## Our Billion 1551



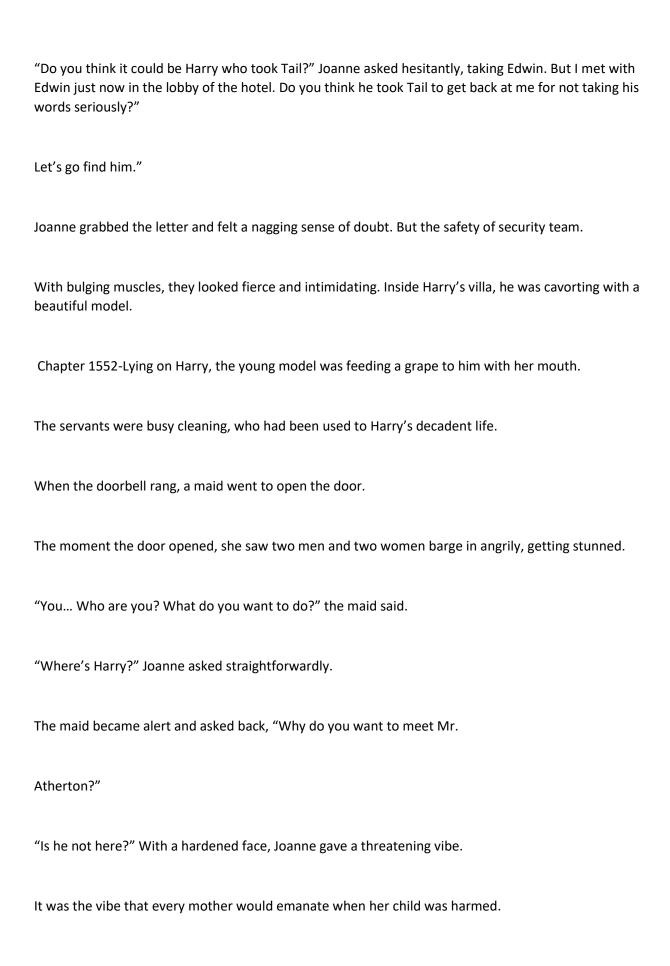
Unexpectedly... They demanded to see the surveillance footage, only to discover that nothing had been captured by the monitor in Jack's ward. It had been tampered with, and the footage showed images of the day before. The one at the hospital entrance, however, captured a man in a hat and mask hurrying away. face. Look for any distinguishing marks." The hospital staff were shocked and angry when they learned that someone had snatched a child from within their walls. If word got out, their reputation would be ruined. The security guards were highly cooperative and used technology to zoom in on the man. But he was well concealed, his face hidden from view. The only distinguishing feature was a tattoo on his wrist. It was blurry, but it seemed to end in a heart shape. Could it be a couple's tattoo? "Don't worry, Jo. This person kidnapped Tail and left us a letter on purpose. He forehead and tried to comfort Joanne. If she had known this, she wouldn't have left Tail.

Joanne couldn't put her mind at ease. She took out the letter and read it again.

kidnapper.

It seemed like they had come prepared.

The letter was written in strong, confident strokes. It didn't look like the hasty scrawl of an ordinary



The vibe consisted of rage and anxiety.

Sensing Joanne's unkindness, the maid was highly nervous.

"Mr. Atherton, he..." Before the maid could finish speaking, Joanne impatiently pushed her away and rushed into the living room.

The maid hurriedly called other servants to help while trying to prevent Joanne from breaking in. "Miss, you can't go in..."

grill Harry about where Tail was.

quickly moved to the living room with the two men.

"Ahhhhh." Seeing the strange people break in, the young model exclaimed in shock and pressed herself against Harry tight so as to hide her nude body.

As Harry saw the four people, he twitched his eyes, swiftly covered the model with a blanket, and uttered furiously, "Joanne, I didn't go to see you, but you came to meet me with so many people. What do you plan to do?"

