President 351



"Charlotte, stop messing around. The grapes here are big, too. Let's pick the grapes here, okay?" "No." Charlotte's voice was loud. She turned away to ignore Summer. She was apparently angry. "Charlotte, I am getting angry." Summer raised her voice. "It is obviously your fault, yet you get angry. Had I grown as tall as you, I wouldn't have to ask for your help." She raised her voice again and then ignored the two of them. Mark came up and stood in front of Summer, then squatted down. "Climb onto my shoulders." Who was he to order her around? Summer glanced at him and ignored him. Mark narrowed his eyes and glanced at her with an impassive face. He then spread her legs with his hands and lifted her on his shoulders, and stood up. Summer was stunned when she was lifted off the ground. She was embarrassed and panicked. "Mark!" "Hold tight. Don't say I didn't warn you," he said in a deep voice as his lips curled up. As she wobbled on his shoulders, she quickly gripped his hair with both hands to balance herself and gritted her teeth. "Mark, put me down."

"Awesome, Mark! Awesome! Don't let Mommy down!" Charlotte was excited, not forgetting to urge her mom. "Pick the grapes, Mommy. Otherwise, Mark won't let you down." Now the two of them were apparently on the same side, and Summer was on her own. "Mark!" She forced her voice through her teeth, pulling hard at his hair, as if she was venting angers at him. He seemed to feel no pain. Instead, he was cool about it and even gave her a kind reminder. "You have two choices. One is to continue this stalemate, and two is to pick the grapes quickly, and then it will end." Summer wished she could smack him on the head. And Charlotte was still urging her on, her face flushing under the scorching sun. Finally, Summer chose to compromise. Mark's tall and steady body stood straight while Summer was sitting on his shoulders. Meanwhile, Charlotte was excitedly giving instructions under the grape trellis. "On the left, Mommy! Right, Mommy!" Chapter 352 The afternoon sun leaked through the gaps between the grape leaves, and fell on the backs of the

three of them, creating a warm and harmonious scene.
"Mommy, pick more. We have to pick more. Our teacher said that grapes can be made into wine.
Mommy will make grapes into wine, and then I can drink it every day."
She walked under the grape trellises, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. "Mark is amazing! Look, I have said
that Mommy can't weigh down Mark."
Summer could not care less what Charlotte was babbling about down under. She sped up her action,
wanting to end this as soon as possible.
Forget about what happened four years ago. Given the two of them were vying for custody of Charlotte,
and they were in a hostile relationship, their actions and gestures now were not only too intimate and
ambiguous but also improper.
But they could not help themselves in restraining their runaway hearts. 'This was wrong,' she secretly
told herself in her mind.
The sun in the summer afternoon was too hot. Even if there was wind, it could not cool them down at
all.

Fine beads of sweat covered Summer's forehead and back. She was soaked to the skin.

But this was not the most important thing. The most crucial thing was that the clothes of the man under

her were also soaked, and a thin layer of sweat had popped up on the skin of his neck.

She straddled his neck. Whenever they moved, she could feel the slipperiness, and her pants were all

wet. Feeling embarrassed, her cheeks blushed.

Mark's eyes dimmed several degrees, and the sweat popping up on his muscular arms made him more

masculine and sexier.

After picking for over half an hour, Summer finally finished the area designated by Charlotte. She let out

a sigh of relief and felt at ease when she got back down on the ground.

But embarrassment followed. The rest of her pants were fine except the part between her legs was

