

One Night Surprise Chapter 41

Chapter 41 I've Never Forced Anyone

"Married?" Anna frowned and snorted. "When was she ever married? She still has her identification at home! She didn't even graduate college when she left, and she's only twenty-four this year."

Britney tried to pry more information out of Anna as she hinted, "Did she fall in love with somebody? Why did she leave the country all of a sudden? Didn't you say that she did not even finish college? Could she have followed her boyfriend overseas?"

Anna's face took on a look of contempt when she spoke of Courtney's past. "Her boyfriend at that time? You probably know him—he's Isaac Graham, the Young Master of Graham Enterprise. He had gotten together with her best friend for ages, and they couldn't wait to let the whole world know about it. She was the only one who had no clue about it—how brainless!"

"Is that so? Issac Graham?" Britney made some calculations—it seemed as though Anna was not aware that her sister had a child.

Six years ago, Courtney was still in Melrose City and had only left five years ago, so the child was probably born here. In that case, the father of the child was probably someone in Melrose City, and it wouldn't have been Isaac. As she left the golf course in her MPV, Britney felt that something just wasn't adding up.

"Jason, is there a way to find out someone's hidden past from five or six years ago?"

Jason turned back from the passenger seat and pondered for a moment. "Yeah, just get a private investigator."

"I want to look into someone."

“Who?”

“The other Young Lady of the Hunter Family, Courtney Hunter. If I’m not mistaken, she only left the country five years ago after giving birth in Melrose City. I want to know who the father of the child is.”

Alexander’s attitude toward Courtney is simply too strange. Just because she saved Jordan once doesn’t mean that Alexander should treat her so differently. I don’t care if this makes me an overly suspicious person, but I will only be at ease if she doesn’t have anything to do with Alexander.

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Meanwhile, Anna had just returned home. Susan, who was Anna’s mother, greeted the latter as soon as she came back. “You’re back, Anna! Why are you back so late? You didn’t make it back in time for dinner.”

Anna leaned against her mother’s arm and said affectionately, “I went to the golf course with my friend today and chatted for a while. It was Britney; you mentioned that you liked her TV series, so I asked her for a photograph.”

“You’ve always been this thoughtful, Anna.”

Susan praised her as she glanced toward the sofa and raised her voice. “Although I didn’t give birth to a son, you can’t find anyone more thoughtful than Anna in this world.”

“Okay, Mom—how can you praise yourself?” Anna laughed and diligently brought some tea to the sofa. “Have some tea, Dad.”

Lucian was sitting on the sofa as he read the newspaper. Then, he put down the newspaper and glanced at Anna with a loving look as he warned her and said, “You’re back so late. Go and quickly wash up—young girls shouldn’t stay up so late.”

“All right.” Anna nodded obediently. “I know, Dad. You should take care of your health too.”

“By the way,” Lucian took a sip of the tea and raised his head. “You mentioned that the last time you saw your sister was at the mall. Do you know where your sister is living now?”

When Anna heard that, the smile on her face stiffened as she tried to mask her displeasure. “How would I know? I tried to talk to her that day, but she looked so busy and refused to talk

to me. If we hadn't met at the mall, we wouldn't have known that she returned to the country."

Lucian sighed. "This girl—it must be tough living alone in the outside world. If you have time, ask around and find out where she is living. I'll go take a look and try to persuade her. I'll only stop worrying about her when she comes back home."

Anna frowned and was about to say something when a cough came from behind her. Susan gave her daughter a pointed look and came forward with a smile. "I understand your logic; it's not safe for a girl to live outside alone. Since Melrose City isn't that big, I'll ask around—it shouldn't be too hard to find her."

"All right." Lucian picked up the newspaper.

When she got back to the bedroom, Anna sat on the bed with a huff as she scowled. "Mom, why did you promise Dad that you would find her? Also, I told you that I saw the b*tch last time, yet you told Dad about it—aren't you looking for trouble?"

