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At that point, Natalie was sure that he was furious over something she had done.

Frowning, she deliberated on what could be a cause for it. Yet, she still did not have a clue. Rubbing her temples, she ranted, "Still, tell me about it! At least I can get to understand why I won't be able to change it. Besides, if I can't do anything to reverse it, I can compensate you in another way!"

"You can't make up for it no matter what you do or how hard you try," Shane spat before pushing past her to open their bedroom door.

He almost shoved Natalie onto the ground in the process, and she staggered aside before managing to regain her balance. Her mouth hung open as she stared at him in disbelief.

Did he just push me?

Even so, he used so much force.

From the door, Shane caught a glimpse of her startled expression, and his eyes flickered. Quickly lowering his gaze, he turned away to hide how apologetic he felt.

The moment he pushed past her, he already felt a sense of regret.

Despite so, he had to act otherwise.

Natalie did not take long to recover from her shock. Ignoring what happened seconds ago, she seethed, "Why can't I make up for it? Why can't you tell me?"

"Enough!" Shane roared. "If that's all you have to say, save your words."

To talk about his parent's car accident was the last thing he wanted to do.

As long as he did not bring it up, they would still be a married couple. However, if he revealed what happened, they would probably end up filing for a divorce.

It was because he knew that she would probably be overcome with so much guilt that she would choose to leave him.

Reeling from his booming voice, Natalie shuddered but stated, "Sure, we will not talk about it. Let's talk about your attitude instead. I did something wrong, and it's perfectly alright for you to be upset with me. But why do you have to act the same way around the children? Do you know how hurt they are?"

"So what?" Her husband scowled at her. "They are not my biological children. Is there any reason for me to care about their feelings?"

Instantly, Natalie gasped, and her heart felt like it was about to explode. "How... can you say that?"

"Isn't it true?" Shane looked at her with his face devoid of emotion. "They were never my children, to begin with. It is good enough that I don't abuse them in any way. Why should I treat them like my biological children?"

After he finished his outburst, he turned and disappeared into the bathroom, leaving the woman frozen to the ground in shock.

How could he say that?

Even though I never told him that the children were his, he did tell me he would treat them like his biological children before our marriage. What's more, he has been so nice to them all this while...

Did he cut them off because I might have done something wrong?

Am I at fault?

She looked at the bathroom and regretted deciding to only reveal the truth to him on his birthday.

If she had told him earlier, would he still take out his anger on their children?

She could bear his fury, but she did not want him to turn against their children too.

With that thought in mind, Natalie squeezed her hands into a fist and decided not to hide the truth from him anymore.

"Shane." She stood outside the bathroom and began to pound on the door. "Shane, I know you can hear me from there. I have to tell you a secret regarding the children's birth. You are actually..."

Before she could complete her sentence, Shane threw the door open.

He strode past without even looking at her.

In a panic, she quickly chased after him to continue her sentence. "Shane, Connor and Sharon are actually..."

"I'll sleep in the guest room tonight." Shane cut her off.

Hearing that, Natalie's face turned pale, and she stammered, "You want to sleep in a separate room from me?"

Once again, the man ignored her. Picking up a suit to wear the next day, he promptly left the room.

When the door slammed shut, Natalie started to tremble. Her knees buckled, and she fell onto the ground. As she stared at the closed door, tears began to well up in her eyes.

He... He actually abandoned me to sleep in the guest room!

She bit her lips as tears rolled down her cheeks.

I don't understand. What on earth did I do? Was it so nasty that he had to treat me like that?

If that's the case, why does he have to keep the matter to himself? Not only is he keeping quiet about it, but he is also giving me the cold shoulder.

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vvny!

Natalie was unwilling to accept things as they were and was determined to clarify things with Shane. Even if he did not say anything, she would force a reply out of him.

If she did do something heinous, she hoped he could punish her straightforwardly instead of treating her and the children coldly.

With that thought in mind, she quickly got up and walked out the door.

However, once outside, she was stunned.

The villa was so big that there were nearly a dozen guest rooms alone.

Moreover, she did not know which one he had entered. Don't tell me I have to search them one by one?

She glanced across the rows of rooms on the third floor and eventually decided to look through each one.

The first was empty.

The second too.

Just as she was about to open the third door, Jacqueline suddenly came from downstairs. As soon as she saw Natalie standing palely in front of the guest rooms, she smirked. However, she asked in a doubtful tone, "It's late, Ms. Smith. Why're you not resting? What're you looking for?"

However, Natalie ignored her and proceeded to open the third door.

