

## Spoiled 531

Chapter 531: Annie is My Daughter

Half an hour later, Charlotte Thompson found herself staring blankly from the sofa, until the doorbell's urgent ringing brought her out of it.

A twinge of anticipation stirred within Charlotte as she shuffled in her slippers to answer the door.

As she drew it open, a familiar face awaited her.

Her gaze was icy, her hand, gripping the door, slightly tightened until the knuckles blanched.

"What are you doing here?"

Charlotte took a deep breath, her tone brisk. "I've made it perfectly clear over the phone."

With that said, she didn't even glance at the man before her and was about to close the door.

Anticipating her action, Justin Battleson hurriedly took a step forward, blocking the door, pain flickered in his eyes.

"Hear me out." His voice was deep, tinged with a raspy sound. "I admit that the post yesterday was due to my negligence, and I'll delete it right now."

He paused, his gaze falling on Charlotte, and his voice slightly trembled.

"Don't leave Riley Group, please?"

Charlotte turned her head away, her face etched with a look of pained reluctance that she hadn't even noticed herself. Her voice was somewhat strained, "I've made up my mind, there's no point in anything you'll say."

She looked at Justin, her clear eyes filled with complicated emotions. "You should go now."

At her words, Justin gazed at her blankly, he seemed to forget any gestures.

Charlotte hardened her heart to close the door, she then returned to the living room.

The doorbell was ringing again from the other side, she irritably switched on the TV and turned up its volume to drown out the sound of the doorbell completely.

She leaned back in some irritation, and let out a deep sigh.

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The following day.

It was the day Henry Hudson was supposed to be discharged from the hospital, and Charlotte Thompson drove there early in the morning. The moment she approached the hospital, she saw Henry, clad in a black jacket, descending the stairs.

Charlotte rolled down the window and excitedly waved at him.

Henry saw her as well, smiled, and then opened the car door and got in.

All the way to Henry's apartment, Charlotte was oddly full of joy. She was practically laughing as she drove. They got out of the car and she pulled out some groceries from the backseat.

Henry watched her movements, his eyebrows raised slightly in question.

Seemingly understanding his uncertainty, Charlotte laughed and said, "Today is your discharge day, I've brought some ingredients to celebrate."

Upon entering, Charlotte carried the groceries straight into the kitchen while Henry sank into the sofa, watching her with a smile in his eyes.

Sunlight poured in obliquely from the window sash, giving the scene a peaceful, tranquil air.

In the kitchen, Charlotte skillfully started to clean and chop the vegetables. Though Henry had been in the hospital for a long time, there wasn't a speck of dust in his apartment, indicating that a housekeeper must be coming regularly to clean.

Just as she was about to start cooking the noodles, the phone resting on the table suddenly rang.

Charlotte's hand, holding the noodles, twitched slightly. She glanced at the caller ID, her eyebrows raising in surprise.

"Annie"

She quickly set down the noodles, grabbed a few paper towels to wipe her hand, and answered the call.

Before she could even say a word, a flurry of sounds came from the other end, a mix of hysterical insults and sobs.

Charlotte's heart skipped a beat. Her grip on the phone tightened in anticipation, and after a few seconds, she tentatively called out.

"Annie?"

The commotion on the other end gradually subsided, and Annie Anne's desperate voice finally sounded, still tinged with sobs.

"Charl... I remember, I remember everything." She was crying so hard she could barely speak. "Annie is my daughter, right?"

Chapter 532 I miss her so much.

Charlotte Thompson's heart skipped a beat, listening to Annie Anne's almost uncontrollable voice on the other end of the phone, she couldn't describe what she was feeling.

She turned off the stove, listening to the faint bubbling sound coming from the pot, and closed her eyes.

"Annie, calm down."

Annie Anne had just woken up and was undoubtedly shifting between lucidity and confusion. Seeing Olivia Thompson now might frighten her.

But Annie Anne couldn't calm down at all, Charlotte felt a bit of a headache and pulled over a chair to sit down.

Where was Oliver Hudson? With Annie Anne being this out of control, why hadn't she heard him say anything?

