

## Two Times The Charm Chapter 1 - 1

### Chapter 1

“Ms. Calloway, right this way.”

The driver opened the suite’s door for her, bowing politely.

Clara Calloway stood at the entrance, looking at the darkness inside the room. Every fiber of her screamed to turn around and bolt! But the check that was clenched in her fist made her straighten up; she forced herself to walk in.

The door was closed behind her, blocking out the last shred of light! Clara, like a frightened bird, frantically searched for a light switch, only to find there were none in the room.

Suddenly...

She felt someone approaching from behind!

Just as Clara was about to scream, a pair of large hands suddenly covered her mouth!

“Quiet. I don’t like noisy women.”

The voice was deep and frightening, laced with a hint of annoyance.

The next moment, she was abruptly lifted and roughly thrown onto the soft bed!

“Hold on!” Clara pressed against his chest with her voice trembling. “I want to know. Why me?”

“You don’t need to know why.”

She wanted to ask more, but his lips had already silenced her...

Even now, Clara still remembered that man's icy voice, his cold hands, and his rough, seemingly endless actions, until she lost consciousness...

Ten months later, outside a villa in a suburb overseas, a dozen black Bentleys were waiting at the gate. They were waiting for the birth of the youngest offspring of the Melendez family.

Inside the villa, Clara was in a battle with death!

"Push, don't give up! We can see the baby's head!"

"I can't... I'm all out of strength!" Clara's forehead was soaked; her face pale as a ghost from the pain! Thank God, the bed rail in her hands was made of iron, otherwise, it could have been crushed! "I can't do it, I'm really out of strength!"

"Ms. Calloway, the lady has specifically insisted on a natural birth, and without the use of any painkillers. It's better for the baby's growth! Just hang in there, and follow my lead. 1, 2, 3. Push!"

"Ah! It hurts too much! It really hurts!" She couldn't tell if the moisture on her cheek was tears or sweat. At that moment, she wished she could just die, not having to give birth anymore!

The doctor was in a bind. On one hand she saw the laboring mother exhausted, on the other hand, she was afraid of the Melendez family. She didn't dare to decide lightly.

"Childbirth is always painful. If you don't push, the baby might die in your womb!"

The doctor's words seemed to have an effect. Clara suddenly mustered all her strength, and gave birth to a baby boy in one go! "Ahhh..." The cries of a newborn filled the room.

“It’s a boy! The little one has a heart-shaped birthmark on his back!”

Hearing the baby’s cry, the half-unconscious Clara weakly lifted her hand, “Give it to me... I want to see him...”

The doctor held the baby, hesitated for a moment, and then said, “I suggest you don’t look. I’m a mother too, so I know looking will only make it more painful.”

With that, she handed the baby to two men in black suits standing outside the door.

“No, don’t, I... I want to see him just once!”

But the men in black had already left with the baby. She could hear the sound of the car engine starting.

The doctor looked at her expression and sighed: Just as she was about to disinfect Clara, Clara suddenly clutched her stomach and groaned.

“It hurts. It’s starting to hurt again!”

“Still hurting?” The doctor was taken aback, immediately checked her, “Oh my God, there’s another baby in your belly.”

## Chapter 2

Clara clung tightly to the doctor’s hand. Her reddened eyes staring at her, “I’m begging you... please keep my secret!”

“This....”

“They don’t need to know...I beg you! Otherwise, I’ll really die....”

Five years later, in a city.

Clara was up early.

She prepared her son Alex's favorite breakfast, sandwiches and soya milk. She pushed open the door of the second bedroom, and gently patted her son's little butt, "The sun is up! It's the first day of school. We can't be late!"

"Mom... Alex groggily got up, acting spoiled. He wrapped his arms around Clara's neck, and kissed her cheek, "Can I sleep for another ten minutes?"

"No way!" Clara helplessly and humorously patted her son's face, "Did you forget what mom told you yesterday?"

"Hmm...I need to go to kindergarten, and mommy needs to work, to pay for my kindergarten fees! But you've promised to take me to the amusement park so many times." Alex scrunched his small face, Why don't you adults keep your promises!"

"Be good. Mom will take you next week."

"Humph, that's what you said last time!"

"Mom you're always tricking me! You used to say dad was dead, but I clearly saw him on TV!"

Clara felt heartbroken, "Alex. The man on TV can't possibly be your dad. When you grow up, mom will tell you everything."

