

Madam Winters 431

Chapter 431

The intranet completely crashed after Elitos Corporation was hacked, and all employees had to put in extra labor over the weekend.

The tender conference facing the entire Sea City scheduled for the day was also moved to the afternoon

Adina entered the lobby and saw that the staff were busy setting up the venue, and the site was even more grand and solemn than before.

“Mr. Daugherty, this way, please.”

Adina was guided into the conference room by the manager in charge of liaisons.

The door of the meeting room was pushed open. There were already a dozen staff members seated at the round table. The person who wore a silver mask was sitting on the main seat. An assertive aura surrounded him.

“Mr. Earley Wynters, Ms. Daugherty has arrived.”

After respectfully reporting, the manager in charge of liaisons gestured for Adina to enter the meeting room.

Adina’s lips pulled up into a light smile, “Mr. Earley Wynters, how are you?”

Earley pointed to the closest seat at him and said, “Please have a seat.”

Adina calmly walked over. Serene also pulled a chair and sat down behind Adina.

Because she was too close to Earley, Serene inexplicably felt nervous, and her palms were sweating, but when she saw Adina’s calm face, she eventually calmed down, holding the pen and recording calmly in her notebook.

“I’m sure Ms. Daugherty already knows why this meeting is being held today, right?” Earley spoke lightly, his deadpan stare falling on Adina’s body. Adina said calmly, “It’s for the chip design proposal, right?”

“That’s right.” Earley pushed the document forward. “Ms. Daugherty’s proposal is a fantastic idea, but it is too rough, and many details are too abstract. Hence, we can’t be sure whether this proposal is just an idea or whether it can establish the ideal framework outlined in the proposal.” Adina spoke lightly, “The design proposal’s framework is complete and flawless. One of my initial concepts has taken shape, but due to time constraints, I was unable to provide the concrete details.”

Earley curled his lips with interest and said, “It has already been assigned a three months duration, so it is not a short time.”

This tender conference notification was sent out half a year in advance to Sea City, and the details of the tender were publicly disclosed three months prior. If Adina could only submit such a proposal in three months, she could not be as good as he had thought. However, she was indeed superior to the majority of individuals.

“Mr. Earley Wynters, LaStar Technology Corporation was not yet established three months ago and has not made preparations for Elitos Corporation tender conference.” Serene said boldly, “In fact, Ms. Daugherty began working on this proposal only on the morning of the day of the last tender conference. She probably only finished it in about five hours.”

Earley’s eyes narrowed abruptly. Others in the meeting room were also stunned.

“Five hours to produce such a proposal?” “This proposal’s framework , although rough, is indeed very complete. In five hours, how is it possible?”

“I heard that Ms. Daugherty is a Harvard graduate, so maybe she could be capable of such.” “However, five hours still seems unrealistic.”

Earley casually flipped through the proposal and said indifferently , “How long would Ms. Daugherty need to perfect the details?”

Adina mused, “I usually leave the details to our company’s staff to complete. It can be finished in about three days.”

“Very good.” Earley nodded and gestured to the secretary behind him, “Is the contract ready? Bring it over to Ms. Daugherty for signature.”

The contract was spread out in front of Adina in two copies. She flipped through them casually. It was a normal business cooperation contract with standard terms and conditions and did not contain any harsh and excessive terms, so she signed her name neatly on them.

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Earley stood up and extended his right hand. “Ms. Daugherty, I hope we will have happy cooperation in the future.”

Adina also got up and moved her chair aside. She shook hands with Earley. “Mr. Earley Wynters, may we have a happy cooperation as well.”

When her hand touched Earley’s hand, she experienced a shiver that rose up her spine from her fingertips. The air was frigid. It was far more frigid than the cold air from a refrigerator.

She only lightly touched Earley’s hand in a symbolic gesture and quickly withdrew.

Earley pulled his hand back and inserted it into the suit pant pocket. He said coldly, “There will be a celebration banquet tomorrow night after today’s tender conference. Don’t forget to attend, Ms. Daugherty.”