Suppressing the urge to curse at Oliver Hudson, Charlotte heard Annie Anne's intermittent voice through the receiver.

"Charlotte, I want to see Annie. I miss her so much."

Then, she began to neurotically murmur Olivia Thompson's name.

Before Charlotte could respond, she heard a man's voice on the other end of the line. He seemed to sigh, then started to patiently comfort her.

Even through the phone, she could hear the regret and guilt in Oliver Hudson's voice.

Charlotte expelled a mouthful of turbid air, confirming that the speaker was indeed Oliver Hudson, before she stopped cursing him in her heart.

Seemingly hearing the helplessness in her tone over the phone, Oliver put down the cup in his hand and walked towards the kitchen.

In the kitchen, Charlotte stood with her back to the door, silent for a while, before she finally addressed Oliver, who had taken Annie's phone from her.

"You have to calm her down first, I will bring Annie over in a while."

On the other side, Oliver walked toward the window sill with the phone, nodded gratefully at her words, and said, "Thank you."

Charlotte gave a slight nod, then quickly hung up the phone.

"Was that King Samuel?"

Hearing that, Charlotte turned her head and saw Henry Hudson standing in the kitchen doorway.

She paused slightly, then sighed, "Yes, Annie has woken up."

"That's a good thing." Henry glanced at the half-cooked noodles, then said, "If you have something to do, go ahead. Leave this to me."

As his words fell, there was some guilt in Charlotte's eyes, but her tone was surprisingly, "You know how to cook?"

Henry quickly strode over, picked up the noodles on the table, and laughed, "Cooking noodles is much easier than handling company affairs. Don't worry."

Only then did Charlotte nod in relief. She picked up her bag and prepared to leave, and after a moment of thought, she said, "Then I'll go first, I'll make it up to you next time."

As she spoke, Henry continued to cook the noodles and responded with a laugh, "I'm honored."

After leaving Henry Hudson's apartment, Charlotte drove straight to the kindergarten without a break. It was currently class time, she found Olivia's classroom, briefly explained the situation to the teacher, and was then able to take Olivia out with a leave slip.

She held Olivia's hand, clearly feeling the girl's moist palm.

As she walked, she turned her head and asked.

"Annie, are you very nervous?"

A rare mix of surprise and fear appeared on Olivia's face. She tightened her grip on Charlotte's hand and then nodded shyly.

Charlotte's heart was filled with mixed feelings.

She stopped, squatted down to Olivia's eye level, and said, "Annie is a brave big girl now, so you need to be brave when you see mommy later."

She raised her hand and gently ruffled Olivia's soft hair, straining to muster a smile.

She never expected that one day she would have to take the child she had raised to see her biological mother.

Chapter 533: Mommy Needs You

There seems to be a light flashing in Olivia's big eyes. After hearing Charlotte's words, she nodded seriously, as if she was accomplishing an extremely important task.

Charlotte smiled in relief, stood up, took her hand, and continued to walk towards the school gate.

The distance from the kindergarten to the hospital is only half an hour, but for some reason, at this moment, Charlotte wishes that this road could be longer, much longer.

Holding Olivia's hand, when they arrived at the door of the ward, they could hear a woman's soft mumbling from inside the room through the door.

Charlotte lowered her gaze, suddenly losing the courage to open the door.

She knew what would happen next. Annie would recognize her daughter, and Olivia could truly have the companionship of her biological parents.

She should be happy, shouldn't she?

She tried to smile, but it was a strained and grimacing smile. Even Olivia seemed to notice that something was wrong. She just lowered her head to look at their intertwined hands, gently saying, "Mommy, you're shaking."

Charlotte's body stiffened, but she didn't respond.

A few seconds passed. Her cold hand was enveloped in a warm little hand. Olivia earnestly covered her hand, sounding exceptionally serious, "Mommy, are you cold now?"

At the sound of her words, Charlotte's heart ached. She turned away, laughed lightly, and softly said, "Mommy isn't cold. Let's go in."

With that, she seemed to muster all her courage to push open the door in front of her. Even the hand that pushed the door was trembling slightly.