"Then why can't you tell me now? I want mom and dad to take me to the amusement park together!"

"I'm sorry, Alex...."

"Hmph! I already guessed it, mom is just worried that dad will take me to the amusement park, so

Despite the dissatisfaction on Alex's face, he obediently got up, dressed, and washed up.

However, when he was packing his school bag, he deliberately put his little piggy bank in it, along with a few candies from under his pillow.

At the same time, a black Bentley on the street drove by, attracting the envious eyes of many drivers.

Inside the car, Matt respectfully handed over the documents in his hand, saying, “Sir, this is the bidding document for this project. These companies are strong and all within our consideration.”

The man sitting in the back seat didn’t reach out to take the documents. His thin lips slightly pursed. He just swept a glance with his intense eyes, and waved his hand.

“You handle it.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Go home.”

After the man finished speaking, he turned his gaze to the window.

At this moment, his perfect side profile could be seen clearly in the car’s rear-view mirror. He had deep contours and perfectly proportionate features. Peach-colored thin lips that looked like they were painted with lipstick, looking very enticing.

He was the widely known business prodigy Emmett Melendez. The only heir of the Melendez family, who has been voted the most eligible bachelor in the magazine annual surveys for six consecutive years.

He was rumored to dislike women and had serious germophobia! In addition, he had a child with an unknown birth mother. This was announced by the Melendez family three years ago, which had sparked many discussions and speculations.

“Is Aiden still refusing to eat?”

Emmett suddenly spoke. Matt paused before replying, “Yes, Aiden said if he doesn’t get to see his mother, he will continue to refuse food.”

“He knows how to threaten people at such a young age.” He sneered coldly, his handsome face full of coldness and displeasure, “Then let him starve.”

1/2

“But

sir...”

“Stop talking; I hate noise.”

“Okay.”

As soon as Matt’s voice fell, Emmett’s phone rang.

He

glanced down. It was a call

from his mother Sophia. As soon

as he picked

up, he

heard her sobbing.

“Emmett, disaster struck! I lost Aiden!”

“What?!”

Chapter 3

After dropping Alex off at the daycare, Clara hopped in a cab and headed straight to the Melendez skyscraper.

After paying the taxi fare, she got out of the cab, looked up at the towering building and couldn’t help but feel a bit jittery.-

She had to nail this job interview! Melendez Corporation was a big deal in the industry, and anyone associated with it was considered top-notch.

Taking a deep breath, Clara strutted into the building. Before she could even reach the front desk, a man rushed out, muttering:

“Mr. Melendez’s kid is missing? Got it, I’ll round up a search party right away!”

Hearing this, Clara raised an eyebrow, a strange pang in her heart.

“Hello, who are you looking for?”

If it weren't for the receptionist interrupting her thoughts, she would have just stood there dumbfounded.

“Hi, I'm here for an interview. For position of the General Manager's Secretary.”

“Alright, follow me!”

Clara followed the receptionist, stealing a glance at the direction the man had rushed off to.

Clara aced the interview. Out of the ten candidates, she was the only one who made the cut.

After giving her a review, the manager nodded in approval, “You can start tomorrow, right?” “Sure thing!”

“Great, wear a nice dress and drop off a document at the headquarters for me.” The manager grinned, “You'll be representing our entire company at the headquarters on your first day. You'll get to meet Melendez's CEO, so make sure to make the most of this opportunity!” Clara didn't think twice, simply smiling in response, “Thank you for your acknowledgement, I'll do my best.”

As soon as she exited the interview room, she was eager to share the good news. But when she took out her phone, she realized she had nobody to share it with. Her excitement vanished in an instant. Just as she was about to put her phone away, an incoming call from Alex's teacher lit up the screen.

Clara's first thought was that her son was in trouble again.

“Hello, this is Alex's mom speaking.”

“Is this Alex's parent? He snuck out of school!”

“He...he what?”

“Yes. We noticed Alex was missing and checked the surveillance footage. He slipped out during lunch break!”

Clara couldn't hear the rest of the teacher's words. All she could think about was that Alex was missing. Her phone slipped from her hand and clattered onto the ground.

Suddenly, she remembered what her son had said that morning. The amusement park! Alex must have gone to the amusement park! “Alex, mommy is so sorry... This is all my fault! Please, I hope nothing bad has happened to you!”

What was the point of living without her son?

