going. I have a headache."

When an air of awkwardness descended upon the room, Leslie added, "I'll medication for Miss Melora."

Nevertheless, his obsequiousness drew a side-eye from Ingrid, who teased coyly, "Leslie, you have never shown me such attention when I had a headache."

Even though the comment was directed at Leslie, she was complaining about Alfred not being attentive enough.

In response, Alfred smiled faintly as he replied, "Don't you already have more than enough. people to fuss about you?"

Holding his arm, Ingrid cooed, "My headaches have always been cured by your presence."

The words caused Melora's face to lose all color.

Thereafter, Leslie stepped in and painstakingly arranged for all of them to eat inside a private room in the restaurant.

During the meal, Ingrid made an effort to treat Crystal warmly due to her desire to marry Alfred.

Unfortunately, Crystal wasn't particularly receptive to the former.

Later on, when Ingrid attempted to curry favor with Melora by serving her some ribs, Alfred unexpectedly did the same.

The sight of the two pieces of ribs couldn't feel any more disgusting to Melora.

Cognizant of her childish feelings, Alfred remarked, "You should have more meat to help you grow!"

Ingrid, leaning against him with a gentle look in her eyes, added, "That's right. You're still growing, so the extra protein will do you good!"

Given that Melora was much younger than Alfred and had greeted the latter accordingly, Ingrid never suspected anything was going on between them.

By then, Melora couldn't endure it any more.

After excusing herself, she headed to the restroom and splashed her face with running water.

She was unable to hold her tears for a second longer.

When Alfred left without saying goodbye two months ago, she was broken-hearted but knew she had no reason to be angry at him. The fact that they had been reunited under such circumstances simply intensified her sorrow.

Why should I suffer such humiliation? I hate him!

Right then, the restroom door was gently opened before being closed and locked from the inside.

Melora was still crying, her face pale like snow and her nose red like an apple.

It wasn't until a short while later that she noticed Alfred had entered and locked the door behind him. Staring blankly into the mirror with tears rolling down her cheeks, she locked gazes with his reflection.

Alfred spoke in a tender tone. "Are you angry?"

Melora responded by staring daggers at him.

She couldn't forget the lustful look in his eyes when he was with Ingrid. Even though he didn't do anything particularly suggestive, it was obvious that he enjoyed having his way with her.

He's nothing but an old pervert!

She turned around abruptly, eyes bloodshot.

"There's nothing between us. Why should I be angry? Besides, someone like me will never catch your attention. You should just be with a woman who has fully matured!"

Melora was clearly throwing a childish tantrum.

Alfred might not have any intention of getting together with her, but he still felt like pacifying her.

On top of that, he wanted to hide his womanizing ways from her.

Hence, he smilingly remarked, "We're just ordinary friends!"

Melora wasn't blind to what he was trying to do. Since they were family, she calmed herself down in an effort not to make the situation any more awkward. Lowering her eyes, she said, "You should head out first. I'm going to wash my face."

Meanwhile, Alfred couldn't help but feel upset.

She's still so young, and I had made up my mind not to go out with her. Yet, fate had other plans, and now I've run into her.

He then stroked her head. "There, there. Come back to dinner once you're done."

After he slipped out discreetly without alerting anyone, Melora tidied herself up before returning to the table. Her gloomy mood naturally made her lose her appetite, a reaction that didn't escape Crystal's notice.

After observing Melora, Crystal gave her uncle a thoughtful look.

Once dinner was over, everyone went their separate ways.

Alfred stood beside Ingrid, both of them looking perfect with each other.

Meanwhile, Melora got into her own car.

As she held onto the steering wheel, her head gradually slumped on top of it. Ever since she broke up with Robert, she had never imagined that she would feel so devastated over another man.

She could sense Alfred had feelings for her, yet he treated her like a child and seemed to prefer spending time with a woman like Ingrid.

Is it because women like her are gentle and understand him better?

Right then, the door of the Audi in front of her swung open. Leslie subsequently got in and drove away alone.

The turn of events caused Melora's heart to race.

She figured that Alfred had other plans for the evening and might be heading to the luxury clubhouse. Will he take Miss Hopper with him? Perhaps also hug and kiss her in the restroom? Who knows, they might even go further than that...

For some reason, Melora thought that watching them do it might help alleviate the pain. within her.

An hour later, she brought her car to a stop.

The staff at the clubhouse recognized her as one of Alfred's previous guests and let her in. Her stature was also bolstered by the limited edition sports car she drove.

When the staff opened the door for her, he remarked smilingly, "Mr. Lodge has just arrived. too!"

The moment she pushed the door open, she was greeted by the sight of Alfred playing cards. with a group of people.

Amidst the opulent surroundings, he looked as handsome and distinguished as ever.

His sleeves were rolled up to his elbows, while his cheeks had a reddish tint to them. Right between his pursed lips was a lit cigarette.

As for Ingrid, she was leaning against him with her soft breasts pressed against his arm. As if she was giving him pointers on his game, the tender look in her eyes was capable of melting anyone who saw it.