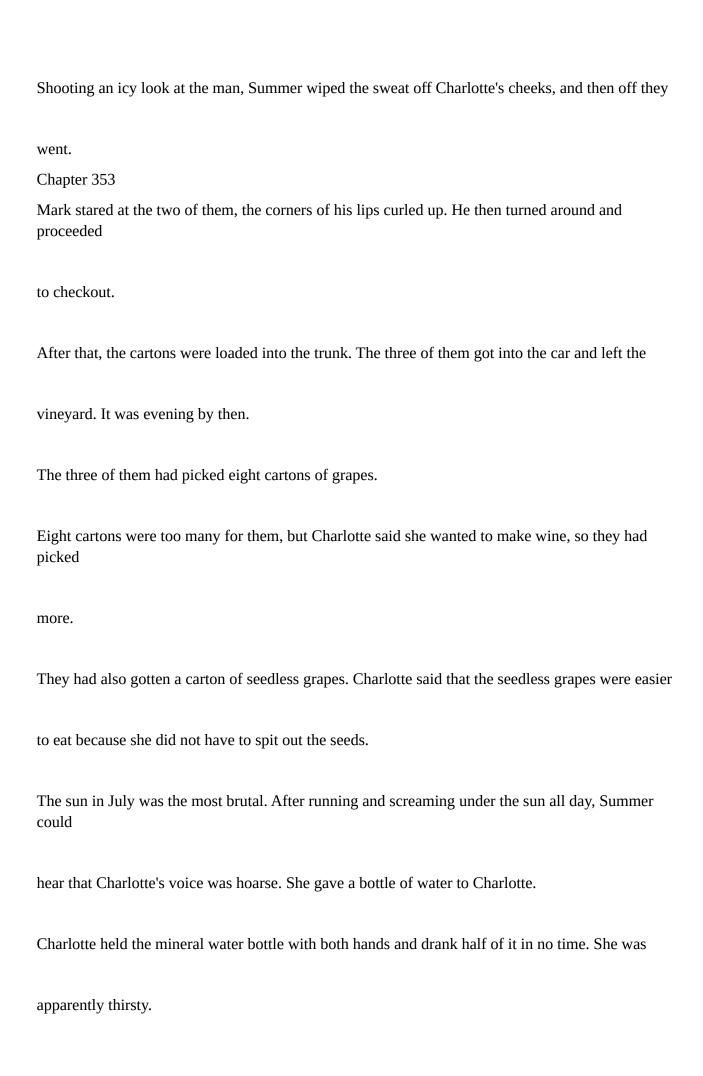
soaked. People who were not in the know could mistake that as something else.

Charlotte was busily counting the grapes. Mark was standing behind Summer and saw her situation

clearly.

He knew that his sweating soiled her pants. His face sank, and he felt heat violently rising inside him,





She passed the remaining half bottle of mineral water to Summer, and then leaned back in the back seat and protruded her belly. "Mommy, I feel like sleeping."

"Go to sleep, honey." She drew Charlotte into her arms so that Charlotte could sleep more comfortably.

During summer, whether she was at school or at home, Charlotte would usually take an afternoon nap.

But today, she did not even get a moment of shut-eye.

Sure enough, within a few minutes after closing her eyes, Charlotte was sound asleep. After a day of sun exposure, her cheeks were red.

With her hand gently stroking that soft little face, Summer felt calm and content.

After a long while, her legs felt numb, so much so that she did not dare to shift her legs. So she put

Charlotte down on the seat between the two of them.

handed her to the driver in front. "Carry her."

The car drove into Santabaca not long after, and then stopped in front of the hotel where Summer stayed.

Mark picked up Charlotte with his muscular arms before Summer realised what was happening. He

"Aye, Mr. Valentine." The driver took the child from Mark, quickly opened the door and walked out, then

took a taxi and left. "Mark! You weasel!" Summer was furious at last, hitting him on the chest like an angry, juvenile lion. She felt so enraged for the first time, her usual coolness and sensibility had gone out of the window i n an instant. How dare he-how dare he take Charlotte away while she let her guard down? Rage consumed her. It surged and jumped inside of her, as if she was up in flames as she hit him with all her strength. Marked ignored the pain in his chest and caught her hands. His lips moved as a deep but gentle voice came out of his mouth. "You have been with her for four years. I am her dad b y blood, but have only taken her away for two days. Why are you so enraged?" 1 "Did you even tell me beforehand?" Her chest was still heaving, but she was gradually calming down. The child had been taken away, and it would not help to get angry. The most important thing now was