Even though it was a weekday, the amusement park was packed with people.

This was a Melendez-funded amusement park, with top-ranked attractions from around the world.

Clara hailed a cab straight to the park. She jumped out in such a hurry she even forgot to pay the fare!

\*Alex! Alex!”

“Alex, where are you!”

She wished she had eight eyes as she scanned the park for a glimpse of her son.

Then, all of a sudden-

She spotted a familiar, skinny little figure making his way through the crowd!

Clara quickened her pace, rushing over to scoop him up, “Alex! Do you have any idea how scared mom was? I can’t live without you! I promise I’ll never leave you ever again!”

Mom?

Aiden

froze, staring

at the

weeping stranger in front of him, who

bore

an uncanny resemblance to



him...

## Chapter 4

Her embrace was warm, tight, and intense.

Was this what it felt like to be held by a mother?—

Clara held Alex for a moment, feeling his body stiffen in her arms.

She let go, looking at the child before her.

There was no mistaking it. That was Alex's face.

But...

“Alex, where did you get this outfit?” she asked, noticing his change of clothes. She remembered dressing him in white shorts and a tee in the morning. How did it turn into a black tee?

“I...” Aiden started, hesitated for a few seconds, and then said, “I like this outfit, and I swapped with some other kids.”

“So you like black clothes! I've been so busy with work, I didn't notice your preferences. I'm sorry, can *you* forgive me?” Clara squatted down, looking at her son sincerely, “I promise, I'll take you to the amusement park every week and spend *more* time playing with you.” Aiden nodded somewhat woodenly. To him, maternal love was foreign, yet fascinating. He... wanted *to* experience this feeling. As for the cold father from the Melendez family, he hoped to never see him again.

“Come with me, I'll take you to Burger King! How about it?” Clara squeezed her son's hand tightly, wanting to give him everything. “Burgers are junk food.” Aiden frowned, his expression somewhat resembling Emmett's.

“It's okay! Haven't you always wanted to try it? I'll take you to stuff your face! I just got a job today, let's go celebrate.” “...Okay.” Aiden didn't dare to say much. He was afraid of being recognized; he wanted to enjoy life with a mother more.

At the Melendez mansion, Sophia had a heart attack and was rushed to the hospital.

Emmett silently sat in the hospital room, his lips pressed into a thin line.

“Emmett, you need to reflect on yourself! You’ve been too harsh on Aiden! Why else would he run away from home?” Emmett’s father, Patrick Melendez, reprimanded, “Even though it was your mother and I who decided to bring Aiden into this world, he is still your son!” “Weren’t you always the ones making decisions about disciplining him?”

“We’re old. How much longer can we manage him! Aiden needs to rely on you in the future!”

Emmett was about to speak when Matt knocked on the door and walked in.

“Gentlemen! We just got word from the amusement park, they found Aiden!”

Hearing this, Emmett stood up, his tall figure casting a shadow on the hospital bed.

“I’ll bring him back.”

“Good, you two need to bond! I’ll be here taking care of your mother.”

“Alright.”

Emmett left the room, went downstairs, and got into the car. His face expressionless.

Matt glanced at his employer through the rearview mirror, said nothing, and kept driving towards the amusement park.

The drive took about ten minutes. As soon as they arrived, Emmett opened the car door, and before he could say anything, a small figure rushed into his arms.

“I finally found you! Your name is Em something, right?”

Alex was as excited as if he’d discovered a treasure. He didn’t expect to actually meet this handsome man!

Emmett stared at the child in front of him, his eyebrows furrowed.

“It’s Emmett, not Em something! And, did you come here looking for me?”

“Yes!” Alex shoved his tiny hand into Emmett’s, squinting his eyes with a grin, “I want a good dad, who can play with me, and take me to eat yummy food. Will you be him?”

To be a good dad...

Emmett was moved by these words. Indeed, he had to admit that over the years, he hadn't given his son enough love, even... Emmett looked at the tender little hand in his. This was their first real contact as father and son!

"Alright, I promise you. I'll try my best to be a good dad." He bent down and picked up his son.

It was time for him to step up and be a good father!

## Chapter 5

Alex was over the moon, "Really? You agreed just like that? Then my mom-"

Once Emmett heard that, his face turned stern and he cut off Alex's words, "You don't have a mom. You only have me! Come home with me."

Alex was taken aback and hustled into the car. He headed back to the Melendez family mansion with Emmett.