"You should know why I came. Where did you hide my daughter?" Joanne questioned him in a huff, whose eyes were glittering with rage, as if to burn Harry completely.

It was the first time that Harry had been treated this way by Joanne. He answered with a sneer, "How can I know where your daughter is? Your daughter's disappearance has nothing to do with me. Why aren't you suspicious of your lovers?"

Joanne took out the envelope from her bag and threw it at Harry's face. "Didn't you write these words? It's no use denying it!"

The veins on Harry's temples were bulging, and he looked wrathful. As the eldest son of the Atherton family, people showed great respect for him. Since now his son, Edwin, charged the Atherton group, he enjoyed even higher status. Joanne's flinging the envelope at him was great humiliation and aggression. He picked up the envelope with half doubt, meaning to see what was written. He opened it and read the letter, his face turning pale. Suddenly, he let the model lie on the sofa and stood up with a frown. 'This... 'The handwriting in the letter is indeed mine. 'But I've never written such a letter.' When Harry looked down at Joanne as he was taller than her, he became hard. "Huh! You think that I abducted your daughter just based on an unidentified letter. Joanne, you'd better take your lackeys away immediately. Otherwise, don't blame me for reporting your trespass to the police." Chapter 1553-"Fine, just call the police. I'll tell them that you almost hit me and my daughter by tampering with the billboard and that you threatened me. If word of this spreads, you'll hit the headlines of entertainment news tomorrow."

Harry's face darkened. He was not afraid of exposure.

Yet if things got big, he wouldn't get any benefits.

"Let me repeat it. I did not abduct your daughter. You are not looking for your lost daughter, but making trouble for me. The longer you delay in my place, the more dangerous your daughter's situation will be."

Kidnapping a child is criminal. Stop pretending. Except you, who else would kidnap Tail?"

Harry got angry. He admitted that he had threatened Joanne before, but this time, Tail's disappearance had nothing to do with him. However, they came to his door to slander him. Harry felt it was a blatant provocation.

"Your daughter deserved to be kidnapped because she has a mother like you, a that you're pretty but foolish. The woman beside you is ruthless. Be careful not to be used as a pawn."

'How dare he sow discord?' "Mind your own business. As an old guy, you're still fooling around with young models like young people. Can you get hard? You deserve to be disliked by your son. Be careful not to die alone."

"You..."

"Harry, four years ago, you forced me to divorce Edwin and hired people to kill me. You said you did all this for his sake. Let's put aside this grudge. You're a father, so you can understand my feelings as a mother. If you want to do anything, just come at me. You hurt a three-year-old child. Are you not afraid of comeuppance?"

Joanne knew that Harry would not easily hand over Tail. She was almost desperate.

Knowing that playing hardball wouldn't work, she softened her attitude.

Harry was so enraged that he laughed.

He really didn't know where Joanne's daughter was.

Yet on second thought, it was nice to see Joanne freak out over that little bastard child.

"I have long told you to stay away from my son, but you don't listen to me. Now your daughter has been kidnapped. This is your comeuppance. Just continue to spend time here. After that little bastard is killed, Edwin will marry a noble lady and inherit a huge business empire in the future. I can't wait to see that..."

Hearing her daughter being cursed by Harry, Joanne was so exasperated that her hands and feet were trembling and that her lips were numb.

"Son of a bitch, today I'll settle the score with you for hunting Jo. I'll kill you!"

Seeing that it was about to smash into him, Harry rolled on the sofa and fell to the floor. The back of his head bumped into a sharp corner of the coffee table. It hurt so much that he immediately said to his bodyguard, "Why are you still standing there? Drag them out!"

'What a fool! He's not worthy of my money at all,' Harry thought.

Just as the scene was in chaos, Harry suddenly felt a fierce and icy gaze on him.

He turned his head and found Edwin standing outside the door with a hostile look on his face.

Edwin's face was obviously bruised, and his clothes and hair were a bit disheveled as if he had just fought with someone.

His sharp, handsome eyes were unreadable.

Harry didn't know how long Edwin had been here...