to think about how to get Charlotte back. Chapter 354 Mark hit the nail on the head. "You held her tightly in your arms even when she was asleep. If it weren't for your legs getting numb, you wouldn't have put her down. You had been so alert. If I were to tell you beforehand, what would you have done? You would have probably carried her and jumped out of the car." "Mark, she is my daughter; I have the right to take her away." She reminded him in an icy voice and flung his hand away. "I didn't say that she was not your daughter, did I?" "So I want to take her away." Summer spelled out the words as she stared at him. "Ms. Hart, she is my daughter, too. Trust me, you can't take her away." Mark sguinted and smiled and reminded her as well. "When can I take her away, Mark? You have got to give me a definite answer." Mark raised his lips with a half-smile and stared at her with a casual and lazy look on his face. "I can even give you two answers. The first one is that after you apply for a change of custody, you can

take her away at any time on the day the court awards
custody to you. I absolutely have no problem with that. The second answer is that you sleep with me
for a month, and I will consider giving up custody of the child." i
His thinking was that one month was long enough to make him get bored and disgusted with a
woman's body, no matter how obsessed he was with her before.
One month was enough for him to figure out if he was just fascinated by her body, or he really loved
her.
His abnormality should disappear and return to the previous normal state by then.
Summer snickered, feeling his words reeking of irony. "Mark, once bitten, twice shy. Do you think I will
be fooled a second time?"
She had been fooled into a verbal agreement to get married once. This time, she would never be
fooled again.
Even if she really gave in to his request and kept an audio record of the verbal agreement, would she
go to court with that kind of recording when he broke his word?
No way.

"Very well, it seems that the life lesson has worked well. But I still have to tell you that sometimes in

order to get what you want, you have to give up something and take risks." His voice was deep and

slow.

"Haven't you heard the saying: once bitten, twice shy? You have betrayed me once, thus I am not

going to trust you anymore, and I am not going to take the so-called risks."

Mark's eyebrows twitched. This time, he meant what h e said, but she did not believe it anymore.

He did not want to maintain this hostile relationship, which he very much hated.

"Then, I have a peaceful proposal for you."

"A peaceful proposal?" Summer looked up at him.

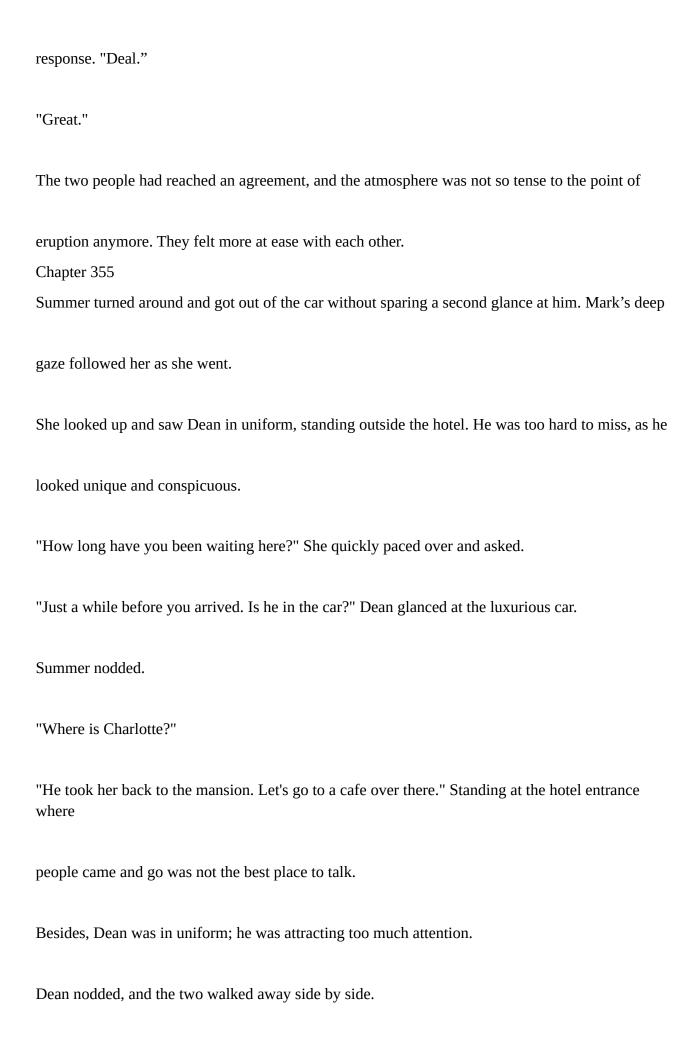
"While the court is deliberating my application for custodial rights, Charlotte will stay with me. But you