Consequently, Melora couldn't bear the sight of them anymore.

When she turned around to leave, someone in the private room spotted her-Eras. "Hey, aren't you the Miller girl? Are you here to see Alfred?"

After parting them down slowly, he looked now and then

[Chapter 320 You Are Out Of My League Part 2](#)

A strange atmosphere quickly descended upon the private room.

Alfred's expression darkened slightly as he gently brushed his finger across his cards. No one could tell what was going through his mind.

As for Melora, she stood at the entrance with tears in her eyes, just like a pitiful little puppy.

Alfred slowly got to his feet and walked toward the door. Sensing something amiss, Ingrid called out by reflex, "Alfred!"

As if he didn't hear her, Alfred strode to the entrance and asked in a tender tone, "Why did you follow us here?"

Melora stared at him before shifting her gaze toward Ingrid and the others in the private room.

It took a bit before she eked out the words. "I forgot to get the autograph."

Her lie fooled no one, but none in the room dared to expose her, for they could tell that she was someone special to Alfred.

At a snail's pace, Alfred broke into a smile before turning around and saying, "Miss Hopper, this is your fault. Hurry up and give the young lady her autograph so that she can complete her task and return home."

Ingrid naturally knew what the proper thing to do was.

She opened her bag and retrieved a scented photo of her to put her autograph on. Sashaying to Melora, she handed the card over and teased, "Alfred is right. It's indeed my fault."

Melora subsequently thanked her softly.

Despite her reluctance to look at Alfred, the latter kept his gaze on her.

It wasn't until she took her leave that Alfred got someone to send her home.

"There's no need for that." Her head shook as she said, "I drove here."

Not insisting any further, Alfred reached out as if to stroke her hair but eventually put down his arm. Instead, he shot her a smile. "Be careful while driving."

With a hum of acknowledgment, Melora turned and left.

Throughout the entire episode, there wasn't a single hostile or resentful comment made between them. Melora knew that only lovers had the right to say such things, and she and Alfred were anything but that.

In fact, he wouldn't even allow her to have a crush on him.

Finally, the bronze gilded doors gradually closed.

Alfred was surrounded by an opulent atmosphere and stunning beauties while she was all alone, her long shadow cast upon the ground by the glittering chandeliers along the corridor.

As the buzz of activity returned to the private room, Ingrid leaned against Alfred obsequiously. Eras and the others couldn't help but tease, "You should have let the young girl stay, Alfred. How could you bring yourself to send your young admirer home like that?"

Alfred joked with them in response, but beneath his smiling face was a sense of frustration. That didn't belong.

As a bachelor, it wasn't a big deal for him to go around philandering. However, the fact that Melora had seen him doing so made him feel uncomfortable. It didn't matter that she wasn't his other half, nor did she have the right to restrict him.

"I'm done playing."

In the end, he threw his cards on the table and ended the evening's session, causing the room to fall silent.

A moment later, Ingrid eked out a smile and suggested coyly, "Are you feeling under the weather? Why you come over to my place and I'll give you a massage? You always let your problems get the better of you."

Eras quickly added, "That's right. Why don't you let Miss Hopper take good care of you."

Not wanting to embarrass Ingrid, Alfred had no choice but to go along.

Ingrid's home had an elegant decor. She even lit up some scented candles in her bedroom. For Alfred, a favorite of his whenever he dropped by in the past.

Leaning against the couch, Alfred closed his eyes to relish in the comfort Ingrid showered upon him.

As Ingrid softly sang a tune by his side, her slender waist and jiggly bosom were accentuated by her tight gown, making for an alluring sight.

After listening for a while, Alfred opened his eyes when he only grew increasingly irritated.

It was then that Ingrid, resting on his lap, pleaded, "Why don't you stay the night?"

No man in Alfred's position then would be able to resist Ingrid's charms, yet all the former could think of was Melora, who had put on a strong front earlier despite being on the verge of tears.

Gently nudging Ingrid away, Alfred put on his shoes as he remarked nonchalantly, "I still have a lot of work to do tomorrow morning. I don't have a choice!"

Naturally, Ingrid was upset, for she could tell that he was just making excuses.

Alfred then gave her cheeks a gentle pinch while comforting her, "I'm really busy!"

Stomping her feet in anger was all Ingrid could manage as she didn't dare throw a tantrum.

When Alfred left her place, Leslie was already waiting by the car. His employer's sudden appearance took Leslie by surprise. "Are you not staying with Miss Hopper?"

Ignoring the question, Alfred simply got into the car.

It wasn't until a short while passed that he asked abruptly, "Do you think the young one is angry at me?"

Leslie was briefly confused before realizing who Alfred was talking about. He then replied, smilingly, "She's just a kid. She'll probably forget it in a few days."

A faint grin was the only response Alfred gave.

That's right. She's still a budding young lady. Her infatuation probably won't last long.

Closing his eyes, Alfred instructed softly, "Head to the Miller residence."