After saying that, without waiting for Adina to answer, he ordered his secretary to send Adina and Serene out.

When they got outside and the sunlight shone down their shoulders, Serene let out a sigh of relief, “Ms. Daugherty, don’t you think Mr. Earley Wynters is strange?”

Adina nodded and said, “He is indeed a little strange, but

the good news is that there is less likelihood of us dealing with each other in the future.”

“That’s true.” Serene grinned and said, “Ms. Daugherty, you are truly amazing. You took on such a significant case without making a sound. Our company will not have to worry about the next three years.”

Meanwhile, at Jones Corporation.

“What did you say?” Zhenny raised her head, her exquisitely maintained face showing brief signs of shock. “You said that the chief chip designer for Elitos Corporation’s new project chose someone else from the inside?”

The assistant stood in front of the desk trembling, “Yes, Ms. Jones, Mr. Earley Wynters’s secretary had personally

called me.”

Zhenny put down the pen, took a deep breath, and asked, “Who is the chip designer that Elitos has chosen? Do you know the news?”

The assistant paused for a moment and continued, “I’ve heard that it’s the general manager of a new small company, whose last name appears to be Daugherty. They formally signed the cooperation contract this morning when Ms. Daugherty showed up at Elitos Corporation.”

This indicated that the Jones family had lost all hope.

Zhenny pinched her eyebrows, “For a newly established small company to actually be able to snatch the case on the board from my hands, something smells fishy about

it.”

“Ms. Jones, I also heard that Ms. Daugherty only spent five hours drafting a proposal that amazed the senior management of Elitos, which caused them to forgo the Jones family and choose that small company.”

Zhenny’s eyes turned fiercely cold.

A few seconds later, she sneered coldly while raising the corner of her mouth, “So that’s how it is?” Do they genuinely think that the Jones family is vulnerable to intimidation?”

Adina went to the company, spent some time there working, and then she drove back home.

When she pushed open the door of the house, she found that no one was inside the house.

When she was about to call Duke, she discovered that this man had sent her a message on WhatsApp two hours earlier.

"I took the children back to Winters' house. Go straight to the Winters' house when you are finished with your work."

Adina's brows furrowed when she read the line on the screen.

The children all stayed at her home. How come they went to the Winters family's villa?

If she lets George and Harold come back to live with her again today, would it be as smooth as it was yesterday? Adina sighed from just thinking about this. She believed that it was better to not be so greedy and be satisfied with the night before.

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Adina's car had just stopped in front of the Winters family's villa, and the four children were already running out of the yard.

"Mommy, you're finally back. I missed you so much!"

Harold's voice was always the loudest and most rowdy. He rushed over and jumped into Adina's arms, climbing up on all fours and kissing her on her cheek.

Melody, who had been led by Harold, also started acting up, grabbing Adina's hand and pleading for a hug.

Adina was forced to carry the two children inside, while the well-behaved George and Alden followed behind her.

Duke frowned and came over, saying coldly, "Harold, how old are you now? Why do you need to be hugged?"

While Harold was hugged by his Mommy, he behaved very conceitedly, sticking out his tongue and saying, "I just like to have Mommy hug me, and not you."

Duke's face darkened, "Even if she had to hug someone, she should hug Al and Mel."

"Why?" Harold raised his chin, "I am also Mommy's biological son. What's wrong with wanting a hug from Mommy?"

"Al is younger than you, and he didn't even let Mommy hug him, yet you still call yourself the second brother. Can you afford to call yourself the second brother?" George said coldly.

Duke said lightly, "Since this is the case, why not change the order? In the future, Al will be the second brother, and Harold will be the third brother."

"No way!"

Immediately, Harold grew anxious.

"I don't want Mommy to hug me. Never again. I can walk by myself!"

He obediently stood on the ground, behaving like a good little boy. Adina's smile vanished and said, "Okay, Hal, your daddy, and George were just joking with you, but since you are the second brother, you

have to set a good example for Alden and Mel.” “Yes, sir!” Harold gave a military salute, “I will be a good brother!”