Susan locked the door and turned around calmly. "She'd still come back whether you tell your father or not. Since she has returned to the country, it's impossible for her not to come home; instead of being unprepared when she comes back herself, why don't we take the initiative to tell your father? That way, he would think that we mean well."

"Is it useful for him to think that we mean well? If she comes back, Dad will reconsider the position of the company's heir again."

Susan frowned in response as her expression darkened. She huffed. "If it wasn't for my useless belly that couldn't give birth to a son, it wouldn't be so hard for him to choose between you and that brat. Well, lucky for us—after all those years that brat has been in the wild, there is no way she has achieved anything outstanding. As long as you marry into a wealthy family, you will definitely be the heir to this company."

Anna's expression softened as she scoffed. "That's for sure. Who knows what kind of man she's been fooling around with all those years living abroad? I think she's just afraid to come home because she's ashamed."

After the weekend was over, Courtney dropped Tina off at the kindergarten on Monday morning and went to work. After the meeting at the headquarters in the morning, she called out to Alexander in the corridor.

“Wait a minute, President Duncan.”

Alexander and his assistant, Josh, turned around at the same time. “Is there something wrong?” Alexander asked.

“Are you going to the hospital at noon?”

“Yes.”

Courtney sighed in relief and handed over a thermos bucket. “I boiled this soup overnight. The thermos bucket is of special quality, so it will stay warm until noon. Please give it to Jordan.”

Alexander nodded and personally took over the thermos bucket from Courtney’s hands.

Meanwhile, Josh was dumbfounded. This is not the first time! Is Miss Hunter’s relationship with President Duncan this special? She even manages Jordan’s hospitalization? And President Duncan lets her do it too!

“Oh, right! There’s also this.” Courtney handed over a small palm-sized book. “I’ve also written down the detailed method and steps of making the soup, so just pass it over to your cook. I may not have the time to cook for Jordan lately because I can’t afford to delay the project—sorry for that.”

Alexander took it and replied, “It’s fine.”

“In that case, I’ll be going back to the hotel first.” Courtney nodded and smiled as she walked toward the elevator.

“Courtney.”

Suddenly, Alexander’s voice called out from behind her, making Courtney stop in her tracks. She then turned back in confusion. “Is there anything else, President Duncan?”

“I’ll have someone come pick you and Tina up this Saturday; Jordan wants you to come over the house.”

“Huh?” Courtney was stunned. “Y-Your house?”

“Do you have something planned?”

“Uh... N-Nothing but the project.”

“You can bring it over and work on it there. I will pay you overtime.” Alexander’s tone sounded commanding and irrefusable. “Is there a problem? I’ve never forced anyone, so you can just forget about it if you don’t want to.”

“N-No problem.” Courtney stuttered.

What does he mean by ‘I’ve never forced anyone’? This is just so unfair! The bet is still ongoing and the contract hasn’t even been signed yet! One word from him and I’d have to leave, so who would dare to go against their boss’ word?

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Chapter 42 She Is Not an Outsider

Early Saturday morning, Courtney was still sleeping when she was dragged out of bed by Tina.

“Mommy, it’s time to wake up.”

Courtney looked at the bedside clock in a daze and said desperately, “Tina, it’s only 7.00AM! What are you doing?”

Tina tugged on one of Courtney’s arms and puffed her cheeks. “Mommy, this is your first time going to Mr. Alexander’s house; don’t you want to dress up properly? Come on—get up, take a shower and change your clothes.”

Courtney hugged the pillow in exasperation.

Why did I give birth to such a shameless daughter who pushes me to any man she sees?

Under Tina's continuous urges, Courtney put on some simple makeup and took out her usual T-shirt and jeans from the closet. Before she could even put them on, it was dragged away by Tina.

"Why are you wearing this, Mommy?"

"What else would I be wearing?"

"This one." Tina pulled out a burgundy open-back dress from the closet. "This one is pretty."

"Are you crazy?" Courtney smacked Tina's head lightly. "It's not like we are going to a nightclub—this is a formal dress. We're just going to play at your classmate's house; do I really need to put on a formal dress?"

