

**Married by Mistake: Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife chapter 1711-1720**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1711**

**The final stage.**

**Jeremy's heart suddenly sank. He could see Shirley's face betraying a sly expression as she spoke.**

**Shirley's smile widened further upon seeing the worry in Jeremy's eyes.**

**"Forget it, I won't reveal it to you now so that you won't get worried."**

**"Shirley!" Jeremy's patience was depleted. His deep, narrow eyes glared with a cold edge. "I'm not in the mood to waste time with you. I want the anti-toxoid test reagent. Do you understand?"**

**"Hiss." Shirley could not suppress her pain. Her wrist felt like it could break anytime at Jeremy's mercy.**

**Her beautiful brows snapped together. She then chuckled softly through gritted teeth, a helpless expression on her face.**

**"I understand, but you should also understand that I don't have any extra anti-toxoid test reagent."**

When Jeremy heard this, his eyes emitted a ghastly murderous intent, and his thin lips pressed together. Without another word, he abruptly grabbed Shirley by her neck ruthlessly and dragged her outside.

“Ugh... Cough!”

Shirley had not expected Jeremy to be so menacing.

She immediately lost all control over her breathing. In that instant, she could see Carter’s face turning cold and fierce, as if he would explode at any second.

Just when she had thought Carter would come to her rescue, she saw Adam running over to her with a worried look on his face.

“Jeremy! Release her first! She doesn’t have the anti-toxoid test reagent, but I do. I’ve been experimenting the whole time, and I’ve almost succeeded! Really!”

Adam had deliberately emphasized that to convince Jeremy to temporarily release Shirley, who nearly suffocated.

Jeremy stopped in his tracks. He lowered his eyes and glared at Shirley in disgust before turning back to Adam.

“Do you think this kind of person is worth it? She’s unfit to be your sister.”

“This isn’t a matter of worthiness. I only know that, as a doctor, I have no intention to allow any living being to receive a death threat in my presence.”

Adam answered calmly, the panic on his face from a second ago vanished.

Jeremy peered coldly at Shirley and let out a chilling, sarcastic laugh, then suddenly released his grip.

Shirley fell onto the cold, hard floor with a thud, greedily gasping for air.

Just a moment ago, she truly had thought she would die from suffocation.

She had also thought Carter would rush over to her rescue at that moment, but even now, he merely stood by and watched, indifferent.

She had indeed mistaken that earlier shot as his care for her.

Shirley lifted her gaze and met the man's condescending eyes. She then laughed at herself. A bitter feeling crept up her throat, and she started coughing. Unable to hold back her embarrassment any further, tears fell from the corners of her eyes as she continued coughing.

"Jeremy, bring me to Eveline. Don't waste any more time. Hurry!" Adam reminded Jeremy.

Despite the rage that was already burning within Jeremy, Adam's reminder prevailed. Now no longer interested to continue teaching Shirley a lesson, Jeremy wanted only to immediately return to Madeline and ease her current symptoms.

"Linnie's in the hospital. Let's go!" Jeremy said as he took a step out of the door.

Adam and Cathy quickly followed.

Carter watched the three of them leave and frowned.

The bodyguards awaited his orders for pursuit, but Carter gave no orders.

He walked toward Shirley who still laid sideways on the cold, hard floor. His tall and lean body towered over Shirley like an ice sculpture as he peered disdainfully at Shirley.

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"Did you do that on purpose? You want to free your brother, don't you?" Carter asked coldly, the sternness expressed with the corners of his eyes and his eyebrows frightened Shirley.

"I... Cough cough... Why would I let him go?" Shirley answered Carter as she coughed. "He was the reason my parents had neglected me back then, the reason they'd sent me to study abroad. It wasn't for my future. The fact was that they'd just wanted a better opportunity to nurture their precious son. Hmph!"

Shirley looked toward the direction where Adam had left and chuckled coldly.

"I only want to see just how great their precious, cherished son truly is."

Shirley said this through gritted teeth.

Nonetheless, tears silently fell from the corners of her eyes. Her fists clenched as the thought of the notebook, containing her father's handwritten, surfaced in her mind.

Upon hearing Shirley's words and seeing the tears trickling out of the corners of her eyes, Carter's

eyes darkened.

He suddenly bent down and carried Shirley, who had still been lying on her side on the floor, in a bridal carry.

Shirley did not dare to expect much more. Being in Carter's arms right now was exactly what she had wanted.

...

The hospital.

It was the middle of the night when Jeremy got back to the hospital room.

Even though Madeline had been injected with some tranquilizer, she was still shivering under the blankets.

Jeremy's heart ached. There was nothing else he could do for Madeline.

If it was possible, he truly would endure it all in Madeline's place.

During their departure from Carter's villa, Adam had been informed of Madeline's current symptoms by Jeremy.

He had first gone home to retrieve some of his things before following Jeremy to the hospital.

After a cursory examination of Madeline, he had given Madeline an injection with the anti-toxoid test reagent that he had brought with him.

After the injection, Madeline's heart still ached, and the chills all over her body persisted. Ten minutes later, color finally returned to Madeline's face.

On the side, Cathy shifted her gaze from the poison-afflicted Madeline to Lillian who had leukemia. The sight distressed her to the point of tears, so she turned and left the room quietly.

Soon after, Jeremy and Adam came out of the room as well.

With a serious look on his face, Adam explained the situation to Jeremy.

"I've injected Eveline with an analgesic that I developed. It can't cure her completely, but it can temporarily help relieve her pain. To eliminate the poison, we'd still need to find out exactly what Shirley used in developing the poison. That's the only way we can prescribe the right cure for Eveline."

"That's not something she'd tell us. She's in this with Carter, and Carter's goal is to get to me. Until this goal has been achieved, they'll only be using Madeline to control me."

In this regard, Jeremy understood clearly. He finally let go of his strong facade and sat down on the chair in exhaustion.

"Lillian has leukemia, and Linnie is in this state. Further, I'm not fully recovered. I truly don't know when all of this will end."

He lamented. For now, he only wanted to release the pressure he had been holding in.

Once this is over, he would still be the husband Madeline needs and the father his children want to depend on.

“It’ll all get better.” Cathy gave him her blessings. “I believe that we reap what we sow. Evie is a good person, so I’m sure she’ll be blessed.”

Jeremy smiled when he heard that. “I agree.”

His smile was quickly replaced with another frown. “Adam, since you’ve heard what Shirley said earlier, do you know what would be the symptoms that Linnie will show when the poison reaches the final stage?”

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Adam frowned when he heard Jeremy’s question.

He only spoke after a few moments.

“I can’t be certain what symptoms would appear during the final stage, but I realize that Eveline’s flare-ups have been too frequent, and the intervals in between them were very short. This is unlike what you’d experienced back then.”

Jeremy too frowned in turn. “What does this mean?”

“This means that they want to achieve something in a very short period. Once the poison in Eveline’s body reaches its final stage, they’ll use this to coerce you into trading away something beneficial.”

Jeremy had already understood this.

The thing he wanted to know the most right now was the symptoms Madeline would exhibit.

Overwhelmed with worry, he lifted his hand to massage his forehead, exhaustion creeping out from his heart.

“I’m very sorry,” Adam suddenly apologized.

Confused, Jeremy lifted his gaze. “Why are you apologizing to me?”

“At the end of the day, she’s still my sister,” Adam simply answered.

While Jeremy understood what Adam meant, he only had gratitude and appreciation for Adam.

“You’re you, and Shirley’s Shirley. I won’t place you on the same level as her. Additionally, you’ve been helping us this entire time. If it weren’t for you, I’d be dead, and Linnie, as well as Jack, might not be alive now.”

“I am a doctor. It’s my duty to save others.” Adam repeated the same statement but then sighed in regret. “I truly don’t understand her. I’d already shown her the notebook, so why can’t she understand the trouble our parents had endured back then? Why is she still full of resentment?”

When Cathy saw Adam looking so troubled, she walked to his side and lifted her hand, patting his shoulder.

“Adam, don’t be sad. Perhaps your sister is compelled by her hardship.”

“Heh.” Adam softly laughed at himself. “What hardship could she possibly have? Her hardship is that

she's unhappy with how well our parents had treated me back then, always thinking that our parents had wanted to give up on her."

Upon hearing Adam's sarcastic remarks, Cathy was uncertain how to continue comforting him.

"She could be doing this for Carter." Jeremy voiced his suspicion. "A woman would be willing to do anything for a man."

While Jeremy was not referring to anyone specific, Cathy could not help but be stunned.

Yes.

She agreed.

She wholeheartedly agreed with Jeremy's words.

In the past, she had committed acts that went against her desires and conscience for Felipe. She had even heeded Felipe's instructions to hypnotise Jeremy, nearly causing the demise of Jeremy and Madeline's relationship.

This thought made Cathy blamed herself.

At the same time, it reminded her of Felipe.

He was dead now. Executed.

On that day, right before his grave, she had been taken by Carter's men before she could bid a proper

farewell.

“Cathy. Cathy.”

Cathy, still lost in thought, heard Adam calling to her.

She abruptly came back to her senses, then realized that Jeremy had gone into the room, and Adam was the only person next to her now.

“Cathy, let me drive you home first. You haven’t been back home these few days. Juan and Jan would be worried.”

Cathy nodded. “What about you, Adam?”

“I’ll move in with you.”

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“You’re moving in with me?” Cathy felt surprised, but she also quickly figured out the reason.

“Is it because you don’t want anything else unexpected to happen to me, getting kidnapped to be used for blackmail again, so you want to protect me?”

Adam looked at Cathy without denying it.

“I don’t want you to go through any further shock. Even if they want to do anything to you again, at least I’ll be by your side to protect you.”

Cathy felt touched by Adam’s words, but they both knew that was not the same as love.

...

After Adam and Cathy had left, Jeremy stayed in the hospital room, watching over the two girls he cared for the most in this life.

One was his beloved wife, and the other was his precious little princess who he longed to protect. These two were so important to him, yet he could not protect them.

He lifted his hand and stroked Madeline's cheek softly. Even the sight of her sleeping face could not dispel his anxiety.

Whenever he thought about that unknown final stage of the poison, Jeremy felt as if his heart was burning.

"Linnie, what should I do to make everything better?"

Jeremy held Madeline's hand, kissing it again and again.

It seemed that he had never felt so helpless before. It was because this predicament was beyond his control and understanding.

That poison was developed by a specialist, so even if he were to start researching it now, it would still be too late.

The only thing he could do right now was to trust Adam. On the other hand, that woman was now essentially a fanatic. She no longer had any thoughts or opinions, and would only listen to Carter.

After Jeremy had kept watch for a night, Madeline awoke the next morning.

He could see that Madeline looked ill, her face lacking color. It was clear how much Madeline had suffered last night.

However, Madeline did not show any weakness in her. The first thing she did after waking was to check on Lillian.

When she saw that her daughter was still soundly asleep, Madeline immediately felt that her pain no longer mattered.

In the following days, Madeline and Jeremy safely stayed in the hospital to care for Lillian, whose condition stabilized too.

While Jeremy dared not inform Madeline about the poison's final stage of the poison, Madeline did not seem bothered by the poison despite it having caused her so much pain the other night.

On Monday morning, Madeline stayed next to Lillian as usual. She watched the doctor give Lillian an injection using a syringe with a thick needle. Her little princess, barely five, pouted and widened her eyes without making a sound, let alone bursting into tears.

The sight broke Madeline's heart into pieces. Despite Lillian's age, her endurance and stubbornness were exactly like Madeline's.

However, she did not hope for her precious daughter to be like her mother, shouldering so much pain like her.

After hanging the IV, Madeline caressed the little girl's head. "You're amazing, Lily."

Lillian blinked her huge eyes and smiled.

Madeline felt her heart ache further as she held the little girl. "Lily, I'll heal you no matter what."

Lillian seemed to understand as she nodded knowingly.

Madeline truly felt relieved. She hoped that her daughter would be intelligent, but not too intelligent.

"Daddy," the little girl suddenly called out for Jeremy.

"Daddy's bringing Jack to see you. They'll be here soon, so wait a little longer, Lily," Madeline comforted Lillian in a soft voice.

Lillian blinked and suddenly, her lively, wide eyes stared toward the door, her gaze seemingly frozen.

Madeline found it odd, so she looked in the direction of the little princess's gaze. She immediately saw an uninvited guest.

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Madeline stood, on her guard, and turned toward her precious daughter who remained ignorant.

She did not want to deal with this uninvited guest in front of the young child, but she was extremely uncomfortable with stepping out of the room, leaving this child alone in the room.

"What's wrong? Are you scared to see me, Mrs. Whitman?" Mockery could be heard in the woman's voice. "Don't worry. I've heard that your daughter has an incurable disease, so I specially came here to express my sympathy," Shirley said as she strode in, handing a bouquet of powder blue baby breaths to Lillian.

Madeline had wanted to stop her, but she did not want to frighten the child with her aggressive actions. She could only watch as Shirley tried to worm her way into being friends with Lillian.

“Lillian, these flowers are for you. Do you like them? I’ve heard that powder blue baby’s breaths are your favorite flowers. You ought to admire them properly. You might not necessarily have the chance to receive such beautiful flowers next time.”

She handed the flowers over, but Lillian did not take them. Her pair of beautiful, lively, wide eyes merely stared silently at Shirley.

Madeline could not bear watching this any further. Shirley’s words were plainly cursing her.

“Shirley, if you still have an ounce of conscience left, you’d only come at my husband and me. Do you think it’s admirable to bully a little kid?”

Shirley held the bouquet and straightened her back. Seeing Madeline enraged, Shirley’s smile further relaxed.

“Your daughter’s not an ordinary child. She’s the precious baby that’ll make you and Jeremy lose all reason.”

Shirley smiled knowingly. Madeline clearly understood the message Shirley had intended to convey with her words.

“Tch! How did you raise your children, Mrs. Whitman? I came to visit this child with good intentions. I even brought her flowers. It’s fine if she doesn’t accept my kindness, but she didn’t even thank me.”

Shirley then chuckled softly and displayed a look of realisation.

**“Oh, no! How could I forget? Your precious daughter is mute. It’s because that woman, Lana, had scared your daughter into becoming mute.”**

**When Madeline heard this, she clenched her fists, but she had to control her emotions.**

**She loosened her hands and pressed her pink lips together into a faint smile.**

**“Well, so you know Lana?”**

**Shirley seemed to freeze momentarily upon hearing that. She then admitted nonchalantly, “Of course I know her. I don’t think there’s any harm in telling you now. I was the one who developed the poison that’s still in Jeremy’s body.”**

**Madeline was unfazed when she heard this.**

**“Birds of a feather indeed flock together.”**

**“...”**

**Madeline looked Shirley in the eye.**

**“If the reason you came here today is to strike at me, hurt me, and make me suffer, then I’ll tell you now that you’ve succeeded.**

**“As a mother, I would rather suffer than watch my children suffer any sickness or misery. The biggest blow for me right now is my daughter’s disease. Shirley, just as you’d hope, I, Eveline Montgomery, truly am in a lot of pain and suffering right now.”**

“...”