Nevertheless, Jacqueline did not throw a fit at being ignored.

She could tell that Natalie was already on the losing end. Thus, she did not find it worth her time to get angry with her.

Even if Shane still protected Natalie then, the more evidence he saw as time passed, his attitude toward Natalie would only become colder. Then, in the end, he would not protect her any longer.

When that time comes, Natalie will surely be kicked out!

Then, Jacqueline opened the fifth door with an excited expression. She deliberately raised her voice as she said, "I'm coming in, Shane."

After speaking, she looked over at Natalie with a provoking gaze before entering the room and closing the door.

Natalie gripped tightly onto the door handle as her heart prickled with pain.

When Shane left their bedroom to stay in a guest room, he had not told her which room he had gone to stay in. Instead, he told Jacqueline.

Furthermore, he even let her enter his room late at night. What on earth is he thinking!

Instantly, Natalie began to feel upset. She stared at Shane's door as she contemplated what to do.

However, she did not knock on the door to clear things up with him, for Jacqueline was there.

After all, it was a private matter between her and her husband. She did not intend to let Jacqueline find out about it.

Thus, Natalie took a deep breath and suppressed the bitter feeling in her heart before she turned around and headed back into her room.

That night, she barely caught a wink of sleep. Hence, she had dark circles under her eyes the next morning, shocking both her children.

"Mommy, you..." Connor pointed at her eyes.

She shook her head and replied, "Mommy's fine."

Then, she brought the two children to the stairs.

Before heading downstairs, she glanced over at the guest room Shane had stayed in for the night.

Is he up yet?

At that moment, Mrs. Wilson was busy cleaning downstairs. As soon as she saw the trio, she hurriedly put down the rag and went over. "Madam, did you and sir fight?"

Natalie lowered her head and replied in a soft voice, "No."

Shane was merely giving her the cold shoulder.

"That's weird!" Mrs. Wilson mumbled, frowning.

At that, Natalie looked over at her and asked, "What's the matter?"

"This morning, when he came downstairs, I asked why you weren't down yet. His expression turned very weird, and he left without eating."

Natalie clenched her fists. "He left?"

"Yeah." Mrs. Wilson nodded, then asked, "Did something happen? Something didn't feel right between you two last night."

Natalie shook her head. "I'm also curious to know what happened."

"Come again?" The housekeeper was stunned by her answer. "You're telling me you don't know?"

"Yeah," replied Natalie as she smiled bitterly. "I asked him about it, but he refused to speak to me."

"What exactly happened to him then?" whispered Mrs. Wilson in a suspicious tone.

Seeing no need to reply to that query, Natalie brought her two children to the dining room.

As they made their way there, Connor raised his head and asked, "Mommy, did you and Daddy not make up yet?"

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"No, Daddy hasn't given Mommy a chance to speak to him yet," she replied while patting his head affectionately.

Sharon blinked innocently and asked, "Why is that?"

"I don't know either." Natalie's eyes unconsciously dimmed with sorrow.

Subsequently, Connor stroked his chin, seemingly lost in thought.

After breakfast, Natalie brought the two kids out. Then, once she dropped them off at kindergarten, she headed to her company.

On the way there, she was constantly distracted by her thoughts about the situation with Shane. As a result, she was not paying attention to the roads and almost rear-ended the car in front.

Luckily, she reacted just in time to step on the brakes and narrowly avoid the accident.

However, she still suffered some minor injuries. She had hit her forehead on the windscreen, causing pain and a buzzing feeling in her head.

Thus, she quickly took out a mirror from her bag to look at her forehead. A big red patch that looked conspicuous and funny had appeared on her forehead, sticking out like a sore thumb.

Just then, someone knocked on her car window.

She put down the mirror and lowered the windows. It was a traffic policeman.

He saluted, then said, "Hello, miss. Please show me your driver's license."

In reality, she already knew she would be stopped as she had suddenly braked. Thus, she did not say much as she took out her driver's license.

She was then given three demerit points and fined two hundred before being allowed to go.

As she looked at the ticket in her hands, her head began pounding.

Ever since yesterday, everything has gone wrong.

When she was sending the kids to kindergarten just now, she had also almost slipped and fell.

She shook her head to clear her mind, then started up the car again and drove off.

Half an hour later, she arrived at her company.

As soon as she walked in, many employees were shocked by the red patch on her forehead.

"Ms. Smith, what happened to your head?" an employee asked as she pointed at Natalie's head with a slender finger.

Natalie smiled bitterly and replied, "Don't bring it up. I almost got into an accident."