"This one!" Tina suggested again as she tugged on a grey-blue dress. "This one should be fine."

Courtney took the dress out and examined it for a while—it did look good, but she hesitated for a bit. "Wouldn't it be inconvenient to wear a dress? Both of you will be jumping up and down."

"No," Tina raised her hand and swore. "I promise that I'll behave today."

"I'll be damned if I believe you."

Courtney wanted to ignore her, but Tina stomped her feet and refused to let her wear a T-shirt and a pair of jeans. In the end, she had no choice but to put on that blue dress.

After having their breakfast at 9.00AM, Alexander's butler arrived downstairs to take them back to Royal Park Manor.

"The Young Master had an important meeting in the morning, so he is not at home right now. He asked me to pick you and Tina up first."

"It's okay," Courtney replied understandingly.

The butler was a composed middle-aged man in his early forties, and he drove in a calm and steady manner.

“The little master has been in a lot of accidents lately, so he must be feeling quite miserable. He is still wary of everyone even when all the maids in the manor have been completely changed, so I was quite surprised when he invited Miss Hunter to come over.”

“Perhaps he’s more at ease with me because I saved him once before.”

Courtney smiled as she thought, Who isn’t surprised? I’m pretty surprised as well.

As they spoke about Jordan’s injury, Tina sat up straight from her seat and sighed heavily. It drew Courtney’s attention to her as she asked, “Why are you sighing? You’re still so young.”

“I’m sighing because of Jordan.”

Tina furrowed her brows. “You see, Jordan can’t talk and he’s so unlucky. I’ve never seen a kid more unfortunate than him! Mommy, our school teacher said that people tend to be unluckier during the year of their zodiac. Is it Jordan’s zodiac sign this year?”

“What are you talking about? You’re only five years old, and this is just a form of superstition. Which teacher taught you all of this nonsense? You even took it so seriously.”

Courtney felt helpless, but she also felt sorry for Jordan.

Although they had only known each other for two months, Jordan had already been in two life-threatening accidents. If she hadn’t blocked the chandelier back then, the little guy would have died; had he cracked his head this time, Jordan would have lost his life too.

Were all of these incidents just accidents? She began to grow suspicious.

When they arrived at the Royal Park Manor and got down the car, a small figure ran over from the doorway and hugged Courtney’s legs.

The maid chased after him. “Little Master, oh dear... He hasn’t even finished washing his face yet.”

Courtney carried Jordan from the floor. “You haven’t washed your face yet? No worries, I’ll take him to wash his face. Where is the bathroom?”

The maid quickly pointed at a direction in the house as she sized Courtney up and followed behind. Then, the maid looked at the little girl behind them and sighed. "You must be Miss Hunter—you're so young, yet your daughter is so big already!"

As soon as they walked in the house, Tina looked around with admiration.

Jordan's house is so big! The staircase actually divides into the left, right and center—there's even an elevator! Whoa! Tina immediately started talking to the young maid who led them in.

Courtney, on the other hand, was clueless about her daughter's thoughts as she took Jordan into the bathroom to wash his face and brush his teeth. "I brought over some snacks that I made this morning. Do you want to eat them together?" she asked.

Jordan nodded happily.

They sat at the dining table and opened the lunch box brought by Courtney. When Courtney was about to feed Jordan, the maid who was taking care of him cried out in panic, "Wait a minute, Miss Hunter! Little Master is not allowed to eat anything from the outside."

"What?" Courtney froze as she held the snack.

Seeing this, the butler glared at the maid and scolded her. He said, "What nonsense are you spouting? The Young Master invited Miss Hunter to the house, don't you understand? In the eyes of the Young Master and the Little Master, whatever Miss Hunter makes is probably much safer than what you all make."

The maid's face paled as she was reprimanded by the butler.

The butler continued, "All right, you can go about your business. The Young Master's instructions were that Miss Hunter and Tina come and play at ease, so they will call you when they need you."

After that, the maids quickly dispersed.