may see her every day in my mansion, and I will not limit the time you see her. After the court has

decided on the rights to custody, the one who wins the custodial right can take Charlotte away. What do

you say?" His voice was deep, but lacked the usual casualness. He sounded like he meant business.

Summer said nothing. She was pondering about it quietly. After a long while, she nodded and gave her



Sensing a piercing gaze coming from behind, Summer frowned. She glanced at the black car with the
corner of her eyes and then ignored it.
Mark's chest was boiling with a nameless anger as he
stared at Summer from behind, a heavy and gloomy expression clouding his face.
Just after accepting his proposal, she turned around and walked away with another man. He wished he
could go up and crush her shoulders with his hands.
He put his well-proportioned hands back on the steering wheel and drove forward with a sunken
expression. 1
The two went to a coffee shop and sat by the window. They were talking about something, but not for
long. Summer returned to the hotel after half an hour, while Dean went off in the other direction.
The depressed expression on Mark's face improved at last. He narrowed his eyes, pursed his lips, and
then started his car.
Meanwhile, the driver who was carrying Charlotte had been waiting in a car. When he saw the black
Land Rover pulled up, he took over the car and parked it up.

Mark gingerly carried Charlotte in his arms and walked into the elevator. The door to the living room swung open, and he saw Yvette sitting on the settee. Yvette turned around when she heard footsteps. "Mark But before she could speak any further, Mark put a finger to his lips, telling her not to make a sound. When Yvette saw he was holding a little girl in his arms, she was almost certain that the little girl was the daughter of Summer. She got up from the settee and walked over, studying Charlotte with a mean expression. This child was surely born to that woman, judging by the similarity between their eyebrows and eyes. But it was also Mark's child. Her eyes, nose, and mouth looked very much like Mark's when he was small. As beautiful as the child was, she could not bring herself to like her because of Summer. She not only disliked, but felt disgusted about the child, i When she thought of how Summer repeatedly humiliated her and wanted to push her down the stairs, her disgust for Charlotte deepened.

Mark put Charlotte on the bed and then went into the bathroom to take a shower. He was sweating the

entire day in the vineyard, and the sticky feeling made him frown in disgust.

He let the hot water flow down his body. As he rubbed his hand to the back of his neck, he thought of

the afternoon scene. He closed his eyes, the sharp lines of his face softening as he rubbed his fingers

that had touched the back of his neck a second ago over his lips. 1

Chapter 356

She could never compete with him for custody.

Yvette was still sitting in the living room, as she still had some questions to ask Mark.

Mark had changed into a clean set of clothes and came out. He took a sip of water. "What are you

doing here?"

"Your grandma is worried about you. She wants to make sure I buy you some supplements. By the

way, who is that child?" She pretended she did not know.

Unconsciously, his voice became deep and soft: "She i s my daughter." His voice spontaneously

became gentle.

"With Summer?" she asked knowingly.

Mark nodded, sat down on the settee, and folded his legs in a graceful fashion.

"She didn't demand things such as money from you? She was sanctimonious." Again, she tried to sound him out.

Her words caught Mark's attention. "What did you hide from me four years ago? What do you mean by

saying she was sanctimonious?" 1 "Four years ago, when you took Baine abroad and gave

me a blank check to pass to Summer, she sanctimoniously refused it. I tore up the check afterward."

Mark sat up straight on the settee. "Why didn't you tell me this until now?"

"She refused to accept the check, no matter how hard I tried to convince her. Besides, you were in

Athana, and I had forgotten about it as time went by."

His eyes were as deep as a whirlpool, his lips pressed into a straight line, and his expression did not

look good.