"Aiden, you're finally back!"

As soon as they got out of the car, the butler Henry spotted him and was so thrilled he was on the verge of tears.

Ever since Aiden joined the Melendez family, it was Henry who watched him grow up; he treated Aiden as if he was his own child. "Aiden? My name's not Aiden, it's Alex!"

"Sweetie, you are Aiden, you're our precious Melendez family member! Don't be angry, and don't run away from home anymore! Don't be mad at your dad, he loves you!"

Run away from home?

Alex got more and more baffled as he listened, until his gaze landed on a photo hanging on the living room wall!

Wasn't that him? But he didn't own the clothes in the photo, and he didn't remember taking that picture! Could it be... they all mistook him for someone else. Was this why they brought him here?

Alex's eyes darted around and he pointed at the photo, "Um... is that me?"

"Of course it's you!" Henry grabbed his small hand, "Who else could it be? Come, let's go have some ice cream sundae and check out the full set of Transformers toys your grandparents got for you!"

Alex's eyes lit up at that, "Ice cream sundae? A full set of Transformers? Are those mine?"

"There you go, Aiden. Finally a smile!" His usual quiet demeanor was just like Emmett's. This sudden burst of energy was a pleasant surprise for Henry.

Before they left, Alex stuck his tongue out at the Aiden in the photo, and mumbled, "I really want to play with the Transformers and eat ice cream sundae, so I'll borrow your name. I am "Aiden" for now! You won't mind, right?"

The next morning, as usual, Emmett finished his morning workout and was about to head to the office.

Normally, he would just leave, but today, he made a detour to his son's room.

He quietly opened the door, and the little guy was still sleeping! His whole body was sprawled on the pillow. His sleeping position was a sight to see, yet it was so adorable it tugged at Emmett's heartstrings!

He smiled slightly, closed the door behind him, turned around and said, "Matt, cancel the afternoon meeting. I'm taking him to the amusement park."

Matt was taken aback, but quickly nodded, "Yes, sir!"

Emmett and Matt got into the car and drove towards the office. On the way, Emmett routinely opened his laptop to check on some documents.

Suddenly, a sudden brake made his laptop fall to the car floor!

Emmett frowned, about to say something, when suddenly there was frantic knocking on the car window. He looked over to see a woman with a bloody face appearing in his view!

“Help me, please!” Her voice sounded weak, and her body was swaying unsteadily.

Upon seeing this, Matt quickly said, “Sorry, sir. I’ll go shoo her away right now!”

“Hold on. Emmett was staring at the girl outside the window. He was surprised because he didn’t feel the usual repulsion towards her.

For many years, he lived alone, not because he was aloof, but because he had a condition. Whenever he saw a woman get close to him, he would uncontrollably want to escape, becoming agitated and even irrational.

But now, looking at the woman outside the window, he didn’t feel that way. It was like... like that woman back then, he didn’t feel disgusted but rather attracted, unable to resist her allure all night.

“Let her in.”

## Chapter 6

Hearing Emmett’s words, Matt almost thought he was hearing things.

“Sir, are you... are you really bringing her home?”

Emmett raised an eyebrow, “Got a problem with that?”

“No! I’ll get right to it!”

Driving out in the suburbs, down a winding forest path, a villa suddenly came into view.

Matt parked the car in the courtyard and hurriedly got out to open the back door, “Sir, do need me to get a doctor for this lady?” “Hmm.” Emmett nodded slightly, glancing at the woman who was still unconscious.

The blood on her forehead had turned a deep red and mixed in with her hair. She was in bad shape! There were bruises and injuries all over her body; she had clearly been beaten up by more than one person!

But none of that was of interest to him, he just wanted to know why he didn't feel repulsed by this woman! Emmett furrowed his brows, his gaze shifting towards her chest...

Could it be, she was actually a transgender?

"Sir!" Matt's voice brought him back to reality, "The doctor is on his way

"Bring her in."

"Yes, sir."

Emmett got out of the car first and walked into the villa. A man in black bowed respectfully to him, "Welcome back."

"Any news?" Emmett strode into the study. He grabbed a bottle of wine from the shelf, poured himself a glass and took a small sip. "Sir, according to your description, I've found four women who match the features! They've all had children, lived abroad for some time and their heights are all around 5.4 feet."

He handed over the photos he had in his hand. Emmett glanced at them with a frown. He felt repulsed by them, so these definitely weren't who he was looking for.