Courtney breathed a sigh of relief as she looked at the butler gratefully. "They're finally gone. I'm quite uncomfortable when people watch me eat."

The butler lowered his head apologetically. "It's my fault for not instructing them properly. Please take your time to eat, Miss Hunter. Do not hesitate to call me or a servant if you need anything."

"Sure."

After the minor incident, Courtney finally relaxed and began to eat properly.

Jordan ate a lot during breakfast—he had a bun, two small snacks and even a bowl of porridge. The maids were startled as they watched from afar and whispered amongst themselves.

Ever since the last incident, most of them were new maids and lacked discipline, so they were bold enough to discuss Courtney's origins.

"Why does the Young Master like Miss Hunter so much?"

"I heard that she's the mother of Little Master's classmate—that little girl over there."

"Oh, that little girl is so sweet! She even gave me a candy—wait, could it be that our Little Master likes that little girl?"

"What rubbish! He's just a little boy."

"I'm just kidding! However, I think the way the Young Master treats Miss Hunter is special. I heard from the maid who worked here before that the Young Master never brought a woman back to the house; even his fiancée of five, six years hasn't been here that often."

"Hey, could it be that the Young Master and Miss Hunter..."

One Night Surprise Chapter 43

Chapter 43 Future Young Mistress

“How can that be possible? The Young Master is getting married to Miss Price.”

“I heard that Old Master Duncan dislikes Miss Price and doesn’t agree with the marriage at all.”

“Really?” A maid covered her mouth with astonishment as she lowered her voice and said, “If that’s true, does it mean that the appearance of Miss Hunter shows that the Young Master likes her more?”

“Be a little more sharp and respectful to her—who knows, she might be the future Young Mistress.”

Meanwhile, Courtney was busy eating with the children. Unbeknownst to her, Jordan’s dependence on herself had triggered the imagination of all the servants in the manor; she was even crowned as the future Young Mistress of the family.

It was already 3.00PM when the two meetings of Sunhill Enterprise were over. Josh placed the meal he had ordered earlier on the coffee table in the office.

“You should eat first, President Duncan. I will copy the minutes of the meeting to your computer later.”

Alexander pinched his eyebrows and nodded tiredly. He had been busy since 7.00AM and hadn’t had time to eat yet.

After a brief rest, Alexander called home and put his phone on speaker as he unpacked his meal.

The call was quickly connected as the butler's respectful voice came through. "Are you done with your work, Young Master?"

"Yeah, I just finished. How are things at home?"

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"Everything is fine. Don't worry, Young Master—Miss Hunter and the Little Master are getting along, and he is having fun with Miss Hunter's daughter as well."

The sound of children playing came from the other end of the call as well as Tina's loud laugh.

"Jordan, this toy of yours is just too funny! Haha!"

Alexander's expression softened.

Although he couldn't hear Jordan's voice, he could already imagine how happy Jordan was from Tina's laugh.

"That's good. Pay attention to their safety," he said.

"Do you still have work, Young Master? Miss Hunter asked me if you were coming back for dinner."

"No, I have a dinner party later tonight." Alexander said flatly. "I will be back later. If it's too late, please arrange for a driver to send both of them back."

As he hung up the phone, Alexander felt strange as he held the chopsticks and stared at the delicious meal in front of him. He suddenly lost his appetite and somehow yearned for the food that Courtney had brought over to the hospital last weekend.

She should be preparing dinner soon. Even though there are maids at home, she'd probably make it herself according to her personality. I wonder what's for dinner?

"President Duncan, here is the chicken soup that the delivery guy forgot to deliver."

All of a sudden, Josh knocked on the door and walked in with a thermos bucket.

Alexander stared at the silver thermos box and suddenly put down his chopsticks and stood up. "Josh, cancel the dinner party for me—I'm not going."

"What?"

Josh carried the thermos box with a puzzled look and asked, "Why are you not going? Is there something important? It's a dinner party for the Shanghai exhibition and sale."

Meanwhile, Alexander had already grabbed his jacket and walked out, completely ignoring Josh.