The maids in the house all laughed.

Adina glanced at her watch and put Mel down, “It’s past four. Mommy needs to go make dinner for all of you right away.”

“Mommy, there’s no need to make dinner today.” Alden said quietly, “Daddy just said that he would make dinner today.”

Duke was speechless.

If Alden was not his son, he would have kicked him out.

He never mentioned wanting to prepare dinner. It was all because Alden had dug him a pit. He was forced to jump

1.

Adina raised an eyebrow at the dark-faced Duke. “You know how to cook?”

“Yes, Daddy can make handmade noodles too!” Harold said casually, “But, there was a mishap. In the end, the handmade noodles were not made. This morning, we had spaghetti that was cooked by daddy.”

The corners of Adina’s mouth twitched.

Duke would never be able to make the homemade pasta because it was so challenging to make. Was it possible that he created that little accident on purpose?

Regarding the spaghetti, both the sauce and the pasta were readily available. Even Al, not to mention Duke, who was an adult, could cook spaghetti.

However, since this man wanted to show off his cooking skills in front of the children, she naturally would not refuse it.

Adina grinned as she curved her lips, “So, I will not cook today and take it easy. I appreciate your father!”

Duke pulled his lips together, “It’s only for one meal. It’s not hard.”

As he spoke, he cast a fleeting glance at Alden.

Alden looked at Duke with his innocent eyes, and said meekly, “Daddy, I want to eat fish. Make it light.”

Duke nodded, “Okay, then I will make you steamed sea bass.”

Harold saw the situation and also hurried to order dishes, “Daddy, I want to eat...”

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Duke glanced over with a cold gaze. “Just eat whatever that’s available. Why ask for so much?”

Harold fell silent.

When Daddy got a new son, he forgot about his previous son. He was very harsh.

Duke did not bother to look at Harold. Instead, he bent down to look at Melody. "Tell Daddy. What do you want to eat for dinner?"

Harold was speechless.

It felt like another arrow shooting into his chest. He felt so sad.

After asking Melody, Duke looked at Adina again. "What do you want to eat?"

Adina had no particular preference for food. She said with a light voice, "Whatever, just eat whatever you can cook." Duke let out a sigh of relief.

If this woman proposed eating braised meat or something else, he would be in a difficult situation.

However, steamed fish seemed to be a little difficult for him. But because all that was required was to steam the fish, he appeared to be able to manage it too.

Duke entered the kitchen with a heavy heart.

Mr. Brown knew Duke was going to cook, and his wrinkled face was covered in worry. "Sir, should I ask the chef to prepare the dinner instead?"

Duke pretended to be calm and said, "Today I will be the chef. Just send the chefs over and prepare the ingredients for me."

The two chefs immediately took their positions and respectfully asked, "Sir, what kind of dishes are we making today?"

"A steamed sea bass and a cola-glazed chicken wing."

These two dishes were what Alden and Melody wanted to eat. As for the others

Duke mused, "Do whatever dish that is easy."

It was his first time cooking, so it was better not to make things too difficult for himself.

The chef thought about it and said, "Sir, because this is your first time cooking, you might be more at ease making western cuisine." Another chef said, "There is still fresh beef in the refrigerator. How about we cook some steak?"

When it came to things he was not good at, Duke would fully listen to other people's suggestions. He nodded. "Alright, you guys get the ingredients ready."

He then used the free time to get his phone and look up instructions for steaming sea bass.

The children, Al and Mel, had been away from him for four years. His relationship with Mel had escalated quickly.

On the other hand, Al often gave Duke a watchful look, which made him feel like a failure.

Therefore , as long as Al asked something from him, he would definitely oblige.

While Duke was cooking in the kitchen, Adina played the piano in the living room with the four children.

She and Mel sat at the piano and played the piano, while the other three little ones sang along with the piano music. Harold ran all around the piano since he was tone deaf, and the living room filled with joy.