"What? An accident?" Joyce heard her words just as she exited her office. As a result, she immediately got frightened, threw her cup away, and took Natalie's hands in hers. She looked Natalie up and down and asked, "Did you get hit somewhere, Nat?"

"No." When Natalie saw how worried her friend had become, her mood lifted. She smiled slightly and replied, "I'm fine. I just hit my forehead earlier on."

"Are you really okay?" Joyce asked again, still a little worried.

At that, Natalie nodded affirmatively. "Really."

Seeing that Natalie's gaze was clear and firm, Joyce eventually believed her and breathed out a sigh of relief. "That's good. You scared me to death."

"Sorry." Natalie smiled embarrassedly.

Joyce waved a hand of hers and said, "It's fine. But come here. I'll get you some ice for your head. What're you going to do if it swells?"

Upon saying that, she pulled Natalie toward the office.

After all, there was a refrigerator in the office. Joyce took out some ice cubes and wrapped them in a towel before handing them to the other woman. "Here."

"Thanks," replied Natalie with a smile. After which, she placed it against her forehead.

The cold feeling instantly dispelled the grogginess in her head, causing her to become more energetic.

Joyce leaned against her desk and stared at Natalie before she asked, "Did you not rest well last night? Your dark circles look really bad!"

Hearing those words, Natalie's eyes dimmed. "Joyce, have I done something wrong recently?"

"Huh?" Her friend was taken aback by her sudden question. "Why'd you ask this?"

Natalie shook her head. "Just answer me. Did I?"

The other woman pondered for a moment before she replied, "No."

Natalie then tightened her grip on the towel. "Then why's Shane doing this to me?"

"What did he do to you?" asked Joyce as her expression turned serious.

Natalie leaned back in her chair, saying, "His attitude toward me changed since yesterday. It suddenly became cold, as though I'd done something wrong and made him angry. But he's not willing to talk."

"What?" Joyce frowned. "Why's he behaving like that? That's a bit too much."

Natalie let out a deep sigh. "It's fine if that's all there is to it, but I can't accept him venting his anger on the children."

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The words Shane said the previous night had genuinely hurt her.

The man did not even want to see her. As a result, she did not have the chance to tell him about the identity of the two children.

"Damn! He's taking it out on the children. Why's he acting as such! It's ridiculous!" Joyce scowled in dissatisfaction.

Natalie put down the towel. "His attitude did a sudden one-eighty yesterday. Even until now, it still feels so unreal."

"Nat..." Joyce looked at her worriedly.

However, Natalie shook her head. "I'm fine. I just feel a little tired. I still don't know how long he'll ignore me for though."

"What are you afraid of? Just talk things out with him," replied Joyce.

However, Natalie smiled bitterly. "It's not that easy. I already thought of doing that yesterday. I tried to talk to him twice, but he refused to say anything. That's why I feel so tired."

She then looked up at the ceiling.

A frown appeared on her friend's face as she chided, "I really don't know why he's keeping all this in his heart. It'll only worsen the misunderstanding between the two of you."

"Yeah. But if he doesn't want to talk, what can I do?" Natalie shrugged.

Joyce then looked her in the eye and said, "Find a chance to talk to him again."

"Yeah," Natalie replied, nodding absentmindedly.

That's the only way. I'll talk to him tonight. We can't keep going on like this, after all.

After contemplating, Natalie took out her phone and sent Shane a message. She texted: Let's talk tonight, Shane. We'll talk through any issues we have, okay?

She hesitated before she sent another text: Also, I want to tell you a secret tonight. It's very important.

After she sent out both texts, Natalie stared at her phone, waiting anxiously for the man's reply.

However, no reply came, even after a very long time. As a result, Natalie's heart sank.

She had no idea if he did not see the message or was busy.

He's probably busy.

She subconsciously found an excuse for him before putting down her phone.

Maybe when he's done with work later, he'll reply to me.

She sighed and smiled bitterly to herself.

Meanwhile, at Thompson Group, Shane sat at his desk with his phone in his hand. His eyes were fixated on the two text messages from Natalie.

Secret? What kind of secret?

He frowned slightly, feeling doubtful. However, he did not bother replying to her messages.

Suddenly, a knock on the door of his office sounded.

He locked his phone and said, "Come in."

Silas entered upon hearing his instruction. "Mr. Shane, I have news about Sean."

"You found him?" Shane asked, narrowing his eyes.

However, his assistant shook his head. "Unfortunately, no. But there's something strange."

"What?" Shane asked as he stared at him.