Chapter 1554-"Edwin?" said Harry, stunned. A nervous scowl flashed across his eyes.

'Damn! When did he come? How much did he hear in our conversation? He didn't hear that I had let someone to murder Joanne, did he?' Harry was anxious as an ant on a hot pan, but he tried his best not to show it.

He let out a groan of pain. "Edwin, you're finally back. Look at this woman! She's so rude! Not only did she humiliate me, but she let her men beat me up. It would be a joke if you kept her in our family."

The next second, Edwin let out a sneer, "So you cursed Tail to be killed?"

"I'm just mad. I didn't mean it." Harry tried desperately to hide his panic. "I didn't know her daughter. She brought these men to threaten me, so I was out of my mind. Edwin, you're my son. You should be on my side!"

"I'm your son, but Tail is my daughter!"

Edwin clenched his fists tightly. He suppressed his anger and walked over to Joanne.

After the argument with Harry earlier, Joanne was really afraid that Tail would be killed...

Hearing Edwin say that Tail was his daughter, Joanne bit her lower lip, almost bursting into tears.

She thought Edwin said it was because they were married, so literally, he was Tail's stepfather.

But where was Tail?

Seeing Joanne's pale face, Edwin took her hand in his.

Joanne tried to pull her hand back, but Edwin wouldn't let go because he felt her body trembling.

He put her hand to his chest and touched her tense face with the other hand. He leaned over, rested his forehead against hers, and said in a soft voice, "Don't worry. I'm here. I'll get Tail back. I promise no one will hurt her."

All Joanne could think about was Tail. She should have been tough, pushed him away, and questioned him about where Tail was, but when she heard his soft voice, she burst into tears.

"How could I not be worried? She's my daughter! She means everything to me!" After a few seconds of pause, she suddenly pointed to Harry and screamed, "It's him! He kidnapped Tail! He had threatened us in the hospital." Joanne's body kept trembling. Edwin held her tightly in his arms. He kissed the top of her hair and said softly, "I see." 'It really was my father.' Harry couldn't believe it. Callum had told him Joanne resented Edwin and that the two barely spoke. Why do they seem so intimate?' Edwin demanded in a cold voice, "Where's Tail? Give her to us." "Edwin, don't trust this woman. I didn't kidnap her daughter, neither did I write this letter!" Harry roared. He felt angry that Edwin believed Joanne and not him. Harry felt so indignant. "How would you believe that I didn't kidnap her daughter?" "If I kidnapped her daughter and left her a letter, then I was trying to get her to leave you. When she came to me just now, I would have been straight with her. Why would I deny it? I'm not stupid. "I admit that I had threatened her, but the position of that billboard was precisely calculated. It would not hurt her or her daughter!

"I'm a father, too. I wouldn't hurt a three-year-old girl." After Harry's defense, Edwin didn't say anything. Harry had no idea what Edwin was thinking. Chapter 1555-Just when Harry was considering whether to take some action, Edwin ordered, "Lucas, ask a team of people to guard the villa, confiscate Mr. Atherton Sr.'s phone, and strictly check all suspicious communications. From now on, no one is allowed to leave the villa." This was literally imprisonment! Harry was so angry that he couldn't even breathe. He covered his chest with one hand and pointed at Edwin with the other trembling hand. "Bastard, I told you that I didn't kidnap that little girl. How can you treat your father this way for an outsider? Aren't you afraid of divine retribution?" Harry was pissed off. Edwin didn't show any respect for Harry. If words went out, he would become a joke of the town. Hearing this, Edwin kicked the coffee table in front angrily, which slid half a meter away and bumped into a sofa with a bang. Harry was shocked. The young model even screamed in horror and hid in Harry's arms. Now everyone realized that Edwin was in a rage. Edwin gave a frightening vibe, who looked like a demon. "You are wrong. Tail is not an outsider. She is my daughter," he uttered through gritted teeth with an imperceptible quiver.