Approximately an hour later, dinner was ready.

Mr. Brown led the maids to bring the dishes to the table one by one.

“Ms. Daugherty, Mr. Winters made all the dishes for today.” Mr. Brown said with a smile, “This steamed sea bass was specially made by Sir for the Young Master Alden, these cola-gazed chicken wings are for Ms. Melody, and lastly this scalded Jinga shrimp was specially prepared for you, Ms. Daugherty.”

Harold asked with a curious expression, “How about me? What dishes have been made for me?”

“Ahem!” Mr. Brown coughed dryly. “The portions of these dishes are quite generous, so let’s eat them together.”

When he saw Harold’s face filled with disappointment , Mr. Brown hurriedly changed the topic, “Mr. Duke personally prepared these steaks. The flavor is excellent. Young Master Harold can try them later. If there is steak, there should be red wine. I’ll go get two bottles of red wine from the wine cellar.”

Mr. Brown turned around and walked away with guilt.

He did not dare to say that just now, while he was in the kitchen , he had forgotten to remind Mr: Duke to make dinner for George and Harold.

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After Duke finished cooking dinner, he went upstairs to change his clothes and came downstairs again.

Even though there were only three dishes, they included six steaks. When put all at once, they took up the entire table.

Mr. Winters felt quite a sense of accomplishment as a result.

Six of them sat down at the table. There was already a plate of steak that looked pretty excellent in front of each of them.

Duke elegantly put the napkin on his knee and said, “Try it to see what it tastes like.” Harold was the first one who was excited to cut a slice of steak and put it into his mouth. After only tasting a bite, the little guy wrinkled his brow and said, “It’s so hard, too hard, I hardly can chew it.”

Duke was speechless.

According to the chef, the fire was just right for grilling the steak. Why was the steak so tough?

Alden tasted a bite of steamed sea bass and said, “The fish meat is quite fresh and juicy, but it’s too salty.”

Duke could not come up with any words.

The chef mentioned that it would be good to just put two spoons of salt, and he also followed his instruction to put only two spoons of salt. What made it salty? George ate the scalded shrimp. "The shrimp is cooked, but the sauce is a little spicy."

Duke remained silent.

The sauce was mixed by the chef. He refused to accept responsibility for it. Melody took a piece of the cola-glazed chicken wing into her bowl. She took a bite, and then another bite.

Seeing that gave Duke's heart a little comfort.

However, Adina suddenly said, "Mel, stop eating it. The center of the chicken wings is still uncooked."

She was forced to take the chicken wings out of Mel's bowl.

Mel pouted as she was very unhappy that her favorite food had been taken away.

Duke remained silent at this point.

But he felt it was time for him to speak up.

He coughed and said, "I was directed by the chef to make all these dishes, and I don't know how it ended out like this."

He was not blaming the chefs in any way. He was just telling the truth.

No one spoke among the group of chefs huddled in the kitchen.

Duke had his own opinions, and as they were powerless to influence him, they likewise refused to take responsibility for it.

Fortunately, the chefs had anticipated the possible scenario and prepared an extra portion of each dish.

After Adina had asked to remove the dishes, the maids brought the newly made dishes back to the table, and this time, the children finally did not spit out what they had placed in their mouths.

Harold said while eating the cola-glazed chicken wings, "Daddy, you better not cook in the future. What if you poison us to death?"

Duke also tasted the sensation of a million arrows prickling his heart.

However, Adina felt Duke had done rather well on his first attempt.

She smiled and said, "Hal, it took your daddy about two hours to prepare this meal. Regardless of the outcome, you should say thank you to him."

Harold swallowed the food in his mouth and thanked his daddy reluctantly.

"The wine is here, and I also found a little fruit wine." Mr. Brown walked into the dining room carrying a few bottles of wine. "This is Lafite. It has been kept at home for more than 20 years, and today it was finally put to use. These fruit wines were bought last year. Several young masters can each drink half a glass."

Mr. Brown took six tall glasses and poured wine for each of them.