Shirley was dumbfounded as she had completely not expected Madeline’s words.

While she was still out of sorts, she still caught sight of Madeline’s unshakable resolve in that sharp glare of hers.

“However, don’t think you’ve won just like this, Shirley. Eveline Montgomery will never crumble in the face of hardship and danger.”

When she heard Madeline’s words and saw the tenacity in her eyes, Shirley asked, “Eveline, are you truly not scared?”

“No one could be unafraid of misfortune and the unknown, but not everyone would surrender to the fear of the unknown.

Upon hearing this, Shirley’s expression changed, but a corner of her red lips lifted again.

“No, you will surrender. The reason I’m here today is to make you surrender.”

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As Shirley was speaking, she looked at Lillian who was leaning against the hospital bed with a confused face.

She placed the baby’s breath, which had been in her hand, on the bedstand. A moment ago, Shirley’s eyes had been full of hostility and sarcasm. Her eyes were gentle as they scanned Lillian’s small face, then, with an arrogant and disdainful look, fell back onto Madeline.

**“Eveline, I know you’re a special woman. You’re so special that you’re unyielding and tenacious. However, she should also know that I’m an evil woman. That is why I had especially concocted the poison in your body.”**

**“What about it?” Madeline asked indifferently.**

**Shirley’s beautiful eyes narrowed. “You already had three flare-ups. After these three stages, the poison in your body will slowly reach the final stage.”**

**As she spoke, she stopped for two seconds, taking two steps toward Madeline.**

**As Shirley confronted Madeline’s naturally stunning face which wore no makeup, Shirley’s eyes were tinged with a hint of regret and pity.**

**“Eveline, you won’t be able to endure the final stage.”**

**“Is that so?”**

**“Yes.” Shirley decisively gave her a firm answer. “Eveline, let me ask you a question. What’s the most terrifying and mortifying experience that you’re most reluctant to relive in your life?”**

**The most terrifying and mortifying experience that she was not reluctant to relive...**

**For some reason, Madeline felt as if her emotions were being drawn out by Shirley’s words. She immediately thought of the experience from years ago. Those extremely painful and dark memories...**

**At that moment, Shirley caught the uneasiness that flashed across Madeline’s eyes.**

**“Linnie. Linnie.”**

**Upon hearing the man’s gentle voice calling out to her by her side, Madeline abruptly returned to her senses. She blinked in surprise as she noticed that, unbeknownst to her, Shirley had already left, and Jeremy and Jackson were before her eyes.**

**Madeline forced a smile on her face quickly. “Jeremy, Jack, you’re here.”**

**“Mommy, what were you thinking about just now? Daddy and I were calling you the entire time, but it’s like you didn’t hear us.” Jackson lifted his handsome little face, peering at Madeline curiously.**

**Jeremy too was confused. “Linnie, what were you thinking about?”**

**“Nothing,” Madeline denied it. She did not want Jeremy to worry about her when he was already so vexed, so she came up with a random lie. “I was just thinking about Lily’s condition.”**

**Jeremy held Madeline’s hand to comfort her. “I’ve managed to contact the most prestigious doctor in the field. Lily will recover.”**

**“Really?” Joy immediately appeared on Madeline’s face.**

**Jeremy nodded affirmatively. “I promise. Our daughter will definitely be fine.”**

**The man’s firm promise immediately made Madeline feel much more optimistic.**

**Jackson ran over to the bedside and held Lillian’s hand.**

**“Lily, are you in pain?” Jackson asked, pointing at the needle on Lillian’s neck.**

**Lillian shook her head. There was a small smile on her fair yet pinkish little face.**

**“It really doesn’t hurt?” Jackson was still uneasy. He felt that it must be very painful to have such a thick needle in one’s body.**

**Lillian pursed her lips. When she was about to shake her head, she nodded this time instead.**

**It hurts. How could it not?**

**Seeing this scene unfolded, Madeline and Jeremy felt as if their hearts had been pricked.**

**Jeremy patted Madeline’s shoulder. As he lifted his gaze, he noticed the bouquet of baby’s breaths next to Lillian.**

**“Did someone come to visit Lily?”**

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**Madeline could not deny it now that Jeremy had asked.**

**“Yes, I guess so.”**

**“You guess so?”**

**“I... I was at the nursing station. The bouquet was already on Lillian’s bed when I came back.”**

Madeline avoided Jeremy's gaze when she spoke. She knew that she was being untruthful, but she had to lie to him.

It was because she truly could not make someone up out of thin air.

If she had told him that Shirley was here, Jeremy would certainly be angry.

"Could it have been Fabian?" Jeremy guessed.

Madeline immediately followed along. "Fabian? It's possible."

"We're the only people who know that Lily likes powder blue baby's breaths. Apart from Fabian, I can't think of anyone else," Jeremy said, giving his analysis.

Madeline very much agreed.

Indeed. Besides their parents, who else would understand their children's preferences?

This shows how thorough Shirley had been in researching them.

On this day, Shirley's words Madeline kept appearing on her mind from time to time.

This poison was made especially for her. When the poison reached the final stage, there would be no way for her to endure the symptoms.

Dread, fear, and the experience she was reluctant to relive.

**Madeline did not want to be affected by her words, but she could not stop herself from taking this to heart.**

**Based on her calculation, all three flare-ups had happened within a month. Madeline's hunch and estimation were that this fourth flare-up would happen within this week.**

**Madeline did not tell Jeremy about this, but she did not know that Jeremy had already known about this.**

**Jeremy would go to Adam's place every day because he was expecting Adam to develop the anti-toxoid test reagent that could cure Madeline.**

**Even if it could not cure Madeline, it would be fine if it could alleviate Madeline's pain.**

**However, as the days went by, Adam was still unable to make good progress.**

**The thought that Madeline's suffering might be even more led Jeremy to a decision.**

**In the evening, after notifying Madeline, Jeremy left the hospital.**

**He drove his car to a street away from Carter's villa. Jeremy calmly waited in the car from sunset until nightfall, waiting for the right moment with the utmost patience.**

**Four to five hours later, Jeremy finally saw a car driving toward Carter's villa.**

**After a few seconds of careful observation, he quickly started the car.**

Shirley was just returning from elsewhere, and thinking that she was nearly home, she took out her phone to read her messages. Suddenly, there was strong light beaming at her from afar.

She reflexively raised her hand to block the light, then saw Jeremy's unique thin eyes from the corners of her eyes.

Shirley immediately understood what was happening. Unable to block the light in the distance in time, she frantically steered the car around.

Jeremy stepped on the pedal, chasing after her. He had anticipated Shirley to be panicking now, so he further accelerated, using his car to force Shirley's car to a dead end. He then crashed the front of his car into Shirley's driver's seat door.

Bang! Shirley's car suddenly lost control and crashed into the railings, white fumes quickly rose from the car hood.

Jeremy quickly stopped his car, strode toward the door of the passenger seat of Shirley's car, then opened the door.

Shirley was now lying on the steering wheel, unconscious. Jeremy, without hesitation, yanked Shirley out of the car, then stuffed her into his car trunk.

Carter's villa.

Carter was sitting in the living room awaiting Shirley's return.

The tea in his teacup was almost finished, and Shirley was still not back.

Carter pondered, feeling that something was amiss.

He called Shirley. The call got through, but no one answered the phone.

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Shirley always answered his call.

Carter opened a location application on his phone and quickly found the location of Shirley's phone.

He noticed that the location of Shirley's phone was near the villa, but it remained stationary on the spot, unmoving.

Without hesitation, Carter rose and walked to the garage. He then got into his car and went to the street near the manor following the location indicated on his phone.

Before he had arrived, Carter could see from afar that Shirley's car had crashed into the railing, white fumes still rising out of her car hood.

Carter's eyes darkened. He quickly got out of the car and strode toward the door of the driver's seat.

In that second, he had no idea how much fear and anxiety he had in his heart.

"Shirley!"

Carter yelled at the driver's seat, his voice trembling.

When there was no response, Carter felt his heart and body went cold.

He got a closer look and realized that there was no one in the car; only Shirley's phone glowed on the phone stand.

Carter felt less uneasy now.

He swiftly observed the surroundings and noticed a dent on the side of Shirley's car, suggesting a collision.

'Was it an accident?

'No.

'If this was merely an accident, why would Shirley disappear along with the culprit?'

The more Carter thought about this, the fishier it seemed. He wanted to retrieve the security footage for this place, but there would be obstacles.

This was not St. Piaf. No one would give him the green light for his actions, and he certainly could not act recklessly here.

Even though Carter felt anxious, he could only adhere to the standard procedures and make a police report, letting the traffic police deal with this.

It was already past dinner time, and the food served on the dining table had already turned cold.

Carter had sat at the dining table for a very long time, but there was still no news from the traffic police.

No one knew what he was worried about. Even he was a little confused. It seemed that Shirley had an immensely important position in his heart.

However, he did not want Shirley to remain in this position. Not at all.

He hoped to hate her, to exact vengeance on her for leaving him years ago.

In a dark underground garage with no source of light, Shirley awoke as a pail of cold water was poured over her.

She opened her eyes. She thought she heard a loud crashing sound in her mind, then recalled what had happened before she fell unconscious.

“Awake?”

There was completely no emotion in Jeremy’s cold voice.

Startled, Shirley lifted her head.

A ray of the chrome yellow incandescent light illuminated Jeremy’s handsome face and his firm features.

He wore a black coat and was sitting on an old chair near her, his presence emitting an intimidating chill.

Through the transom, a ray of moonlight cast into the room and fell exactly onto his alluring, bottomless eyes, reflecting a cold, silver glint in his deep gaze.

Shirley suddenly felt her body turning frigid as the terrifying chill, much colder than the biting winds of winter outside, enveloped her inch by inch.

“Jeremy, what are you trying to do?” Shirley asked directly. “Are you trying to get the anti-toxoid reagent for Eveline?”

Jeremy coldly stared at Shirley. “Will you give it to me if I ask for it?”

He chuckled softly as he asked rhetorically. “That was my initial idea, but I’ve changed my mind now.”

As he spoke, he suddenly lifted his right hand, shaking an object between his long and thin fingers.

“Do you recognize this?”

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In the silence that followed, Shirley turned her gaze toward Jeremy’s hand.

When she saw the object in Jeremy’s hand, her expression evidently changed.

Jeremy stood, his tall and straight figure casting a dark shadow over Shirley who laid on the ground, unable to get up.

“I’m guessing that you know exactly what this is?” Jeremy slowly squatted and gently opened the syringe in his hand.

“Give someone a dose of their own medicine,” Jeremy said as he grabbed Shirley’s arm, not giving

Shirley any chance to resist, then injected the anti-toxoid test reagent directly into Shirley's vein.

Shirley frowned in pain, her eyes widening at the same time.

She could only watch as Jeremy proficiently injected the cold liquid into her veins. At that moment, she felt as if all the cells in her body were frozen.

"Hiss."

This was the new type of poison that she developed. The AXT69. She had developed this to deal with Madeline.

However, she had not expected that the extra samples would be used on her own body in the end.

Seeing the change of emotions on Shirley's face, Jeremy felt a hint of satisfaction within him upon exacting his vengeance.

"Now, do you now know how someone feels when they're injected with this twisted thing which you developed?"

Jeremy mercilessly grabbed Shirley's collar and questioned, "I won't bother pursuing the matter of the torture and hardships I'd suffered, but now you're using this poison on my wife. Shirley, you're certainly vicious. Adam's such a kind person. How did he end up with a sister like you?"

Jeremy then pushed Shirley away.

Shirley laid on the cold, hard ground, her head in a daze. The poison that had been injected into her veins was spreading inch by inch. The bone-piercing cold was completely different from what Madeline had originally experienced.

Madeline's poison had been mixed in the red wine. To prevent her from discovering it, the poison had been colorless and tasteless.

That was how she had been able to fool Madeline into drinking the red wine.

Meanwhile, she had another use for this vial of anti-toxoid test reagent.

This was meant for an emergency, to prevent anything unexpected from happening.

However, she had not used this vial of anti-toxoid test reagent, so she always kept it in her bag with her. She had not expected that the syringe would be used on her now.

'Was this karma?'

Shirley wondered sarcastically as she lifted her trembling hands to hug herself.

However, this would not provide any warmth. Direct injection would be far more torturous and painful than simply swallowing the poison.

"Hiss..."

She let out a grunt of pain.

Jeremy looked down on Shirley, enjoying her torment.

He did not have a single ounce of sympathy for the vicious woman who kept harming others.

One had to bear in mind, Shirley was only bearing a fraction of what Jeremy and Madeline had to bear.

Since he could not obtain the anti-toxoid test reagent to cure Madeline, he would just have to let Shirley share the same experience. Let her feel how twisted the poison she developed was!

Jeremy turned and picked up the pail of cold water, which had not been used up, then poured it on Shirley's face.

Shirley moved her head, trying to avoid it, but her entire body was sluggish.

She trembled all over, and her mind was a mess.

"Are you cold? In a lot of pain? It even feels like you can't breathe now, huh?" Jeremy asked, sneering.

The sight of Shirley's face, which was gradually turning pale, brought him only joy.

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"Shirley, if you're able to, you could keep on enduring it and suffer. If you can't stand it anymore, get me the anti-toxoid test reagent. Otherwise, don't even think about seeing the sun again in this lifetime."

As he was about to leave after speaking, he happened to hear a customized ringtone.

He looked askance at Shirley, who could not speak at all, then walked to a side, answering the phone.

**“Linnie.”**

**He spoke first, gently calling out to Madeline.**

**Madeline’s gentle and pleasant voice responded from the other end. “Jeremy, won’t you be coming to the hospital tonight? Is there still work at the company?”**

**Jeremy turned to glance at Shirley, then walked toward the basement door. “I’ll be done soon. I’ll head over in a moment. You should lie down and rest if you’re tired. Where’s Lily?”**

**“I’m not tired yet. Lily’s already asleep.”**

**“I’ll head over now.”**

**“Take your time. Drive carefully,” Madeline reminded him.**

**Jeremy felt a warmth in his heart, but he started to feel uneasy again at the thought of Madeline suffering from the poison very soon.**

**After hanging up, he walked back to Shirley.**

**“Have you properly thought about what you’re going to do?” he asked bluntly.**

**Shirley held her arms and, with great effort, lifted her eyelids.**

**“There’s no anti-toxoid test reagent.”**

Shirley's voice trembled as she spoke.

"The ones I gave you back then were only half-complete. They could only briefly alleviate the symptoms."

"What did you say?" Jeremy's eyes immediately darkened.

