

Night of Love 141

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Sleep In The Master Bedroom

Crystal was overwhelmed by unease.

"I'm heading downstairs," she muttered.

Henry stared at her silently and only uttered hoarsely after some time, "I'm sorry, Crystal."

He watched as she practically scurried away before lowering his head and lighting a cigarette.

Twenty minutes later, a pleasant aroma wafted from the kitchen, which Henry immediately recognized as Crystal's cooking.

He stubbed out his cigarette and headed to the dining room.

After serving him some spaghetti, Crystal tried to leave but he sat down and grabbed her hand. "Stay with me."

She shook her head and said firmly, "Henry, if you weren't injured, I wouldn't even be here!"

Crystal was very calm. Perhaps she felt numb after crying many times at night. Facing him did not hurt as much.

Henry's eyes turned gloomy but he respected her wishes. Not in the mood to enjoy his food without her company, he finished it quickly.

Crystal pointed at the couch after fetching a blanket from the guest room. "I'll sleep here tonight."

Henry's gaze darkened. "Sleep in the master bedroom. It's not as if we've never slept together before. Besides, I'm not going to do anything!"

Crystal was not so naive as to believe him.

Henry has strong sexual cravings and will undoubtedly become aroused once we get into bed together. Besides... it's over between us, so there's no need for any more ambiguity.

"It's better to keep things clear," she refused flatly.

Exhausted from drinking and forcing herself to sober up, she curled up in the blanket on the couch and promptly fell asleep.

Henry gulped as he watched her sleep. He entered his bedroom and grabbed his quilt, which he threw over her.

Without waking up, Crystal tugged the quilt and curled into it, making herself look especially thin.

Henry's heart ached when he thought about all the alcohol she had consumed that night.

Does being with me cause her so much suffering that she'd rather drink with a stranger to gamble on a chance that might not work out?

Henry went into his study and made a call.

The person who answered it was Emelia.

Her tone was polite yet distant at the same time. "Mr. Miller, do you need something at this late hour?"

Henry's voice sounded particularly chilly in the night. "Miss Long, is your music center still short of students?"

"Yes! Of course!"

Emelia snickered inwardly. What we're lacking the most are foolish rich folks!

"I'll recommend a student over tomorrow. Get Miss Winters to teach her, Henry said calmly.

Emelia was dumbfounded.

"Your child, Mr. Miller?" she deliberately asked.

Henry chuckled nonchalantly. "Have you ever seen Crystal's belly get bigger, Miss Long? She's just a relative."

Emelia could not help but grumble inwardly. This man is utterly shameless. He appears so refined in the newspapers and magazines that no one can tell that he's actually rather promiscuous. No matter what, it's always good to have money in the bank.

She then probed about Crystal, to which Henry answered ambiguously, "Crystal was so tired that she fell asleep."

The next morning, Henry was already up when Crystal woke up.

His wound seemed to be healing well. He was sitting in the dining room drinking coffee while reading the newspaper.

Dressed in a dark grey shirt with a thin dark tie, he looked handsome as always.

Crystal was a life stunned.

As Henry's gaze fell on her, he said softly, "You're missing a button."

She lowered her gaze to her light-colored shirt and discovered that the third button was missing.

Because she was sitting, both sides of her top naturally parted, revealing a portion of her chest.

Crystal hastily bunched up her shirt. She searched the couch for a long time but could not find the button.

"Go and get changed in the walk-in closet. Your clothes are still there," Henry said flatly.

Crystal remained silent.

He bought those expensive clothes for me when he was pampering me, and they amount to tens of thousands. Now that we've split up, I have no reason to accept them again. Just like the piano, Morning Dew, no matter how much I like it, I have no interest in playing it again.

She simply requested to use the guest room.

Having lived there before, she knew where the sewing kit was, so she moved the button at the collar lower to cover her chest.

Crystal did not freshen up there. She merely wiped her face.

After leaving the room, she looked at Henry and said. "You seem fine, Mr. Miller. I'll head back now."

Henry placed the newspaper down and regarded her silently.

"Have your breakfast before you go. It was delivered from the Miller residence early this morning."

Crystal smiled faintly and replied, "That's not appropriate."

She sounded distant and polite. Henry could tell she was trying to draw a line with him. He did not know how others won back their lovers, but he had a feeling that she was more difficult than ordinary girls.

He gazed at her and went into deep thought.

The atmosphere became a little tense. Crystal gave him a slight bow and said, "Thank you for continuing to help my dad with the lawsuit, Mr. Miller. I'm very grateful to you."

Henry felt extremely uncomfortable.

Crystal treated him like an ordinary citizen treating a prominent person even though they had had the best experience together in that condominium. Be it physically or in terms of lifestyle, they were very compatible with each other.

He was slightly annoyed.

He picked up the newspaper with his slender fingers and said indifferently. "Do as you like!"

Crystal ran as fast she could.

After taking a cab back to her condominium, she took a shower and changed her clothes.

She even had her breakfast in the car.

When she arrived at the music center, she found Emelia looking apologetic. "I truly can't afford to offend that imposing man last night."

Crystal did not blame her. She merely stated softly. "I had to make things clear."

Emelia showed her the contract signed by Zayne and said with admiration, "Crystal, last night was amazing. Mr. Zadriel is well-known for being difficult to deal with, but him over almost immediately."

Crystal smiled faintly.

She was well aware that Henry's appearance last night was an opportunity, which scored her the chance.

Not wanting to bring up Henry, she made no reply.

Emelia then told her another big news. "That Hades of the legal profession called me last night, saying that he's sending a young relative over to learn the piano, and he requested you to be her teacher. Crystal, have you ever heard of the Miller family having young relatives? Or are they simply Henry's illegitimate child, and he's just covering it up."

Crystal pondered for a moment.

It's not strange for the relatives of the Miller family to have young children, but there shouldn't be many that Henry would make an exception to take care of

She could not come up with an answer.

Emelia waved her hand nonchalantly. "We'll find out when the child comes. As she spoke, she suddenly recalled Henry's suggestive words and asked curiously, "Crystal, did you guys... do the deed last night?"

Crystal, who was drinking water at that moment, spat out the entire mouthful.

She glared at Emelia with watery eyes filled with frustration and embarrassment.

Emelia merely shrugged. "He said on the phone that you fell asleep from exhaustion, so of course I overthought! Besides... Henry seemed unsatisfied last night!"

Crystal wiped her clothes before saying softly, "No! He suffered a minor injury, and I just bandaged him up! It's over between us. It's not going to happen again."

Emelia thought it was a shame.

With Mr. Miller's physique, looks, and the sexual tension in his eyes, who wouldn't be interested in him?

Just as she was imagining that, the landline phone rang.

"Miss Winters, Mr. Miller's family have come. They wish to sign up for your VIP course."

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I Do Not Mind

Crystal froze.

"It really is the relative's child, huh?" Emelia smiled.

Confused, Crystal asked a few more questions to which the receptionist answered dutifully, "Yes. It's the mother who brought the kid. She's a pretty girl."

Crystal hung up and turned to Emelia, who seized the chance to gossip. "Say... could it be a child Henry had when he messed around in his twenties? Is he sending the kid over on purpose because you got into a fight with him?"

Crystal was not sure if she should laugh or cry.

"He isn't someone who'd do something like that," she said, only to be shocked by it.

Since when do I know Henry so well?

"I'll go out and take a look."

Crystal walked over to the reception room with Emelia tagging along hoping to see some drama.

As soon she pushed open the door, she was taken aback.

The description of a mother with her kid was right, but it was not what Crystal had expected. The person seated on the couch was the wealthy Julia and Melora.

Crystal was bereft of speech, but she still sat across from them gracefully. "What brings you here, Mrs. Miller?"

Julia looked deeply troubled.

She was worried sick about her son, yet he was not living up to her expectations. The moment she found out he and Crystal had fought and broken up, she had no choice but to get involved.

Softly, she said, "Henry told me you established a music center, and I've always wanted to visit. It's any talent in really amazing as I expected." She pulled Melora to her side. "Melora doesn't have music, so I'm thinking of sending her here to cultivate her skill."

Melora instantly threw her mother a glare. Mom! I passed grade ten when I was ten!

Julia was unaffected by her daughter's reactions. Her gaze on Crystal only grew more affectionate. "It was Henry who recommended your music center, but this is what I want. Crys, you wouldn't cut all ties with me because of Henry, would you?"

An uneasy feeling bloomed in Crystal's heart, and she quickly exchanged glances with Emelia.

Emelia was so engrossed in the drama that she had no intentions of intervening,

Crystal had no choice but to handle the situation on her own. "Mrs. Miller, we only accept kids aged sixteen and below," she said politely.