Compared with Joanne's intense anxiety, Edwin didn't show any fear, though he was dreadfully worried because the little girl, who had been ill-treated by him, was his biological daughter!

The moment he knew the truth, his surprise was as strong as his guilt...

Harry thought that Edwin had been cheated, so he said loudly while glaring at Edwin, "That little natural child is the daughter of Joanne and Patrick! Even if you want to be a stepfather, you can't turn a blind eye to our family's rules."

According to their family rules, only legitimate children were eligible to enter the family tree.

"She's not a natural child. She's my daughter," Edwin answered firmly, holding back his anger." Anyone who tries to harm her is against me."

"You... What are you talking about?" Harry thought he had misheard and then said, "Didn't you do a paternity test in Mourpa? The result showed that she is Patrick's daughter. You must have been deceived by Joanne."

Edwin stared at Harry sarcastically. Though he knew that Edwin had arranged for people to watch him, he didn't expect him to know exactly what he had done in Mourpa.

"Didn't you find out that Tail's bone marrow was replaced with Patrick's? And that paternity test was skewed," Edwin snapped ironically.

"What do you mean?" Harry queried.

"After I returned to Sapphire City, I did another paternity test, which confirmed that Tail's father is actually me. Do you need me to show you the evidence?"

Edwin answered.

## What?!

Harry felt that he had almost stopped breathing, his eyes widening with outright disbelief. He subconsciously turned to look at Joanne.

Completely dumbfounded, Joanne didn't expect that Edwin had already discovered Tail's identity.

But it was not inexplicable. When taking Tail to the hospital, Joanne said that Tail's bone marrow had been substituted, and probably Edwin became suspicious at that time.

But anyway, the most important thing now was to save Tail.

Overwhelmed with anxiety, she bit her lip, clenched her fists, and then said in a shakingly light voice, "Yes. Tail belongs to you, the Atherton family. Who you kidnapped is your own granddaughter! Can you give her back to me now? She's really very weak..."

Chapter 1556-Edwin's and Joanne's words were like a bolt from the blue to Harry.

'Is Tail really my granddaughter?' It was all Callum's fault. He didn't find out the whole truth. If Callum had made it clear earlier, Harry would not have threatened his granddaughter.

Harry also blamed Edwin for not telling him earlier.

"How many times do I have to tell you I didn't kidnap her? This has nothing to do with me!"

Joanne couldn't tell if Harry was telling the truth or not.

But with what she knew about him, she felt that Harry was lying.

'Maybe he wants a strong grandson more than a weak granddaughter.' When Harry saw the doubt in Joanne's eyes, his face turned livid. He gritted his teeth and said, "I swear if I kidnapped my

granddaughter, I would live lonely for the rest of my life and die a miserable death. What are you guys waiting for? Go and find her..."

As Joanne saw that Harry even dared to make such a vicious vow, a sense of powerlessness came over her.

If it really wasn't Harry, who else could have kidnapped Tail?

Harry frowned stiffly, seeming to have thought of a possible person.

Edwin noticed Harry's strange expression. He was just about to ask Harry, but suddenly, Joanne's cell phone rang.

He didn't know what the person on the other end of the line had said. Joanne's face became even paler. She almost cried and yelled, "Wait, let me hear Tail's voice first. Don't hang up. I... Hello? Hello?"

After the call ended, Joanne's hands trembled as she tried desperately to call back.

Yet no matter how many times she called, she only heard," Sorry, the subscriber you dialed is powered off."

Edwin walked over to her and held her hand worriedly. "Who called you?"

"The kidnappers..." Joanne's head was buzzing, her makeup completely smudged by tears. She looked like a little cat at a loss. "They said... They said they had Tail in their hands. If I want Tail to be safe, I have to prepare 100 million dollars and deliver it to the designated place by tomorrow, or they will kill Tail..."

Edwin listened to her helpless and panicked voice, feeling heartbroken.

He had just learned that Tail was the daughter of Joanne and him, and Tail got into such a crisis...

Tail had not yet fully recovered. No one knew what would happen to her after she was kidnapped.