The sound of the door opening was moderate, neither loud nor soft, and the gaze of the two people inside the room simultaneously shifted to them.

Charlotte pulled Olivia to stand in place, looking at Annie Anne, who was pale as death on the hospital bed.

Annie's eyes were red and swollen, as if she had just cried. After seeing Charlotte and Olivia, her dull gaze focused again.

Only Charlotte clearly saw the light gradually brightening in Annie's lifeless eyes.

Charlotte pursed her lips, looking down at Olivia, and whispered, "Annie, go ahead, Mommy needs you."

Upon hearing this, the little girl timidly widened her eyes. It seemed that she remembered what Charlotte had just said to her. She nodded vigorously, letting go of Charlotte's hand, and with steady steps in her little leather shoes, walked forward.

Charlotte watched her back, at a loss for words.

On the hospital bed, Annie stared blankly at the little girl coming toward her, her mouth opened and closed a few times, but she couldn't say a word.

Suddenly, she turned her head and covered her mouth with her hands as she began to sob.

What expression should she use to face her own Annie?

The years of forgetting and owing to Olivia felt like a mountain in her heart, pressing on her chest mercilessly. Even her breathing hurt.

King Samuel stood aside, unable to bear the sight and turned his head away.



However, Charlotte looked up at Annie with slightly red eyes and whispered softly, "Annie, she's right in front of you."

Annie was crying so hard that she couldn't speak. She turned her head and tried to get out of bed, but her legs were so weak she fell to the floor.

Charlotte and King Samuel both tensed their gazes and started to run over, but they were stopped by Annie's voice.

Charlotte blinked her eyes, holding back her tears. Only after rubbing the moisture at the corner of her eyes did she turn around to look on.

Annie sat on the floor, her line of sight level with Charlotte's. Her face, devoid of all trace of colour, was soaked in luminous tears, and her eyes were filled with unspeakable sorrow.

But it was clear, despite it all, she was happy.

Olivia pursed her lips; tears spun in her eyes but, stubborn as she was, she refused to let them fall.

#### Chapter 534: Apology

The mother and daughter stared at each other for several seconds, their eyes brimming with unshed tears. It was as if they were traversing through time and space, silently communicating their inner sorrow.

Annie Anne, in a daze, reached out to touch Olivia Thompson's warm cheek and murmured, "Annie... my little Annie."

On the other hand, Olivia pursed her lips, raised her hand, and gently wiped away the tears on Annie's face with her soft fingers. In a soft, tender voice, she said, "Mommy, don't cry. Annie is here with you."

Upon hearing this, Annie's eyes widened in surprise and delight. She quickly held onto Olivia's hand, her voice trembling, "Annie... What did you call me?"

She started crying again: "Annie, are you not mad at Mommy?"

"I'm sorry, my dear. Mommy shouldn't have forgotten you."

"I've cruelly left you alone for so many years. Don't you hate me?"

Each word she spoke felt like an admission to a crime, an attempt to apologize.

Charlotte Thompson rolled her eyes, her tears flowing uncontrollably. She held back her sobs, raised her hand, and silently wiped away her tears.

Hearing all this, Olivia shook her head earnestly, "Annie knows that Mommy didn't mean to leave me. Aunt Charlotte told me that Mommy forgot about Annie because she was ill."

She carefully looked at Annie and asked: "Will Mommy forget about Annie again?"

As these words fell, Annie shook her head vigorously, raised her hands haphazardly to wipe away her tears, and said: "No, my love. Even if Mommy forgets herself, she will never forget you again."

Upon hearing this, Olivia's eyes widened, and a hint of joy flashed in her gaze.

Annie choked back a sob and hugged Olivia tightly, but didn't dare to hold her too hard, treating her like a rare treasure.

The little girl wrapped her arms around Annie's neck, a look of satisfaction spread across her face.

Behind them, King Samuel felt his emotions stirring. He casually wiped away a tear from the corner of his eye and chuckled.

The grip around the handbag in Charlotte's hand tightened for a moment. After just a few seconds, she relaxed and a faint smile appeared on her face.

Finally, things were starting to get back on track.