Shirley chuckled bitterly. "Jeremy, you could have the half-complete products, but it's best if you let me go. Otherwise, you'd only be helplessly watching the woman you love most continue to suffer."

"Heh." Jeremy chuckled coldly in disdain. "If there's no completed anti-toxoid test reagent, what is your worth to me? Do you think I need you for the half-complete test reagents? Your brother Adam's much more talented and capable than you."

Jeremy's praise for Adam seemed to strike at Shirley's vulnerable spots, and the expression on her face instantly changed.

"Nonsense! I am more talented and capable than him in this!" Shirley defended herself passionately. "I'm smarter than him, and I have a better chance of becoming a medical scientist than him. They didn't even give me a chance! It's their fault! It's all their fault!"

She was suddenly growling and snarling. Her facial expression turned malevolent, showing how much this mattered to her.

No longer interested in Shirley's mad ravings, he turned and left.

"Jeremy, get me out of here!

"This is illegal imprisonment!

**“Without my anti-toxoid test reagent, Eveline could definitely not endure it!**

**“Jeremy!”**

**Shirley’s heart-rending screams continued, but they were eventually cut off by the basement door.**

**Jeremy drove back to the hospital as if nothing had happened. The moment he saw Madeline and Lillian, he felt relieved.**

**Madeline was oblivious to the fact that Jeremy had gone to find Shirley, nor did she know that he had injected Shirley with the same anti-toxoid reagent poison as the one from which she was suffering. However, she inevitably found it curious that there was some dust on Jeremy’s coat.**

**“Jeremy, did you just come from the office?”**

**“Yeah, I just finished my meeting.” Jeremy did not look Madeline in the eye as he casually came up with a lie.**

**“Is the meeting room so filthy? Why is there so much dust on your clothes?” Madeline patted the dust on Jeremy’s shoulders with suspicion. She had wanted to help him tidy his clothes when, much to her surprise, she felt a woman’s earring in Jeremy’s pocket.**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman’s Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1721**

**“Jeremy, why do you have this in your pocket?”**

**Madeline brought the earring in front of Jeremy. Of course, she was not suspicious nor was she questioning him. She just felt that this was a little strange.**

When Jeremy saw the earring, his mind went straight to Shirley.

He figured that it had fallen into his pocket when he brought Shirley into the car.

Jeremy did not know how he should dodge the question. He figured Madeline would not believe any excuses as to why he had a piece of woman's jewelry in his pocket.

Upon seeing Jeremy hesitating as though he did not know how to answer her, Madeline felt a little worried. "Jeremy, what's the matter with you? Who does this earring belong to?"

Jeremy knew he could not hide this anymore, and he really did not want to lie to Madeline either.

"It probably belongs to Shirley." Jeremy did not hide it anymore.

"Why is Shirley's earring in your pocket? Did you go to find her?" Madeline's expression became anxious as her heart started beating frantically. "Jeremy, did you do something to her?"

Jeremy felt remorseful when he saw Madeline's worried expression.

He held Madeline's shoulders and when he was about to tell her what was going on, someone pushed the room door open all of a sudden.

Lillian was sleeping but when she heard the noise, she woke up abruptly.

Jeremy looked at the man who barged through the door in displeasure. "Why are you here? Don't disturb my daughter's rest. Get out."

Madeline looked at Carter in dissatisfaction and quickly walked to Lillian to comfort her.

However, Carter did not leave. Instead, he strode over.

His expression was cold as he questioned in an icy tone.

"Jeremy, where did you hide Shirley?" Carter asked, going straight to the topic.

Madeline detected something fishy when she heard this. "Carter, why are you asking this?"

"Why don't you ask your husband what he did?" Carter asked with eyes filled with hostility.

Jeremy went over and protectively pulled Madeline behind him. "Carter, don't you think that you're being pathetic by asking this? What did I do? Have you asked yourself what you've done? What kind of shameful things have you asked Shirley to do?"

After Jeremy asked that, Carter seemed to fall into momentary silence.

It seemed that he did not have anything to refute.

Jeremy walked over to him, and their two pairs of eyes that were beautiful in their own way met.

**Their hostile gazes crashed into each other savagely mid-air.**

**“Carter, I did to Shirley what you asked her to do to my wife. What she’s enduring now is nothing compared to what my wife and I had to endure.”**

**When Carter heard Jeremy’s answer, there was a look of anxiety in Carter’s eyes.**

**“What the hell did you do to her?”**

**“Why? Are you worried? Are you worried that something will happen to the chess piece you’re manipulating?”**

**“Jeremy.”**

**“I won’t tell you where she is, just like how she refuses to hand over the anti-toxoid test reagent to me.”**

**Jeremy’s tone was decisive. The aura emanating from his cold eyes completely overpowered Carter at this moment.**

**Carter saw the overwhelmingly strong aura in Jeremy’s eyes and felt his determination to save Madeline with the anti-toxoid test reagent.**

**“Jeremy, if you want the anti-toxoid test reagent, you should let Shirley go. Without her, you won’t be able to get the anti-toxoid test reagent!” Carter said in a warning tone while looking a little impatient.**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman’s Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1722**

However, this time, Jeremy remained very calm. He chuckled softly and carefreely, saying, "Shirley has already told me that the anti-toxoid test reagent hasn't been made. So even if she's standing here, it won't be of use."

"So you won't let her go, huh?" Carter was slowly losing his patience.

"You can go now. Don't disturb my daughter's rest." Jeremy chased Carter away coldly.

Carter pressed his lips together tightly. He looked at Lillian who was blinking her clear wide eyes and then looked at Madeline while saying, "Jeremy, don't regret this."

"The thing I regret the most is that I only waited till now to teach that vile woman a lesson."

'Vile woman.'

Those two words pierced Carter's eardrums. He felt that they sounded abnormally ear-piercing.

Carter did not continue questioning Jeremy and turned around to leave with a cold expression on his face.

After Carter left, Madeline immediately comforted the little princess and put her back to sleep. After Lillian was asleep, she looked at Jeremy before the two of them walked out of the room.

**“Jeremy, is that true? Did you kidnap Shirley?” Madeline asked directly.**

**To be honest, she wanted to hear him denying this but she only saw him nodding.**

**“That’s right, I kidnapped her and locked her up.”**

**“Jeremy...” Madeline felt a twinge in her heart and she wanted to ask Jeremy to let Shirley go. After all, this was not something just and honorable.**

**However, before she could continue, Jeremy interrupted her.**

**“Linnie, I can’t take this anymore.” Jeremy held Madeline’s hand tightly in his palms.**

**She could feel Jeremy’s anxiety and uneasiness from the way he was holding her so tightly.**

**“Jeremy, are you worried about me? Are you worried that the poison will torment me a lot when it reaches the final stage so that’s why you kidnapped Shirley to force her to give you the anti-toxoid test reagent?”**

**After she said that, Jeremy lowered his eyelids silently.**

**Madeline felt her heart aching, but at the same time, she felt loved and pampered.**

**“Jeremy, let her go. I don’t want you to do something so unreasonable because of me.”**

**“Linnie, I’m clear-headed and I know what I’m doing.” Jeremy’s gaze looked firm. “I’m just doing to her what she did to you. I can’t let them always have the upper hand over us. Linnie, we can’t be so passive anymore.”**

**Madeline saw Jeremy’s unwavering decisiveness. After pondering, she figured that she could not change his mind anymore.**

**Plus, it was true that Shirley had done all kinds of evil.**

**“Jeremy, where did you imprison Shirley? I want to go see her,” Madeline suggested, but Jeremy rejected without hesitation.**

**“I won’t let you see her. This is my own doing so I won’t drag you into this.”**

**“I’m already in this now, aren’t I?” Madeline emphasized and looked straight into Jeremy’s eyes. “Jeremy, I’m your wife. I won’t run away if you’re in trouble, do you understand?”**

**When Jeremy heard this, he suddenly felt remorseful. He regretted kidnapping Shirley now.**

**However, now that things had already arrived at this point, he could only continue with it.**

**The next morning, Jeremy called Karen to come to take care of Lillian in the hospital. After that, he took Madeline to the place where he was imprisoning Shirley.**

**On the way, Jeremy sensed that someone was following them. As such, he deliberately took a very roundabout way. After making sure that he had lost the person behind him, he eventually drove to the destination.**

**Madeline was surprised when the car stopped and she saw the building in front of her.**

**'It's this place.'**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1723**

**Madeline got out of the car. She had never thought that she would come back to this villa again.**

**After all, this place was filled with a lot of unhappy memories.**

**Jeremy carefully observed Madeline's expression. He knew this place had given her too much pain. To be honest, he was genuinely reluctant to bring her back here.**

**"She's in the basement." Jeremy broke the silence and went over to open the iron gates.**

**Madeline followed after him. When she stepped into the premises, she felt a strong uneasiness rising in her chest.**

**Perhaps it was because the weather was cold today, so whenever the wind blew, the coldness would penetrate her skin like thorns.**

**Madeline could not endure this discomfort so she followed Jeremy to the basement.**

**When the door of the basement was opened and the light streamed inside, Madeline could see a person lying on the cold and damp floor.**

**Madeline quickly walked to Shirley and grabbed her arm.**

**She could feel that Shirley's entire body was hot, even her breath. It seemed that she was having a fever.**

At this moment, she looked battered and exhausted. She had lost her bright and beautiful appearance as well as her arrogant attitude whenever she was in front of people.

“Shirley,” Madeline called out to her.

Jeremy watched them coldly at one side. “Linnie, she won’t die. You don’t have to worry about people like her.”

Madeline understood how much Jeremy despised Shirley. However, if something happened to Shirley and she died here, Jeremy’s future would be destroyed.

“Jeremy, get her out of here. Ask Carter to come to get her.”

“No way.” Jeremy rejected decisively. “Even if she dies, it’ll be an appropriate punishment for her crimes. Linnie, why are you worried about people like her?”

“The person I’m worried about is you, Jeremy Whitman,” Madeline emphasized with a stern tone.

Suddenly, Jeremy was dazed. He felt as if his judgment had been affected by his anger because what Madeline said hit him hard now.

She was worried about him. How could she be worried about Shirley?

Jeremy squatted down and stroked Madeline’s cheek.

“I’m sorry, Linnie.”

**“There’s no sorry between us,” Madeline said. She used all her might to pull Shirley who was drifting in and out of consciousness. At the same time, her heavy gaze was glued to the man who was furrowing his eyebrows.**

**“Jeremy, I know you hate Shirley, but this is not right. Even though they’ve done such things, it doesn’t mean we can. I know you’re doing this for me and you’re unconvinced, but you can’t use their methods.”**

**After Madeline said that, she used all her might to drag Shirley outside.**

**Before she could take two steps, Jeremy hurried over and yanked Shirley away from Madeline.**

**However, after he did that, Shirley started to slowly regain consciousness.**

**“Jeremy, let me go...”**

**Shirley said weakly and sluggishly.**

**Jeremy lowered his eyes to look at her coldly. “Are you feeling the pain and discomfort now? Shirley, this is what you deserve.”**

**He said and dragged Shirley forcefully toward the entrance.**

**Madeline thought Jeremy was going to let Shirley go, but she did not expect him to drag Shirley into the guest room.**

**He then pushed Shirley onto the bed without pity.**

Shirley let out a muffled sound of pain and shifted slightly on the bed. She had no energy left in her body.

Sunlight poured into the room from the French window, shining on Shirley's face and body that was covered with dirt. At this moment, she looked especially sloppy and battered.

Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1724

Perhaps Shirley had never imagined that this would happen to her one day.

When Madeline saw Shirley in this state, she fell silent.

"Jeremy, are you really not going to let her go?"

"Letting her stay here is already my absolute limit." As Jeremy said that, he grabbed Madeline's hand to walk out of the door. At the same time, he locked the door of the guest room.

He turned around and held Madeline's shoulders. Then, he said earnestly, "Linnie, don't worry about me and don't feel sorry for this woman. She's the one who poisoned you and it's because of her that we have to suffer the pain of getting tormented by the poison again. If we can't get better, then she also should not think about getting better."

After hearing what Jeremy said, Madeline suddenly felt relieved.

She smiled gently. Her warm palm was caressing the side of Jeremy's cheek softly. "Jeremy, I completely understand what you mean. We'll go according to your plan and keep Shirley here for the time being. If she can come to her senses and give us the anti-toxoid reagent, it would be the best. However, if she doesn't, I also hope that you can try your best to handle this rationally."

After Madeline said this, she lifted Jeremy's face when she saw that he was silent. Her beautiful eyes were looking straight into his eyes.

"Jeremy, look at me and promise me this."

Jeremy looked into Madeline's eyes, nodding seriously and gravely.

"I promise you, Linnie. I won't do anything irrational."

"Okay." Madeline smiled in satisfaction. "Give me the key to this room."

Jeremy did not hesitate before handing the key to Madeline.

Madeline opened the door and when she entered the room, she saw that Shirley had already gotten out of bed.

She looked battered and exhausted, but it was not as bad as before.

When Shirley saw Madeline, Shirley stopped in her tracks. When she wanted to say something, she saw Jeremy coming in after Madeline and she backed away subconsciously.

"Jeremy, Eveline, don't think that you'll get the anti-toxoid reagent by locking me here. You will never get the anti-toxoid reagent by doing this!"

Jeremy chuckled in a low voice, filled with disdain. "If we can't get it, neither can you. You've also been injected with the same poison as Linnie. You'll go through whatever Linnie goes through soon enough."

“...” Shirley bit her dry lip and there was a look of panic in her alluring eyes.

She was panicking. Of course, she was panicking.

She had always watched other people suffer in pain after she developed the poison.

She had never been tormented by the poison she developed before, but she knew it must be a horrible experience.

Even though she had not reached the first stage of the poison, the pain when Jeremy injected her with it was enough for her to feel it deeply.

Madeline caught the uneasiness on Shirley’s face and she turned around to look into Jeremy’s eyes.

“Jeremy, you should go out and wait for me. Let me talk to her for a bit.”

“Linnie, you have to be careful. She’s not like you. You have a cautious heart but she has a heart that only knows how to hurt people.”

“...” When Shirley heard this, she had nothing to say as well.

“I’ll be careful. Don’t worry.” Madeline gave Jeremy a reassuring answer.

Jeremy did not say anything anymore. He turned around to walk to the door before closing it.

He did not walk away and just stayed at the door.

If Shirley really wanted to do something reckless, he would be able to rush in there and protect Madeline immediately.

Meanwhile, inside the room, after Shirley saw that Jeremy had left, she sat down on the bed while letting out a sigh of relief.

She leaned against the side of the bed, seemingly exhausted. She was looking at Madeline insipidly as she said, "Mrs. Whitman, what do you want to talk to me about?"

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Madeline did not answer Shirley. She walked to the closet and took out a clean set of clothes from inside.