Melora said enthusiastically, "I'm a kid, too!" Shamelessly, she wrapped her arm around Crystal's. "You can pretend I'm five years old, Crystal."

Crystal felt uneasy once again.

Emelia patted her shoulder and excused herself.

I can't take it anymore. I'm going to burst out laughing if I stay any longer.

After watching Emelia leave, Crystal turned around to face the Millers again, a sense of helplessness slowly growing in her heart.

With great difficulty, she said. "I've broken up with Henry."

All Julia did was blink and say, "I brought Melora here to learn the piano."

"Exactly. I'm here to learn the piano."

Crystal felt utterly helpless. It took her a long time to ponder before finally agreeing to the request.

When Julia settled the fees, she ordered the driver to bring in some expensive supplements. "I know Henry has a terrible temper. It must've been hard on you," she said softly.

Crystal hesitated for a while and finally said, "Actually, we're not in that kind of relationship you think. We... We..."

Melora blinked.

Young people know other young people better.

She interrupted, "I know. You guys haven't talked about marriage yet."

Melora threw Crystal a look. Is she that tactless? How could she talk to elders about things like being friends with benefits? No matter how open-minded Mom is, she still has some reservations about some things.

The interjection left Crystal stunned.

Melora went on to pester the woman. "You're mine for the day. I want to have Ferropenian food and go quí on a date with you."

Julia did not bother to stop her daughter.

She simply smiled and said to Crystal, "I'll leave Melora to you, then."

Crystal was beyond speechless.

"Come on, Crystal. Have Ferropenian food with me," said Melora sweetly.

At that moment, Crystal had the urge to call Henry to take his sister away.

Melora ended up lazing around the music center the whole day.

When night came, Melora brought Crystal to a Ferropenian restaurant.

Julia was there, too. She sipped the red wine elegantly, smiling as she watched the two young ladies whisper among each other.

Melora ran her mouth.

"You know Audrey's fiancé, the famous producer from the Kingdom of Brundela? While she was gone, he hooked up with a young model. It really serves her right."

A subtle frown settled on Crystal's forehead.

Why isn't Audrey returning to the Kingdom of Brandela when her relationship's at stake?

Melora scratched her head and smiled.

"She's a prideful person. After all, she's the most capable person among us. She believes she has complete control over her fiancé and that having affairs is a common problem among men. She stayed in Barnwood because she wanted-"

Melora dared not finish her sentence, but Crystal knew what she wanted to say.

The spoiled woman not only wanted to get married to her fiancé from the Kingdom of Brundela, but she also wanted Henry as well.

At the end of the day, Audrey was a selfish and willful woman.

Yet, there were people who fell for her.

Crystal remained silent and sipped on her soda.

Realizing she was out of line, Melora took Crystal's hand. "I'm sorry. Come on, smile for me, Crystal."

Crystal looked up to meet the innocent and cute woman. She recalled the words she had said to Henry previously: a life for a life.

Guilt crept into Crystal's heart, and she said softly, "I'm sorry, Melora."

The sudden apology confounded Melora, but Crystal merely smiled without explaining anything.

Once they were done with their meal, Crystal was about to get up to pay the bill when a slender finger rested on the luxurious dining table.

She looked up to find herself staring at Henry.

He looked exceptionally dazzling that night, dressed in a pair of dark grey pants, a sweater, and a black coat.

Everything about him was elegant, and with his mesmerizing features, he became the center of attention in the restaurant.

"I've paid the bill." Henry's voice was hoarse as he spoke.

"Thanks," said Crystal.

She believed it was time to bid her farewell, but Henry said. "I came here to pick my mother up. but I haven't eaten yet. You don't mind if I have some food here, do you?"

He spoke in a reserved tone.

Crystal could not bring herself to decline his request. Forcing a smile, she said, "Please help yourself, Mr. Miller."

Henry glanced at her, his mischievous self activated. Instead of asking for another set of cutlery, he took Crystal's glass of soda and took a gulp.

While Julia beamed with satisfaction, Crystal blushed. "Mr. Miller, I'll get you a set of cutlery."

"There's no need for that. It's not like we've never tasted each other's saliva. I don't mind." said Henry, staring intently at her.

Crystal's face was so hot that she felt as if she was burning. That's not the main point!

Henry was famished after a busy day at work. He finished his food quickly yet elegantly.

Crystal counted down the seconds, constantly thinking of ways to get out of the situation. No, matter how dense she was, she knew that was a trap Henry had set.

What's the meaning of this? How dare he offer me a carrot after hitting me with a stick? What does he take me for?

Alas, there was nothing Crystal could do.

The Miller family was incredibly powerful, which meant she could not offend Henry publicly if she wanted to stay in Barnwood.

"Miss Winters, you're going to make me misunderstand if you keep looking at me like that." Henry wiped his lips.

Crystal was not in the mood to entertain the man. "You're thinking too much."

In response, Henry drank from the glass again. The look in his eyes had become a little warmer, but the words that came out of his mouth were not pleasant to hear. "Is that so? Maybe... I thought you hated me out of love."

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Are You Jealous.

Crystal was livid, for Henry was speaking boldly in front of an elder.

She got to her feet and nodded at Julia. "I have some business to deal with, Mrs. Miller. I'll be off now."

Julia's expression instantly darkened into a scowl.

Is this how my son handles relationships? Women need to be treated gently. How could he be so rude as soon as he met her? He was never this graceless.

Softly, Julia urged, "Henry, give Crys a lift."

Crystal curled her lips into a polite smile. "I drove here."

Hearing that, Henry did not bother to change her mind.

He set the glass down in a dignified manner. "There'll be a short meeting at the firm tomorrow. It's about John's case. Is the defendant attending or..."

Of course, Crystal would not let her father attend the meeting for fear it might agitate him. Even if she knew Henry had ulterior motives, she had no choice but to give in.

That was exactly what Henry wanted.

"I'll see you at the firm tomorrow," he said expressionlessly.

Crystal left in a hurry.

When she was out of earshot, Julia reprimanded, "You can't do this, Henry! That's not the way to pursue women! What were you thinking? Is this a date at the firm?"

Henry merely smiled.

He would never tell his mother about the obstacles he had faced with Crystal.

Standing up elegantly, he offered, "I'll send you home."

His exceptional looks and elegance were sure to have attracted many glances from countless women.

The thought of that filled Julia with pride and sorrow,

"You're a great person, Henry. How are you still single?"

Melora's lips curled into a smirk. "It must be Henry's fault."

The comment left Henry at a loss for what to say.

The next day, Crystal arrived at Henry's firm at two o'clock in the afternoon.

Jamie was there to personally welcome her.

"I'm afraid you'll have to wait for a moment, Crystal. Mr. Miller's still in the middle of an international conference call."

Jamie brought Crystal to Henry's personal lounge and made her a cup of coffee before leaving to carry on with her work.

Crystal was left alone in the lounge, sipping on the coffee while admiring the interior.

Henry liked postmodern art, so the lounge was decorated with style. Suddenly, Crystal's eyes fell on a piece of antique copper artifact.

It was placed upside down.

Finding the placement somewhat odd, she lifted it to get a clearer look, only to regret her actions. It was a photo frame with a picture Crystal was familiar with.

It was a picture of a twenty-four-year-old Henry and a twenty-two-year-old Audrey.

Crystal stared at it for some time before returning the frame to where it belonged.

Just then, a voice came from the door.

"It was placed there during the renovation. I kept forgetting to throw it away."

Crystal turned around to find Henry standing by the door wearing a classic black and white suit that made him look handsome.

He walked over, picked up the frame, and looked at Crystal. "Are you mad?" he asked gently.

Crystal tried to change the topic. "Mr. Miller, I'm here for my dad's--"

"I know. You don't need to emphasize that." After tossing the frame into the trash can, Henry took a seat on the couch and flipped open a file. "Shall we, Miss Winters?"

Crystal was dumbfounded.

He said it was going to be a meeting last night. Why are we the only ones here?

Henry stared deeply into her eyes.

"Are you doubting my professional capabilities?"

Of course, Crystal dared not think that way.

Given no choice, she braced herself and listened to him analyze the case using professional jargon.

She tried her best to keep up, but she could not help feeling sleepy at the end of it

"Miss Winters," Henry called out. He had a stern look on his face. "Are you feeling sleepy?" He paused momentarily. "I noticed you slept deeply on the couch last night"

Crystal was speechless. She forced herself to stay awake until six o'clock

It should be time for Henry to get off work now.

Sure enough, Henry shut the file and said plainly, "It's late. I'll treat you to a meal."

Crystal declined flatly, "We're-

"I still have some details to tell you. Let's continue over a meal, Henry said, staring fixedly at her and waiting for an answer.