After a few seconds of thought, King Samuel walked over to Charlotte and quietly said, "Thank you, Miss Thompson."

This gratitude was one that he had never before expressed so sincerely in his life.

He opened his mouth, at a loss for words. He simply lowered his gaze and softly said, "Let Annie stay here. Annie's emotions are not quite stable at the moment, and being with her might help her."

Charlotte's hand, hanging by her side, tensed slightly. Then she exhaled a heavy breath and nodded with a smile: "That's fine. Just remember to take good care of the two of them - mother and daughter. They've had it tough."

Watching King Samuel nod solemnly, Charlotte left the room feeling reassured.

The sky started to darken. Glancing at the time, Charlotte realized it was indeed getting late - it was time to pick up the kids from daycare.

She got into the car, but she felt strangely hollow.

Charlotte rolled down the car window and refrained from driving off immediately. Instead, she looked up at the hospital building through the window.

She was unsure if she felt more glad or sorrowful. Olivia had been recognized by Annie and her family was finally reunited, which she found genuinely heartening.

However, what saddened her was that over the years, she had regarded Olivia as her own child. Once Olivia returned to Annie's side, her role in the family would change.

Now, she was just Olivia's godmother.

Chapter 535: We Don't Want to Leave You

The slightly cool evening breeze gradually calmed her somewhat irritated heart.

Leaning lightly against the car window, Charlotte felt a growing sorrow.

After all, Chad and Jack were not her children. Even if they didn't say it, their desire to stay with Adam Ross was clear, based on her understanding of them.

Family blood ties, after all, could never be severed.

Charlotte slightly raised her head, her hand soothing her eyebrows; her eyes were full of exhaustion.

Oh well, she'd take one step at a time.

Thinking this, she no longer overthought, starting the car and driving towards the kindergarten.

There were many people and cars outside the kindergarten. At the time when the children were let out, it was peak hour, and all parents, whether driving or walking, were there to pick up their children.

Charlotte found a parking space and parked her car. As she got out, she immediately saw Grace Thompson standing near the entrance of the kindergarten.

On seeing her, the children's faces flickered with surprise, but this lasted for only a few seconds before turning into joy.

Grace Thompson shouted and ran towards her, her little legs bouncing with excitement, she jumped and hugged Charlotte.

Some of Charlotte's desolate mood was finally remedied by her. She stepped forward; standing beside the children was a woman who seemed to be younger than thirty, wearing glasses, and who looked like a teacher.

She extended her hand, smiling: "You must be the children's teacher, right?"

The woman seemed a little surprised for a few seconds, then extended her hand to shake with Charlotte, chuckling, "Nice to meet you, my last name is Hughes, I'm the children's teacher."

She paused, her gaze harboring a trace of curiosity.

"You seem very familiar, are you Miss Charlotte?"

Hearing that, Charlotte frowned slightly, then reluctantly smiled.

Yes, with the rumors on the internet going wild, her name was almost universally known now.

As for whether that was good or bad, that was another matter altogether.

Charlotte nodded slightly, opened her mouth, and then closed it; finally, she just chuckled, "Teacher Hughes, it's getting late. We should leave now, goodbye."

Teacher Hughes adjusted her glasses, smiled, and bid her farewell, then watched as the children left with her.

Only when they were completely out of sight did the smile on Teacher Hughes' face not diminish. She took out her phone from her bag and dialed a number confidently.

Her voice carried an air of casualness.

"I have a business proposition for you."

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After picking up the children, Charlotte thought for a while, then decided to take them out to eat at a restaurant.

After all, they had just moved, and there weren't many groceries at home.

Before she could say anything, she heard Cyrus Thompson say somewhat confusedly, "Mommy, we went to look for Annie after school, but the teacher said she was picked up by you."

Upon hearing this, Charlotte was slightly taken aback, then chuckled, "Yes, I almost forgot to tell you, from today, Annie is officially back with her godmother."

Annie's biological mother was Annie Anne; all the kids were aware of this.

Hearing this, Chad pursed his lips, speaking sorrowfully, "Mommy, will there come a day when Jack and I will also be sent to Dad's side?"