"Keep looking."

"Yes, sir!"

The man turned and left while Emmett put down the wine glass he was holding with slender fingers.

He had never thought about finding that woman before, because she was the pain of his life! But recently his son had been wanting to see his mom. Although he had always sternly refused, he could see the longing in his son's eyes!

After all, the kid hasn't done anything wrong, he just wanted to see his own mother! So he decided to find that woman to fulfill his son's wish.

Soon after, Matt came over, "Sir, the lady has been mumbling the name Taylor. Do you want to go see her?"

"Taylor?" Emmett raised an eyebrow.

His first thought was Taylor Atwood – the competitor of Melendez Company, the CEO of AW Corporation.

"Yes, I've heard her several times, it's definitely Taylor! Also, this is the ID we found on her." Matt handed over the ID card.

"Clara..." he muttered the name on the card unconsciously.

What a gentle feminine name! He wondered, could this woman he picked up be one of Taylor's lovers? If so, that would be interesting.

Emmett got up and went to the guest room of the villa, where the woman on the bed was mumbling.

The doctor had already treated her wounds and bandaged her up. Looking at her face now... she was quite delicate and pretty. Not the type that would take your breath away at

first sight, but her features were pleasing to the eye, and there was a sense of familiarity! Emmett thought to himself, have I seen her before?

## Chapter 7

“Taylor... Taylor, no, it’s not what you think. Let me explain!” Clara suddenly furrowed her brows, gripping Emmett’s sleeve tightly, and then her eyes flew open!

This man’s eyes... they were so similar to that pair she saw that night!

“Who are you?”

Years of caution drove Clara to throw a punch his way before even getting an answer. Emmett took the punch, frozen in place.

Who would have thought that he, the CEO of Melendez Company and the only heir of the Melendez family, would get punched by a woman he’d never met before!

“Sir, are you alright?” Matt hurried over, pushing Clara aside and checking Emmett’s condition, “This woman is ungrateful! Our boss saved her and she dares to hit him!”

Realizing that she’d punched the wrong person, Clara hurriedly apologized, “I’m sorry, it was unintentional! I’ll take responsibility if you’re hurt!”

“Can you really afford to? This gentleman is the CEO of Melendez! Can you compensate for any work he might miss because of this?” The CEO of Melendez?! Clara’s eyes widened in shock. That meant... he was the big boss of her new company. The one who would be signing her paycheck!

“Matt.” Emmett spoke in a low voice, “Leave us,”

“... Yes, sir.”

Though reluctant, Matt didn’t dare to defy Emmett’s order! He wondered what got into Emmett today!

It was surprising enough that he helped this woman, and now he was taking a beating from her without retaliation!



After Matt left, only Clara and Emmett remained in the room. Feeling the awkward atmosphere, Clara hurriedly apologized again, “I’m sorry, Mr. Melendez! I really didn’t expect this. I was beaten up by a bunch of debt collectors, and when I opened my eyes and saw you, I thought you were...”

“Debt collectors?” Emmett arched an eyebrow, intrigued.

“Yeah, they’re after my father’s gambling debt. They couldn’t find him, so they came after me.” Clara bit her lip, feeling a bit embarrassed, “It’s my first day at Melendez, and I was supposed to deliver some documents to the head office....”

“You know Taylor.” Emmett interrupted her, making a statement.

He wasn’t a hundred percent sure, but he wanted to see her reaction.

Just as he expected, a flicker of panic in her eyes confirmed that the man she had been blabbering about was Taylor, the CEO of AW Company.

“I... I don’t know who he is!”

Emmett kept his eyes on her, not missing a single change in her gaze, “You’re Taylor’s woman.”

“No, I’m really not!” Clara quickly waved her hands. She was in no position to have any connection with Taylor! Taylor was now a high-flying CEO, a top bachelor amongst the elite, while she was just a humble single mother struggling to make ends meet!

“Then have you seen me before?” Emmett found himself slightly hopeful.

Could she be that woman from that night? He didn’t see her face that night, but he remembered her eyes, clear as glass, unforgettable!

“No.” Clara shook her head firmly, “Mr. Melendez, I’m really just a newly hired secretary at the Melendez Company! I’m here to deliver documents. If you don’t believe me, I can show you!”

She jumped out of bed, intending to go find her documents, but then the memory suddenly hit her!