It was something Crystal could not refuse. She was willing to give in for her father's case as long as Henry did not cross the line. Just as she was about to give her answer. a shout came from the conference room door. "Henry!"

Crystal looked up and spotted Audrey.

The woman was dressed neatly and had a document in her hand, looking extremely professional.

She's impressive. She's already engaged, and her relationships are stake. Yet, she's still pursuing other men. That's bold of her

Audrey had come prepared. With a gentle tone she said. "Henry, I'm here to talk to you about my case. I hope I'm not interrupting you two."

Hearing that, Crystal rose to her feet. "Please carry on, Mr. Miller."

Before she could move away, Henry caught her arm and gazed at her.

It was only after a long while did he utter in a low voice. "The wound on my forehead hasn't healed yet. Aren't you going to take responsibility?"

He instructed Crystal to wait for him in the lounge and entered his office with Audrey.

While Henry led the way, Audrey followed and suddenly fixed her gaze on something.

She spotted the picture frame in the trashcan. That's the picture of me and Henry during our sweetest moment. Why is it in the trashcan

She looked at Crystal. "Did you throw it?"

Crystal did not give the woman a direct answer. "I don't ruin people's things."

Audrey paled.

Does that mean Henry threw it? How could he throw away the memory we shared?

Her lips trembled. Unable to accept the truth, she shot Crystal a glare. "Miss Winters, do you think you'll get to have Henry by doing that? Our past-

"I'm not interested in your past! Miss Quinn, if you love the past so much and can't bear to forget it, perhaps you should wrap yourself in pictures. If not, your past might accidentally slip away."

Crystal was a pragmatic person.

Audrey's presence might bother her, but she had no intentions of picking a fight with her. After all, things were over between her and Henry.

She picked up her bag and the document and left.

The moment she got into the car and started the engine, the car door was opened.

Standing outside was Henry.

He stared at her and asked calmly, "Are you jealous?"

"No."

Henry's gaze darkened a little. He pondered briefly before asking. "What do I need to do to make you come back to me? Or is everything I do useless now?"

"Yes."

Henry chuckled. "I've handed Audrey's case to another lawyer. I won't have any work interaction with her in the future. Crystal, whatever happened between me and her is in the past."

Crystal simply stared dead ahead and said impassively, "Henry, you'll never know what I felt when I lay on the operating table that night. Yes, there was pain, but the shame was greater." She shifted her gaze to him. "I'm scared. I can't fall for you anymore."

Her eyes were moist when she finished saying that.

She gently stepped on the gas pedal and drove away from him.

Audrey was not the problem between them but rather Henry himself.

He doesn't love me. That's why everything that happened that night happened. How could he abandon me if I the woman he loved?

Crystal had loved Robert in the past, and she had ended up hurt.

Now, she chose to protect herself in her relationship with Henry.

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Do You Love Me

Crystal drove straight home, afraid that he would pester her.

John and Anna were delightfully surprised at her unexpected return.

Anna pulled her inside and said cheerfully, "Speak of the devil! Your dad was just talking about how much he missed you. Father and daughter sure think alike!"

Crystal put down the fruits and approached John.

They had a lengthy conversation.

Just then, Anna's voice sounded from the kitchen. "Crystal, lend me a hand, will you?"

Crystal agreed with a smile.

No sooner had she entered the kitchen than Anna swiftly shut the door after her.

"What's the matter, Madam Anna?" Crystal was confused.

Anna pulled her to the window and pointed downstairs. "Isn't that Mr. Miller's car? It's been parked there for a while now! What's going on? Did both of you get into a fight or did you guys split up?"

Crystal did expect Henry to pursue her all the way here.

She cleaned the strawberries indifferently. "We've ended things."

Henry got out of his car carrying a gift box and looked as if he was about to visit them upstairs.

Anna lowered her voice as she said, "I can see that he kinda likes you. Crystal, aren't you going to think this over?"

Crystal shook her head.

At that very instant, the doorbell rang.

Anna covered her mouth and smiled. "Look who's here."

Crystal was exasperated.

She would have been on cloud nine for several days if he'd done such a thing in the past. But now, that their absurd relationship had ended, she found it pointless.

"I'll talk to him." She opened the door ahead of Anna.

Henry was elegantly dressed, holding a bag of imported fruits in his hand. He gazed deeply at Crystal.

Crystal shut the door behind her, stepped out, and whispered, "What are you doing here, Henry?"

"I'm here to visit Mr. and Mrs. Winters."

Crystal bit her lip lightly. "We're over. You don't have to do this."

"Crys, who's there? You should invite him in instead of sneaking around outside," John called out from inside the house right then.

Crystal fibbed, "He's just an insurance agent."

John was obviously convinced.

Crystal gently shoved Henry. "All right, you can be off now."

Henry refused to budge and yelled into the house, "Mr. Winters, I'm Crystal's boyfriend."

Crystal hit the roof. "You're absolutely shameless!"

"You're right! Crystal, you have a choice between introducing me to your dad as your boyfriend. or a friend with benefits."

Crystal flushed as red as a tomato.

Henry reached out to pinch her cheek lightly. "If you still refuse to let me in, I'll find a way to stay overnight here."

Crystal would never allow that to happen.

Unfortunately, John was already at the door and was greeted by the sight of an attractive and polished young man arguing with his precious daughter.

Henry swiftly composed himself and restored his image as a quintessential gentleman.

He greeted suavely, "A pleasure to meet you, Mr. Winters. I'm Henry Miller, your attorney as well as Crystal's boyfriend."

So he's Mr. Miller! John instantly took a liking to Henry.

"Why did you let Mr. Miller stand outside?" John looked at Crystal, then smiled apologetically. "Please pardon my daughter for her ignorance."

"It's fine! She's absolutely wonderful! Besides, I think she's adorable when she throws a tantrum."

Crystal felt embarrassed by his statement as she followed behind him.

Henry felt completely at home at the Winters residence.

His shrewdness made it easy for him to get into people's good graces. He addressed Jolus with deference and praised Anna's culinary skills, much to their delight. They would have offered

Crystal to Henry on a silver platter if they could.

John was in high spirits.

He brought out his chessboard. "Henry, let's play a round or two!"

Henry quirked his lips. "Sure. Please go easy on me." He then took off his thin black overcoat and handed it to Crystal, saying gently, "Prepare a plate of fruits for us, will you?"

John and Anna exchanged a satisfied glance.

Crystal gritted her teeth and had no choice but to do as she was told.

Little did she expect Henry to enter the kitchen while she was cutting the fruits. He even closed the door behind him.

“Henry, what do you think you’re-

Henry cut her off with a kiss.

Her eyes were wide as she stared at him in shock.

“Have you forgotten how to kiss? Crystal, relax and let me take the lead.” Henry said in his husky voice.

Crystal’s slender neck was stiff.

She swung her fist at his shoulder.

“Henry, you b*stard!”

“Hush! This b*stard is about to kiss you now.”

Engaging in such behavior was dangerously thrilling.

Her parents were just a door away. They would discover what she and Henry were up to if she made any noise.

Crystal rested her fist on his shoulder.

Henry held her slim waist and ran his hands back and forth around it.

He was so skilled in kissing that Crystal gradually became carried away despite their unfavorable location.

Nevertheless, she still felt ashamed.

Crystal froze when Henry made to take a step further.

She felt immense terror whenever he tried touching her there.

The immense pain was all she remembered from that night.

“Stop...” Crystal leaned against his shoulder. “Henry, please let me go. I can’t afford to play along with your games!”

Henry was at his limit as he had been celibate for several days.

While he could sense Crystal pushing him away, he knew her body craved him. It was her mind that refused to give in.

He tilted his head and nibbled her ear.

“Crystal, I have no intention of toying with you!”

He was sincere in his intentions to pursue and get into a serious relationship with her.

He sorely missed the time they had spent together.

"I don't want to! Henry, I admit I have feelings for you, but I don't want to continue this relationship anymore!"

She pushed him away and opened the door.

Henry felt extremely uneasy.

It took him a while to calm himself down after being hot and heavy with Crystal. John, who'd just opened the door to the kitchen, noticed it easily.

Regardless, the knowing smile on his face never faltered.

"Henry, aren't you coming?"

Henry pretended to wash his hands. He glared at Crystal and replied, "Give me a minute."

Crystal blushed slightly and scurried to her room to hide after serving the fruits.

Henry stayed at the Winters residence for quite a long time and departed only when it was late into the night.

"Crystal, I'll be making a move." He stood outside Crystal's bedroom.

Crystal ignored him.

John was exceptionally fond of Henry. He urged Crystal, "Crys, don't be so rude. Come on out and send him off."

Crystal wished to tell him once and for all that she did not want him over ever again.