Despite his anxiety, Edwin said with certainty, "A new clue means more hope. I promise I will get Tail back safely. Don't cry. It's all my fault. I didn't protect you two well."

"Edwin, should I trust you?" Joanne lifted her face, her eyes filled with tears.

She looked pitiful and expectant as if she were a turtle in her shell, looking for support and comfort, but very afraid of being hurt again.

What happened to her four years ago? She has become so vulnerable.' As Edwin thought of what he had just heard, rage flashed across his eyes again.

Originally, Edwin heard Jack say that Harry had asked someone to intimidate Joanne and Tail, so Edwin came to warn Harry. Unexpectedly, Edwin heard Joanne ask Harry for Tail. In fact, Edwin had been here for a long time, so he almost heard the whole conversation between them.

Also, Edwin learned that Harry had sent someone to kill Joanne.

Chapter 1557-How could he not have noticed that Harry was so insane before?

"As long as you are willing to trust me, this time I will not let you down," Edwin stared at Joanne with tenderness and promised.

Joanne's body gradually warmed up, but she still dared not respond. After all, Tail was still in the kidnappers' hands, so she stammered, "I'll send you the kidnapper's number. He said he would call back in four hours to say where to put the money and specially told me not to call the police..."

Edwin didn't try to get Joanne's answer again because he wanted to use actions to prove his words.

At present, Edwin was not sure if Harry had anything to do with the kidnapping, but he asked his men to guard Harry anyway.

Instead of confiscating Harry's cell phone, Edwin sent someone to follow Harry 24 hours a day, even when Harry went to the toilet.

As soon as Harry was found to have the slightest connection with the kidnappers, he would be controlled by Edwin's men.

Harry knew that this time Edwin was determined to imprison him, and he suddenly felt ironic. After all, he had been considering everything for Edwin.

Although sometimes his action was a little too radical, he didn't want to be interrogated and guarded like a prisoner.

Even the young model Harry had just called was locked up in the guest bedroom next door.

Edwin quickly raised two hundred million dollars' funds, went to the bank overnight to withdraw the money, and transferred a group of men from Cedrick.

Eason would lead those men and stand by at any time.

This time he did not intend to call the police because some things that would happen after they caught those kidnappers should be dealt with in private.

Those guys actually dared kidnap his baby daughter, then they must be prepared to bear the consequences.

While waiting for the call, Joanne was highly nervous. Edwin said a lot to persuade Joanne to rest, so Joanne lay down on the sofa, but she slept very restlessly, waking up almost every few minutes to see if the kidnappers had called her and then ask about preparations.

After waiting for three hours, Joanne looked very sleepy, and her eyes were bloodshot, so Edwin forced her to rest on his lap.

Looking at her trembling eyelashes, Edwin knew that she was still worried, and a burst of strong guilt and sadness welled up in his heart. He rubbed some faint scars on the back of her hands and secretly vowed that he would never repeat his mistake and would make her willing to go back to his side.

"Mr..." At this time, Lucas came back from outside and wanted to say something, but soon he was stopped by Edwin's cold eyes.

Seeing the picture of Joanne resting on Edwin's lap, Lucas scratched his head awkwardly. Then he decisively took out his cell phone to tell Edwin with text messages.

The kidnapper's van was caught on a camera of a small restaurant outside the hospital.

In other words, they didn't have to wait for the kidnappers to call them and could locate their location directly.

Edwin also replied with text messages to avoid disturbing Joanne.

Joanne didn't remember how she fell asleep but just remembered that she was waiting for the kidnappers to tell her where to put the money before she fell told her that Edwin had found out the kidnappers' specific location and had left to save Tail with Eason.

Joanne's eyes were red, and her hair was dishevelled. When she heard this, she was startled, "They have left? Why didn't you wake me up?"

Chapter 1558-However, when she saw Edwin gently caressing Joanne's cheek with led the team to save Tail...

bloodshot. When Tail is rescued later, you must be worried and watch her all the time, so we didn't wake you up to let you rest more."