When she was surrounded by those guys, she remembered swinging her purse at them, and then it slipped from her hand...

“Oh, no! My documents! Clara thought and immediately rushed out.

Emmett frowned in warning, “If you go back now, those guys might still be there.”

“But I have to find my documents! This is my first job, I can’t just screw it up! My son is waiting for me to earn money to take him to an amusement park!” She couldn’t lose this job!

Son?

Emmett was slightly surprised, “You... you have a kid?”

“Yes! I have a son named Alex, he’s five years old!”

Then she wasn’t that woman, because Aiden was also five, and born in the summer, she couldn’t have given birth to two children in one year.

Snapping out of his daze, Emmett realized that the woman had disappeared.

He was frowning; he felt he had already interfered enough and shouldn’t let this woman he just met influence his thoughts! But thinking about the danger she might face going back, he couldn’t help but worry

After hesitating for a few seconds, Emmett decided to say, “Matt, go find that woman.”

Clara hurried to find her documents, but they were nowhere to be found. She searched everywhere, even rummaged through the nearby trash cans!

What to do... was she going to lose her job right off the bat? She had promised Alex to take him to the amusement park, buy him new clothes and toys! She couldn’t lose her job!

As Clara reached for another trash can, she suddenly heard the voices of a few men.

“Look, the woman is back!”

\*She's got some nerve!"

One of them walked up and shoved Clara, "Are you here to repay us?"

Caught off guard, Clara stumbled back a few steps.

"I'll definitely pay you back. Can you give me some time?"

"No way! How are we supposed to live if we give you time?"

The leader of the group threw away his toothpick, looked at Clara, and smirked, "You have one other option... come with me! Become my woman, and I'll let you pay later."

Clara shook her head immediately, holding her chest, "I... I'm a woman with a child. I'm not good enough for you! Can't you give me a little more time?"

The man walked up, grabbed Clara's hair. The pain made her wince!

"Why should I give *you* time? *You* think my money grows on trees? I'm giving you the chance to be my woman because I think you're worth it. Don't be ungrateful!"

The man raised his hand to hit Clara again; she had closed her eyes, waiting for the impending slap...

But, the slap never came! Suddenly, the man screamed in pain, letting go of Clara's hair.

"Ah–Fuck! Who, who dares touch me?!"

Matt sneered. He single-handedly subdued the man with ease and forced him to kneel before Emmett! "Behave!"

The man looked up to see Emmett; his face paled in an instant. He started to stutter.

"Si... sir, Mr. Melendez! What... what are you doing here?"

"She owes you money?" Emmett arched an eyebrow, asking calmly.

"Yes! Her father owes me a lot of money! I had no choice but to do this! I really didn't know she was your friend! If I knew, I wouldn't dare touch your friend..."

"How much does she owe?"

Upon hearing Emmett's question, Clara was taken aback!

Was he planning... to help her pay off the debt?

## Chapter 9

"I... How on earth could a man ask Emmett for money? Isn't that just asking for trouble?"

"Speak." Emmett glanced at the woman next to him out of the corner of his eye. She looked thunderstruck. "I'll pay you back today," he said. "But don't let me catch you stirring up trouble again."

"Got it! I won't never do that again!"

"Matt,

pay

him."

Matt nodded obediently. "Yes, sir."

Before Clara could react, Emmett had pulled her into the car!

It wasn't until the car door closed that she snapped back to reality.

"Thanks... really, thanks for today! Don't worry, I'll pay you back for the money you paid for me!"

"No need." Emmett poured himself a glass of red wine with his slender hand, sipping it delicately. "We won't be seeing each other again. Matt, let her out at the corner ahead."

"Yes, sir."

Upon hearing this, Clara frowned. "This isn't a small amount of money, and I'm nobody to you. How can I accept your money? How about you give me your bank account number. I'll repay you monthly, with interest!"

"I don't have a bank card."

Matt, who was driving, whispered, "The bank is owned by the Melendez family."

Clara swallowed hard, flustered by the sudden display of wealth.

After a few seconds of silence, she declared, “I have principles. I can’t just accept things from others! Even if you’re loaded, I can’t Just–mmph!”

Her words were cut off as two thin lips sealed hers!

Clara was shocked. He... he’s kissing me! Emmett is kissing me!

She could smell a faint fragrance on him, not like the sweat stench of other men. That handsome face was right in front of her, making her forget she should push him away!