"I think it must be hard for you to stand the state you're in right now. You can go and take a shower."

Madeline placed the clothes at the end of the bed gently.

"You have a slight fever. Here's a first aid kit. I think you should know better than anyone what you should take to make your fever go down."

Shirley was puzzled after she heard what Madeline said. She looked at Madeline with suspicion.

"Eveline, what are you trying to do? Are you requiting evil with good?"

Madeline smiled indifferently. "I'm not that great nor am I sanctimonious. However, we're on the same boat now. After all, I still have to depend on you to recover, right?"

After Madeline said that, Shirley looked at the woman who was smiling slightly and fell into silence.

She was locked up here now, so she could not develop the anti-toxoid reagent. Hence, Madeline would never be able to get treated and it would be impossible for her to be completely recovered as well.

“Shirley, I don’t know what you’re thinking about, but don’t worry. My husband is right, we’re not the same. You want to hurt people but I won’t. So you can take a shower with no worries and take a comfortable nap.”

After Shirley heard this, she kept feeling as if something was amiss. She looked at herself from top to bottom and touched her face. Then, she decided to do just as Madeline said.

“Alright, I’ll listen to you, Mrs. Whitman. I’m going to take a shower and go to sleep after that.” Shirley got up and grabbed the clothes at the end of the bed. Then, she turned around and walked into the bathroom that was attached to the room.

Madeline looked in the direction of the bathroom for a few seconds before opening the door of the room.

When Jeremy saw Madeline walking out, he looked into the room and did not see Shirley. However, he heard the sound of running water coming from the bathroom.

“Linnie, what did you talk about? Is she taking a shower?”

“Yeah, she’s taking a shower now.”

“Linnie?”

“Jeremy, I know what I’m doing. Don’t worry.” Madeline looked at Jeremy profoundly and smiled.

Jeremy saw the confidence in her beautiful eyes. He wanted to ask more questions, but suddenly, he felt as if he understood what she meant.

“Jeremy, you should go back and take care of Lily. I’ll stay here for a bit.”

“Alright, I’ll listen to my wife.” Jeremy agreed. At the same time, he exhorted in concern, “You have to be careful.”

“I will.”

Madeline answered seriously, letting Jeremy leave with ease.

Shirley was showering in the bathroom. She was still feeling dizzy, her brain turbid. She felt that there must be something amiss with Madeline’s behavior. However, she could not wrap her head around why Madeline wanted to do this.

Shirley felt weak, and she also knew that she had a fever. It was such a cold winter day and Jeremy had splashed so much cold water on her. Plus, she spent the entire night in that basement so it was impossible for her not to have caught a cold.

She finished showering while enduring her discomfort. After that, she put on the clothes Madeline gave her. The moment she stepped out of the bathroom, she smelled food.

Shirley stopped in her tracks and saw steaming hot food on the table. There was also a cup of hot water on the side and next to it was a white-colored antipyretic.

Shirley was dazed. When she was wondering if she was dreaming, the door opened once again.

Madeline walked in with a set of clean four-piece bedsheets.

**“You were starved for one whole day. Eat something first.” Madeline walked to the side of the bed as she said that and started to change the bedsheets.**

**Since Shirley had been in bed just now, the sheets were now dirty and messy.**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman’s Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1726**

**While this further increased Shirley’s suspicion, she certainly was hungry.**

**She did not think that Madeline would do anything to the food, so she started eating without worries.**

**When she finished, Madeline had already changed the bedsheets.**

**“You ought to stay here for the time being.” Madeline walked up to Shirley. “I know you like Carter, but that doesn’t mean that you should follow that person blindly.”**

**“Heh. Eveline, are you teaching me how to conduct myself?” Shirley chuckled and asked. “Don’t you recall that you too had done a lot of stupid things for Jeremy back then?”**

**Madeline calmly smiled at that. “Back then, I loved him so much that I had lost myself, but I never did anything that goes against my conscience or harms others, not even for him.”**

**“...”**

**Shirley, silent upon hearing that, momentarily did not know how to refute Madeline.**

**Unconvinced, she bit her lip, and her eyes were hostile and doubtful. “Eveline, what on earth do you and your husband intend to do?”**

**Madeline curled her beautiful lips slowly. “You should be grateful that you have a good brother.”**

**“...”**

**“Just think about it.”**

**After Madeline said that, she turned and walked out the door.**

**Shirley saw that Madeline was about to leave. Although Shirley had regained a fair bit of her energy after bathing and eating, she thought about being locked up here for who knew how long. Seeing Madeline’s back, she suddenly charged toward Madeline.**

**‘Eveline, thank you for your hospitality, but at the end of the day, I am not a good person, so I won’t fall for this!’**

**Shirley silently thought as she suddenly reached out with her hands and tried to pull Madeline back in to borrow her momentum to run out.**

**However, Madeline quickly turned her head.**

**Shirley was shocked. Before she could react, Madeline grabbed Shirley’s wrist, restraining her.**

**“It’s not time for you to leave yet, so be obedient and stay here.”**

**Madeline released Shirley’s hand as she spoke.**

Shirley, still physically weak, stumbled backward and bumped into the bedside.

Madeline glanced at Shirley, then firmly walked out of the door and locked the door from the other side.

As she was about to head downstairs, Madeline's footsteps gradually came to a halt.

She looked at her previous master bedroom, then suddenly turned and walked toward the room.

The door was ajar. After taking a step inside, Madeline felt an intense discomfort washing over her.

Scenes seemed to play in her eyes. Scenes of the time when she had been wronged and hurt in this very room.

The scenes in which Jeremy had ignored her, neglected her, and treated her brutally played in her mind like a movie, appearing one after another in her eyes.

She had already let go of all these, but these scenes now flooded her mind, bringing her pain.

Madeline quickly turned to leave the bedroom, nearly running down the stairs as she left.

When she was outside the villa, she felt that her heart was beating abnormally fast, and it seemed to have gotten more difficult to breathe. Those fragments of memories also persisted in her mind.

Madeline staggered, suddenly recalling Shirley's words from before...

Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1727

Shirley had said, "Eveline, let me ask you a question. What's the most terrifying and mortifying

experience that you're most reluctant to relive in your life?"

Madeline knew better than anyone the experience she was most reluctant to recall. It was the time when she had been in so much pain that she had wanted to die. To her, it had been a time of misery. A living hell.

Madeline then suddenly realized what might happen when the poison reached the final stage that Shirley mentioned.

'No.

'Don't jump to conclusions.'

Madeline's mind wondered, then she gently shook her head, collecting her thoughts.

Her heart was racing. Once her breathing difficulties had alleviated, she hailed a car by the roadside, considering returning to the hospital.

After getting into the car, however, Madeline's imagination ran wild against her volition again.

Initially, she had been unafraid of the physical pain and torment. She had thought she could endure them because the pain she had experienced previously was far worse than it was now.

She had made it through those experiences, so why should she fear?

However, Madeline had a feeling that the final stage Shirley mentioned would not torment Madeline physically, but rather destroy her mentally.

**Screech!**

**The car braked suddenly as Madeline was still deep in thought.**

**Her body reflexively launched forward, quickly grabbing onto the handle.**

**“What happened?”**

**Curious, Madeline lifted her gaze and looked.**

**Without waiting for the driver’s answer, Madeline immediately understood what had happened.**

**She saw that Carter and his car were in front of the taxi; it was clear that Carter had forced the taxi to stop.**

**“I’m sorry, that’s my friend. I’ll get out now.” Madeline immediately paid the driver and got out.**

**Upon seeing this, the driver knew something was amiss, so he reversed the car and left.**

**White snow gusted furtively into the air as biting squalls passed by on this winter day.**

**Madeline calmly looked at Carter who wore a black coat. His mannerism did not seem to be that of the cultured and refined noble that he had before. Now, his presence seemed to radiate a dark and chilling aura as dangerous as the piercing cold wind.**

**“I don’t want to cause you trouble,” Carter said, breaking the silence.**

Madeline listened as the cold wind whistled past her ear. She lifted her hand to wrap her scarf around her neck.

“Why did you stop me then, Mr. Gray?” Madeline asked calmly.

Carter walked in front of Madeline. “Where’s Shirley?”

Madeline could not help but feel that something was odd upon hearing this.

She had thought that Carter intercepted her here because he had been tailing her, but that did not seem to be the case. He might have merely been waiting for an opportunity on this road.

“Are you concerned about her, or are you worried that your plan would be affected if something happens to your pawn?” Madeline asked and chuckled softly.

Carter seemed to frown, then opened his mouth to speak in a cold, but not quite angry, tone. “Eveline, I’m quite fond of you, truly. I think you’re very special, but I hope that you won’t use it in a different place.”

Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman’s Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1728

Upon hearing Carter’s words, Madeline smiled softly. “Thank you for your compliments, Mr. Carter, but I don’t need them. I don’t need you to think I’m special, and I certainly don’t need your admiration. On the contrary, you repulse me.”

Carter’s lips seemingly curled. “Is that so? Is that why you won’t tell me where Shirley is?”

“That’s right, I won’t.” Madeline maintained her cool as she looked into Carter’s inscrutable eyes. “However, if you intend to abduct me now to exchange for her, go ahead. I can’t compete with a man’s strength anyway.”

Carter had initially considered this. If Madeline would not speak, he would similarly use this method, abducting her so that Jeremy would exchange Shirley for Madeline.

However, he had not expected Madeline to have already seen through his thoughts and intentions.

Admiration flashed across Carter's eyes. "Eveline, you're indeed extraordinary, but I won't abduct you."

He walked toward the door to the passenger's seat and said, "Mrs. Whitman, please join me for a cup of tea at my place."

Madeline knew that she did not have a choice. As she got into the car, she swiftly sent a text to Jeremy when Carter was not looking.

Carter did notice Madeline's action. He figured that Madeline was texting Jeremy, but he pretended not to have noticed it.

His initial goal of whisking off Madeline was to let Jeremy know that Madeline was with him. Since Madeline had already informed Jeremy, she saved Carter some time.

Half an hour later, Madeline returned to the villa once again.

Upon getting out of the car, Madeline noticed that the snow had gotten heavier. The wet and cold ground was covered with a thin layer of snow.

Madeline pulled her coat tighter as she gradually made her way over the snow and into the entryway.

It was warm inside the house. Carter instructed a servant to brew some black tea and bring over some snacks.

He seemed unhurried as he turned and sat on the sofa before slowly speaking.

“It wasn’t truly my intention to cause so many of these incidents. At first, I’d just wanted to discuss business with Jeremy. After realizing that the chance of us reaching an agreement was close to none, I went with the most direct approach, which was you.”

Madeline calmly listened to Carter, then dryly asked, “What business did you and my husband talk about?”

Carter gazed into Madeline’s beautiful eyes for a few seconds, then the corner of his lips lifted into a mysterious smile.

“The plan was already scrapped, so there’s no point talking about it again. However, I won’t be stopping the current plan.”

“Your current plan is to use me to keep my husband in check to obtain your deep secret, is that right?”

“Deep secret.”

Carter repeated those two words, then elegantly lifted his black tea and took a sip.

“Indeed. As you’ve said, it is indeed a deep secret.”

Upon hearing that, Madeline fell silent for a few seconds then resumed her questions. “What exactly is the relationship between you and Shirley? Why does she listen to every word you say?”

“What’s our relationship?” It seemed that Carter was lost in thought, and there was a slight change in his expression as well. Carter seemed to only return to his senses a while later. “An insignificant pawn.”

“If she’s insignificant, then why are you so worried about this pawn to the point of searching everywhere for her, Mr. Gray?”

“Because...” Carter quickly stopped himself after uttering a single word. His sharp eyebrows and dazzling eyes rose as his handsome face smiled in intrigue.

“It seems that you’ve mistaken who’s in charge here, Mrs. Whitman. I brought you here, so I should be the one directing this game instead of you questioning me incessantly like you’re interrogating a criminal.”

Madeline pretended to only realize this after hearing it. “Oh, I’m sorry. I’ve truly mistaken who’s in charge. Since that’s the case, please go ahead and ‘interrogate’ me, Mr. Gray.”

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Madeline’s calmness impressed Carter yet again.

Perhaps it was this calmness of her that had made him feel that she was special back then.

Carter placed the cup in his hands steadily. “I don’t have anything to ask you.”

He checked the time on his watch. “Your husband should be here soon.”

Just as Carter had spoken, Madeline could hear the familiar car engine sound coming from the outside of the villa entrance.

That was Jeremy's car.

Carter glimpsed at the French window through the corner of his eyes. "That was certainly fast. You're someone he cares about indeed."

"You're so good at cracking jokes, Mr. Gray. I'm his wife, could he not care about me?" Madeline asked and chuckled lightly. "Some people are quite pitiful, however. They obviously care about someone, yet they don't know how to care for them. Don't you think so?"

"..."

Carter's smile froze.

He could tell what Madeline was sneering at him, he did not know what Madeline had meant exactly.

Thud thud thud thud.

The familiar sound of footsteps came closer, and Madeline immediately rose from the sofa.

"Linnie!"

"Jeremy, I'm here."

Madeline looked toward the man who was walking over. The sight of Jeremy's hurried and frantic look made her sincerely feel sorry for him.

If it were not for her wanting to be alone with Shirley and asking Jeremy to leave, this would not have

happened.

At least now that they had reunited, Jeremy would protect her, even if Carter had shown up.

“Mr. Whitman, you’ve arrived very quickly.” Carter was the first to speak.

Jeremy’s cold gaze swept past Carter’s face, then walked straight to Madeline and grabbed her hand.

“Let’s go.”

“Don’t you want to sit down for a chat, Mr. Whitman?” Carter asked as he took a new teacup and poured another cup of black tea.

“It’s snowing so heavily out there. Why don’t you sit down, enjoy some tea and chat for a bit?”

Jeremy looked at the leisure and carefree Carter, then lowered his eyes, meeting Madeline’s eyes, and sat on the sofa facing Carter while holding Madeline’s hands.

“You want to chat, huh? Alright, I’ll chat with you. What’s the purpose of you doing all these? What on earth are you trying to do by asking Shirley to develop this kind of poison to manipulate others?”

Carter silently listened to Jeremy’s questions, then calmly said, “Specifically, I intend to manipulate you, but you should’ve already known that a long time ago.”

He briefly paused as he spoke, and the smile his gaze deepened as he peered into Jeremy’s sharp and charming eyes.