She silently put on a coat and followed Henry downstairs.

"Get in." Henry opened the door to the passenger seat.

Crystal didn't budge. "Let's just say it here."

Henry lowered his head and lit a cigarette. He took a puff and smirked. "What do you want to tell me? That I shouldn't come over ever again?"

Crystal stared daggers at him.

Henry cornered her against the car with one hand and closed the distance between them. "Your body is far more honest than you are regarding your feelings for me. Why won't you get together with me?"

He gently kissed her in an attempt to rouse her passion.

Crystal initially resisted but eventually surrendered and let him do as he wished.

After some time, she murmured, "Henry, do you love me?"

[Chapter 145](#)

I Cannot Give You What You Want.

After hearing Crystal's question, Henry was startled for a moment,

He slowly released Crystal and stood there smoking silently.

Crystal had expected this, but she still felt a bit sad.

She got up gently.

After a moment of silence, she spoke in a low voice. "Henry, all you want is a sexual relationship! On the other hand. I seek emotional fulfillment and even desire marriage. That's why I believe we're not suitable for each other. Your passion for me may burn out, leaving behind nothing but resentment. So what's the point?"

Henry tossed away his cigarette butt and put it out with a stomp,

In the darkness, he gazed at her.

Crystal's face was fair, and her eyes were slightly red, making her as lovable as a little bunny.

Henry pondered for a long time before he answered, "Crystal, I admit that before I met you, I did. treat emotions and work as equals! I expect a return after investing a certain amount of money and effort... I don't see anything wrong with that! However, my intention is not only to sleep with you. Otherwise, I wouldn't be so persistent in holding on to you, would I?"

Crystal looked at him. She knew that he hadn't gotten to the point yet.

As she expected, Henry's gaze deepened.

He continued in a soft voice, "Crystal, I don't know where our relationship will lead! But my feelings for you are genuine, and I have never entangled myself with any woman before. You are. the first."

Crystal lowered her head.

Henry didn't lie to her, nor did he utter any sweet words.

He gently lifted her chin and said, "Crystal, I like you."

However, it wasn't love.

He had loved too passionately during his younger days. Until now, he hadn't rediscovered the feeling of being heartbroken for a girl.

He did like Crystal, and the recent arguments had indeed made him unhappy.

However, it was not to the extent that it affected his sleep and appetite.

It was more about the uneasiness of having the rhythm of his life disrupted.

He shouldn't have said these things to her, as any girl who heard them wouldn't want to reconcile with him. However, Henry felt some sympathy for Crystal.

He didn't want to deceive her!

Henry took a step back.

His handsome face bore a composed expression as he uttered, "I'm sorry, Crystal. I can't give you what you want!"

That included marriage and children!

The wind blew fiercely through the night.

Crystal felt cold, and she gently wrapped her coat around her.

Under the moonlight, she gazed at Henry.

Her previous embarrassments and anger seemed to have suddenly disappeared,

She liked Henry, but she believed they hadn't met at the right moment. They had both been hurt. in relationships and didn't trust each other.

Crystal instinctively took a step back..

She smiled faintly. "Mr. Miller, drive safely on your way back."

Henry's gaze darkened.

He nodded politely, opened the car door, and got in.

However, he didn't leave immediately. Instead, he lit a cigarette, took a drag, and looked up to see Crystal. He then stroked his chin and said, "Go upstairs now. It's cool at night."

Crystal looked at him deeply, giving him one last glance.

The next instant, she turned around and walked away abruptly.

Henry slowly moved the cigarette away from his lips as his gaze fixed on her fading figure.

Over the years, Crystal was the only woman who truly captivated his heart.

If there were no conflicts, he believed they could have a long life together, and he knew that the reason they had come to this point was because of him.

He knew immediately that Crystal had feelings for him.

However, when she asked him with teary eyes if he loved her....

He gave up on this relationship!

He didn't want to entrust his future to another woman, nor did he want to taste the bitterness of betrayal again, even though he knew that Crystal wouldn't do such a thing.

Henry sat in the car for a long time.

He took some time to digest and process the aftermath of this relationship.

Time flew by, and two months had passed.

During these two months, a lot of things happened. Crystal and Emelia successfully took over the music center and turned it into the largest music training center in Barnwood. They were doing great in their careers.

As for John's case, it went to trial last month.

Crystal met with Henry once.

They exchanged a few words, but all were related to work. His attitude was aloof and distant. It was as if they had never experienced those passionate nights.

It was the same for Crystal.

Eventually, the court announced that John was innocent.

Crystal hesitated for a while but finally decided to text Henry: Thank you, Mr. Miller.

It took Henry three days to reply: My pleasure.

Crystal looked at these two words and was reminded of the Henry she first met.

He was skilled at putting on a facade and had a reserved demeanor.

She smiled faintly and didn't think much of it.

In early December, Madison invited her for a meal.

When Crystal arrived at the place, she looked around and said, "Are you trying to relive your childhood? Eating a children's meal at your age?"

Madison chuckled.

She lowered her voice and said, "Crystal, I've been really longing for a child recently.

Crystal knew Madison's situation.

Zachary was still out there fooling around. He was just saving Madison some face and not bringing those women home.

Crystal gently stirred her coffee.

After a while, she asked, "Are you sure?"

Madison hesitated for a moment, then immediately said, "Crystal, as you know, I haven't been working much since I got married to him. I can't live without him... As for those women around him, I don't care anymore!"

She glanced at her belly and said, "Maybe having a child will make him settle down."

Crystal gently held her hand. "Madison, have you thought about working at my place?"

Madison shook her head and laughed. "I'd better not. I don't want to ruin those kids."

Crystal didn't insist.

Suddenly, Madison cleared her throat and said, "Tomorrow night is the anniversary of my marriage with Zachary. Why don't you come and join the celebration?"

Crystal was somewhat hesitant. "Considering that Zachary and Henry belonged to the same circle, would I bump into Henry during the event?"

Madison reassured her, "No, it won't happen! Henry hasn't attended any social events in the past two months. He has been living a quiet life like a monk. Besides, Zachary doesn't have such a big influence to invite him."

Hearing that, Crystal readily agreed.

Afterward, Madison continued with some gossip, "Crystal, do you know? Audrey went back to the Kingdom of Brundela. Zachary accidentally revealed it once and mentioned that Audrey got into a big fight with her fiancé's mistress, and that mistress was quite fierce. She ended up putting Audrey in the hospital."

Crystal was stunned.

Madison's expression was full of satisfaction. "What goes around comes around! I heard that the mistress is actually the Quinn family's housekeeper. I bet she's very open-minded in that aspect, which would certainly please men."

As Madison continued talking, it somehow turned into something like a late-night show.

Crystal didn't dare to listen anymore. "I have something to attend to, so I should go now."

Madison was still worried. "Don't forget about tomorrow night. I'll send you the location on WhatsApp."

Crystal waved her hand casually.

She took this matter to heart, and the following evening, she returned to her condominium and deliberately changed into a dress.

She wore a smoke-gray long dress with a thin coat over it.

Crystal tied up her chestnut-colored long hair, giving off a celestial and otherworldly vibe.

However, as soon as she entered the private room, everyone's gaze turned uncomfortable, and a heavy silence filled the air.

Crystal found it strange.

When she looked closely, she saw the person sitting in the corner

It was Henry!

He was dressed in exquisite wool trousers and a dark blue shirt.

It was obvious that he had just come from a formal occasion.

Crystal felt a knot in her stomach as she looked at Madison.

Didn't you say he wouldn't come?

[Chapter 146](#)

Did You Miss Me In The Night

The instant Crystal swung her gaze over, Madison was gripped by the urge to make a break for it.

Gosh, how would I have known Henry would suddenly show up when he has never had much regard for Zachary?

Out of guilt, she arranged for Crystal to be seated far away from Henry as much as possible.

Unfortunately, Henry simply had to stir up trouble.

No sooner had Crystal shrugged her jacket off and taken her seat than the man strolled over and jerked his chin up a fraction.

At once, the people around her tactfully moved away.

Following that, Henry openly sat down right beside her.

About everyone in the private room knew that the two of them had dated in the past. As such, they all kept silent.

Henry remained as relaxed as ever.

Reclining against the couch, he nonchalantly asked Crystal, "How have you been these days?"

With her eyes pinned on the LCD screen, Crystal tried to answer in a casual manner so she would not appear too petty and make him misunderstand that she could not forget him.

"Pretty good."

In response, Henry chuckled lowly.

"I'm glad to hear that. Then, it's considered a wise decision for us to break up," he remarked,

Crystal said nothing to that.

In truth, she still had feelings toward him upon seeing him again.