George raised the fruit wine glass and said, "Thank you, Daddy, for preparing dinner for us."

He clinked glasses with Duke and drank half a glass of the fruit wine.

Alden also raised his glass and clinked it with Duke, "Thank you, daddy, for the steamed sea bass. It tastes excellent."

Alden genuinely meant what he said. He raised his head and sipped almost a whole glass of wine.

Melody smiled sweetly and said, "I like Daddy's cooking.

Thank you, Daddy, for cooking for me."

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Melody also drank half a glass of wine. Her fair face instantly blushed like a red apple.

When Adina saw the kids drinking wine, she found it inappropriate if she did not drink any.

She raised her wine glass. When she was about to drink, Alden reached out to stop her. "Mom, I'll drink for you."

Duke frowned. "You're just a kid. How could you drink wine? Let me do it."

He grabbed the wine glass.

Mr. Brown quietly nudged Duke's shoulder. "Master, Ms. Daugherty wants to toast to you. How can you drink on her behalf?"

Duke seemed to have suddenly realized what was going on.

"Young Master Alden, you'd better not drink red wine. This wine is very strong, so children can't handle it." Mr. Brown took the wine glass from Duke before he passed it to Adina again. "Ms. Daugherty, you can just take a sip as a formality."

Adina toasted to Duke before she took a sip of the wine.

This wine was full of flavor. The taste lingered on the lips and tongue. She could not help but take another sip.

Duke cast a glance at her before he drank all the red wine in his glass at once.

The meal was over just as the sky turned dark.

Adina wanted to leave.

But Mr. Brown walked over, smiled, and said, "Miss Daugherty, you drank alcohol, so you can't drive. Why don't you stay here tonight?" Adina found herself speechless.

She finally understood why Mr. Brown had kept persuading her to drink wine during dinner just now. So, this was what he was intending to do.

She massaged her forehead. "I'll call a chauffeur."

Mr. Brown fell speechless.

How could he forget that there was a chauffeur service?

"Chauffeur services are not safe." Duke indifferently said, "You're a young drunk woman with two kids. It's hard to ensure that they won't have ulterior motives."

When Adina thought of it, she also agreed, so she gave up on the idea of calling a chauffeur.

While she was about to ask the bodyguard of the Winters family to send her home, she heard Mr. Brown speaking while standing at the entrance of the mansion, "Today is

Sunday. After you finish your work, you can go back and rest. You have half a day off tomorrow morning as well."

When the servants heard what Mr. Brown said, all of them became stunned.

A day off?

Since when did day offs exist in the Winters family?

There were two young masters. The servants had rotating shifts, and there were bodyguards and servants in the mansion at all times.

But Mr. Brown actually let all of them go home?

Although they were rather dumbfounded, nobody disliked having a day off. Therefore, the bodyguards and servants left very quickly.

Adina massaged her forehead.

The servants and bodyguards had left. What was she supposed to do now? Was she to ask Mr. Brown to send her home?

But Mr. Brown was already old. Could he drive?

She looked at Duke again. Should she let this man send them home?

But Mr. Winters was busy working. He would not have the time, right?

"I read the news yesterday," George suddenly said. "A

drunk single woman returned home alone, and she died of asphyxiation after vomiting and being left unattended."

Harold was so shocked that his face turned pale." Mommy, don't go home. Can you stay one night here, please? I'll take care of you!"

Melody's wide eyes also became watery. "Mommy, don't go back tonight."

Perhaps Adina was really drunk. She felt her head getting a little dizzy.

“Go back after you’ve sobered up,” Duke slowly said. “Go and rest in the guest room. I’ll make you some tea to sober up.”

Alden was slightly worried as he looked at Adina. “Mom, I’ll help you to the guest room.”

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Adina lay on the bed in the guest room and closed her eyes.

Alden put the blanket over her before he gently left the room.

Right after he went out, he was dragged to the corner of the staircase by Harold. “Alden, we need to talk.”

George and Melody were also there. They surrounded Alden.