While driving back, he stopped at a snack shop and bought two boxes of snacks to bring back home. It was almost evening when he arrived, but the sky was still bright with a gorgeous colorful haze in the distance. The house was lively with the sound of children giggling from the toy room on the second floor.

When Alexander pushed open the door of the room, a fuming Courtney was standing with her hands full of flour while she pointed at Tina, who was jumping excitedly on the bed.

"You come down this instant, Tina! Stop fooling around. I'm going to cook, and no one will be here if you fall down again. You too, Jordan—your injuries are not healed yet. How can you follow this nonsense?"

Alexander leaned against the door and was stunned by the scene in front of him. Jordan had always been quiet and reserved, but now he was actually jumping and rolling on the bed with Tina while wearing Spiderman clothes and occasionally posing as the hero.

He doesn't look like a person who has a broken bone!

Courtney warned them again as the two kids looked at each other and stuck their tongues out before they got off the bed.

"That's right, be good. If you want to play, you'll have to wait until I finish cooking, all right?" Courtney pointed at Tina's nose. "You must look after Jordan. Don't play too rough—he's not healed yet, and his arm is still in a cast."

Tina giggled playfully. "Okay Mommy, I know! I won't play then."

Courtney nodded with satisfaction and turned around.

Her gaze was so focused on the two children that she hadn't noticed there was someone at the door, bumping right into him immediately.

"Ah!"

Courtney cried out as her forehead knocked into a rock-hard chest. As she raised her head in pain, her heart skipped a beat while she panicked and took a few steps back.

"S-Sorry."

Courtney looked down and realized there were two white handprints on Alexander's black shirt as flour fluttered down to the ground.

Alexander's expression darkened.

"I'm sorry," Courtney rushed forward. "Let me help you pat it off."

As her hands patted Alexander's chest several times, the white palm prints were gone, leaving behind a chest full of flour. Alexander covered his mouth as he coughed and pushed her away from him.

"Courtney, y-you... are you trying to take revenge on your boss?"

Courtney shook her head vigorously. "I didn't mean that! It's just a misunderstanding! I was going to cook dinner—in fact, I'm making dough. How was I supposed to know that you were standing at the door?"

"Are you saying that it's my fault right now?"

"I'm just saying that you shouldn't stand at the doorway so quietly," Courtney muttered guilty.

Alexander's gaze darkened as his tone sounded strained. "Courtney, is this because I've been treating you too nice as of late?"

"No, not at all!" Courtney waved her hands and reasoned calmly. "I just thought that the reason I'm making dough and accidentally soiling your clothes is for your son, so when you think about it—which is more important, your shirt or your son?"

Alexander was actually rendered speechless as he frowned and changed the subject. “There are maids in the house, so why do you need to cook? I invited you as a guest here—don’t turn this on me later and say that I was bullying you.”

“How can what the maids make compare with mine?”

Courtney rolled her eyes and raised her eyebrow. “You don’t believe me? If you make a snack for Jordan now, Jordan will still be exceptionally happy—even if it’s not as good as the ones made by the maids.”

“We don’t need to go through all that trouble; I’ve already bought some.” Alexander lifted the box of snacks in his hand.

“Store-bought snacks are definitely not the same as the ones you make yourself.”

Suddenly, Courtney thought of something. “Wait a minute, do you not have any plans for tonight?”

Alexander looked at her and answered faintly, “Yep.”

“That’s great—you’re just in time. Follow me to the kitchen; let me teach you how to make the dough and snacks for the kids. Let’s go.”

One Night Surprise Chapter 44

Chapter 44 Don’t Be a Sore Loser

Without another word, Courtney pushed Alexander into the kitchen.

“You really should spend more time with Jordan. Look how happy he is playing with Tina! I also heard from the maids who take care of him that he has never been so happy before—that’s the craziest thing I’ve ever heard.”

Alexander felt a pang of guilt as he listened to Courtney's words and was taken aback when an apron was shoved into his hands. "Put this on so that the flour won't get on your clothes."