"It's so dangerous. Tail must be terrified. I have to go. What if she runs around and gets struck by the bullets?" Joanne hurriedly changed her clothes and shoes and then ran out.

place.
In the suburbs, in an old abandoned factory, the air was filled with a pungent smell of dye, accompanied by a musty odor.
Less than fifty meters away from the factory, Edwin and Eason led their men over.
In the dim night, the crowd perfectly blended with the darkness.
Eason and Edwin quickly made a siege plan.
"We've cased the joint. There are only three kidnappers, but our most important thing this time is to protect and save Tail no matter what happens" Eason methodically ordered everyone to secretly flank the opponents to prevent them from escaping with Tail held hostage.
The snipers in the hidden high places were ready. After Edwin and Eason gave orders, they silently approached the factory.
Inside the factory, the kidnappers tied up Tail and threw her into a corner.
The three men then gathered around a small wooden table that was in disrepair and full of dust to eat and drink.
It could be seen that these people were outlaws. Their shoulders or backs were covered with large tattoos.
"Our employer let us kill that little girl and then give her corpse to the woman at the hospital, right?" Scarface asked suspiciously.
Another stout man snorted coldly, "Kill her after we get the money. The result will be the same."

"Exactly! At this time, why should we still care about work ethic? This girl is the daughter of Edwin's woman. With Edwin's property, he can easily give us two hundred million dollars. It will be enough for us to live happily for the rest of our lives. We can take the money and run to other countries. Isn't it good?"

Hearing the kidnappers' fierce voices, Tail shivered in the corner.

They thought she, a three-year-old child, was too weak to run away and could only be killed anyway, so they didn't hide anything from her.

Joanne had taught her to protect herself.

In such critical situations, the first thing was to make the kidnappers let their guard down and feel that she was incapable of escaping, and then, she should find a way to be rescued...

Tail knew that her mom and Miles would come to her rescue.

When the three kidnappers were eating happily, Tail wriggled on the ground and let out a moan. "Boohoo... My stomach hurts so bad. Am I going to die?"

The kidnappers didn't think she might be faking it. After all, she was only three years old.

Other kids at her age could not even speak clearly.

Chapter 1559-The kidnappers looked at each other. Although Tail would be killed, before they got the money, they had to ensure her safety. Otherwise, if Joanne wanted to hear Tail's voice, it would be tricky.

So Scarface asked, "Captain, how should we deal with the little girl?"

"It's just a tummy ache. It's not like she's dying of cancer. Are you going to find a doctor for her?"

Scarface was embarrassed. "This is the middle of nowhere. Where can I find a doctor?"

"I really feel bad..." Tail listened to their conversation, looking at them pitifully with wet eyes. "Even if you can't find a doctor, can you untie me? I can't breathe."

The kidnappers' first reaction was to refuse. Although the little girl was short, if she escaped, it would be very troublesome.

Tail's small face was red, her forehead was sweaty, and her hands were tied behind her back. She looked as if out of breath. The leader of the kidnappers frowned and finally agreed.

"Untie her."

Tail whimpered. After she was untied, she weakly shrank in the corner, covering her small heart and gasping for air.

Seeing this, the kidnappers did not pay attention to her again. If Tail fainted in pain, she would be quiet.

"Come on, let's continue eating..."

Bang!

The next instant, three bullets shot into the factory from different directions in unison.

Two of the kidnappers were killed at the same time. Only Scarface, who bent down to pick up his fork, escaped death. Seeing his companions' bleeding temples, Scarface realized something was wrong. He subconsciously wanted to grab Tail to protect himself...

However, another few bullets stopped him, forcing him to withdraw. He upended the dining table and hid behind it.

Tail heard the intense gun battle. Her head buzzed, but she knew that the men in this factory were bad guys and that she had to run outside...

Yet the gate was too far, and bullets were shooting everywhere.

At that moment, Tail found a small hole in the wall not far behind her. It was seemingly caused by disrepair, not very big, but enough for a little one like her to escape.