“George, Mel, and I have reached an agreement, which is to...” Harold announced, “Let daddy and Mommy get married. This way, we will have daddy and Mommy, and we can live together forever.”

“I disagree!”

Alden rejected it without thinking of it.

“I know you disagree, so we are here to discuss it with you.” Harold patted Alden’s shoulder in a serious manner. “Brother Alden, you’re still young, so you don’t understand boy-girl relationships. Let me explain it to you.”

Alden coldly glanced at Harold. “Are you sure you know?”

Harold suddenly felt guilty before he puffed his chest.

Hmph! I don’t know, but George knows it. Am I right, George?”

George found himself speechless.

What the heck did he know?

But he still cleared his throat and said, “Alden, dad likes Mom a lot. I guess you can also see it.”

“I just know my Mom doesn’t like your dad.”

What Alden said made the boundary very clear.

My Mom and your dad. 1 Even though he was very close with George and Harold already, he did not treat the Winters family members as his own family.

George understood the meaning behind his words, and he narrowed his eyes. “How did you know that Mom doesn’t like dad?”

“I’ve been living with Mom for four years, so nobody knows her better than me.” Alden pursed his lips and said, “If Mom chooses to marry your dad because of love, I wouldn’t disagree. But I don’t wish you, the Winters family, to force her to marry him using kinship abduction and all other means.”

Harold widened his eyes. "I never thought of forcing Mommy into anything!"

George indifferently said, "Harold and I always respect

Mom's decision. We asked you to come for a talk, just because we wish you not to get in between Mom and dad." Alden did not back off, and he stared at the two of them. "What do you mean by getting in and not getting in?"

"For example, if Mom decides to stay here tonight, you can't try to find ways to make Mom go back!" Harold angrily said, "You're so cunning. You can bully me, fine, but you even set dad up. If you are harboring any bad thoughts about this, dad and Mom will never get together!"

Alden pursed his lips, and he did not know what he should say.

It had been a long time since he bullied Harold. It was clearly Harold who had been superior over him these times

He set Duke up just because he wanted to see if this man cared about him and Melody.

He did not want Mom to get involved with Duke because he was afraid that Mom would fall for him and get hurt.

All the things he did were not for himself.

But were they really right?

He did those for Mom's sake, but did he really respect Mom's choice?

"Alden, I understand why you would do this, but Mom is

an adult. Once she makes her choice, she must have been thinking in depth before she decides it," Harold slowly said. "Mom is also my and Harold's Mom. We wish for Mom to be with dad, but we also wish that Mom can be happy. If dad can't bring happiness to Mom, Harold and I will be the first people to oppose." Harold nodded. "That's right. If dad dares to bully Mommy, I'll not call him dad anymore!"

Melody remained silent, but she blinked and gently shook Alden's arm. She said in a low voice, "Al..."

She called George and Harold by their first names, but she still called Alden by his nickname.

When she called him Al, this made Alden's heart melt.

He hugged Melody before he softly said, "Okay, I promise. I'll not get involved in anything between dad and Mom."

Harold immediately became happy. "Awesome! Alden, I will stop attacking you over this!"

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George held Alden's hand. "Let's go. I'll take you to my room. I have many good things in my room. I believe you'll like them!"

Harold looked around. "Mel, go with them to George's room. I have something to do."

He smirked to himself before he turned around and went to the courtyard.

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Under the cook's guidance, Duke finally made some tea.

He held a cup of tea and knocked on the guest room door. He knocked on the door for a while, but the room remained silent.

He turned the doorknob and pushed it open.

Then, his breathing stopped.

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Adina had taken off her outerwear and was strewn out on the bed. She was wearing a chiffon shirt. Her sleeves were rolled up, showing her jade-like arms.

She had taken some wine. When the alcohol dissipated off her body, her cheeks blushed like a glorious sunset.

The redness extended from her cheeks to her neck, and her collar bones glowed pink.

The blanket covered her chest, and it went up and down along her breath.