**“For you, Mr. Whitman, the physical pain and mental torture had been but a brief suffering, at most. However, it won’t be the same for your wife. She’s your weak spot.”**

**Carter certainly saw through this.**

**However, the anger in Jeremy’s heart was surging.**

**He felt as though he and Madeline were just like experiment subjects for Carter to examine in detail.**

**Regardless of what Carter knew, he certainly could not know everything about them.**

**“Carter, you’ve got one thing right. My wife is indeed my weak spot, but she’s also my armor. I’d advise you to stop provoking us. Otherwise, you’ll find it far more difficult to achieve your goals, and I’ll do everything in my power to stop you.”**

**“Heh.” Carter chuckled softly. “Mr. Whitman, I don’t think you can threaten me anymore,” he said, standing up. “If the poison remains in the body of the love of your life, you will always have to worry. You might have also forgotten about one thing, so let me remind you.”**

**Carter deliberately paused as he spoke, the corner of his lips curled upward as he looked at Jeremy’s light flax-colored hair and amber eyes.**

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**“It seems that you’ve forgotten that the poison in your body is not completely cleared as well.”**

**Carter spoke confidently.**

**Jeremy’s expression remained static despite this reminder.**

**“What about it? You seem to be quite confident. Was it just because of this?”**

**“No, I am completely confident.” There was an assured look on Carter’s face. “Jeremy, since you’re here and we’re done talking, let me bring you guys somewhere.”**

**Without speaking, Jeremy and Madeline shared a look.**

**“What is it? Are you guys scared?” Carter asked provocatively. “If you’re scared, you’re free to not follow.”**

**Carter then turned and walked toward the basement.**

**Madeline remembered this place. Carter had hypnotized her here back then. Unbeknownst to Madeline, a completely different world was hidden in the basement.**

**Through the side door, there was a large-scale laboratory.**

**The laboratory was equipped with state-of-the-art instruments.**

**Madeline saw that the test tube racks were neatly arranged with vials of various colors and sizes. This scene gave Madeline an extreme chill.**

**These vials of anti-toxoid test reagents, likely developed by Shirley, had a variety of effects.**

**“Can you guess whether the anti-toxoid test reagent you’re looking for is here?” Carter asked with a proud smile on his face.**

Perhaps he was proud of the fact that he owned so many mysterious anti-toxoid test reagents.

“Eveline, do you know what will happen during your next flare-up?”

Carter kept them on tenterhooks. He observed Jeremy’s reaction before speaking.

“You will recall the worst and the most painful experience in your life.”

Madeline was unsurprised by Carter’s answer. On the contrary, she had already expected this.

However, Jeremy immediately froze when he heard this answer.

Carter was visibly very satisfied by Jeremy’s reaction.

“What about it? I’ve already figured out what you’re referring to. Did you think I would be frightened by this, then submit to you, listen to you, and return Shirley to you?”

Jeremy was now shocked by Madeline’s calmness and questions.

‘She knows?’

‘How did she know?’

“What is it? Are you disappointed that the thing you’d thought could threaten me doesn’t affect me in the slightest?”

Carter looked at the smiling Madeline and suddenly felt slightly defeated. "Eveline, you truly are a special woman. Unfortunately, no matter how special you are, you will submit when the time comes."

"We shall see."

Upon hearing the conversation between Madeline and Carter, Jeremy felt his temples throbbing furiously.

He faced Madeline. The sight of her calm and serene mannerism left an excruciating ache in his heart.

'It seemed that Linnie had already known about the pain and torment she'll be going through in the final stage, yet she never said a single word.

'Does she intend to suffer this alone?'

Jeremy dared not imagine that Madeline would again suffer the horrendous experiences of the past.

He could not let her relive those horrible experiences.

"Carter, tell us your final terms. I'll agree to anything as long as you have the anti-toxoid test reagent."

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Jeremy suddenly relented.

Madeline quickly turned, facing Jeremy's firm expression, though she did not find this unexpected. He relented solely because of the concern he had for her.

The corner of Carter's lips raised at these words. This was the answer he wanted.

"Carter, state your terms," Jeremy requested, not showing much patience for Carter.

Carter did not beat around the bush. "Let Shirley go," he said bluntly.

Madeline had thought that Carter's demand would be something very difficult or unreasonable. However, she had not expected Carter's only stipulation was Shirley's release.

Jeremy too found this doubtful. If this was the only stipulation, why should he not oblige?

After all, his main purpose in kidnapping Shirley was to exchange her for the anti-toxoid test reagent.

"I can let her go, but I have to see the anti-toxoid test reagent first. She told me herself that there's no completed product, so I'd like to verify that you're telling the truth and that there's truly an anti-toxoid test reagent," Jeremy asked carefully, probing.

He could not afford any more mishaps. Madeline's safety depended on this.

Understanding Jeremy's concerns, Carter slowly turned and walked toward a mini-fridge. Once Carter had entered a passcode on the fridge, the door opened.

Madeline and Jeremy shared a look, then saw Carter retrieving a vial of transparent anti-toxoid test reagent from the fridge.

It looked the same as the anti-toxoid test reagent Shirley had given them back then.

“She’s not lying. There isn’t a complete product that can heal you completely. This one’s just a half completed. You can use it to alleviate your symptoms for the next flare-up.”

It was just a half-complete product.

Disappointment flashed across Jeremy’s eyes, but it was better than nothing.

He could not standby and watch Madeline flare up and suffer through those horrendous past experiences again, no matter the cost.

He reached out his hand to Carter. “Give it to me.”

Carter shook his head lightly. “I won’t give it to you until I see Shirley.”

“Carter, I’m a businessman, and trust is vital in businesses. Once I, Jeremy Whitman, have promised something, I’ll certainly fulfill it.”

**“However, I’m not a businessman,” Carter said with a cold expression, then placed the anti-toxoid test reagent into his coat pocket. “Mr. Whitman, lead the way.”**

**Carter was asking Jeremy to take him to Shirley.**

**Jeremy, without hesitation, grabbed Madeline’s hand and turned. “Follow me.”**

**After saying two words to Carter, Jeremy turned and went back the way he came.**

**Jeremy and Madeline got into the same car while Carter followed them in his car.**

**Jeremy looked at the rearview mirror, glancing at the car that was tailing them closely as his expression became grimmer.**

**Madeline was silently in thought when she heard Jeremy suddenly speaking.**

**“You already knew what’ll happen. Why didn’t you tell me?”**

**Madeline quickly understood what he meant. She shifted her gaze from the snow drifting outside the window onto Jeremy, who wore a cold expression on his face.**

**“I’m not scared,” Madeline said softly, “there’s nothing I can’t handle.”**

**“Linnie, this isn’t about whether you can handle it or not, it’s...”**

**“I understand. I do understand.” Madeline earnestly looked at the agitated man and softened her tone. “Jeremy, I truly do understand.”**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1732**

**Jeremy gave Madeline a serious look, saying nothing in response.**

**The snow grew heavier over time, gradually piling on the ground.**

**Half an hour later, Jeremy's car stopped at the villa's gates once again.**

**When Madeline got out of the car, her eyes were immediately drawn to the two lines of tire tracks that were imprinted on the snow.**

**This villa was detached. Under normal circumstances, no one would be passing by this place, let alone leaving tire tracks at the gates, unless they came here deliberately.**

**"I see. You've locked her up here," Carter said as he got out of the car. "Lead the way." He seemed impatient, but his expression still looked perfectly calm.**

**Perhaps Jeremy was still worried about Madeline, for he did not notice the tire tracks on the snow.**

**He opened the gates and led the way with Madeline in tow.**

**"Jeremy, something's off," Madeline said, expressing her concern.**

**"Off? What do you mean?" Jeremy asked, confused. However, when he was at the entryway opening**

the door, he immediately felt an uneasiness hanging in the air.

Madeline too realized that something was wrong. She sniffed the air around her, then her expression suddenly changed.

“I think something has happened!” Madeline said with emphasis, immediately running upstairs.

Jeremy strode behind her.

Upon seeing this scene, Carter, who stood behind them, felt that something was amiss and quickly ran upstairs with them, toward the entrance to the guest room.

“Why are you two running so fast suddenly? What’s wrong?” Carter asked in displeasure, then his eyes fell upon the guest room door.

He saw that the door lock was broken and there were footprints on the door, suggesting someone had forcefully kicked it.

Carter’s expression immediately changed. “She’s here?”

Jeremy was silent while Madeline, her beautiful eyebrows slightly furrowed, said, “I smell blood.”

Madeline’s words put Jeremy and Carter on guard, their eyes simultaneously narrowed. Carter, however, was one step ahead of Jeremy as he violently pushed the door open.

The smell of blood intensified, and Madeline swiftly entered the guest room. She immediately saw a horrific puddle of blood, still fresh, that stained the snow-white rug. The room also showed signs of struggle.

However, Shirley was nowhere to be seen.

“Jeremy, where is she? Where’s Shirley?” Carter asked impatiently.

This was the first time Madeline saw such an extreme expression on this man’s usually emotionless face.

“Shirley was right here when I left. Carter, you can see that someone had clearly been here,” explained Madeline.

“Sorry, I don’t see it.” Carter’s face fell, looking at the blood on the rug, and he clenched his fingers one by one.

“This was your plan all along, isn’t it, Jeremy? You had intentionally put on such a good show! You said you want to make a deal with me, exchanging Shirley for the anti-toxoid test reagent, but the reality is that you didn’t even want this deal at all!”

Carter’s face was cold, his tone brimming with accusation.

“I would never pull this kind of trick. Someone had barged into this room and taken Shirley away. If you’re truly worried about her, I can help you in finding her current location.”

“There’s no need!” Carter rejected him coldly and suddenly took out the half-complete anti-toxoid test reagent from his pocket. “Since she’s nowhere to be found, this deal is off, Jeremy. Don’t even think about laying your hands on this anti-toxoid test reagent!”

As his voice fell, he suddenly lifted his hand and violently threw the anti-toxoid test reagent out of the balcony.

**“Stop!”**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman’s Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1733**

**Jeremy shouted, attempting to stop Carter, but Carter had made up his mind.**

**With all his might, Carter hurled the vial of anti-toxoid test reagent out of the balcony, ensuring that neither party won.**

**However, Jeremy was unwilling to stand by and watch Carter throwing out the anti-toxoid test reagent. At that moment, he launched himself toward the trajectory of the vial, leaping forward like a sword flying from its scabbard, his entire person seemed to soar with the vial.**

**Madeline’s heart suddenly leaped as this scene unfolded.**

**“No! Jeremy...”**

**Madeline cried out in alarm and ran over to Jeremy.**

**However, she could not catch up with Jeremy’s speed. She watched as Jeremy jumped down the balcony, trying to catch the vial of anti-toxoid test reagent.**

**“Jeremy!” Madeline ran hurriedly to the balcony and looked down. She then turned to head downstairs to find Jeremy.**

**However, when she ran past Carter, he suddenly reached out a hand, grabbing her arm.**

**“Let go!” Madeline struggled angrily.**

Displeasure colored his face. "What did you guys do to her? Where did you hide her?"

Madeline looked Carter in the eyes, unflinching from his suspicious gaze.

"Listen, Carter. Shirley was here initially. Before I'd left, I'd let her bathe, eat, and sleep comfortably. Now that something bad has happened to her, it should be obvious that someone else is behind this. Why should I put up this act with you? Do you think I could've predicted that you'll make this deal with my husband and come here?"

Carter's brows furrowed at Madeline's questions.

While he still gazed at Madeline with suspicion, his grip loosened noticeably.

Madeline used this chance to break away from Carter's grip and quickly ran downstairs.

She rushed straight to the ground level beneath the guest room balcony where she found Jeremy squatting, and she darted toward him.

"Jeremy, how are you? Did you hurt your leg? You still have a scar from the time when you jumped out of a balcony in St. Piaf! How could you be so reckless and jump like that again?"

Madeline was speaking incoherently, torn between caring for Jeremy and scolding him.

She wanted to check whether Jeremy had injured himself, but when she reached out her hands, Jeremy grabbed them.

"Linnie, I'm fine. Really." Jeremy smiled. He had just jumped down from such height, yet his

expression betrayed no sign of discomfort.

“Linnie, look at this,” Jeremy opened his palm and asked, “where’s Carter?”

“I think he’s still in the guest room. Was that really Shirley’s blood? If so, who kidnapped her?”

“It should be hers.” Jeremy was certain.

As his voice fell, he heard hurried footsteps coming from the living room.

A slight change came over Jeremy’s expression. “Linnie, the anti-toxoid test reagent that Adam gave you, you bring it with you at all times, right?”

Madeline nodded. “Yes, I always keep it with me.”

“Good. Give it to me. Quickly.” Jeremy reached out his hand.

Madeline’s heart skipped a beat as she grew very nervous. “Jeremy, are you unwell? Could it be that you...”

“I’m fine, Linnie. Let’s leave it at that for now. Quickly, give it to me.”

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At Jeremy’s urging, Madeline questioned no further. She quickly retrieved the anti-toxoid test reagent she kept in her pocket and handed it to Jeremy.

Jeremy took it just as Carter walked out from the entryway.

He immediately spotted Jeremy and Madeline, then walked straight over.

He shifted his gaze toward the vial of anti-toxoid test reagent that laid next to Jeremy. Upon seeing the shattered pieces of the vial, Carter's eyes flashed with delight, then darkened further.

"Jeremy, that was the only available vial of anti-toxoid test reagent that could help Madeline, and now it has been shattered. Now, you can only watch the suffering of your beloved. Unless you release Shirley. She'll then have time to develop the anti-toxoid test reagent."

After listening to Carter's words, Jeremy calmly stood up.

Madeline got up as well. She lightly patted away the snowflakes on Jeremy's coat, looking at the shattered vial by Jeremy's feet with a grave expression.

"Carter, you still dare think so highly of yourself. Since you've already thoroughly investigated Linnie and me, you should know that I'd never risk my wife's safety."

Jeremy walked up to Carter; Jeremy's eyes blazed with anger despite the biting cold winter snow.

"Truth be told, I'd never wanted to let Shirley go. That's not all. I'd even locked her in the basement with neither food nor drink for the entire night."

Carter furrowed his brows. "Jeremy!"

"That woman has developed such a twisted and damaging thing to harm Linnie and me. Do you think I'd still be kind to her? Even if I'd truly tortured her, she'd only be getting what she'd deserve."

"You..." Carter's mouth set into a hard line, and his eyes glowed with rancor.

**“I’m not finished,” Jeremy interrupted Carter coldly, Jeremy’s deep, alluring eyes were more imposing than Carter’s. “If it weren’t because of my wife’s urging, I wouldn’t have even let that vile woman sleep in the villa guest room in comfort. A despicable reprobate like her, who only sees the life of others as experiments, is unworthy of any sympathy.”**

**A vile woman.**

**A reprobate.**

**Upon hearing Jeremy’s description of Shirley, Carter’s fists slowly clenched as the raging flame within him was about to erupt at any moment.**

**However, at the brink of Carter losing control of his overflowing anger, Madeline suddenly spoke.**

**“I treated Shirley kindly not because I pity Shirley, but because I pity how she’s being manipulated,” Madeline said while looking into Carter’s eyes, which suddenly had a confused look.**

**“Shirley is very detestable, and she did many despicable deeds. However, the one who is even more detestable, more despicable, is the one who’s behind her instigating her to commit these deeds. Wouldn’t you say so, Mr. Gray?”**

**“...”**

**Carter immediately fell silent.**

**He knew very clearly that Madeline was referring to him.**

That is correct. Shirley had only been following his orders.