Late at night, David had just settled into bed when the housekeeper knocked on his door, informing him that Alfred's car had arrived.

It wasn't until the housekeeper repeated herself that David sat back

Julia, too, put on her jacket but was stopped by David, who ranted, "That Lodge kid must be upset about something to have come here and be bothering us in the middle of the night!"

Nevertheless, he had no choice but to receive his guest.

As Crystal and Henry had yet to be married, he couldn't avoid entertaining Alfred accordingly.

After putting on a jacket, David replaced the scowl on his face with a warm expression. "It's a surprise to see you here, Alfred. Why didn't you tell me that you were in town? I would have thrown a feast to welcome you back."

With his distinguished figure standing in the living room, Alfred broke into a smile. "It's still not too late to do it now!"

David froze in response.

Now? Is he kidding? It's almost ten. What's the f*cking point of having a welcome feast at this hour?

Amidst their conversation, a slender figure with long black hair came down the steps. She was wearing a flowy white dress, her reddened.

It was none other than Melora.

She had come down after hearing the commotion downstairs and ended up seeing Alfred.

What... is he doing here?

Alfred had a leisurely air to him as he beamed at her, as though she were any younger member of the family.

Under the light's illumination, he noticed how pale her face looked.

Nevertheless, the unsuspecting David instructed the butler to prepare a meal before saying to his daughter. "Since you've come down, hurry up and greet Alfred."

Melora's lips moved but no words came out.

Right after that, she spun on her heels and ran back upstairs.

Shaking his head, David said to Alfred, "She's but a spoiled child! Please don't mind her, Alfred."

Alfred's gaze shifted upstairs as he grinned. "It's no big deal. She's just a kid."

After the butler personally served up a feast, David ate and drank with Alfred for about an hour but still had no idea what the latter's purpose of this visit was.

It wasn't until the wee hours of the morning that Leslie helped Alfred into the car, for he had had a lot to drink.

Leaning back into his seat, Alfred fell into deep thought. I'm heading back to Coldbridge tomorrow morning, but that little girl is still upset with me.

He felt compelled to cheer her up before leaving.

When he tried calling her phone, no one answered. He let it ring seven to eight times before finally ending the call.

An indescribable bitterness welled up within him, causing him to be stricken with heartache.

Truth be told, someone like him should never be involved in a relationship, let alone with someone as immature as Melora. Despite his vehement denials and how he kept insisting she was simply a younger family member, he couldn't deny that she was special to him.

Unfortunately, he couldn't reciprocate her feelings, nor could he forget her either.

Holding that thought, Alfred opened the car window to let in the wind, hoping to reinvigorate himself with it. A short while passed before he pretended to be calm by joking with Leslie. "I've embarrassed myself in front of you."

Those who pursued Alfred were too many to count.

Some were after his position, while others were after his good looks. In fact, he couldn't even remember some of their names.

Among them all, Melora was the only one he seemed to care about.

They barely had a relationship to speak of, let alone shared a night of passion. All they ever did together was have a meal, and there was also the time when she took a nap in his bedroom. On top of that, they kissed once, and she greeted him as Mr. Alfred...

Thereafter, he never heard from her for a while.

After Crystal became pregnant and the Miller family came to propose a marriage between the two families, Alfred expected to see Melora, for she always enjoyed a lively occasion.

When she didn't turn up, he felt slightly disappointed and spent most of the event smoking alone, going through half a pack of cigarettes.

The day Crystal got married, Alfred finally got to see Melora.

She was wearing a beautiful blue dress with a hue so pure that it left him mesmerized. As she kept her distance from him and stayed with the other girls, all he could do was watch her from afar.

Alfred thought, This is for the better. I don't know what to say if I see her, as there's nothing I can give her at all, nor should I give her anything.

The gap between their age and identities was a gulf too big to bridge.

He didn't dare dwell upon the intensity of the feelings a young girl like her had for him and whether she could withstand the trials and tribulations involved. As for his own feelings, he was forced to cast aside the affection he harbored deep in his heart before he even had the chance to confess it.

It was just that he couldn't help missing her.

As for his close female friends, it had been a long time since he contacted any of them.

Clueless to what was going on, Eras and the others thought that he had changed for the better. Little did they know that he had inadvertently fallen for Melora.

During his business trip to Hulcaster, he personally queued and bought two stuffed rabbits in his free time.

He had heard that they were called "Stella Lous" and girls adored them.

Upon bringing them back to his office, Leslie couldn't contain his smile. "These are so cute. When you go on a business trip to Barnwood next week, I'm sure Miss Melora would be very happy to receive them."

Lighting up a cigarette, Alfred gave Leslie a side-eye. "Who said that I bought them for her? Even if I were going to gift her, Crystal would get one too. I didn't get it specifically for her."

Leslie quickly corrected himself. "That's right. The whole point is to give one to Miss Lodge."

Only then did Alfred get off Leslie's back.

Once he was alone, he couldn't resist wondering if Melora would like the toy.