He immediately looked away and forbade himself from staring at the alluring figure. He covered his lips with his hand and coughed, but he still could not wake up the woman who was laying on the bed.

"Addy, wake up." Duke moved two steps closer and softly called her. Adina still closed her eyes. Her breathing was very light, and she slept very soundly.

Her skin tone was very fair, and it glowed attractively under the dim, yellow night lamp. Her lips were full and moist, and her breath carried a trace of alcohol.

Duke felt as guilty as a thief as he leaned forward and stretched out his hand for some reason. His thumb was just less than a centimeter away from touching Adina's lips. With difficulty, he moved his hand away before he quickly reached out and brushed a few strands of hair away Adina's forehead.

Perhaps his movements had been too rough. Adina's eyelashes trembled before she slowly opened her eyes.

When Adina saw his face being so close to her, she instantly woke up in shock. "I... why... why are you in my

room?"

Right after she asked that question, she immediately remembered that she was still at the Winters family residence. "I'm sorry. I've had a little too much to drink, so I'm not quite myself right now."

Duke stepped back before he took the cup of tea from the bedside cabinet. "You will feel better after drinking this."

Adina nodded.

After she drank some tea, her mind was indeed clearing

“Thank you.”

She thanked him with a hoarse voice.

“What time is it now?” She asked again.. Duke took a look at the time. “It’s 8.30 p.m.”

It turned out that she had only been sleeping for less than an hour. Adina drew the blanket away and sat up. “I’m feeling better already. I can go back.”

Duke was disappointed.

But he no longer had any excuses to keep her here. He followed her to walk outside. “Then, I’ll send you back.” But suddenly , Mr. Brown’s scream was heard from the courtyard.

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“Oh boy, what are you doing?”

Mr. Brown stared blankly at the situation in front, his

eyes wide open.

“Shush!”

Harold immediately dragged Mr. Brown and squatted under the shade of the bushes.

“Papa Brown, please don’t tell dad, okay?”

Mr. Brown looked at the screwdriver in Harold’s hand before he glanced at the deflated tires. “Oh boy, do you know what you’re doing?” “Of course I do!” Harold nodded hard. “You were no different when you persuaded my mommy to drink, Papa Brown.”

Mr. Brown was speechless.

He had done it in secret. Why was he seen through by the young master so easily?

“Papa Brown, we share the same goals. Why don’t we work together?” Harold blinked before he took out another screwdriver and handed it over. “You also puncture Dad’s tires. That way, Mommy will be left with no cars to drive.”

Mr. Brown imagined himself being forced to stand in a corner as a punishment by Duke.

He was already old, so he really could not be humiliated like that.

Therefore , he returned the screwdriver . “Young Master Harold , I’ll leave the car to you. I have something more important to do.”

Mr. Brown stood up and walked toward the mansion. As soon as he walked to the door, he saw Duke and Adina walking out, side by side, and this shocked him so much that he nearly had a heart attack.

“Mr. Brown, we heard your scream just now. What happened?” Adina asked.

“Oh, nothing. I was just startled by a stray cat.” Mr. Brown stroked his nose and said, “I still have other matters to tend to. I’ll go inside first.”

After Mr. Brown spoke, he speedily disappeared to the first floor.

Adina frowned. "Why do I find Mr. Brown a little weird?"

"He is already old, so it must have done a number on his heart." Duke raised his head and said, "Stray cats have many viruses. I'll go out and see where the stray cat came from."

Adina walked outside with him.

It would not be too late to bring Alden and Melody home after chasing the stray cat away.

She was slightly drunk, so she tottered a little. When she followed Duke, her steps were unsteady.

As soon as they went out, a black figure jumped out from the side of the car.

Duke thought a stray cat had rushed over, so he stretched out his hand to the back, grabbed Adina, and hid to the side by instinct.

After he saw clearly who rushed over, his expression darkened. "Harold, why were you hiding beside the car?"

"No... nothing!" Harold put both hands behind him, and he was so scared that his face turned pale. "It was too hot inside the house, so I came out to get some fresh air. Haha! I don't feel so warm anymore. I'll go inside now!"