While the kidnapper was being attacked by a rain of bullets, afraid to look up, Tail took a deep breath and got out through the small hole.

Just after that, she heard the gunshots getting closer and closer. She peeked inside the factory through the hole and took a few glances. Edwin led a group of men and broke in through the front door. There were some bruises on his face, but he looked as cold and charming as ever. His deep eyes were sharp and terrifying.

In addition, Tail saw blood on the ground...

Just now when the snipers killed the other two kidnappers, Tail did not see it. As she saw the blood, her heart jumped into her throat, trembling.

The last kidnapper was quickly subdued.

Edwin looked around for Tail. He then saw Tail's hairpin in the corner, but she was not there.

"Where is my daughter?" Edwin walked up to Scarface and kicked him hard in the chest.

Chapter 1560-The kidnapper's face was pale from the violent impact on his abdomen, and he arched his back on the ground, unable to say a word for a long time.

Edwin did not let him go, half squatting in front of the kidnapper. Edwin pressed the tip of his shoe against the kidnapper's neck, easily making him unable to breathe. The kidnapper's face was twisted in pain, and above his head, Edwin asked menacingly, "Let me repeat it. Where is my daughter?"

"I'll tell you..." The kidnapper held Edwin's trouser leg with both hands and said with difficulty, "She ran away from there... We didn't do anything to her. Please let me go..."

Edwin didn't have time to continue interrogating who had hired them. He handed the man over to Eason.

"Mr. Atherton, don't worry. I will get everything he knows out of him," Eason said with a fake smile.

After so many years as a bodyguard, he was becoming more and more intimidating.

Ignoring Scarface's shriek, Edwin walked to the small hole. Indeed, it seemed someone had crawled through it.

Thinking that Tail had escaped from here in fear, Edwin instantly felt an overwhelming sense of remorse and instructed his remaining men, "Find Tail right away. She's short and unfamiliar with this place, so she won't get far."

Meanwhile, Tail, who had just escaped, was lost in the suburbs.

The night was dark, and she walked around without knowing where this place was.

As it was on the outskirts of the city, the ground was uneven. Tail stumbled all the way. Her calves were scratched by vines and branches, and she lost a shoe.

She could hear the whistling of the wind, which sounded particularly eerie in the silent wilderness.

Tail was afraid of ghosts. There were countless scary images in her mind, scaring her into wincing and pouting. She looked very aggrieved, and she didn't dare to run around again. She was worried that if she went the wrong way, her mom would be unable to find her
It was in this situation that Joanne found Tail's trail.
Tail standing alone and stubbornly across the street.
At first glance, the scene was a little frightening.
Yet as Joanne got a better look at Tail, her fear instantly turned into surprise.
"Mama!" Hearing Joanne's voice, Tail darted into Joanne's arms with one bare foot, wrapped her arms around Joanne's neck, and complained about how hard the whole day had been. "I won't run around anymore"
Tail hugged Tail tightly, filled with the joy of finding her.
At that time in the hospital, Joanne accompanied Jack for a checkup and told Tail to play in the hospital room and not to run around.
However, Tail waited for a while and did not see Joanne back.
So Tail went to look for Joanne. The hospital was big, and she got lost. A man said he could take her to find her mother. Unexpectedly, he abducted Tail from the hospital and tied her up. Tail thought he must be a child trafficker.

"Mama, it's all my fault. I'll be obedient from now on..." Tail sobbed, her bright eyes full of tears.

Joanne kissed Tail on the forehead and held back her tears.

"I don't blame you. I was too careless. I shouldn't have left you alone in the ward."

desperately. She then looked around suspiciously and asked, "Tail, Edwin brought people to rescue you, didn't he? Why are you alone?"

Tail remembered the images of the gun battle and the blood flowing on the ground. She shuddered, bit her lip, and jumped into Joanne's arms with her face against Joanne's shoulder, not saying a word.

Knowing that Tail was terrified, Joanne didn't ask any questions.