On the other side, Jack raised his head and mumbled, "Mommy, we don't want to leave you."

After listening to the sincere words of the two children, Charlotte felt a prickle in her nose.

She lowered her gaze, suddenly unsure how to respond.

No one could predict what the future held. She couldn't lie to her children, telling them she'd always be there, could she?

Because their biological father had already appeared, there would come a day when, like Annie, they'd reunite with him.

#### Chapter 536: Five Children of Similar Ages

Charlotte's heart began to ache again. It took her a few seconds to gather herself, managing to muster up a smile, "You're both still young. Don't worry about all this. Whether you return to your father or not, just remember that I will always be your mommy."

Saying this, Chad pursed his lips, understanding the meaning behind Charlotte's words. He didn't say anything else, but there was a complicated mix of emotions in his eyes.

Charlotte shrugged her shoulders, her tone forcedly casual, "Let's not feel too sad. It's a good thing for Annie to stay with her biological parents."

While waiting for the traffic light to change, she turned to glance at Grace sitting behind her. The girl was obviously feeling dejected.

Annie usually had the best relationship with her. Despite being the youngest among the children, Annie was always eager to offer advice to Grace, like an older sibling.

On many occasions when Grace was upset and shedding tears, it was always Annie who earnestly comforted her.

Charlotte sighed, reached out and caressed the young girl's soft cheek, whispering to Grace, "Don't worry, we will still see Annie regularly."

Upon hearing this, Grace lifted her head, her big, tearful eyes fixed on Charlotte. She bit her lip and asked, "Really?"

"When have I ever lied to you?" Charlotte turned her eyes back towards the road ahead, smiled and said, "We're about to reach the restaurant. Let's all eat to our fill and turn our sorrows into appetite, okay?"

Upon hearing her words, Grace brightened up and started nodding her head like a pecking chicken.

Charlotte had already chosen the restaurant beforehand. It was an Internet celebrity restaurant. Although it was quite crowded, the food truly lived up to the hype.

She led Grace into the restaurant, found an empty table and sat down with the kids. At this point, the waiter came over with the menu.

Charlotte glanced at it and casually selected a few dishes while also ordering a few juices.

The restaurant was filled with people, mostly young couples with their children, or lovebirds. It was rather unusual to see someone like Charlotte alone with five kids.

She saw a number of glances being thrown in her direction. Not seeming to mind, she simply turned her head and engaged Grace in a conversation.

What she failed to notice was that a few minutes after they had walked in, a woman wearing glasses and a mask entered and took a seat at the table next to hers.

It was right in Charlotte's blind spot.

The woman quietly took out her phone, turned on the camera, and quickly snapped a few pictures in Charlotte's direction.

The woman did everything so subtly that no one noticed. After waiting a few seconds, she stood up and walked out of the restaurant as if she was just a random customer.

Behind her, the waiter prepared to present her with the menu, but by the time he realized what was happening, he only saw her back exiting the door.

The waiter dejectedly took back the menu and muttered, "So strange."



Outside the restaurant, the woman checked the photos she had taken. A satisfied smile curled at the corner of her lips at what she saw.

She exited her gallery, opened her contacts list, and called a number.

The call was picked up almost instantly. She excitedly spoke before the other person could.

"Sister Hughes, your information was spot-on," her eyes shone brightly, her voice quaking with excitement. "This news is going to be even bigger than the last time. My promotion is definitely not far off."

She paused for a second before continuing, "By the way, Sister Hughes, I am curious. How did this woman manage to give birth to five children of similar ages?"

Upon hearing this, the woman on the other end chuckled, "Let's not pry into others' affairs. Just focus on getting the news out."

Chapter 537: Did She Give Birth to Children for Both of Them?

In the restaurant, not long had passed before the dishes were all served. Grace Thompson, excited, picked up her cup and took a sip.

Her eyes brightened after a sip.

Charlotte Thompson chuckled fondly and handed her a tissue.

Grace loved orange juice most. As she often put it, even the biggest problem would seem less significant after a glass of orange juice. If not, just have another glass.

All of her children were eating quietly. Charlotte watched them in satisfaction, seeing the joy in their eyes.