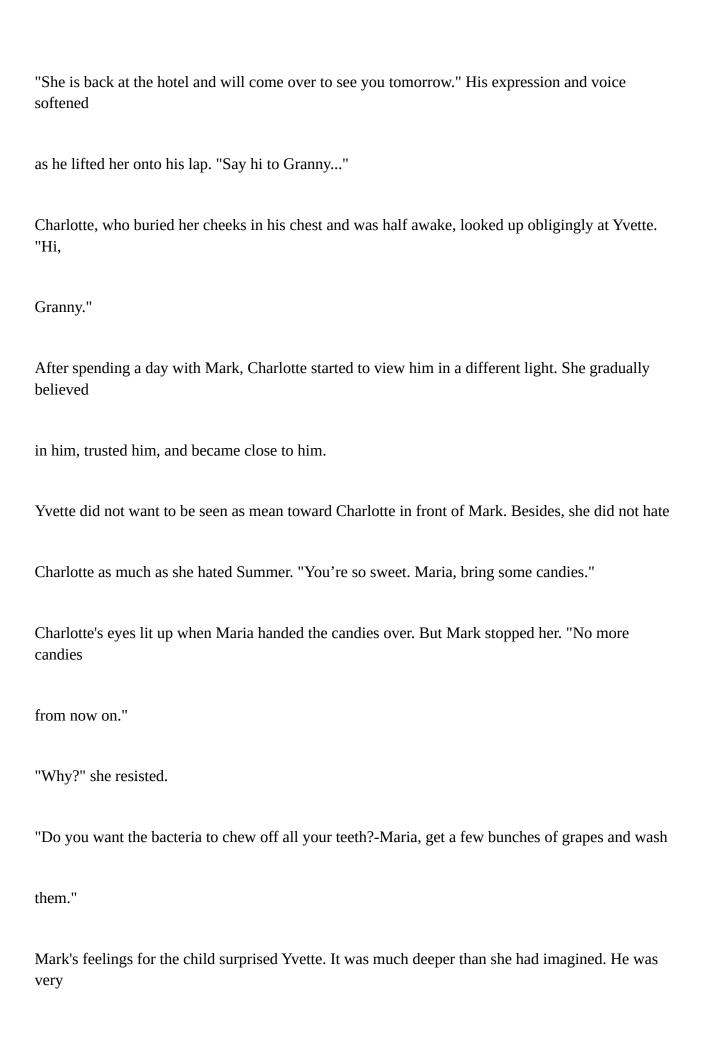
He had been thinking that Yvette had given Summer the check, not knowing that that was not the case.

Summer raised the child for four years without using a single cent from him. He did not like this feeling

at all.

Just then, Charlotte was awake. She walked out of the bedroom, rubbing her eyes with both hands.

Coming u p to Mark, she looked at him with a confused expression. "Where is Mommy, Mark?"



protective of her.

She frowned and decided to talk about it openly. "Mark, do you want it or not?"

She was really curious about whether he wanted custody of the child.

Charlotte was still young and understood none of this. She took the grapes she picked herself and

chomped on them, totally enjoying it. "They are sweet!"

Mark got what she meant, but he said not a word. His expression deepened, and he pursed his lips.

Using his warm fingers, he wiped off the grape juice that overflowed from the corners of Charlotte's

mouth.

"Mark." Charlotte smiled as he handed a few grapes u p to his mouth. Her smile broadened when Mark

did not respond. "It was sour at noon, but this time it's really sweet. Try it."

Chapter 357

"Really?" Mark's long eyebrows were raised questioningly to tease her.

"Really." Charlotte nodded her head like a pigeon. "I will eat it, Mark. Look."