She did not want to speak to him too much, afraid he would notice something as his eyes were too sharp.

Subsequently, everyone in the same circle gathered together boisterously,

Henry joined in the fun while Crystal merely sat there and scrolled through her phone. She vaguely heard them playing truth or dare, during which a girl boldly confessed to the man.

It went without saying that the girl ended up rejected.

Crystal felt rather bored. The fact that she was seated next to Henry, in particular, made her feel uneasy.

Just as she was about to excuse herself to the restroom, a ringtone started blaring in the private room.

It was Zachary's phone, and the caller was none other than Clementine.

His phone rang again and again until he answered the call.

Considering the occasion then, Madison had no choice but to leash her temper.

When Crystal saw that the latter still wanted to stay married to Zachary, she heaved a muted sigh and asked Madison to accompany her to the restroom.

The two of them washed their hands side by side.

After much contemplation, Crystal ventured softly. "They've been keeping in touch?"

Madison's eyes were red-rimmed.

Taking out a long and slender light cigarette from her bag, she lit it with a shaky hand.

She took a deep breath before turning to Crystal.

"Zachary is rotten to the core. He bought a condominium and kept Clementine there. I checked. the bank statements, and he's spending two to three million on that b*tch every month."

Hearing that, words cluded Crystal.

Conversely, Madison snickered indifferently.

"I suppose I've reached a tacit understanding with him. If I turn a blind eye to him, our relationship can still be quite amicable. He's also being more generous with me now. Don't follow in my footsteps, Crystal. You deserve a man who loves you."

Crystal gently patted her on the shoulder. "No matter what, come to me if you need anything."

"I definitely will."

Smiling, Madison bumped her fist against Crystal's shoulder.

Right then, Zachary strode over with his phone in hand, the look on his face unnatural.

Madison sniggered coldly. "You want to go and keep that woman company even on such a day as our wedding anniversary, Zachary? Is she really that precious? You've probably never seen how she looked when she spread her legs and seduced Robert."

Zachary merely stared at Madison fixedly.

Indeed, she's beautiful. Regretfully, she's too delicate. We've been married for two years, but she's adamant about not having a child for fear of losing her figure. Clementine, however, is different. She's willing to give birth to a child for me. In fact, she's now pregnant and loves to eat sour things. As such, it must be a boy!

For that oppostason, he was determined to go and keep Clementine company no matter the

Nonetheless, he did not dare speak the truth and made up an excuse instead. "Something came up at the office. I'll be back in no time."

Needless to say, Madison did not believe such an excuse.

Alas, she could not make him stay. At his unwillingness to remain by her side despite it being their wedding anniversary, her disappointment in him reached an all-time high.

She gazed at him quietly.

In the end, she queried. "Must you really go. Zachary?"

Feeling a touch guilty. Zachary grunted in affirmation.

All of a sudden, Madison laughed and flipped her long hair lightly. "Okay, go ahead, then."

Zachary instantly rushed into the elevator as though the hounds of hell were nipping at his heels.

When he had left, Madison's lips started quivering. Her entire body likewise trembled uncontrollably.

"How did he turn into such a person, Crystal?"

"Do you want to have a divorce?" Crystal questioned in a murmur.

With her eyes red-rimmed, Madison shook her head.

She took out her phone and made a call.

"Charles, I'm at the clubhouse. I'm slightly tipsy. Will you come and drive me home? Yeah, Zachary left to keep someone else company. I'm all alone now."

At that, a chill ran down Crystal's spine.

She tugged at Madison. "What are you doing?"

Madison gently took Crystal's hand away. A hint of resolution was etched on her beautiful yet pale face. "I know exactly what I'm doing, Crystal. Charles likes me. He pursued me for a long time during university,"

"But a relationship between you both is no longer possible."

"I know. But I can obtain pleasure from him."

That rendered Crystal at a loss for words.

In no time, Charles arrived. Madison nestled in his arms, looking as pretty as a picture.

However, Crystal knew that she was crying inwardly.

Well, I can't do anything about it. Perhaps this is the worst things can be.

Madison made a grand affair of things.

She went back to the private room with Crystal and openly left with Charles after retrieving her jacket.

For a moment, everyone present went silent.

Even a fool would be able to see that Madison and Zachary's marriage had reached its end.

Crystal did not want to stay any longer. Returning to her seat with her body slightly bent, she retrieved her things and made to leave.

Out of the blue, a hand grabbed hers.

Henry's hoarse voice drifted into the air. "Stay and have fun for a while."

Crystal was still feeling sad for Madison, so her voice was slightly choked. "I want to go home now."

With a cigarette in one hand. Henry forcefully pulled her down to sit beside him with the other.

In the next second, someone declared, "Henry got the truth option and can ask anyone three questions."

Following that, Crystal's heart jolted.

Henry bore his eyes into her. "I would like to put my questions to you, Miss Winters."

"I'm not playing the game," Crystal declined.

As Henry took a deep drag of the cigarette, his cheeks sunk in, rendering him incredibly alluring.

"I'm allowed to ask anyone in the private room."

Crystal's temper spiked, but she did not want to kick up a fuss.

She pursed her lips in resignation.

Henry stared at her intently, his voice measured and hoarse.

"My first question is this—do you have a boyfriend?"

"No."

"My second question is this—is there someone you like?"

Crystal refused to answer that, but someone started scoffing at her.

"What a coward, Crystal!"

White-hot rage blazed within Crystal, and she bit her lip hard.

She swung her gaze at Henry.

Unexpectedly, he was wearing a grin on his face instead of feigning solemnity and aloofness as usual.

"Yes," she hissed begrudgingly.

At once, everyone fell silent.

Henry's eyes were fixed on Crystal's lovely profile. His voice turned even more tender. "My third question is this did you ever miss me in the night during this time we've been apart?"

Finally, Crystal snapped, "You're crossing the line, Henry."

She was very much animated when she was mad.

Consequently, a smile curved Henry's lips.

Leaning back against the couch, he chuckled. "It's good to be angry. It's far better than your looking as though on the verge of tears."

Unbidden, shock flooded Crystal.

Henry pressed her hand lightly and whispered, "Don't leave. Wait for a while longer."

That had Crystal somewhat puzzled.

Lifting his hand off hers, Henry picked up his mug and stated mildly, "Zachary will be back."

[Chapter 147](#)

It Is Fair

It was just as Henry expected.

Zachary wanted his son, but he couldn't let go of his pride either.

After comforting Clementine, he returned to the private room an hour later.

"Where's Madison?"

Silence ensued inside the private room. This time, they all stood by Madison. Zachary had crossed the line.

How could he even have an affair with a woman like Clementine?

Noticing that everyone's expression was off, Zachary asked indignantly, "Has Madison left?"

Henry casually replied, "She left with Charles."

Everyone knew that Charles was pursuing Madison. Now that Madison was angry and alone with Charles, it wasn't hard to guess what would happen.

Zachary's face turned pale when he thought of the possibility,

He began dialing Madison's phone number frantically, but her phone was turned off

Cursing fiercely, he started dialing Charles' phone number, and the latter picked up.

However, the ambiguous sound of a man and a woman came from the phone.

Just by listening, one could tell how intense it was.

Zachary clenched his fist and yelled, "Charles, let Madison answer the phone)"

Charles, panting heavily and sounding particularly delighted, handed the phone to Madison. "Zachary's on the phone."

Breathing heavily, Madison asked, "Zachary, what's up?"

The silence in the private room was broken by Zachary smashing his phone.

He ran out like a madman, intending to confront Charles.

Crystal wanted to follow but was stopped by Henry. He said calmly, "What do you have to worry about with Charles there? Besides, they're bound to separate after all these incidents. Isn't it exactly what you wanted?"

In the end, Crystal didn't go after Zachary

Perhaps Henry's right. Madison and Zachary's relationship has come to an end. Maybe some chaos is what they need.

Crystal didn't stay long in the private room either. Taking her coat, she left the room.

This time, Henry didn't stop her. He caught up with her in the parking lot.

Crystal was already sitting in the car.

Henry tapped on the car window gently, and she wound down the window, asking politely. "Is there something else, Mr. Miller?"

Henry stared at her wistfully, his voice hoarse as he asked, "Miss Winters, would you like to have a drink together?"

Crystal looked ahead steadily.

After a moment, she turned her head in his direction slightly and smiled. "I don't really feel like going. Good night, Mr. Miller."

Then, she raised the car window and slowly drove away.

Henry didn't force it. He didn't actually want to have a one-night stand with her, but he still felt a strong connection whenever he met her, and that made him want to hold her.

That feeling was just like when he first met her.

His enthusiasm and passion for her hadn't diminished at all.

Earlier in the private room, he had asked Crystal if she had ever thought of him at night. Even though she didn't answer, he knew she definitely did.