By the time they enjoyed this cozy time, the sky had already darkened completely. It was drizzling outside when they left the restaurant. Charlotte held an umbrella, herding the children into the car before driving home.

Her phone in her bag had been vibrating continuously, but she was completely unaware. A explosive piece of news was spreading across the internet like a virulent virus.

Once back home and the children had brushed their teeth and gone to bed, Charlotte took a bath. She sat down on the soft couch, preparing to send a message to Annie on her phone.

The moment she unlocked it, she saw continuous news pushes on Weibo.

Charlotte's fingers on the screen paused, her expression freezing - she had a rough idea of what had happened.

Feeling a bit of a headache coming on, she rubbed her temple and clicked on the news.

As expected, there were several pictures attached to a lengthy article - this time it was posted by a verified newspaper.

Due to being posted by a verified account, the news spread explosively, garnering significantly more attention.

Charlotte glanced over the lengthy article, her face darkening. She scrolled a bit and clicked open the comment section, her face darkened even more.

"OMG, is this for real, almost knocked my teeth out when I found out about the news while walking, Charlotte Thompson, not even in her thirties, already has one, two...five kids?!"

"That's not the point! Did you guys notice, that fuzzy picture shows the boy across from Charlotte looks startlingly like Justin Battleson."

"Yeah, yeah, I noticed, but what puzzled me is, do Charlotte and Justin have five kids??"

Just as netizens were scratching their heads in confusion, the newspaper published two more photos.

Netizens unanimously praised the sophisticated heat-chasing, then excitedly clicked on the news.

The two photos were of Chad Thompson and Jack Thompson.

Looking at the faces of the two children, netizens were at a loss for words. The comment section was full of ellipses and question marks.

After a while, someone wrote a long comment to analyze the situation.

"I have a bold assumption, these two kids look like Adam Ross, the child in the previous picture looks like Justin Battleson, does it mean Charlotte has had children with both of them?"

As soon as the comment came out, the internet was in an uproar.

"!!! Brother, you spoke my mind, no wonder Mr. Ross and Justin Battleson are so devoted to her, so this is why."

"Ugh, what an honor, I already found it ridiculous when they said she was just rearing fishes, now it turns out she's using her kids to elevate her status. So gross, really."

Two vomiting emojis were attached afterwards.

Charlotte scanned the comments, her grip on the phone tightened involuntarily, her knuckles went slightly white.

Several seconds passed before she removed her gaze, leaning back and rubbing her slightly sore eyes.

## Chapter 538: They Are Also My Children

In the president's office of the Riley Group.

Justin Battleson was seated in his executive chair, his expression growing progressively grim as he listened to Michael Richard's words.

"Mr. Battleson, right now public sentiment is extremely heated, and the worst part is that the children's faces have been captured in the photos. I'm afraid those who are interested will soon locate the preschool they attend." Richard paused a moment, glanced at Justin's expression, and noticed the low-pressure atmosphere permeating the office. He broke out in a cold sweat and continued, "I've managed to suppress most of the media attention, but over time..."

He hesitated to breathe before adding the remaining sentence after a few seconds.

"Internet users...those who were supposed to see have seen, and now people are saying all kinds of things."

Silence fell upon the office just as Richard finished speaking.

Justin leaned his head back, his eyes closed, and his voice became decidedly cold.

"Find out who leaked the information."

Upon hearing Justin's command, Richard felt a sense of relief. He quickly nodded his head, picked up his files, and exited the room.

The air felt slightly damp as Justin slowly stood up and positioned himself in front of the large floor-to-ceiling window.

The light rain had been falling since last night.

Suddenly, he remembered Charlotte Thompson's cold face and her uncompromising words from yesterday.

Even though he still had her resignation letter, she had not shown up at the office since yesterday.

Justin lowered his gaze, revealing no discernible emotions in his profound eyes.

She always did what she said she'd do.

After pondering for a while, he decided to give Charlotte a call.

News after news on the internet repeatedly threw her into the limelight. Justin was worried about whether she would be affected.

Finally, after nearly reaching the point of automatic disconnection, she answered the phone.