After a while, Emmett was the first to release her lips, saying coldly, “Consider this kiss a purchase.”

He wanted to see if he only felt no aversion toward this woman.

The car quickly stopped at a corner. Clara didn’t say a word until after she got out and watched the car drive away.

The car was out of sight when she finally blinked, weakly touching her lips. She wanted to ask, Mister Emmett. Can you buy a few more kisses?

This was probably the most valuable kiss she ever had!

When Clara got home, Aiden was studying at the table.

Upon hearing her, he immediately stood up, saluting, “Hello, mother.”

“What are you doing?” Clara raised an eyebrow, slightly taken aback. “You’re actually studying on your own? And... You’re being polite? Alex, if it wasn’t for your face, I would have thought I mixed up my kid!”

Aiden swallowed hard; he was still a child after all, and his expression was a bit stiff.

As Clara walked into the room, she said, “I’m sorry, Alex. I might need to find another job. Melendez will definitely fire me this time.” Melendez?

Aiden looked surprised instantly. “Why?”

“Because I messed up at work today. I borrowed a lot of money from Emmett without understanding the situation. Things might get harder for us, and I’ll need to save up to repay Emmett.”

“...My dad has a lot of money.”

Clara froze. “What did you say?”

Chapter 10

“Uh... I mean... I wish he was my dad....”

Clara walked over, grabbed her son’s arm, and said seriously, “Remember, son! Even if they’re loaded, they shouldn’t spend a dime on us! That money isn’t ours! Got it?”

“Mm-hm!”

“Good boy! Now go read some more. I’ll whip up some grub.”

But Aiden followed her. Because within Clara, there was a motherly love that attracted him...

It was an experience he had never had before! He couldn’t help but want to get closer.

“What’s up? Alex, you seem off today?” Clara turned her head and looked at her own son, raised her hand and touched his forehead, “You don’t have a fever! You seem a bit down!”

“So... what should I do?”

“Don’t you usually make a mess at home every day, refuse to take baths and study?”

“Oh... so can I not bathe today?”

Clara sighed, “Of course not! After dinner, I’ll take you to bathe!”

Aiden was stunned, “You? Take me to bathe?”

“Yeah! Who else?”

“But I’m a boy!”

Clara rubbed her son's hair and laughed, "What, you just started kindergarten and you already know about gender differences?"

didn't know before?"

Aiden was helpless. What exactly was the original Alex like!

"You should have known this before! Besides, how would I know if you knew or not! I'm not you!" Clara laughed awkwardly. She had really never paid attention to this issue before, so she quickly changed the subject, "So, what do you feel like eating? Is steak burger okay?"

Aiden obediently nodded, "Okay!"

"Then I'll check in the fridge to see if we still have the steaks we bought from the supermarket last time?"

Aiden frowned, but eventually swallowed his doubts. He can't ask too many questions. It'll raise suspicion!

But... constantly eating frozen food wasn't good either! Even though he craved that motherly feeling from her, he didn't want to always eat junk food!

"By the way! You mentioned Emmett from the Melendez Group last time and said he'd be a good match for me. Can you believe we actually met! Son, did the God of Luck kiss your mouth or something?"

Clara was making the burger and muttering *to* herself.

Aiden stiffened when he heard his father's name. "I don't think you guys are a good match now."

"Hm?" Clara paused, "Why the sudden change of heart? Last time, someone was insisting I go on a date with Emmett, and now you're saying it's not a good idea!"

"He has a bad temper. Anyway, it's not a good match." Aiden had a serious look on his face, unable to say anything praiseworthy about Emmett.

In his eyes, this father, whether present or not, made no difference!

“Haha, let’s change the topic! It’s like I could really have a good tale to tell with Emmett!” Clara reached out and pinched her son’s cheek, “Alex, for you, I won’t go on dates, nor will I find a stepfather for you! Having you as my son is enough in this lifetime.”

In the Melendez family’s mansion.

The previous Aiden was hard to please. He was always cold as ice, just like Mr. Emmett, so the servants were all scared of Aiden! But now, Aiden was all smiles to every servant!

“Miss, I want to play hide and seek, will you play with me?” Alex tugged at a maid’s dress, squinting his eyes and giving a sweet smile. Before the maid could respond, a voice suddenly cut in-

“No playing! Why do you seem like a different person than before?”

Alex looked up... and saw the person scolding him was Emmett.