He thought of her to the point where his body ached. He longed for her. She had to think of him

Crystal drove home.

After parking the car, she immediately called Madison. This time, Madison's phone was turned on.

Madison seemed indifferent about what had happened earlier.

Zachary, somehow found out which hotel they were at and got into a fight with Charles. He even threatened to kill the latter.

However, the Jenkins family was not to be underestimated. In fact, Zachary couldn't do anything.

Madison was in a good mood. "I will never forget Zachary's expression, Crystal!" She laughed heartily. "You should've seen it. It was so funny!"

However, as she spoke, she gritted her teeth.

"Does he think he's the only one who knows how to cheat? I have no shortage of suitors around. me either!"

Her words were harsh, but Crystal knew she was feeling sad.

"Where are you? I'll come pick you up," Crystal said softly.

"I'm at the police station." Madison's voice was hoarse.

Crystal restarted the engine and drove to the police station.

Zachary and Charles had finally become bitter enemies. They had both fought fiercely, which resulted in bruised and swollen faces. Crystal was quite impressed that Charles was willing to get beaten for Madison.

Zachary looked like a defeated rooster in a cockfight. His joy of obtaining a son was no longer on his face.

Through his swollen eyes, his gaze looked terrifyingly sinister.

He glared at Madison, but he didn't lay a finger on her.

Charles was still provoking him, but Zachary merely laughed coldly. "You can show off for now, but Madison will always be mine!"

Crystal was in awe that Zachary still thought he could live happily ever after with Madison after everything that had happened.

She turned to look at Madison, who lit a cigarette as she stared ahead of her blankly. Madison shot Charles a glance and said, "You should go back first."

Charles understood what she meant.

They would still have plenty of opportunities to hang out in the future.

After straightening his clothes, Charles left.

Eyes reddened, Zachary asked Madison, "Do all the years we've spent together mean nothing to you?"

Madison stepped down the stairs and looked directly into Zachary's eyes.

Her tone was indifferent, but she said each word deliberately, "And do they mean anything to you? I merely treated you the way you treated me. It's fair."

Zachary fell silent.

After what seemed like an eternity, he said, "Let's start over again, Madison."

Madison froze for a moment before letting out a small chuckle.

"I don't care what you decide to do next but don't expect me to love you wholeheartedly as I did before. That's impossible! You were the one who pushed me to this point. I might be able to tolerate you cheating once, but cheating on me over and over again? You make me nauseous. It's time to let you have a taste of your own medicine." After pausing for a while, she added, "Charles is quite good in bed, you know."

Zachary was about to go crazy.

He started to smash things like a madman at the police station, which led him to be detained for the night.

Crystal took Madison to her car.

When they got into the car, she handed a glass of water to Madison. "Are you okay?"

Inside the car, with the lights on, Madison's face appeared pale.

She had sought revenge on Zachary by sleeping with Charles. It was a lose-lose situation, yet she didn't regret it.

Madison whispered, "There's no turning back at this point, but I won't be the one to suggest a breakup first. I can't let that b*tch Clementine benefit from this for nothing."

Crystal didn't know how to advise Madison because her situation with Zachary was too complicated.

"What about Charles? What did he say?"

Madison's eyes slightly reddened.

"If it were before, I could still marry into the Jenkins family, but it's impossible now! The Jenkins family is considered a prominent clan. They won't allow Charles to marry someone like me.

Crystal gently caressed her face.

"I think you're amazing. Well, at least, it's quite satisfying to listen to you cursing someone."

Madison laughed.

"It was nothing. By the way, have I told you that Charles is quite good in bed? He satisfied me multiple times."

When Madison went on and on about it like a late-night show hostess, Crystal quickly closed the car window,

It would be too embarrassing if someone heard it.

Just then, a clear and elegant voice accompanied by a hint of amusement came from outside the car window.

"Is it Miss Winters and Miss White? I am Ritchie Jenkins, Charles cousin."

Crystal glanced at Madison.

Uh-oh! He probably heard everything...

Ritchie, who was in his early thirties, looked refined and cultured. He taught and served as an associate dean at a university.

He was staring at Crystal, his breath taken away by her beauty. In a gentle tone, he added, "I overheard you discussing Charles, so I came over to ask."

[Chapter 148](#)

The Night Of Christmas Eve

Crystal felt as if her face was on fire.

Every time she felt shy, her cheeks would turn a shade of rosy hue which made her look all the more captivating.

Ritchie's gaze was completely fixated on her.

"Charles has left." Crystal tried to sound calm.

Ritchie nodded in response.

He looked at Crystal and said, "My car is in for maintenance, so I took a taxi here. Do you mind giving me a ride?"

Crystal was a little hesitant.

This man has a really good temperament, but is he always this straightforward?

On their first meeting, he was already asking her for a ride home.

Crystal was naive, but Madison sensed that he had ulterior motives. It was obvious that Charles' cousin had intentions to pursue Crystal.

She had heard of Ritchie, who was a Jenkins known for being upright, good-looking, and well- educated: Given his status, it was only reasonable that his standards were high.

Madison didn't expect him to fall in love at first sight with Crystal.

Even though Madison was going through a tough time, she was already plotting for Crystal's love life.

Slightly shifting her position, she smiled at Crystal and said. "Crystal, he's Charles' cousin / If it's convenient for you, why not give him a ride? Consider it a favor to me!"

Now that Madison had asked, it became harder for Crystal to turn him down.

Smiling politely, she said to Ritchie, "All right! Send me your address."

Ritchie didn't have much dating experience, but it didn't mean that he didn't know about dating at all. Easy enough, he obtained Crystal's number and sent her his address,

Crystal was quite surprised that his place was rather close to hers.

After gesturing for him to get in the car, she started the engine.

On the way, Madison did most of the talking.

Ritchie's considerate and respectful attitude toward Charles' lover throughout the conversation. left a favorable impression on Crystal.

When they arrived at Ritchie's place, he got out of the car and walked to the side of the driver's seat.

He tapped the window gently, and Crystal wound it down.

Beaming at her, Ritchie expressed his gratitude. "Thank you, Miss Winters. Allow me to treat you to a meal another day," he said as he waved his phone.

Crystal smiled and agreed because she thought Ritchie was just being polite. They might not necessarily meet again after this encounter.

After taking one last glance at Crystal, Ritchie left with a wistful expression on his face.

When Crystal started the car again, Madison yawned. "I'm tired."

Head tilted to the side, she complained, "I wonder how long Charles hasn't had sex. He has completely worn me out."

Crystal's face flushed when she heard Madison's straightforward words.

Eventually, Zachary gave in and turned the page on this matter in his heart.

After staying over at Crystal's place for a week, Madison went back.

Later, Crystal found out that Madison and Charles were still involved with each other intermittently. She heard that they even went on a vacation to Hawen for a week.

While Madison seemed happy and radiant, Crystal could only sigh to herself.

Her life was still centered around her condominium, the music center, and going back and forth to her family.

Life was quite dull, but Crystal had gradually gotten used to it.

On Christmas Eve, Crystal finished work at six o'clock. The air was filled with a festive atmosphere while young couples were flooding the streets.

At times like this, Crystal couldn't help but think that it was time for her to start dating.

Knowing that she had ended things with Henry, Anna had hinted a few times about introducing a friend's son to her, but Crystal had declined every time.

Right then, a phone call came from Anna.

Anna brought up the topic again on the phone. "Crystal, you should meet him. He's an associate dean at a university, and he's good-looking. You'll be twenty-five after this year. You need to take this seriously!"

Crystal looked up at the Christmas lights above her, which were twinkling like stars.

She smiled lightly. "Okay, I'll meet him some day."

Anna chuckled. "Some day? He wants to invite you to spend Christmas Eve together tonight."

Crystal was quite surprised by it.

Nevertheless, she agreed after a while. "All right, then. Could you give me his number?"

"That won't be necessary!"

Surprised, Crystal turned around and saw Ritchie.

On the winter night before Christmas, he was wearing a white sweater with a gray coat over it. Standing tall at a hundred and eighty-five centimeters, he looked elegant and handsome.

His presence was dazzling.

While staring at him, Crystal whispered to Anna. "I bumped into him."

That prompted Anna to hang up the phone with satisfaction.

That young man from the Jenkins family is very suitable for Crystal!

After Crystal hung up the phone, she waved her phone gently and greeted, "It's you, Professor Jenkins."

Ritchie replied straightforwardly, "Yeap, it's me! Do you mind if I call you Crystal from now on?"

Crystal didn't object.

Ritchie strode beside her as he continued in a friendly tone, "There's a Malarnorn restaurant up ahead. Their turkey drumsticks and tequila are excellent. Don't worry about driving afterward. I'll have my driver pick us up later."