If she was a vile woman and a despicable rat, then he would be even worse.

This thought made Carter chuckle.

The white snowflakes fluttered past his eyes, and in that second, it was as though the snowflakes had turned black.

Carter's elegant face finally revealed a never-before-seen sinister smile.

"Seems that I wasn't the only ones who have done a thorough investigation. You guys have investigated me thoroughly as well," he said provocatively, an abnormal chill in his voice. He shifted his gaze to the shattered vial on the ground, then to Madeline.

"Madeline, for the sake of our relationship, I didn't initially want to see you in so much pain. However, there are no longer any anti-toxoid test reagents, and you guys seem unwilling to release the one who developed the anti-toxoid test reagent. Further, your husband insisted on making me his enemy. I guess you can only resign yourself to fate now."

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With that, Carter turned and left with a carefree demeanor.

Madeline, staring at Carter's back as he walked away with such finality, felt slightly uneasy.

She felt her chest tightened upon seeing the vial of anti-toxoid test reagent shattered on the snow.

Noticing the changes in Madeline's mood, Jeremy, whose face was surprisingly happy, held her hand and comforted her.

**“Linnie, I know you’re worried about me, but your condition is more urgent now. Even if poison inside me were to flare up, it wouldn’t be much of a problem with Adam around. However, it’s a different story for you. Carter would never genuinely give you the anti-toxoid test reagent.”**

**Madeline could not deny that Jeremy had a point. Nonetheless, she was still fairly upset seeing the shattered vial.**

**Once Carter had left, Madeline and Jeremy returned to the guest room once again.**

**Jeremy examined the room’s condition and inspected the puddle of blood.**

**It was indeed human blood, and judging from the state of which it had dried up, this incident had likely happened not long ago.**

**“Jeremy, who do you think wanted to kidnap Shirley? What would they benefit from kidnapping Shirley?”**

**Jeremy, who seemed to be in thought, did not answer Madeline’s question, but instead responded with a question of his own. “Linnie, what kind of relationship do you think Carter and Shirley have?”**

**Madeline pondered for a few seconds and said, “Honestly, I think Carter has romantic feelings towards Shirley.**

**“You’re saying that Carter has feelings for Shirley?”**

**“Yes.” Madeline nodded. “That’s what I think.”**

“I think so too. Carter doesn’t merely think of Shirley as a pawn,” Jeremy agreed, then his handsome eyebrows furrowed slightly. “I have an idea who is likely to be behind this. This kind of trick could kill two birds with one stone, and there’s only one person who would benefit most from this.”

As Jeremy analyzed the situation, his deep eyes flickered with foresight.

Madeline looked into those eyes and seemed to immediately have some idea what he meant.

‘It seemed that only one person could benefit from this.

‘However, would that person truly be bold enough to do this?’

...

In a damp and dark basement.

Shirley once again woke up from her stupor, feeling a chill all over her body.

Due to her blood loss, her body was lacking in warmth.

Amidst her grogginess, Shirley felt a sudden, dull pain in her stomach.

“Hiss.” She curled up in pain. Through her blurry vision, she saw a woman, who wore a cap and face mask, aggressively kicking her.

“I thought you were dead,” the woman mocked. She then bent down and yanked Shirley’s collar.  
“Who asked you to get in my way? Let me tell you this. You have yourself to blame for this outcome!”

she warned fiercely.

The woman then pushed Shirley away. Prone, Shirley lifted her head with great effort. She tried standing, but felt a fiery pain in her ankles.

Even now, Shirley, feeling neither afraid nor panic, calmly posed her question instead.

“Who... the hell are you? You said I got in your way, but can you at least tell me how I got in your way?”

As Shirley’s voice fell, the woman suddenly yanked Shirley’s collar again in rage and lifted her hand, slapping Shirley’s face twice, without even saying a word.

“Shirley, don’t think that you can get away with this because you now have a bit of talent and looks. He didn’t belong to you before, and he won’t ever belong to you!”

As the woman spoke, she suddenly got up and took a fruit knife from the table at the side.

While Shirley felt dizzy and dazed, she could still clearly see the woman walking over to her, the fruit knife in hand.

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The light in the basement was dim, so Shirley could not see the woman’s face. However, she could imagine how malicious this woman’s face would look now.

“What are you trying to do?” Shirley supported herself with both hands and tried her best to move backward.

She was not scared of the torture this woman would inflict on her, but she could not accept sustaining any injuries on her face.

No woman could accept this.

The woman waved the fruit knife and strode in front of Shirley, towering over her as she arrogantly peered askance at Shirley.

“Shirley, I know I can never compare to you in some aspects and I can never replace you. The only thing I can do now is to change your physical appearance.”

After Shirley heard this, she was even more certain that this woman wanted to disfigure her.

She knew if she did not fight back, her face would be atrociously disfigured in her hands.

She could not sit here and resign to her fate.

When she saw the woman waving the knife at her face, Shirley used all her might to push the woman away.

The woman thought Shirley had lost all resistance, so she was completely caught off guard when she was suddenly pushed. She fell to the ground, and the fruit knife in her hand also dropped.

The woman muttered angrily while picking up the fruit knife in a hurry. However, Shirley was even faster than her and was now holding the fruit knife.

Fearing that the tables would turn at this critical moment, the woman pressed Shirley's hand down and the two of them started fighting.

Since Shirley was weak, the woman managed to trap Shirley under her.

The two of them fought for the fruit knife, and amidst the chaos, the sharp blade slashed across the woman's palm.

"Ah!" the woman screamed in pain, and at the same time, flames of rage filled her heart.

She snatched away the fruit knife that Shirley was holding tightly in her hand as her eyes turned aggressive.

"Go to hell!"

She held the handle of the knife and slashed the sharp blade across Shirley's right cheek.

"Ah!"

An overwhelming sharp pain immediately washed over Shirley.

Shirley was instantly alert without a trace of muddle-headedness.

She lifted her hand to clutch her wound, the blood quickly staining her palm red.

"Shirley, do you feel the pain now? Who asked you to offend someone you shouldn't? You should think about who you offended back then. Don't blame me, I'm just doing this under someone's instructions. Think about who you've offended recently."

**'Who I've offended recently?'**

**Shirley clutched her face that was bleeding profusely, and she was in so much pain that her bones were trembling. She could not think. The only rivals whom she could think of were Jeremy and Madeline.**

**When she remembered how Madeline had let her take a shower, change her clothes, eat, and sleep in such a friendly manner, Shirley could not help but chuckle sarcastically.**

**"Eveline, I almost believed you. I didn't expect you to be so good at acting."**

**Shirley said in self-mockery before pushing away the woman who was restraining her. Then, she stood up shakily and stumbled toward the door.**

**The woman initially wanted to stop her but when she heard what Shirley had just said, she felt that it was unnecessary.**

**She removed her mask and cap before curling her red lips to display a sinister smirk. She was pleased that she managed to get away with this.**

**"Shirley, it's good that you've arrived at this conclusion. Remember to go back to Carter and tell him who did this to you."**

**Married by Mistake Mr. Whitman's Sinner Wife [Sixteenth Child] Chapter 1737**

**Shirley clutched her face and ran forward without bothering which way she was going, braving the biting cold wind and snow.**

**The blood that seeped through the gaps of her fingers fell on the white snow drop by drop, and beautiful blooming flowers seemed to appear on the ground in a split second**

Shirley did not know how long she had been running for, nor did she know where she was headed to. Her consciousness was getting more and more blurry. When she almost fainted, she rushed out into the road.

A taxi could not stop in time and directly crashed into Shirley who was running around blindly.

The taxi driver quickly hit the brakes and was so scared by this sudden incident that he was holding the steering wheel without budging an inch.

“It’s not my fault. She ran out into the road. It’s not my fault.”

The driver kept emphasizing.

When Adam and Cathy saw this from the backseat, the two of them opened the door and got out at the same time.

As a doctor, Adam would not leave the wounded to die without trying to save them.

Adam initially thought it was just a stranger who had carelessly dashed out into the road, but when he saw the face that was covered with dirt, Adam’s heart palpitated with fear.

“Shirley? Shirley!”

He called out to Shirley repeatedly but she was not reacting at all.

Adam tried to feel for Shirley’s breath, and her weak breathing caused his heart to plunge violently.

He carried Shirley, who was covered in blood, back into the car. Cathy also quickly got back into the car. The moment she sat down, she heard Adam roaring at the driver frantically.

**“To the nearest hospital, hurry!”**

The driver did not dare to delay it for even half a second. He immediately pressed down on the accelerator to speed to the nearest hospital...

Madeline and Jeremy went back to the hospital.

Karen was taking care of Lillian who was getting an intravenous infusion.

When Karen saw the two of them, she pointed at the bouquet of powder blue baby breaths on the table and said, “A masked man came to visit Lily just now. That man was very weird. He didn’t say anything and just left after putting the flowers down.”

**“A man?”**

**“He looks like he’s in his 20s. He’s tall and handsome. I think he looks somewhat familiar but he was wearing a mask so I can’t be sure,”** Karen explained.

Madeline walked to the bouquet and noticed that there was a glass jar full of colorful candies behind the bouquet.

When she saw the candies, Madeline arrived at a conclusion with much certainty. **“It was Fabian. He left the flowers and the jar of candies.”**

Jeremy approached Madeline to take a look. Indeed, there was a jar of candies behind the flowers.

**“I don’t know what he’s trying to do. He wants to cut ties with us but he still cares about our daughter so much.”**

**Madeline smiled and sighed. Then, she turned around to look at Jeremy.**

**“Jeremy, what are you planning to do with Shirley? Can you get the security footage to see where she is right now?”**

**“Alright, I’ll get someone to do it now,” Jeremy said and walked to one side to make a call.**

**Madeline walked to the side of the bed to caress the sleeping little princess. As she watched the cold liquid seeping into the child’s body little by little, she felt incredibly helpless.**

**“Lily, you have to stay strong and make it through this.”**

**“Our Lily will be fine. However, I heard that something has happened to your body recently. What’s going on?” Karen asked with a friendly tone.**

**Madeline smiled. “Don’t worry, Mom. We’ll all make it through this.”**

**She promised, and at the same time, she was giving herself the confidence to make it through this.**

**Then, she recalled the test tube that Jeremy had broken himself.**

**She took out her phone and called Adam.**

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She would not feel assured if she did not have the anti-toxoid test reagent that Adam gave her with her.

If Jeremy were to experience another flare-up at a sudden timing, she would not know what to do.

However, even though she could get through to Adam, no one was picking up the call.

Madeline figured that Adam might be busy, so she thought she would call him later. However, when she was about to put her phone away, Adam called her back.

Madeline quickly answered the call and heard Cathy's voice from the other side.

"Evie, it's me."

"Cathy, are you with Adam? Is he unable to come to the phone now?"

"Evie, he can't come to the phone because..."

After Madeline heard what Cathy said, her eyes flashed suddenly.

Jeremy came back into the ward after making the call. When he saw Madeline's strange expression, he strode to her and asked, "Linnie, what's going on?"

"Something bad has happened to Shirley." After Madeline said that, she grabbed Jeremy's hand to walk out of the ward. At the same time, she turned around and said to Karen, "Mom, I'm going out with Jeremy for a bit. Please look after Lily."

Karen waved her hand. "Go ahead. Don't worry, I'll look after Lily."

After getting a reply from Karen, Madeline held Jeremy's hand and quickly walked out of the ward.

"Linnie, where are we going?"

"The operating room."

"Operating room?" Jeremy was puzzled. Then, he had an assumption and asked, "Is Shirley in the operating room?"

"Yeah." Madeline nodded and started to increase her walking pace without realizing it.

Soon, they arrived at the corridor that led to the operating room.

From afar, Madeline could see Adam sitting on one of the chairs with a heavy and worried look on his face. Meanwhile, Cathy was sitting beside him.

When Cathy saw Madeline and Jeremy, she walked over to greet them.

"Evie, Jeremy, she's still inside and we don't know her condition yet."

Jeremy looked at Adam who looked dispirited and spotted the bloodstains on Adam's clothes. He could guess that the dried blood came from Shirley.

Shirley had disappeared from the villa, so how did she suddenly show up here?

Jeremy was confused. "What happened? Why is Shirley in the operating room and why was she with you guys?"

Cathy shook her head lightly. "I'm not sure what's going on as well. When Adam and I were on our way home, we saw Shirley darting out into the road all of a sudden. The taxi driver couldn't stop the car in time so he crashed into her. However, before the car hit her, she was already hurt. Plus, there was a very deep knife wound on her face."

"She's been disfigured?"

"Someone did it to her," Adam said something at this moment.

Madeline looked at Adam and saw that he had a look of dismay on his face.

Even though he did not approve of a lot of the heinous things Shirley did and he abhorred her actions deeply, they were still siblings who were related by blood. Nobody would be able to be unaffected under these circumstances.

Madeline and Jeremy could guess who was the person who had kidnapped Shirley, but they did not expect them to be so heinous.

"Do you know who did this?" Adam saw the light flashing across Madeline and Jeremy's eyes.

When Madeline was about to say something, the door of the operating room opened.

Adam turned around and rushed over immediately. "Dr. Lewis, how's the patient?"

The doctor shook his head with a heavy look on his face. "Dr. Brown, I did everything I could. Perhaps it'll be better if you perform the surgery."

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**After hearing this, Adam felt his heart turn ice-cold. It was as though it had been submerged in bone-chilling ice water, causing his entire body to freeze.**

**When Madeline heard this while standing at the side, she found the situation to be strange. She did not dare to believe that Shirley would die just like this. "Doctor, how's the patient doing now?"**

**When the doctor saw that Madeline was with Adam, he explained in detail, "Judging from the current situation, she may end up losing her mobility and will have to spend the rest of her life in a wheelchair. The wound on her face is also abnormally deep, so it can be said that she'll be disfigured."**

**Disability and disfigurement.**

**Madeline immediately recalled her own situation from back then.**

**She had been blind and also disfigured. It could be said that she had gone through the exact same thing as what Shirley was going through now.**

**"This is the patient's current state. Perhaps she might improve after a recovery period, but it might take a very long time or even a lifetime."**

**After Adam heard this, he nodded gently to show that he understood. "Thank you, Dr. Lewis."**

**He turned around slowly, the back of his figure looking abnormally bleak.**

**"Evie, Jeremy, I'll go stay with Adam." After Cathy informed Madeline and Jeremy, she quickly followed Adam.**

Madeline lifted her eyes to look into Jeremy's eyes. There was a complicated look in both of their eyes.