His eyes slightly twitched as he stared at the pink apron in his hands. He was about to say something when Courtney urged, "Why are you still standing there? Go and wash your hands. It's already 5.00PM, and the kids will die of hunger if we don't cook dinner soon."

He actually listened to her as he silently put on the apron and washed his hands. With that, Alexander began learning how to make noodles under Courtney's instructions.

"When we make our own cookies, a simple round or square shaped cookie is usually fine. However, kids don't focus on flavor—they like the appearance of the food more than how it tastes. When we're making cookies, we can use molds or our hands to pinch the dough into various animal shapes."

Courtney demonstrated and squeezed the dough on the oven paper. "Look, this is the shape of a small duck, but don't make it too fat—it'll expand on its own after you put it in the oven."

Courtney looked very serious when she was teaching as she stared at her oven paper. Shortly after that, various animals appeared on the baking tray.

Alexander looked at her as he stood on the side and suddenly felt a strange feeling in his heart.

All of a sudden, he found her very interesting; she was far more interesting than all the women he had met before.

Courtney was not vain and pretentious; not only was she capable at work and at home, she was also kind and brave. She was simple, direct, and also very patient when it came to dealing with the children.

Mr. Alexander, why don't you consider making my mommy your wife?

The words that he had taken as a child's joke suddenly turned up in his head. Alexander's hand trembled and squeezed too much dough onto the oven paper as a weird pile of dough appeared.

Courtney bursted into a fit of giggles and said bluntly, "President Duncan, we're lucky that this dough is beige in color. Otherwise, no one would want to eat a pile of chocolate flavored poop-shaped cookies."

Alexander's expression froze as he looked at his own masterpiece and felt embarrassed. He impatiently threw down the things in his hand and said, "You do it yourself then."

"Someone's sulking." Courtney raised her eyebrow and gave him a gloating look. "All right, it's not like we can't save it—I think there's a way we can still salvage this."

After that, she took out a small cranberry from the bag of cranberries and placed it on the 'poop' shaped cookie before using a toothpick to lengthen the end of the dough.

"There, it looks like a small snake now."

Alexander glanced at the salvaged 'snake' shape—its eyes made from cranberries radiated a playful shine as the 'snake' curled lazily on the oven paper with its long, thin tail dragging behind.

He stared at it for a while as his eyes unconsciously moved to Courtney's face—that smug look on her was surprisingly pleasant to his eyes.

At dinner time, Jordan seemed much happier than usual. Alexander, on the other hand, was amazed that the little boy took the initiative to eat by himself. Feeding Jordan had always been a difficult task because he would rather not eat than let others feed him; even if he was fed, he would only eat a little. Hence, the five-year-old Jordan was always thinner and weaker compared to his peers.

"Can you actually eat by yourself, Jordan?" Alexander couldn't help but ask.

"He's already five years old; who doesn't know how?" Courtney raised her voice. "Jordan knows a lot of things, doesn't he?"

Jordan nodded his head and glanced at Alexander with disdain, seeming as though he was just hiding his talents from Alexander before.

Alexander was slightly annoyed by Jordan's gaze, but he finally caved in and put some food in Jordan's bowl as he said gently, "I'm the one who hasn't been paying enough attention to you. You should eat more."

It was getting late and Courtney was prepared to leave after the meal, but Tina was reluctant to go back as she insisted on playing games together.

There was a huge LCD television in Alexander's living room with a game called 'Tank Battle' on it, which could be played by four people at the same time with a game console each.

They were only five minutes into the first round as Alexander occupied all of their territories and ended the game.

Courtney was a little frustrated. "This is not fair. You must have played it very frequently since it's your family's game machine. We're all new to this game, so this is not fair."

"This is my first time playing this too." Alexander said blatantly. "Don't make excuses for your failures."

As soon as he heard that, Jordan kicked Alexander with frustration and jumped around angrily—no one knew what he was saying as he grabbed his drawing board and wrote, "Bad Daddy."