After a few seconds of silence, he asked softly, "What do you plan to do?"

On the other end, Charlotte had just called in a leave of absence from the preschool. Given the recent events, she wasn't certain if anyone would try to harass them.

She glanced over at the children sitting on the sofa, watching TV, and sighed gently. She felt a bit of a headache, "I haven't planned what to do yet. I will probably lay low; I'll take the children away from the public eye until the media furore dies down. Then I'll figure something out."

After she finished speaking, she paused briefly, her tone indicating a sense of helplessness.

"I don't want the children's identities and backgrounds to be exposed, nor do I want them to become dinner table gossip at such a young age. I just want them to grow up as normal children." Charlotte closed her eyes and rubbed her temples, sounding a little weary, "I know what's been said online, but it doesn't matter. If they can focus the attention on me and not harm the children, that would be a blessing."

After hearing her words, Justin fell silent.

He sighed, speaking with rare calmness, "I've already sent people to investigate. There must be a source to this issue."

Upon hearing this, Charlotte nodded slightly, thought for a few seconds, and finally managed to say, "Thank you."

Justin was taken aback, followed by a bitter smile, "They are my children too, so there's no need for thanks."

Charlotte pursed her lips and stopped speaking.

Justin was slightly lost in thought after hanging up the phone. Just then, Michael Richard, in a hurry, entered the office and reported, "Mr. Battleson, it wasn't hard to investigate. Our people went to the news agency. The reporter who broke the news said that a preschool teacher surnamed Hu gave her all the information."

Upon hearing his report, Justin turned his head slightly, his expression reflecting some surprise, "A preschool teacher?"

As if understanding something, the colour of his eyes went cold. "Prepare the car, we're going to the preschool."

Chapter 539: Handling

Michael Richard moves quickly. Upon hearing the information, he got in his car.

Within half an hour, the two of them arrived at the kindergarten and went straight to see the principal.

The principal was a woman about fifty years old with slightly graying hair; wearing plain clothes, she looked neat and plain.

Justin Battleson had once donated a large sum to this kindergarten during its most difficult times, so the principal naturally knew him.

"Mr. Matthew," Justin Battleson sat down on the sofa and nodded slightly. "You must be already aware of the news. I had someone investigate, and found that the news was leaked by a teacher from your school."

Mr. Matthew was an honest person, which Justin Battleson naturally admired.

However, for such a despicable incident taking place at the kindergarten, he needed to be firm with his words.

Mr. Matthew placed a cup of tea in front of him. Upon hearing Justin Battleson, his expression became a bit serious as he nodded and said, "Mr. Battleson, I understand what you mean. I will conduct a thorough investigation into this matter. If it turns out to be true, I will certainly deal with it seriously."

When his words were finished. Michael Richard, standing on one side, placed the call records and other evidence in front of Mr. Matthew, saying: "Mr. Matthew, all the evidence is here. Please have a look."

After saying that, he played the call recording between Teacher Hughes and the reporter.

After hearing this, Mr. Matthew's face also turned grim. After a while, he shook his head and sighed, "Mr. Battleson, on behalf of the kindergarten, I apologize to you. We won't keep such an immoral teacher."

Hearing Mr. Matthew intended to fire Teacher Hughes, Justin Battleson eased his stern face a bit and, with a docile tone, nodded and said, "Thank you, Mr. Matthew."

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On the other side, inside the apartment.

Charlotte Thompson stopped the animated show playing with the remote and sat down on the sofa. When Grace saw this, she was the first one to turn her head and looked at her, obviously slightly displeased.

Putting down the remote, Charlotte considered her words before speaking, "Babies, an unexpected situation has occurred. After thinking it over, I want to ask you if you're willing to go back to Ashton to continue living."

She paused, taking a lighter tone, "Of course, I'm not going to force you. I just want to hear your opinions."

Upon hearing this, Grace's face changed, blinking her big eyes dissatisfied says, "Mommy, I don't want to go back. I promised Annie to play together tomorrow. If I go back, won't I not be able to see her?"