Madeline did not know whether this encounter and ending were Shirley's karma. If it was, then what about the things she had experienced before?

Cathy and Adam came to the garden below the hospital.

It was still snowing and a thick layer of snow had already piled up on the ground.

Adam stood amid the snow and the wind like a statue. He showed no emotions and was not speaking.

Cathy tried to get close to him. "Adam."

She called out. She initially thought Adam would not pay attention to her, but he still turned his head.

"Cathy, it's cold out here. You should go in first. Let me stay here for a while."

"Adam, you were with me during the most torturous and coldest time of my life, so I'll return the favor. I'll be with you no matter what the circumstances are."

Upon hearing this, Adam's expression changed slightly.

He wanted to tell Shirley to leave again, but he felt that Cathy might not listen to him.

He smiled softly and walked forward slowly. The fluttering snow flew past his shoulders and landed

on his hair.

“I really miss my childhood,” Adam lamented.

Cathy was touched by this sentence as well because she also missed her childhood.

She missed the year, the month, and the day when she first met Felipe at the beach.

Back then, their encounter had been so pure, but ultimately, he still could not escape what life had planned for him.

He was dead now.

They would never meet in this life again.

“She used to be a good sister and was amazing.” Adam reminisced sincerely. “She thought Mom and Dad only loved me and they neglected her because they wanted to care for me. However, she didn’t know that only one of us could study abroad in St. Piaf and our parents gave the chance to her. She thought they did this to abandon her.”

Adam furrowed his thick eyebrows in distress.

“I had given her the notebook. She wouldn’t have wasted time on insoluble problems if she had just read it. Why is she still so stubborn in going about things the wrong way?”

“Back then, she said she wanted to be a great medical scientist like Mom and Dad, but now, she has become a witch who only knows how to harm people and use poison on them...”

**“How did things become like this?”**

**Adam lowered his eyelids in pain while sighing with melancholy.**

**Cathy placed her hand gently on Adam’s shoulder. “Sometimes, a misunderstanding or complication can cause someone to obstinately persist in going about things the wrong way. They will only come to the realization after you solve the matter that gnaws at their mind.**

**“Adam, your sister will be very devastated after she wakes up and sees the condition she’s in. When that happens, you have to stay with her and care for her. I’m sure she’ll feel your sincerity.”**

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**“I don’t know if her leg will recover, but I’m sure you have a way to heal her face, right?”**

**When Cathy asked this, her eyes were twinkling.**

**She believed that Adam had this ability.**

**After she asked that, both of them fell into a brief moment of silence.**

**Adam looked as if he was thinking about something. After a while, he lifted his head and looked at Cathy with a small smile on his handsome, flawless face.**

**“Thank you, Cathy.”**

**“If you thank me, you’re treating me as an outsider. Adam, you’re like my family member, so you don’t have to be courteous to me.”**

**Family member.**

**When those two words reached Adam's ears, he felt happy yet disappointed at the same time.**

**However, he was feeling more delighted than anything.**

**After all, a family member went beyond a friend; it was a special presence.**

**Shirley was transferred to a private hospital ward.**

**After being unconscious for a day, she woke up in the middle of the night.**

**Despite feeling very weak when she lifted her hand, she still used all her might to touch her face.**

**The thick layer of bandages on her cheek proved that what had happened before was not a dream but reality. Her face had really been disfigured.**

**Shirley felt her heart turning cold, and when she was about to move, she suddenly realized that her legs were not responding to her. She wanted to move but could not. She had even lost all feelings in her legs.**

**'How is this possible?'**

**Beads of cold sweat appeared on Shirley's forehead. She tried to move again but she still could not move her legs.**

**In that instant, it was like a bolt from the blue and it struck her straight in the heart, splitting it into**

**two.**

**She felt as if all of the blood in her body had been drained and her entire body was cold.**

**In addition to that, it felt as if the night sky outside the window had shrouded her. She felt that everything in front of her was black and icy.**

**While she was feeling distracted, Shirley saw a figure from the corner of her eyes. Then, she turned her head to see Adam sitting on the chair at the side of the bed with his eyes closed. He looked exhausted because his brows were still furrowed even when he had fallen asleep.**

**When Shirley thought about her current situation, she felt that this was oddly laughable.**

**At this moment, Shirley felt as if her heart had lost its normal rhythm. Soon after, her breathing started to become rapid.**

**She reflexively lifted her hand to press it against her heart, but she still could not soothe this uncontrollable feeling.**

**She knew very well that this was one of the symptoms when the poison flared up.**

**She did not forget how Jeremy had personally injected the poison into her veins that day.**

**Heh.**

**She chuckled coldly with self-mockery. This was karma.**

**This was karma, indeed.**

**Shirley gritted her teeth and gripped the blanket tightly. She looked at Adam who was sleeping soundly and slowly moved her upper body.**

**At this moment, she only wanted to leave. She would get out of here even if she crawled.**

**However, her lack of energy and the injuries she sustained after the accident would not allow her to do so. Plus, due to the poison in her body, she would have difficulties breathing. How could she crawl out of here?**

**However, Madeline was still determined. She endured the debilitating pain to try to move again, but her body tilted to one side and she lost her balance before falling straight to the hard floor.**

**However, at this moment, a pair of warm hands held her.**

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**Shirley could tell that those hands were that of a woman.**

**Dazed, she lifted her eyes and was met with a pair of clear, wide eyes.**

**"The doctor said that your injuries will need proper care to recover, so it's better if you rest," Cathy said gently as she slowly helped Shirley back to the bed.**

**Shirley sat back down, then gave a cold chuckle.**

**"Which quack said that? Could I ever recover from my current condition? If they can't even make the most basic of judgments, they shouldn't even be doctors!"**

She mocked cynically while enduring her pain.

**“Do those pompous quacks think that they’re being kind by telling such lies? I don’t need such hollow kindnesses! Just say that I am crippled and disfigured! There’s no hope for recovery!”**

Upon seeing Shirley giving in to despair, Cathy sternly emphasized.

**“Of course there’s hope! Yes, there might be a lot of unqualified doctors out there, but there are also a lot of good doctors, like Adam, who’s also your brother. Believe in him. He’ll definitely help you recover and return to your old self.”**

**“Shut up!” Shirley huffed, interrupting Cathy. “Who do you think you are? You dare shamelessly spew such nonsense at me? Do you think I know nothing about medicine?”**

She turned her face and peered at Adam who was still asleep. **“I know everything he knows! However, he might not know what I know. I understand my current situation perfectly. Heh. If I’m helpless at this, what hope can I have for him?”**

Arrogance flashed in Shirley’s eyes.

Cathy finally saw the dissatisfaction within Shirley.

It was the extraordinarily intense determination to surpass her brother whom she thought her parents had loved more.

In other words, she was jealous.

However, her jealousy was entirely misplaced.

“You’re Cathy, right?” Shirley stared at Cathy while suppressing the debilitating pain in her body. “Get the nurse for me, immediately. I don’t intend to stay here. I don’t want to see this person, or anyone related to him. I want to leave this hospital immediately!”

Shirley was very emotional, but Cathy still looked at her calmly.

“If you still want to get better, you should continue resting. If you want to be crippled and disfigured for the rest of your life, then you can continue making a fuss.”

“...” Shirley bit her dried lips. “Are you threatening me? Heh.”

She gave a cold chuckle, laced with contempt, then suddenly reached out to press the call button.

However, before she could reach it, her hand was met with a palm that felt familiar to her.

Shirley turned and saw Adam, who had awakened unbeknownst to them, standing on the other side of the bed, his upright body emitting a resilient aura.

He retracted his hand that was blocking the call button and pushed Shirley’s hand back.

**“You ought to be a little more compliant if you don’t want to die,” Adam warned, his gaze penetrating.**

**Shirley was briefly stumped for words, then chuckled mockingly and said, “Adam, I don’t need you to pity or feel sorry for me. I certainly don’t need you to cure me.”**

**“Do you think I want to save you?” Adam asked her coldly. “I’m a doctor in this hospital, and they have passed you to me. I’m just following the standard operating procedures. If it weren’t for my performance appraisal, I’d have handed you to the other doctors.”**

**“...”**

**Shirley had not expected this answer. She had wanted to refute Adam when he turned to walk away with a cold expression, but the poison intensified at this moment.**

**Her pain was so excruciating that she could not straighten herself, and her face abruptly blanched.**

**Cathy could tell something was wrong with Shirley, so she hurriedly called out to Adam, “Adam! She doesn’t look too good.”**

**Adam abruptly stopped in his tracks. He hastily looked back and saw Shirley, her head lowered, clutching her shirt around her chest, breathing too erratically and rapidly.**

**Adam quickly strode back to the front of the room and grabbed Shirley’s wrist, checking her pulse.**

He noticed that Shirley's pulse was unsteady and irregular. This situation was critical yet familiar.

"Do you have the same poison in you as Eveline?" Adam asked in disbelief.

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Shirley effortfully retracted her hand. "I don't need your concern."

"I certainly don't want to be concerned about you. Even if you were to suffer and die by this poison, a pernicious person like you would deserve it."

"..."

"Adam."

"However, I have not forgotten. I'm a doctor, and it is a doctor's duty to save others. Just like with mom and dad, I won't let anyone die by my watch, not even if they're my enemies."

"..."

Shirley's movement immediately became sluggish when she heard these words.

It was as if the pain had stopped at this moment as well.

"Heh. Hehe..."

After a long while, she chuckled, coldly and bitterly.

When she returned to her senses, Adam was no longer in the room; only Cathy remained, standing at one side.

“Adam will be back soon.”

Shirley said nothing in response, no longer having the energy to speak.

Although she had developed the poison, she had never known that one of the components could cause such intense pain once inside the human body.

It was so cruel.

“Ah...”

Shirley could not help but wail out in pain.

She could not imagine how Madeline had gone through this. She felt that she could not endure this any further.

However, she knew she would not die. The first three stages of this poison only consisted of physical torment. Once it had reached the final stage, the torment would be mental.

She would once again experience the memories she did not want to relive. Those lonely, cold, and dark days when she had been depressed...

“Hiss...”

The fourth stage has yet to arrive, but Shirley’s heart had already begun to have a splitting pain.

She tried to suppress her emotions, but she still could not control her tears.

Cathy, seeing Shirley’s pained look, went up to comfort her. “Hold on a little longer. Adam will definitely have a solution for this.”

“A solution...”

Shirley let out a light chuckle through her red, teary eyes.

“I developed this poison and I don’t even have the antidote. Who would have it? Get lost! I don’t need your sympathy.”

Shirley forcefully pushed Cathy’s hand away.

Cathy, caught off guard, nearly fell, but someone supported her from behind.

“Evie.”

Upon hearing Cathy calling out to Madeline, Shirley spent all her might to lift her red, teary eyes and looked over.

Shirley remembered the moment when that mysterious woman had sat on Shirley and disfigured her. She also remembered what that woman had said to her.

“Shirley, don’t blame me for this. I’m merely doing this on someone else’s behalf. Think about who you have offended lately.”

As the phrase kept on repeating in Shirley’s ears, she tightened her grip on her clothes.

Upon seeing Shirley’s current state, Madeline calmly walked over to the bedside. Before Madeline could speak, Shirley suddenly pulled out the IV, which had been attached to the back of Shirley’s hand, and grabbed Madeline’s wrist, intending to stab the IV needle into Madeline’s neck.

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When Cathy saw this, she swiftly ran up to intervene. “Evie, watch out!”

Madeline was caught off guard by this sudden attack, but with her agile reflexes, she easily caught Shirley’s wrist, putting a stop to her deranged action.

“Evie, are you okay?”

Worried, Cathy walked over to Madeline’s side, then turned toward Shirley and reprimanded her.

**“Why do you still want to hurt people? Even now, do you still not think that you’ve gone too far? What on earth did Evie do to offend you, causing you to hurt her time and time again?”**

**Shirley, enduring the waves of pain, stared at Madeline through gritted teeth.**

**“Yes... Why do I want to hurt her time and time again? It’s because I am heinous! It’s because I’m a cold-blooded, inhumane tool! Hahahaha...”**

**Shirley started laughing maniacally in self-deprecation, then tightly gritted her teeth as she endured the intense discomfort.**

**“Eveline, do you find it extremely infuriating and depressing that you’ve encountered someone like me? One can only blame it on your horrible luck! I’ll accept the fact that you had someone to do this to me. I have only myself to blame for having provoked you first. Isn’t that right, Mrs. Whitman?”**

**Cathy frowned, confused by Shirley’s words.**

**“What are you babbling about?”**

**What does Evie have to do with your injuries? You were the one who darted out of the road, causing that driver to run into you because he couldn’t break in time.**

**“Heh.” Shirley softly chuckled at that. “Observe, Eveline. You’ve put on such a great act. Everyone thinks You’re put on such a great act. Everyone thinks you’re such a gentle and kind woman. The truth is that your side is even more sinister and vile than I am”**

Madeline was completely unbothered by Shirley's opinions and comments about her. On the contrary, she answered Shirley with a calm and composed look on her face.

"Yes, I am a sinister and vile woman, so fret not, I too won't let you die this easily. You still have something I want, after all."

Shirley tightly pressed her dry, pale lips together. "Don't even think about getting the anti-toxoid test reagent! I certainly won't develop it!"

Madeline gave a cold chuckle, then shrugged nonchalantly. "That's still not bad. From now on, I'll have you as company whenever I have a flare-up. We can be there for each other."

Madeline's calm reply seemed to induce in Shirley a phantom pain, as though her injuries had worsened.

Dissatisfied, she clenched the bed sheet, panting, and said, "Heh, Eveline, do you honestly think it'll be that easy to make it through the fourth stage? Let me tell you that you definitely won't be able to handle it! You'll definitely come begging, but I'll definitely refuse to save you!"

"Just you wait. Let's see whether I'll beg for you to save me when the day comes. Who knows? When the time comes, maybe you'll be the one who's begging."

After Madeline had spoken, she turned around, untroubled, and left.

Cathy saw the hatred burning in Shirley's eyes and the discomfort that Shirley must be experiencing all over, then strode after Madeline. Madeline had reached the entrance when she saw Cathy

following her. She stopped and said, "Cathy, you should go back to keep an eye on her."

Cathy nodded with a solemn expression. "I will, but Evie, what did you mean by what you said earlier?"

You have nothing to do with the scar on her face, right? You wouldn't do such a thing, and there was just some misunderstanding, right? Why didn't you explain it to her?"

Upon hearing Cathy's words, Madeline could feel Cathy's trust in her. She then smiled lightly. "

Those who trust me would naturally do so. There's no use in explaining to those who do not trust me. Cathy, you should return and stay with her."

Madeline lifted her eyes, studying Shirley who was currently suffering from the poison and her injuries.