Alexander gave a wry smile as he stroked Jordan's head and asked, "Am I considered bad if I win? Jordan, that's not logical—you can't be a sore loser when you lose."

Jordan glared at him and pushed his hand away as he sulked, sitting cross-legged on the floor.

Alexander had no choice but to play again.

This time, he carefully circled around the game for almost half an hour before finally deciding to counterattack, but Jordan kicked off the game console in his hand as Courtney broke into his camp with a tank and destroyed everything.

"Yeah, we won!"

Tina jumped up and cheered as she tore down a note and slapped it across Alexander's forehead. "Punishment!"

Alexander questioned. "How come there was no punishment for you guys when you lost earlier?"

"We were just trying out the game earlier. How can there be punishment when it was just a trial? This is the real start of the game," Courtney replied with a justified look.

He glanced at his son who followed her lead and nodded his head.

Alexander was speechless. I have led the wolves into my house, and my own son is rebelling against me.

They played several rounds after that—Alexander had the intention to win, but he didn't stand a chance against the sabotage of the two little kids. Finally, after being plastered with a face full of notes, the papers fluttered along with Alexander's breath and had almost covered his whole face. Laughing heartily, Courtney fell on the cushion and shouted, "I'm afraid we can't play the game anymore—there's no more space on your face to stick more notes!"

The children clapped their hands and jumped on the cushion as Tina laughed loudly.

"All right, it's late—we should go." After she calmed down, Courtney stood up from the sofa and reached toward Tina. "Let's go, Tina. It's almost 10.00PM, and it'll be too late if we don't go back soon."

Immediately, Tina's smile vanished from her face as she pouted. "No! Since it's already late, why don't we stay here for the night, Mommy?"

Courtney's face dropped.

One Night Surprise Chapter 45

Chapter 45 She's Here With Me

"Tina." Courtney's voice deepened as she stared at the little girl.

"Do you think this is appropriate?"

Tina pursed her lips as she felt guilty.

When Mommy talks to me like this, it usually means that she's really angry.

"Mommy," Tina tugged on her sleeve. "I just want to play with Jordan for a little while longer."

Courtney looked at her with a serious face. "Do you know what time it is now? Haven't I told you this before? You can play at someone's house, but when it's time to go back, you can't insist on staying at someone's house—that's basic manners."

As she was reprimanding Tina, Jordan suddenly crawled over and hugged one of her legs while his other hand was holding the drawing board.

Courtney felt a tight grasp on her leg and looked down. Jordan raised his drawing board, and she read the words written on it, 'I want Tina to stay.'

"Jordan," Courtney frowned. She didn't know what to say because she was always unable to refuse Jordan's request.

"I have to go, Jordan. It's too late today, so I'll bring Tina over to play with you the next time I have a chance, okay?"

Jordan got nervous when he realized Courtney insisted on going back. He quickly wrote on his drawing board and tugged on Alexander's pants as he tried to show it to the latter. 'If you don't let Tina and Miss Hunter stay, then I will stop eating.'

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Alexander was stunned as a strange wave rippled through his heart. He looked at Courtney and asked hesitantly, "Why don't you stay here tonight? There's a spare room for you and Tina here."

Courtney froze. "No, that's not good."

"Don't take this the wrong way," Alexander glanced at her and explained calmly. "If you leave now, Jordan will stop eating again. Besides, his hand injury is not healed yet and he's stuck at home, so it's hard for him to see his friends."

Courtney was rendered speechless by his words.

Tina joined in and said, "Tomorrow is a Sunday, Mommy. There's no need to go to school or work. I promise that I'll definitely go home tomorrow—I just want to spend more time with Jordan."

Courtney finally caved in and poked Tina's forehead with her finger. "You already know how to accompany others at such a young age; it's true that girls don't stay long with their mothers."

Once they decided to stay for the night, the maids promptly arranged a guest room for them. Courtney took Tina for a bath, and the little girl was so excited that she kept jumping around in the bathtub. As a result, all the towels in the bathroom were soaked wet by her.