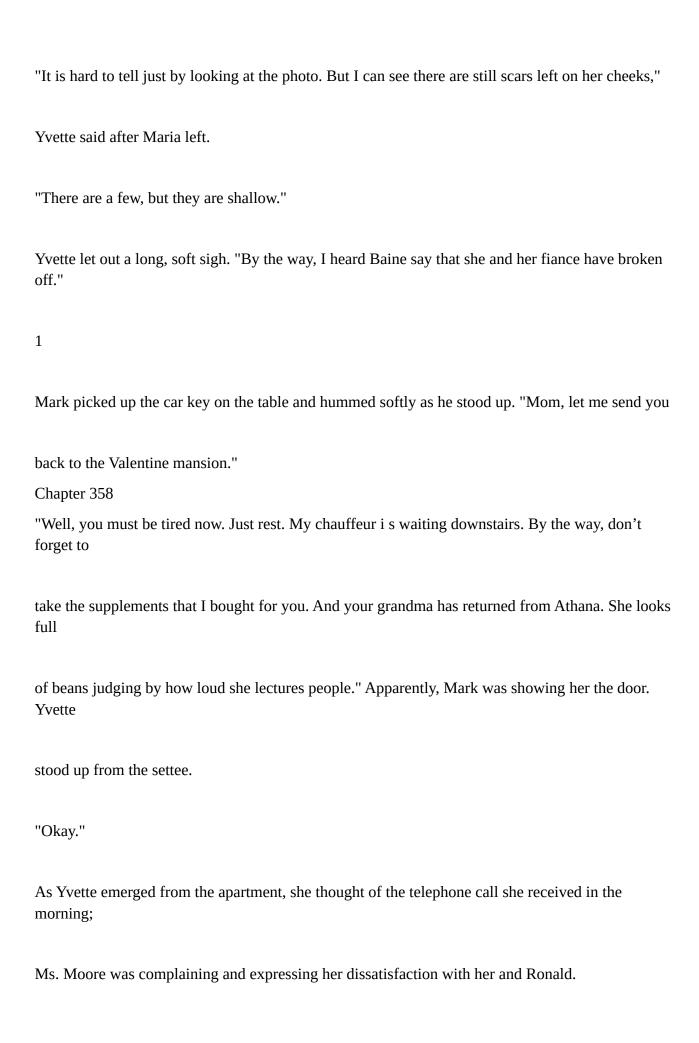
She plucked three grapes at a time with her tender hand, and then popped them all into her small

mouth. Her round face bulged even rounder. She looked adorable and innocent. At the same time, she

did not forget to lick her pink lips. "Look, it is very sweet this time. I'm not lying."

The corner of Mark's lips turned up. He leaned forward and ate a few grapes from her hands. "Mark, why didn't Mommy take me away with her today? Will she really come to see me tomorrow?" "She will..." Charlotte was relieved and looked around the living room. "Where is Kaka?" "It is having a shower. It will be sent over in a while." Acting mysteriously, Charlotte put her mouth to his ear and said in a very low voice. "Let me tell you a secret, Mark." "What secret?" Her dark eyes rolled in her eye sockets a few times, and then her innocent but serious voice came. "I don't hate you very much now." Such simple words were enough to ease his sullenness. The corners of his lips curved upward. Yvette furrowed her willow eyebrows as she looked at the interaction between the two. Mark did not answer her question, but she could see that he was pampering and indulging the child. But it did not matter to her whether Mark wanted custody of the child or not. Summer had been divorced, and was no longer her daughter-in-law. So she would not give a damn about this child.





When Ms. Moore suffered from a cerebral hemorrhage and underwent treatment in Athana, Ronald had never visited her. It was undeniably unbecoming of him as a son-in-law. Now that Ms. Moore was back from Athana, Ronald had to go to Norwood, no matter what. She took out her mobile phone, dialed the number, and pressed the call button. There was no answer. Anger boiled inside Yvette. Since he did not pick up her call, she would keep calling until he answered. The call finally got through after six or seven attempts, and she heard heavy breathing at the other end. 1 "What are you doing? Why did you only pick up after s o long? I have been trying to call you for seven times!" Yvette was upset. "I am busy with documentation work. Someone is coming for an inspection tomorrow. Please cut it short if you have anything to say." Ronald's voice was a little hoarse. Yvette sensed something amiss. "What's the matter with your voice? You sound like you have a frog in your throat."

"I have caught a cold. Just cut to the chase. What's u p?" Ronald urged.