"I think she would need someone to keep her company now."

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After Madeline had finished speaking, she left.

She had initially come here to look for Adam. While she was at it, she went to check up on Shirley. She had not expected to nearly have another brush with trouble.

Regardless, just as she and Jeremy had expected, whoever kidnapped Shirley had achieved their goal of making Shirley misunderstand Madeline.

Madeline had a hunch regarding this person's identity.

In the hospital room.

Jeremy was telling Lillian a fairytale.

The little princess drifted into sleep while listening to the delightful fairytale. Jeremy then planted a soft kiss on the little princess' cheek before tucking her in. As he was getting up, he saw that Madeline had returned.

Madeline and Jeremy looked at the little girl who had fallen asleep, then shared a look and a smile. With a tacit understanding, they then walked toward the chairs by the entrance and sat down next to each other.

"Linnie, what's the situation over there?"

"Coincidentally, Shirley had a flare- up while I was there. With those injuries on her body, her condition seemed terrible."

Jeremy held Madeline's hand, intertwining his fingers with hers, and his eyes were gentle and filled with concern. "Even if her pain worsens, or her condition worsens, she's not worth your sympathy , Linnie."

Madeline pressed her lips together into a slight someone who has harmed us so cruelly. It's just that if we still don't identify the poison's components, I'm afraid we'll be under Carter's control forever."

"We won't," Jeremy said with perfect certainty, his grip on Madeline's hand tightened as well.

**“Linnie, there’s something I have yet to tell you.”**

**“What is it?”**

**“When I injected the ant-toxoid test reagent poison into Shirley, I extracted a small sample should’ve immediately handed it to Adam, but I have not got the chance this turn of events.”**

**This news was indeed completely beyond Madeline’s expectations.**

**If they had the specimen, it would not be difficult to develop an anti-toxoid test reagent that could combat the poison.**

**“In fact, I contacted Adam when you went to see Shirley. He said he was on his way home. He sounded frantic.”**

**“I think Adam is going to get the anti -toxoid test reagent that could eliminate the poison in Shirley. He truly still cares a great deal about this sister.”**

**As Madeline was making her conjectures, Adam had been on his way back for the anti-toxoid test reagent as Madeline had guessed.**

**When Adam rushed back into the hospital room, Shirley was curled up in bed. Cathy, unable to do much else, had only stayed by the beside.**

Adam swiftly assembled the syringe, then grabbed Shirley's arm, identifying the location of her vein, and expertly injected the syringe.

Shirley grunted. The moment of sharp pain was immediately followed by a cool sensation, which slowly soothed the pain all over her body.

Shirley slowly lifted her head and, with disbelief, looked at Adam who was Administering the injection.

"How... How did you get the anti-toxoid test reagent? Did you come up with it just from your deductions?" Shirley gasped and asked, using all her strength, her eyes betraying her displeasure. "Impossible! You can't come up with the anti-toxoid test reagent just like this. Adam, you can't be smarter than me in this!"

Shirley denied hysterically. "Tell me, where did you get this?"

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Adam calmly completed the injection, then his gaze drifted over to Shirley's hostile face. He had not a single ounce of intention to explain, and he could not be bothered with quibbling with Shirley about this.

He looked at Cathy who stood by the bedside and gently said, "Cathy, you should head back. I'll watch her."

Cathy shook her head. "I can still watch her. You must be exhausted today."

Adam unenthusiastically glanced at Shirley. "I can't help that I'm related to this person."

He sounded disgusted as he uttered this.

**"..." Shirley was speechless.**

**Cathy had wanted to advise Adam again to rest, but she also figured that Adam might want to have a word with Shirley, so she spoke no further.**

**"I'll bring breakfast tomorrow. You should get some rest soon as well, Adam," Cathy said and grabbed her bag.**

**Adam sent Cathy to the entrance and did not forget to remind her, "Be careful."**

**After sending Cathy off, Adam returned to the hospital room.**

**Color had returned to Shirley's face; she now looked better than before. At least the poison was not tormenting her further. However, the injury on her face and legs would not heal so easily.**

**"How did you hurt your face? There are injuries on your legs too," Adam asked coldly, not sparing another glance at Shirley.**

**Shirley chuckled softly and leaned backward. "It was Eveline. She had someone do this to me."**

**Adam briefly froze, then lifted his eyes. "Did you say Eveline was behind this?"**

Upon seeing Adam's reaction, Shirley smiled with even more disdain. "I knew you'd react like this.

You'd rather believe that woman than believe your biological sister."

"Well, so you still remember that you're my sister, huh?" Adam asked. "You should reflect upon yourself while you're here. Besides, I can assure you that Eveline would never ask anyone to do this to you."

Adam spoke sternly, then turned to leave the room, closing the door securely behind him.

Facing the empty hospital room, Shirley's negative emotions immediately overwhelmed her.

She touched her face, then looked at her unmoving legs, feeling as though the night sky outside the window was slowly swallowing her whole.

"Carter."

She murmured Carter's name, clenching her fists.

This time, she truly had no chance. Although she had carried out his orders perfectly, it did not matter.

After leaving the hospital room, Adam immediately went to the temporary office the hospital had

arranged for him.

He had previously asked the driver to send Shirley to the nearest hospital, and this hospital was not the hospital he was working in.

Moreover, the hospital did not hand Shirley to him.

This was merely an excuse that he had come up with to treat Shirley.

It was the middle of the night when he took out the old notebook to find a photo in between the pages.

The photo showed a family of four. It was the photo that he had picked up and kept safe after Shirley broke the photo frame.

The corner of Adam's eyes grew dry upon staring at this photo.

'Sister.'

Could he still rediscover his proactive sister who had been full of life, who used to stand up for him?

It was past midnight.

The light in Carter's study remained on. He answered one call after another, but still, nobody had any news of Shirley for him.

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For someone who had weathered many storms, he had expected himself to be unmoved by this, but right now, he was fretful.

Up until daybreak, Shirley's whereabouts still eluded him.

Carter then decided to search for her himself. However, as he got up, someone abruptly pushed the study room door open.

Through the entrance came Camille.

Carter found this unexpected. "Why are you in Glendale as well?"

Camille did not answer Carter, but asked, "Are you looking for Shirley?"

Carter paused briefly when he heard that, then calmly admitted it. "I am."

"Why are you still looking for her?" Camille's expression turned extremely sour in an instant. "You should have seen through this kind of woman a long time ago."

This kind of woman.

The corners of Carter's eyebrows seemed to furrow slightly at Camille's description of Shirley.

"Carter, don't tell me that you're still concerned for this woman. If you recall what she'd done back then, you shouldn't still have feelings for her."

Camille's words were laced with repulsion and hatred of Shirley.

Carter put away the vexed emotions portrayed between his brows, and his handsome face instantly wore a cold expression, reverting to his usual stone- cold expression.

"I haven't had any feelings for her for some time. The reason I've tolerated her presence is to have her gradually pay back for the things she had done to me."

Camille's expression changed upon hearing the words "pay back".

"You should just let this kind of woman go. What's the point in getting payback?"

Camille did not want to see Carter committing anything unreasonable or cross any lines.

"I've heard that she has even developed some type of poison that harms humans just to sell them at a high price to certain sketchy individuals. That woman could not be saved, Carter. You ought to stop dealing with her. Since she left so decisively all those years ago, you should now just think her dead."

As her voice fell, the air around them plunged into silence.

Carter knew that Camille despised Shirley. Camille was a reasonable woman who valued relationships, so her hatred toward Shirley was not without reason. This he understood enough.

However, he could not understand his heart.

“Don’t worry, I haven’t had any feelings for her for some time. My current dealings with her have only been work-related.”

Camille did not want Carter to get into contact with Shirley, not even for work. However, she knew she could not force Carter to a corner because it would only produce the opposite of the desired outcome.

After Camille had left, Carter slowly returned to his seat and turned on his phone.

Shirley seemed to truly vanish from the face of the earth; he could not get hold of any news of her.

Of course, Carter, still suspicious of Madeline and Jeremy, did have them followed, but there was nothing suspicious about the two of them.

Now that Camille had told him this, he temporarily gave up looking for Shirley. However, his mind brood on.

Shirley has stayed in the hospital for approximately ten days. during which she had another flare-up. Even though Adam had given her the injection which could soothe her, he had intentionally waited for Shirley to experience the poison’s torment and pain before giving her the injection.

He wanted Shirley to experience how scary and heinous the poison she had developed was.

Shirley could only tolerate this. Now, she was a good-for-nothing without any power to resist. She could only endure this.

After being bedridden for half a month, the thing she cared about most was still the injury on her face. When the time to remove the bandages had finally arrived, Shirley impatiently asked Adam for a mirror.

“A person may not be beautiful, but if she has a kind heart, she won’t be ugly; if her heart is black, she’ll be ugly no matter how beautiful she may be.” Adam gave Shirley a cold look, then tossed the mirror to her.

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Of course, Shirley understood what Adam meant, but she cared not for that now.

As a woman, she could not accept her face to be disfigured.

Now that she had lost the ability to feel and move her legs, and no one would help her to a mirror, she could only pick up the small mirror Adam had tossed to her.

Before she looked, Shirley was mentally prepared because, even if she could not see them, she could feel the uneven scars on her right cheek.

She held her breath and brought the mirror to her eyes. Despite the small size of the mirror, she could still clearly see the hideous scar on her initially flawless face.

Shirley’s eyes widened, staring at the scar for about ten seconds. She then violently threw the mirror at the floor, smashing it.

“No!”

She could not accept this reality even though she had already acknowledged this earlier.

Adam coldly observed Shirley by the side as she leaned against the bed. Her face was pale, both hands clutching the bedsheet. In the end, she could not muster the courage to touch or see her face again.

“Shirley, this is what you reap for your evil deeds. You said Eveline has someone do this to you. Even if it was truly her, you have absolutely no right to complain.

“just look at what you’ve done to them. Even now, the poison inside Jeremy and Eveline is still not completely cleared!”

Adam berated sternly.

After being stumped for words for a moment, Shirley sudden burst out laughing.

“You’re right. This is what I deserve.”

Shirley lifted her teary, red eyes. “Adam, you’re cold and ruthless, just like the husband and wife who died a long time ago. You’re also so cold-blooded in dealing with your family members!

“I am your sister, and you’ve spared no sympathy or concern despite my current state, yet you care for Jeremy and Eveline, whom you are not related to at all, instead.

**“Adam Brown, you certainly are something. You’re indeed their most precious, most highly regarded good son!”**

**In the face so Shirley’s mocking and ridicule, Adam did not want to offer any explanation.**

**He took Shirley’s medical report and lowered his eye, taking a glance.**

**“Your body’s condition no longer shows any other problems now. As for the condition of your face and legs, You’d need to have regular checkups.”**

**“Adam, what are you trying to say?”**

**Adam slowly closed the medical report. “ I’m saying that you can be discharged now.”**

**“Will you be needing my help in informing your superior? Adam asked, a cold expression on his face.**

**Shirley seemed confused by the word “superior”, but then quickly realized that Adam was referring to Carter.**

**In their eyes, was she merely Carter’s subordinate?**

**She laughed at herself. ‘That’s still fine. At least this was slightly better than being used.’**

**Adam, noticing better than being used.’**

Adam, noticed the change in Shirley's expression, pretended to be perplexed and asked, "Is Carted not your superior? Don't you listen to everything he says? You had a work accident, so as your superior, he should bear some responsibilities, no?"

"This has nothing to do with him," Shirley suddenly said, her tone abnormally firm and quick. "There's no need for you to inform anyone. You should just need to get me a ride and I'll leave on my own."

Adam looked at Shirley, betraying no emotion. "I am not your subordinate, so I'm not obligated to get you a ride."

"What would you have me do then?" Shirley said anxiously.

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Holding the breakfast in hand, Cathy saw the scene unfolded when she reached the hospital room entrance. After some contemplation, she decided to speak up. "Adam, I have an idea, but I'm not sure how the both of you will feel about it."

Shirley and Adam lifted their gaze at the same time.

Cathy slowly stepped into the room and suggested, "Adam's house is big, and the guest room is always empty. Further, Adam, you're Miss Brown's doctor. If both of you were to stay at the same place, it'd be more convenient for you to keep a close eye on your patient's condition."

Cathy then paused, deliberately observing the changes in Shirley and Adam's expressions.

**“At the end of the day, Miss Brown is still your sister, and it’s very normal to have your sister staying with you. What do you think, Adam?”**

**After listening to Cathy’s suggestion, Adam darted a cold look at Shirley from the corner of his eyes, then sarcastically asked, “Does she still think that she’s my sister?”**

**“It seems more like you don’t want to have me around, Adam, and I simply won’t let you get what you want,” Shirley said through gritted teeth, then looked at Cathy.**

**“Help me with the preparations. I’ll be discharged shortly, then I’ll go and stay at his house.” Cathy glanced at the silent Adam. “I misspoke. That’s not his house— that’s my house too!”**

**Adam was not bothered to quibble over what Shirley had said. He merely shot a glance at Cathy and turned to walk toward the entrance.**

**“Whatever,” he said without looking back.**

**When he walked past Cathy, Adam gave Cathy a knowing look.**

**Adam and Cathy’s eyes met, and then they smiled.**

**Soon after, Madeline learned that Shirley was moving in with Adam. While she was not in a hurry to look for Shirley, Jeremy was.**

**He handed the sample of the poison he had extracted from Shirley to Adam, hoping that Adam was**

able to find time in developing an anti-toxoid test reagent that could combat the poison as soon as possible.

Adam solemnly agreed, indicating that he would do it promptly.

As a doctor, he wanted to save people. Additionally, deep down, he hoped that nothing would happen to Shirley.

After all, they were siblings.

This was a relationship that he could never give up in his lifetime.

Even if Shirley had turned into a cold- blooded and cruel person.

At the end of the day, she was still his sister.

Shirley stepped into the house once again, but the feeling she had in her heart was different from the last time she had entered.

She had indeed read the diary Adam had given her.

However, she refused to face it or believe it.

Cathy cleaned the room for Shirley which Adam had assigned to her.

Although Adam and Shirley did not say it, Cathy could tell this was nothing like a guest room—it was Shirley's old room.

She could also tell that despite Adam's nonchalant expression on the surface, he had been behind the development of the situation.

The reason Shirley could move in was that Adam already had the opinion to have her move in Cathy had merely helped him by bringing this up.

While Carter had listened to Camille and had not gone to find Shirley any further, in reality, he still got people to seek out Shirley's whereabouts.

Today, Carter finally got news about Shirley.

He cleaned himself up, put on a coat, then left in a hurry, deliberately avoiding Camille as he left.

Snow began to fall amidst the biting cold winter winds when Carter stood at the entrance of Adam's house. He stopped momentarily, then stepped forward.

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