Silas pushed his glasses up the ridge of his nose and replied, "It's about the number. It should be a new one Sean bought. I found out that other than contacting madam, he also contacted someone else."

"Who?"

"Ms. Graham," Silas slowly replied.

Shane was stunned by that answer. "Jacqueline?"

"Yes."

Shane pressed his lips together and asked, "Why would he contact Jacqueline of all people?"

"I don't know. Why don't you ask her, Mr. Shane?" suggested Silas.

For a few seconds after that, Shane was silent. Then, he rubbed his temples and replied, "Understood. I'll ask her when I get home. You can leave."

"Understood," Silas replied before he turned to leave.

Leaning back against his chair, Shane stared at the ceiling, exhausted.

After a while, he suddenly stood up and took his coat before leaving the office. Then, he drove off from Thompson Group and headed for the Thompson residence.

At that moment, Sam and Catherine were watching TV. The butler suddenly walked in and said, "Sir, madam, Shane is here."

The couple immediately exchanged glances with each other. "Why is he here?"

Sam shook his head. "I don't know. Let him in first."

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The butler nodded and headed out to invite the guest in.

Soon, Shane entered the house.

Sam smiled and greeted him. "It's rare you come home, Shane. Is something the matter?"

Catherine looked at the man as well and said, "Sit down, Shane."

"I'm fine," he rejected. He then looked at Sam and replied, "I want to look at my parents' room."

"That room?" Sam frowned. "It's been closed off for over ten years. What's there to see? It's not been cleaned either. You better not go in."

"It's fine. I only want to take a look. I won't touch anything." After saying that, Shane then headed upstairs.

Instantly, the couple downstairs leaned towards each other.

Catherine asked in a low voice, "What do you think he's trying to do, Darling? He suddenly wants to look at his parents' room. Do you think he found out about something?"

"Don't sprout nonsense." He glared at her solemnly. "If there really was something, it would have been discovered long ago. It wouldn't only be found now."

"That's true." Catherine nodded, though she was still a little worried. "Since there can't be anything right away, why exactly does he want to go in?"

"Don't worry. I'll go take a look at what he's up to," Sam replied before heading off.

Upstairs, Shane stood in front of a room whose door had traces of age. He slowly reached out and pushed open the door.

Once the door swung open, a strong, musty smell came from inside the room. Moreover, there was a faint smell of dust in the air. The man frowned and waved his hands in front of his face. When the dust gradually settled, he then switched on the lights.

Since the light had not been turned on for over ten years, it flickered unstably a few times before fully turning on.

In that instant, he finally saw everything clearly in the room.

Everything was the same as in the past, with no change except that the colors had faded. Dust and spider webs were everywhere, making the room feel desolate.

He pressed his lips together and walked inside. As he stood in the middle of the room, he looked around, his eyes darting in every corner.

Although the room still looked the same, the people in it were no more.

"Shane."

Just as Shane was recalling the past, Sam's voice brought him back to reality.

The man turned around, displeased. "What's the matter, Uncle Thompson?"

"It's nothing. I just came up to check on you," replied Sam as he walked over. "Shane, why'd you suddenly think of coming in?" he asked, his eyes observing Shane cautiously. It was as though Sam was trying to find out about something.

Shane looked at his uncle calmly and replied, "For all these years, I've never given up on finding the culprit that caused their car accident back then. Now that the culprit appeared, I can finally face all of this."

"What? The culprit showed up?" As soon as Sam heard those words, his expression changed drastically, and he raised his voice.

Shane narrowed his eyes. "What's with that reaction?"

"Uh..." Sam swallowed before he smiled sullenly. "I'm happy. Your dad's my only brother, after all. He left so suddenly that year. Like you, I was very upset. Now that I know that the culprit has appeared, I feel very happy."

Although the man spoke in a serious tone, the hand he held behind his back was trembling slightly.

However, Shane did not seem to notice anything strange. He looked away before he replied, "I see. It's good that you're happy, Uncle Thompson."

At that, Sam sighed and barely suppressed his complex feelings before he asked, "Who's the culprit, Shane?"

Upon hearing the question, the man lowered his eyes. "They're dead."

"Dead?" Sam asked with widened eyes.

His nephew merely hummed in reply.

Seeing that Shane was not lying, Sam lowered his head and heaved a sigh of relief. However, he instead spoke in a regretful tone, "What a shame. Then, do you still plan to investigate the accident?"

"No," Shane replied before pressing his lips together.

Since Yulia was dead, he did not see any reason to investigate the matter any longer.

Instead, what he had to consider now was his relationship with Natalie.