"How could you catch a cold on such a hot day? I wonder how you take care of yourself. Do you want me to go to Grudin North to take care of you?" "You are run down yourself and may not get used to the weather here. I will feel bad if you fall sick. Just stay in the Valentine mansion. I will make time to go home." Ronald apparently just wanted to brush her off. But Yvette had fallen for his sweet talk and not sensed anything amiss. Her initial anger had dissipated." Whatever you say. By the way, my mom is back from Athana. Make time to visit her in Norwood. Or else, she would be angry." "All right. Is there anything else? If not, I will hang up." "Okay, remember-" The line went dead before Yvette could finish her sentence. But at the moment he hung up, Yvette faintly heard a female voice calling Ronald. The voice was tender as the murmur of rain. She shook her head, thinking she must have imagined it. 1 Ronald had been treating her better than previously for the past four years. Sometimes he would return every couple of months, although he would not stay overnight in the Valentine mansion. He would

also

go shopping with her, have dinner with and buy clothes for her. Even the press in Norwood reported they were a model couple.

The next day

Summer woke up early, freshened up, and then took a taxi to the apartment. Maria, who answered the

door, immediately knew that Summer was Charlotte's mom. 1

Charlotte was playing with Kaka when she heard Summer's voice. She rushed over and hugged her

legs. "Mommy!"

Summer carried her up in her arms and thanked Maria before sitting down on the settee with Charlotte.

Chapter 359

Mark had gone to the office. There were only the three of them, including Maria. So Summer felt at

ease.

She spent the entire day with Charlotte until evening. She looked at the time. It was 8:00 pm. She

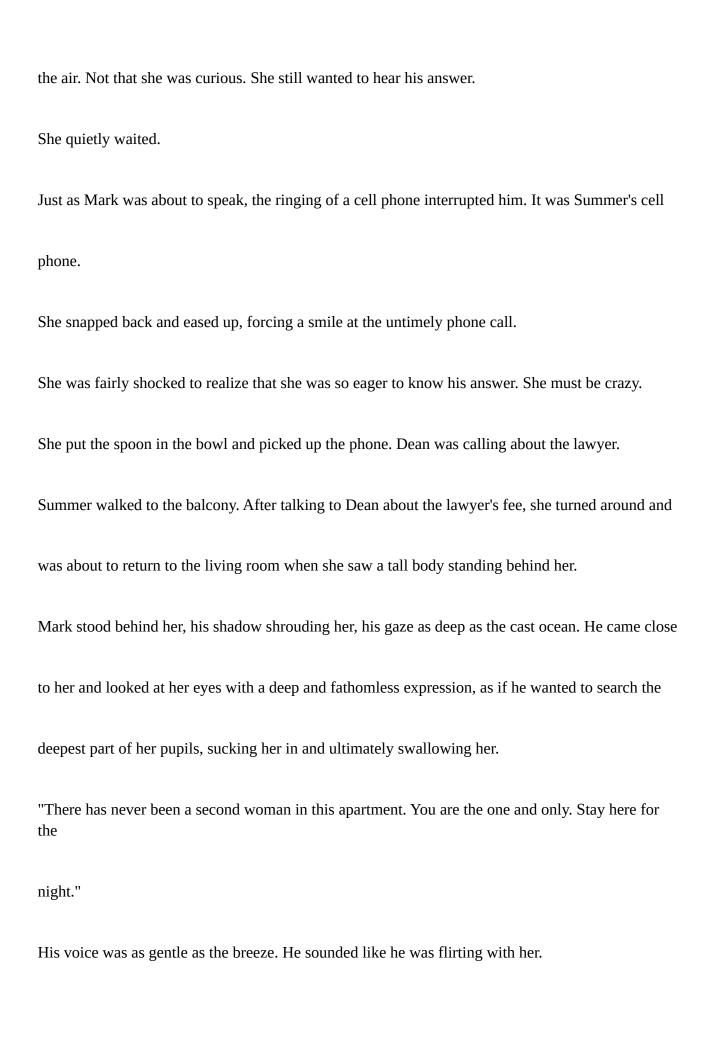
thought about cooking some porridge for Charlotte before leaving.