As for Annie, Charlotte had considered that angle. If they indeed returned to Ashton, she didn't know when they would be able to see her next.

"Besides," Hank interrupted, "Mommy, I think life is richer here compared to there. We all want to stay."

Charlotte Thompson was silent when she glanced at the look on the children's faces. It was evident they all agreed with Hank's opinion.

She bit her lower lip uncomfortably, then sighed and accepted, "Alright."

She turned and went to the balcony, pulling out her phone to send a message to Jordan Thompson about the ins and outs of the situation and her idea of bringing the children back to Ashton, asking him to help her make a decision.

On the other end, after carefully reading through the message, Jordan Thompson was also in a difficult position.

The current situation was indeed tricky.



He hesitated, and then decided to call his elder brother.

Whenever he wasn't sure what to do, he subconsciously notified Henry Thompson.

To put it another way, Henry was the backbone of their family.

#### Chapter 540 Legal Responsibility

Henry Thompson was slightly taken aback for a few seconds when he received Jordan Thompson's call and couldn't react.

After settling matters in Druarus, he had rushed overnight to Ashton to hand over responsibilities. He had just gotten off the plane when the news of Charlotte Thompson caught him off guard.

Jordan's voice was somewhat anxious: "Big brother, what should we do now?"

After a few seconds, Henry frowned and replied, "It's too early to say. I'll head back home now and discuss this with grandfather. Wait for the news."

At his words, Jordan finally exhaled a breath of relief, nodding continuously. "Okay then, please hurry."

On the other side, Ashton.

Mr. Thompson had sent someone to pick up Henry at the airport. No sooner had Henry gotten into the car, he hung up the phone after furrowing his brows. He immediately sent a message to his assistant: "Put the company's affairs on hold for now. I'll be at the headquarters by noon."

After the message was successfully sent, he lifted his head and told the driver, "Let's go directly to the old house."

The old house was quite some distance away from the airport. The driver meandered around, eventually arriving at a secluded mansion.

Mr. Thompson was advanced in age and had already handed over all the business to Henry, enjoying his leisure. When Henry stepped across the threshold, he saw Mr. Thompson half-lying on a lounge chair, sun-bathing.

Standing respectfully in front of Mr. Thompson, Henry nodded slightly. "Grandfather."

Upon hearing his voice, Mr. Thompson squinted his eyes. The sharp gleam in his eyes was as piercing as ever. After a few seconds, he laughed heartily and sat up, "Ah, Henry, what brings you to the old house all of a sudden?"

A servant brought a chair behind Henry. He didn't hesitate and took a seat before giving a light chuckle. He bore a striking resemblance to Mr. Thompson, both of them exuding an air of loftiness.

"Grandfather, to be honest, I'm here because I need your advice on something," he hesitated, then relayed Jordan's words.

Upon hearing this, Mr. Thompson's face sombered. He sighed halfway, with his hands resting on both sides of the lounge chair slightly curling up. "Children are blessed with their own luck. Henry, tell Charlotte to think about the children first. If that doesn't work, we Thompsons are not pushovers."

He snorted coldly, continuing, "If all else fails, we can always silence those rumormongers with money."

At his words, Henry nodded in agreement, "After all, the children like it there. Growing up there won't be a bad thing."

After making the decision, Henry called Charlotte right away. After hearing their grandfather's opinion, Charlotte paused for a moment.

That's it then. Her initial intention was to make the children happy anyway.

She nodded and said, "Big brother, then we'll stay in Druarus. We'll come back to visit grandfather when we get a chance."

As soon as she hung up, another call came in.

Charlotte furrowed her eyebrows, hung up instinctively, but the same number called back a few seconds later.

She picked up the call reluctantly, hearing a man's deep voice: "Come back and continue your work, I didn't accept your resignation."

Knowing that Charlotte would refuse, Justin Battleson hesitated and said: "The project for the Queen of Ashton is still in your hands; there isn't much time left before the deadline, it needs to be completed as soon as possible."

Then, a different tone came from the handset, unlike the calm tone of the previous statements, this one carried an edge to it.

"Don't forget, you signed a contract with the company. If you quit now, I can legally hold you responsible."