"All right, all right, is there no end to this? Do you have to be so happy?"

"Yes, of course."

Tina smiled brightly at Courtney. "Mommy, I've always wanted to have a brother."

Courtney frowned as she lowered her voice. "It's not like you don't have one."

Tina knew that she had brought up her mother's painful memory and instantly regretted her words. "I'm sorry, Mommy."

"It's okay," Courtney sighed and stroked her hair. "Stop fooling around and stay put in the water. Don't get cold; I'll go and find you a new towel."

"Okay."

The son that had been taken away back then was always a knot in Courtney's heart. Even if she could find the child, Courtney knew that it was highly unlikely for her to bring him back. Nonetheless, she hoped that she could just see him one more time—even if she could only watch from afar to see how he was doing. If he was living happily, there was no need for her to disrupt his life.

As soon as she walked out of the room, Courtney exhaled nervously and felt her heart suffocating with sadness.

Meanwhile, Alexander was drinking water in the living room and turned around when he heard a sound from upstairs to see Courtney walking down. Her light blue dress was mostly soaked through. In particular, her chest area revealed the vague outline of her bralette inside.

He felt his abdomen tightening as he watched, and his mouth went dry.

“Uh, where are the maids?”

Courtney asked hesitantly when she saw him staring at her intently.

Alexander came to his senses and avoided her gaze.

“They just went out to throw the garbage. What are you looking for?”

“A towel,” Courtney pulled her collar and smiled wryly. “Tina got excited while showering and got me soaked all over. All the towels inside the bathroom got wet, so I wanted to ask for some fresh towels.”

Alexander glanced at the door. The garbage disposal place was quite far; since the maids had just left not too long ago, it would take a while for them to come back.

“I have some in my room. I’ll go get it for you.”

Then, he put down his glass and walked toward the stairs.

When Courtney followed behind him to the second floor’s master bedroom, she couldn’t help but feel nervous and clutched her fingers. As she stared at Alexander’s back, she shook her head to dispel the distracting thoughts that popped up in her head.

What am I thinking about?

“Do you want a bath towel or a face towel? Come and see for yourself.”

Alexander stood at the bathroom door and called out to her as she quickly ran over.

“Both.”

There were neatly folded towels in the cabinet next to the bathroom sink. Courtney took two bath towels; as she turned the rest over and couldn't find any face towels, she figured that they could be on the top. She tiptoed to reach it, but it was quite straining for her with her limited height.

A hand reached over her head as a low murmur came from the dark. "Just two?"

She was a little dazed and nodded numbly. She didn't know whether he saw it, but she felt that the shadow had further engulfed her body.

As Alexander took the towel, he lowered his head and met Courtney's dazed gaze—even in the dark, her eyes were exceptionally bright. There was a tug on his heartstrings as his hands froze mid-air.

Under the dim light of the bathroom, the way Alexander was taking the things from Courtney's back seemed like he was hugging her very intimately. Suddenly, the atmosphere around them turned ambiguous as the temperature in the bathroom slowly increased.

Courtney's breath became heavier as she smelled the faint cologne on his body; she couldn't stop herself from taking a gentle whiff.

He smells good.

"Young Master..."

All of a sudden, the sound of the servant knocking on the door interrupted the intimate atmosphere in the bathroom abruptly.

Courtney sobered up when she heard the sound and lowered her head to avoid the gaze that fell onto her, taking a step back to pull a safe distance between them.

Alexander also returned to his senses and looked toward the door with displeasure in his eyes. "What is it?"

He took down a face towel and handed it to Courtney.

Courtney stiffened as she took it. She felt that her heart was still pounding in her chest, and it seemed like it was about to jump out at any moment. This feeling is very strange.

"I just went to the guest room; Miss Hunter's daughter was alone in the bathroom asking about her mother's whereabouts. I have looked all over the house and can't seem to find Miss Hunter."

Courtney looked at Alexander, but it was too late—he had calmly walked out of the bathroom and replied, "She's here with me."

There was only silence outside the door.