While she was busy in the kitchen, Mark returned and inadvertently saw the white high heels in the

hallway. His eyes moved and the corners of his lips turned upward.

Summer emerged from the kitchen with a bowl of porridge. "Come take some porridge," she said in a





Those words and tone of voice made her heart race involuntarily.

There was no one else but only her reflection in his eyes, as if she was the only one in his world.

His deep eyes that were as black as ink were now flashing with a profound, seductive charm.

If a man's eyes are too long and narrow, he will only appear more vicious and ruthless when he is

heartless. But if he is affectionate, his eyes could make women wallow in his affection.

Summer pulled back from her runaway thoughts after a while, then suppressed her emotions and

throbbing heart that should not be there. She restored the same calm and coldness as before, as if

nothing had ever happened.

Chapter 360

It was not proper for her to stay overnight here, considering their current relationship.

And she did not know what he felt and thought when he said that.

She also did not understand what he meant when he said those awkward words.

With their current relationship, it was not suitable for her to stay here, let alone stay overnight and sleep

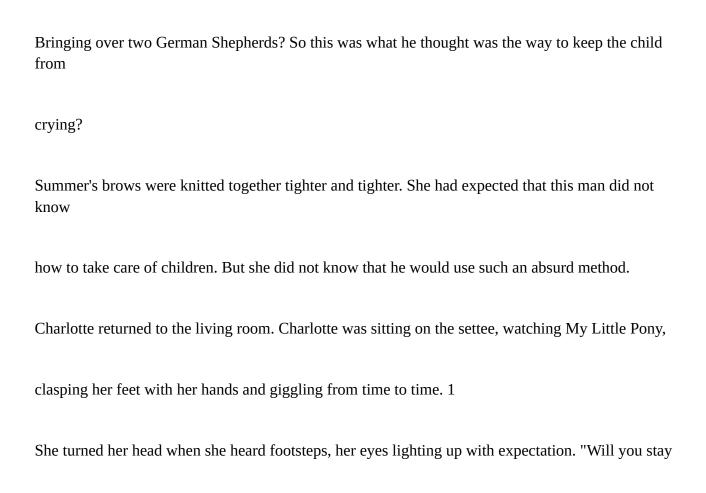
here.

"That won't be necessary. The hotel is not very far from here." She looked away and declined his offer.

Mark was not surprised by the answer. A dim light flashed in his eyes, and he narrowed his eyes.

She was just as stubborn as she was four years ago.
But since he proposed the peace agreement that day, their relationship had eased. They were no
longer hostile toward each other.
He was happy with this change.
"Are you afraid that I will do something to you? You seem to be timider now."
His words sounded a little provocative.
Summer frowned, ignoring him as she walked away.
Mark reacted at once, stepping out with his left leg to block her way. His narrow eyes were raised up.
"Are you sure you won't stay here for the night?"
"I have already answered."
He kneaded his forehead with his shapely hand, eyes still on her. "Up to you, Ms. Hart. It's just that
Charlotte has been crying a bit badly for the past few nights."
Summer's eyebrows twitched, not really believing in his words. Had Charlotte been crying so badly,
Charlotte would have called her.
But she did not even receive a call from Charlotte for the past few nights.

"The German Shepherd is not there for nothing. It has its uses. At least, it could scare the child." Mark
shrugged, turned around, muttering to himself absentmindedly.
Summer looked at him from behind and raised her voice involuntarily. "You scared her with a German
Shepherd?"
Charlotte was cynophobic. She would usually run away when she saw dogs. Let alone a big German
Shepherd. It would scare the daylights out of her.
Mark stood there and turned his face slightly. "I know little about coaxing children. Since the big gray
wolf didn't work, a German Shepherd might. It turned out that I was right," he said in a deep voice. After
a
momentary pause, he continued, "I would have to bring the German Shepherd over again tonight. If
she still cries nonstop tonight, two German Shepherds might work better. I've got to try that out."
Mark did not turn around or turn his head but just walked away, squinting his eyes to observe her
reaction.
He then went into the bathroom to take a bath.



with me tonight?" "I will," she said after a moment of hesitation.