Crystal suddenly halted.

"Ritchie, you actually drove to the police station the last time, didn't you?"

Ritchie didn't deny it.

Smiling, he explained, "I really didn't know how to strike up a conversation with you, so I came up with a lousy excuse. But you still exposed me in the end."

He had a gentle and considerate demeanor, especially toward women.

Crystal felt comfortable talking to him. She thought perhaps a man like him would be suitable for her. She was willing to give it a try and see if they could be together.

Crystal looked ahead and said softly. "Well... let's go and try the dishes, shall we?"

Ritchie looked at Crystal endearingly, and while he didn't do anything to her, his eyes twinkled with delight.

Meanwhile, Crystal failed to notice that a Bentley Continental was slowly driving past them.

Henry saw Crystal with Ritchie from inside the car, and he saw how Ritchie was looking at her with a gentle expression on his face.

The weather was very cold that night. As Crystal rubbed her hands for warmth, Ritchie took off his own scarf and wrapped it around her.

Henry stopped the car with a jerk when he saw that.

Then, he turned the car around and silently watched the two walking side by side. Having witnessed that scene, he had to admit that Ritchie and Crystal were dating no matter how reluctant he was.

The thought of it made his expression turn cold.

After having dinner together, Ritchie suggested that they watched a movie.

However, Crystal felt it was too fast for them to be watching a movie together, so they ended up going to an art exhibition. Not expecting the gallery to be crowded on Christmas Eve, Crystal felt that she was nearly being squeezed out of shape,

Ritchie smiled as he pulled her into his embrace, which startled Crystal, but she didn't refuse.

After leaving the exhibition center, Ritchie held Crystal's hand and led her to a place with less crowd.

Ritchie couldn't take his eyes off Crystal under the continuous fireworks which illuminated the sky of Barnwood on the night of Christmas Eve.

Ritchie truly liked her. It was love at first sight.

He wanted to kiss her but was afraid of being too sudden, so he restrained himself and planted a kiss on her forehead instead.

"I had a great time tonight, Crystal."

Crystal also had a good time. This kind of lukewarm date might not be exciting, but it was what she wanted. Amidst the crowd, Ritchie gently held her in his arms.

Crystal leaned on Ritchie's shoulder lightly and registered how pleasant he smelled. There was a hint of ink fragrance on him, which was unlike the strong and dominating smell from Henry which always made her feel as if he could devour her at any moment.

This feels great. It's time for me to move on. I should completely forget about Henry and start anew.

When the sky was lit up with fireworks once again, Crystal gently hugged Ritchie, which indicated that she accepted his pursuit.

Henry stood among the crowd from far away and watched as Crystal embraced Ritchie.

As he observed her tilting her head, smiling, and willingly holding onto Ritchie's waist, he couldn't help but think that all of those belonged to him originally.

Is she going to take it all back and give it to another man? Is she going to marry Ritchie?

Henry imagined the conversation that would happen when he handed her a gift at her wedding with Ritchie. "Thank you, Mr. Miller, for gracing Ritchie and me with your presence." Is that what she would say?

[Chapter 149](#)

Committed To This Relationship

That thought was unbearable to Henry.

However, being a mature adult, he understood that he couldn't act unreasonably simply because Crystal and Ritchie were in a relationship.

For instance, he knew he couldn't intervene and separate Crystal and Ritchie or express his emotions to Crystal, pledging to make her his life partner by marrying her.

After all, he was the one who told her that he couldn't give her what she wanted.

Henry had perceived his breakup with Crystal as an ordinary occurrence. Just a few days ago, when he had unexpectedly run into her, he had experienced a fleeting sensation, but it didn't compel him to believe she was essential in his life.

However, the instant he stumbled upon the possibility of her being involved with someone else, he couldn't accept it.

Henry's heart was experiencing an unprecedented sensation, leaving him uncertain about his desires and intentions.

It defied logic to claim that Henry was captivated solely by Crystal's physical appearance, as there were numerous women who surpassed her in beauty and curves.

Henry didn't lack any attention from women. With his background and attractive looks, many people sought to please him. Crystal was the only one who walked away from him after her unsuccessful attempts to convince him to marry her.

As the mesmerizing fireworks illuminated the night sky, Henry compelled himself to look up while a bitter sensation spread through his heart.

The couple hugging each other was nowhere to be seen.

Where did they go? The atmosphere is great tonight. Did they head to the hotel directly to have sex?

Henry experienced an intense tightening of his heart, making it difficult for him to catch his breath.

After they finished visiting the art exhibition, Ritchie, being a gentleman, kindly offered Crystal a ride back home.

He noticed that Crystal wasn't really into him. Her good impression of him was primarily based on his/attractive appearance.

She wasn't in love with him.

Ritchie wasn't discouraged. He gave her a ride home, and they agreed to meet on another date.

The night was dark as Crystal bade goodbye to Ritchie downstairs.

Their shadows were long underneath the street lamps. Ritchie probably liked her too much that he spoke a lot before finally breaking into a smile. "You should head upstairs. Otherwise, I might talk until dawn."

Crystal nodded.

She removed the scarf and returned it to him.

Instead of taking it from her, Ritchie gave her an intense look. "In the near future, I hope you can invite me upstairs, Crystal."

The implied intention behind this invitation from a mature man was quite clear.

Crystal was no longer a young girl..

She didn't reply to his question and merely smiled. "We'll see."

Ritchie chuckled and walked away, waving his hand. "Goodnight, Miss Winters."

He opened the car door and hopped into his car.

Crystal waved goodbye to him, too.

Tonight's date was enjoyable. Someone like Ritchie suits me more.

Crystal was in a good mood. She took a bath and emerged from the bathroom smelling great.

After that, she received a WhatsApp message from Ritchie.

He sent a photograph of an intricately decorated door, adorned with a festive wreath, indicating that Christmas was approaching, Crystal inferred that it was the entrance to his mansion.

She flashed a faint smile and was about to reply when her phone began to ring.

The caller ID was Mr. Miller.

Crystal hesitated for a moment before answering the call, but the person on the other end of the line remained silent for a long time..

Finally, she couldn't help but break the silence. "Mr. Miller?"

"Crystal, how have you been?" Henry's voice was slightly hoarse.

Crystal couldn't comprehend why Henry, who typically appeared indifferent, would suddenly show concern for her. However, as he had won the lawsuit for her father, she patiently replied, "Hmm... I'm good."

"Where did you celebrate Christmas Eve? Did you have a great time?"

Crystal was no fool. She quickly grasped that Henry's inquiry was prompted by his discovery of something significant.

After a brief silence, she replied in a low voice, "Yes, I had a great time."

"Are you dating someone now?"

Henry sounded as if he was questioning a criminal. Crystal deliberated for a moment before replying,

“Yes, I have someone now,”

“What’s he like? Is he handsome? What does he do?”

Finally, Crystal couldn’t take it anymore.

She lowered her voice and hissed, “Henry, it’s over between us.”

“So?”

“So you don’t have to worry about me anymore. If you really want to know, I want you to understand that I’m committed to this relationship. He’s a genuinely kind person and also quite attractive.”

No sooner had the words left her mouth than she felt a twinge of regret.

Why am I bickering with Henry?

After a long silence, Henry asked softly. “Ritchie is more handsome than me?”

He then ended the call abruptly.

Crystal blinked, refusing to believe her ears.

He knew about Ritchie but pretended not to know and asked all those questions. F*ck him!

Crystal was in a foul mood and lost interest in continuing the conversation with Ritchie,

Henry’s mood was even more foul.

His condominium offered the best night view in Barnwood.

After taking a shower, he stepped out of the shower dressed in a partially open black robe that revealed a glimpse of his chest, his hair still damp.

He leaned against the bar, staring at the night sky blankly.

After breaking up with Crystal, he wanted to forget her, but her presence was everywhere in his condominium.

In the closet, her bathrobe hung next to his.

The two pairs of matching slippers that she bought remained sealed.

Every single day, as he pulled open the accessories drawer, his gaze would inevitably fall upon the jewelry sets he purchased for her, neatly nestled in their velvet box.

She didn’t take any of these with her.

Every remnant she left behind served as a constant reminder of how she had once permeated his life, raising the unsettling possibility that she might have also invaded not only his physical space but also his very body and heart.

Recently, Henry had trouble falling asleep.

He was tired from working all day but couldn't sleep when he lay in bed.

On certain mornings, at the break of dawn, he would instinctively roll over, half-expecting to find Crystal still lying beside him. He wanted to give her a morning kiss to ignite their desires so they could have sex.

Alas, she wasn't there.

He could only hug the pillow after reaching around the huge bed to find nothing.