He immediately ran into the house.

Duke frowned. He knew by instinct that Harold must have been up to no good. While he thought about it, he felt the woman in his arms struggling. He immediately let go of her, and he said in a deep and low voice, "I'm sorry. I thought it was a stray cat."

Adina took a step back, tidied her collar, and said, "I'm okay."

She looked down. After she calmed herself down, she was about to go inside and call the two kids out, but she suddenly froze in shock. "My tires...."

Duke coldly glanced over, and he suddenly understood what it was about.

Adina also understood.

Other than Harold, nobody would carry out such a boring act.

"I think Harold also wants you to stay for a night." Duke's voice was slowly heard. "He's just a four-year-old boy. He doesn't know right from wrong. I would like to apologize to you on behalf of him."

Adina looked at him in surprise. "I was already expecting you to rush into the villa and teach Harold a lesson."

Chapter 440

Duke pursed his lips awkwardly.

If Harold had not accidentally done something that actually pleased him, he would have made the brat stand at least two hours in military posture.

“Ahem! He’s my son. I won’t teach him a lesson.” Duke secretly did not mean what he said, “I have been very busy in the past four years, so I neglected the two of them. If I have done anything wrong, just point it out to me.”

Adina was a little stunned.

This man had really put himself at a very low position, which left her completely at a loss for words.

He was willing to let George and Harold stay in her house.

He was willing to listen to her opinions about the kids’ education.

He had always respected her.

But she...

She would feel jealous and worried when she saw Melody being too close to him.

When he suggested letting the kids stay in the Winters family, she had turned him down without hesitation.

She even thought of sneaking out of the country with the kids one day and staying, far away from Sea City, so that this man would be unable to steal the kids anymore.

She was so scheming, but this man was extremely magnanimous. He just left all the options to her.

Adina pursed her lips. “You’ve done very well. Georgie is very outstanding, and Hal is very adorable. The greatest fortune they’ve ever had is to have a father like you.”

Duke’s tense nerves were instantly relieved.

Many people said he was a qualified father, but only Adina’s comments made him feel like he had not done well enough.

Or he could have done better.

He said softly, “Compared to a father’s love, young kids actually need a mother’s love more.”

“I’ll stay here tonight then.”

Adina suddenly agreed.

Right after she said that, she noticed something suddenly flashing in Duke’s black eyes.

Her heart clenched before she said again, “I drank some tea to sober up, but I still feel a little dizzy. I’m afraid that I won’t be able to wake up tomorrow morning.”

“Let’s get inside first.”

Duke suppressed the surprise in his eyes before he pushed open the main door of the mansion.

Adina cast a glance at the empty living room, and she said, "Please call Harold over. I'll talk to him."

Duke went upstairs. The three kids were reading in George's room, while Harold hid in the study room next door. Duke reached out and grabbed him.

"Dad, what are you doing? Don't bully me. Mommy is here. She won't allow you to bully me!"

Harold kept struggling, but he was still unable to escape from his father. He was carried over and thrown to Adina.

"Mommy! Dad wants to beat me up!" Harold rushed into Adina's arms. "Mommy, I'll tell you this now. Dad is very bad. He always abuses me! If I misbehave, he will lift me up with a rope and beat me up. He will also lock me in the dark room and not give me food for a few days."

Duke became speechless.

He was still standing here, and this brat was talking bad about him now? "Erhem!" Mr. Brown walked over, dragged Harold's sleeve, and said in a lower voice, "Young Master Harold, don't you want Master and Ms. Daugherty to be together? If you talk bad about him, Ms. Daugherty will be scared.

Would she still dare to come to the Winters family?"

Harold instantly wrapped it around his head.

He immediately said again, "Mommy, I purposely lied to you just now! Actually, Dad is very nice. He is handsome and rich. Most importantly, he likes you. He never cooks, but he even purposely cooked for you today. From this, you can see that he cares about you very much."