

Chapter 6 You Are No Saint Either

After my mom left, my dad seemed like a completely different person, becoming silent and withdrawn.

Sometimes, when I overheard people talking about our family, I'd catch him glaring at them with a murderous look in his eyes.

His gaze was as deadly as a murderer's.

I hated the gossip, but I was even more afraid of my dad's gaze. I always had the feeling that one day, he'd lose control and rush over to hack those people to death.

What did my dad resemble back then?

He was like a wolf that had lost its mate.

Because of this change, his few remaining friends slowly stopped talking to him. Sometimes, when neighbors saw him coming, they'd instinctively close their doors.

Whenever I looked at him, all I saw was a pair of eyes filled with hatred for the world.

He became less concerned with his appearance. His hair grew long before he bothered to cut it, he rarely shaved, and he always wore dark-colored clothes.

He grew more and more reclusive. I heard the leaders at the grain elevator talked to him a few times, but it didn't help. His original job was taken over by someone else, and he was assigned to guard the silo.

Some people were afraid he'd poison the grain and reported it to the management, so his position was quickly changed again—this time to sweeping the floors.

He didn't care.

During that time, I was the one who cooked all the meals—breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

When the food was ready, I'd call out, “Dad, time to eat.” Sometimes he'd come to the table, sometimes he acted like he didn't hear me.

He also didn't speak to me.

I figured my dad probably didn't love me.

About a month after my mom left, we had an argument.

That day, he came home from work with a bottle of whiskey. After dinner, he started drinking.

I said, “Dad, stop drinking.”

He glanced at me but kept drinking.

I didn't push it. I finished my meal, put the dishes in the sink, and started doing my homework.

I was in sixth grade, about to enter middle school. My grades had been slipping badly, and my teacher had talked to me several times, even asking me to bring a parent in.

Bring a parent? Everyone in town knew what had happened to my family.

My mom had run off with a rich guy in a car. She didn't want my dad, and she didn't want me either.

I was a kid who had been abandoned.

I didn't even mention the parent-teacher meeting to my dad. He wouldn't have gone anyway. The teacher had probably heard about my dad, and likely found it hard to communicate with someone like him. Eventually, they just let it go.

My grades tanked, and I didn't get into a good middle school. I ended up staying at the middle school in town.

Back then, kids with good grades went to the middle schools in the county.

My dad drank and drank, and then he started crying.

He must have been in a lot of pain. I watched him as he held his head in his hands, occasionally hitting himself or pulling at his hair like a madman.

“Dad, don't you think you brought this on yourself?” I set down my pen, tilted my head, and looked at him with a disgusted expression.

He looked up at me, confusion in his eyes.

Drunk people think much slower than when they're sober.

“If you'd treated Mom better, if you hadn't hit her or yelled at her, would she have left? You drove her away!” I didn't feel an ounce of sympathy for him. After saying that, I went back to my homework.

It was a long time before he spoke, his voice hoarse. “Your mom cheated on me! She's vain and ran off with a rich man! She didn't even take you with her because she wanted to be with him! So, both of us are the ones she abandoned.”

And then he started laughing manically.

I heard him muttering between fits of laughter. “That sl*t. I loved her so much. I gave her everything I earned. I always apologized, and she still cheated on me. that wretch. You're a sl*t too...”

That was when I heard the chair scrape against the floor and felt a shadow lunge at me.