Henry finished the red wine as Christmas Eve came to an end. He walked into his silent bedroom.

After lying in bed for a while, he decided to get up and went to the bathroom.

Soon, the shower was turned on.

As the water flowed down, the suppressed pants of a man could be heard from the shower.

When it came to an end, Henry returned to his bed, his body damp.

After switching off the lights, he felt really empty.

When night fell, his body became more honest than his own thoughts and emotions.

He missed Crystal and her presence. The last time he had sex was nearly a month ago.

The following morning, Marie came over to clean the house and prepare breakfast.

Henry walked out of the bedroom.

Marie didn't know that Crystal had moved out. She asked, "Is Miss Winters up?"

Henry straightened his the.

He sat at the dining table and took a sip of the coffee before answering. "We broke up. She has moved out of the house."

Knowing she had said the wrong thing, Marie quickly apologized.

Henry began reading the papers. "Just take note of this." After a pause, he looked at Marie. "Tidy up the bedroom and organize the closet today. Get a bag to store Miss Winters' clothes, and tell Jamie to take care of the accessories."

Hearing that, Marie knew that they had broken up for real.

This is quite sad. Mr. Miller treated Miss Winters well, and he seemed to adore her. They even had sex all the time early in the morning. Why did they break up all of a sudden?

Marie hesitated before asking, "What about her clothes? Should I throw them away after packing them up!*"

[Chapter 150](#)

Blow Dry Your Hair

Henry was momentarily stunned.

“Just leave it. I have yet to figure out what to do with them.”

Marie continued, “And what about the piano? You presented it to Miss Winters as a gift. I believe it’s called Ludweig or something like that, and it’s quite valuable. Since you don’t play the piano, Mr. Miller, should I arrange for Jamie to have it removed?”

Henry was speechless.

“That piano is called Morning Dew,” he explained.

Marie’s lips twitched. I don’t know Brundelan well. Henry’s gaze landed on the Morning Dew. A while later, he said softly, “Leave it here for the time being.”

Marie stopped asking questions.

Ha! Mr. Miller can’t even bear to part with Miss Winters’ belongings. It’s evident that he still has feelings for her. Based on my experience, I won’t be surprised if Mr. Miller soon pleads for her to return to him.

Marie went back to work, leaving Henry spa cing out with his coffee in his hand.

In the following week. Henry developed a troubling habit. He would consistently tail Crystal after finishing work, inadvertently crossing paths with her on numerous occasions.

Sometimes, it happened at Crystal’s favorite places.

Sometimes, it happened at Ritchie’s favorite bars and restaurants.

While Henry and Ritchie were not particularly close acquaintances, their families knew each other, leading to a certain level of acquaintance between them as well.

Ritchie wasn’t close to anyone in their social circle and didn’t know that Henry used to date Crystal. However, as they kept bumping into each other, he soon realized something was off,

He asked Crystal about it.

Crystal was taken aback as she thought Ritchie knew about her past relationship with Henry.

After regaining her composure, she revealed to Ritchie that she used to date Henry.

She glanced at Ritchie.

If Ritchie couldn’t accept it, she wouldn’t impose her desires on him. She understood that not all men were capable of accepting certain situations.

Ritchie didn’t say anything.

Nevertheless, when he sent her back home, he confessed his feelings to her in the car. “Crystal, if Hemy wants to get back together with you, will you say yes?”

Men have an inherent understanding of their own kind.

Everyone knew that Henry would never marry anyone, so Ritchie guessed that was why they broke up in the end.

As Henry frequently appeared in front of Crystal, Ritchie discerned that the persistent presence of this arrogant man stemmed from his inability to set aside his pride and plead for Crystal's return to his side.

He wanted to know if Crystal would get back together with Henry.

After asking that question, Ritchie stared at Crystal intently,

Leaning back in the chair, Crystal looked sideways at Ritchie. She had been getting along well with Ritchie these days. While their time together might not have been filled with intense passion, they shared some heartfelt moments. Apart from the gentle kiss he planted on her forehead on Christmas Eve, he had always respected their boundaries.

She knew Ritchie valued her, and she cherished their relationship. She wanted to make it last.

A long while later, Crystal said softly, "Ritchie, I'm serious about us."

Finally, Ritchie's tense body relaxed. No one could imagine how nervous he had been as he awaited her answer. Despite being aware of his privileged background and good looks, he humbly acknowledged that he paled in comparison to Henry's seemingly remarkable qualities.

Henry was influential and charming, and he was called "The Most Charming Man" by the magazines.

That made Ritchie lose some of his confidence.

However, he felt relieved to hear Crystal's answer.

He leaned in and planted a kiss on her cheek. "It's only nine. How about you invite me upstairs?"

Crystal ran her fingers through her hair.

Back at the restaurant, a kid had accidentally touched her hair with hands full of chocolate,

She offered an apologetic smile. "I'm afraid I can't brew coffee for you as I need to wash my hair."

Ritchie gazed at her.

"I'm not heading upstairs for coffee. Shall I dry your hair for you?"

Crystal had no reason to reject his offer.

Having engaged in a few serious dates with Ritchie, she knew it would be too callous for her to deny him the opportunity to visit her condominium.

She gave him a smile. "Then I'll brew some coffee before washing my hair."

Ritchie also smiled in response.

Crystal didn't realize that despite their relationship, she was still holding back in some way,

Crystal invited Ritchie to her modest-sized condominium located on the fourth floor and spanning approximately fifty square meters.

The interior design of the condominium exuded a cozy and inviting ambiance despite its compact size.

After brewing coffee for Ritchie, Crystal headed to the bathroom to wash her hair. When she emerged from the bathroom, he was standing in front of the window with the coffee.

While wiping her hair with a towel, she asked, "What are you looking at?"

Ritchie's gaze was fixed on the gold Bentley Continental parked downstairs. When he heard Crystal's question, he raised the cup and commented, "The coffee is not bad."

"The beans are from Yorksland."

Ritchie's lips quirked up. "Come, let me blow dry your hair."

Crystal didn't suspect anything and gave him the hairdryer.

She stood with his back to him and didn't notice that Henry was downstairs.

Ritchie was gentle and didn't overstep any boundaries.

After drying her hair, he hugged her from behind. "I'd like to stay the night."

Crystal's body stiffened slightly.

She gently pried his hands away and said, "This is too fast, Ritchie."

Ritchie flashed a bitter smile.

He admired Crystal's composed demeanor, but in his mind, if a woman was excessively rational in a relationship, it could only signify one thing: She lacked true devotion or deep feelings for him.

He couldn't help but feel that she had no desires or passionate longing for him.

He sat down for a little while, then left.

Upon reaching the ground floor, he noticed that the Bentley Continental was still parked there. The window was rolled down, revealing Henry's arm leisurely hanging out as he smoked one cigarette after another.

Ritchie couldn't help but admit that Henry looked handsome as he gave a subtle nod in greeting.

Henry turned around and looked at him silently.

A long while later, he let out an icy snort and nodded in response.

Before Ritchie could get into his car, Henry floored the accelerator and sped off, the cigarette still dangling from his lips.

Ritchie didn't know what to feel as he watched the car speed away.

Henry drove back to his condominium.

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Unbuttoning his suit jacket, he tossed it on the couch and sat in front of the piano.

Closing his eyes, he let his slender fingers glide effortlessly across the piano keys, producing the familiar melody of Moonlight Lovers. It was the same piece that Crystal frequently played in the house.

Henry knew how to play the piano but wasn't really good at it.

However, he had never revealed this talent to Crystal, deeming it unnecessary to do so.

His initial intention had always been to date her for a year or two and then part ways amicably. He had planned to provide her with generous compensation for the time they had spent together.

However, to his surprise, their relationship abruptly came to an end in less than two months,

Crystal didn't ask for any compensation from him. All she wanted was to leave him and start anew.

She seemed to be enjoying her time with Ritchie.

It's been ten days. Crystal and Ritchie have dated for ten whole days. Ritchie has entered her house. Are they going to share the same bed soon and have sex?

A resounding thump echoed from the piano keys as Henry stared at the piano silently.

Memories from the past surged through his mind.

He vividly recalled presenting Crystal with the Morning Dew piano after the first time they had sex. She had joyfully redecorated their home with her personal touch, emanating a radiant happiness akin to that of a newlywed bride,

Back then, she had no idea this was how wealthy men treated their women

He showered her with love and gifts so she could repay him by pleasuring him through sex.

Sex was different when both parties had feelings for each other. Henry was extremely aroused every time Crystal gazed at him, her eyes sparkling with adoration.

Will she look at Ritchie the same way in the future? No, that is impossible! I won't allow that to happen! Ten days is the most I can endure.