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Nicole contemplated briefly. Then she strolled over to Evan and held his hand. "I love my kids' daddy."

A grin suddenly spread across Stephen's face.

I knew she would choose him. If she chooses Levant, I'll have to investigate why she used Levant as an excuse to stay here.

On the other hand, though Evan seemed calm, his heart leapt with joy the second he heard her answer.

His eyes were fixed on her as he asked, "Did you choose me genuinely?"

Of course, I love you wholeheartedly.

With a faint smile, she nodded.

If I must choose between Evan and knowing my true identity, I'll certainly choose him. He's a thousand times more important than the b*stard who dumped my mom. I can stay ignorant about the heartless man, but I can't afford to lose Evan.

The children were pleased to see their parents standing together.

The scene of the family of six together also made Stephen heave a sigh of relief.

"Alright, you've chosen him, so there should be nothing between you and Levant anymore. Go back and take care."

Despite knowing that Nicole had come to the estate with an ulterior motive, Stephen didn't want to pursue this matter, as the estate suffered no loss.

She and Rosalie look so alike. I would rather think that her sudden appearance is meant to be. But my wife and Daphne will not let them off the hook. If this goes on, they will surely get hurt. It's best if they leave safely.

Nicole could tell that Stephen was hinting at them to leave.

Anyway, I've no reason to stay anymore. I'm grateful that he is letting us go instead of holding me accountable for lying and the kids for pulling tricks on Daphne.

Gazing at Stephen's tall and mighty figure, she felt a sense of familial warmth and care which she had never experienced since young.

To her, this was an absolutely precious feeling.

"We shouldn't hold you back any longer, Sir. Please let Levant know. We'll take our leave now."

It's better that they leave overnight. Otherwise, my wife will make use of her family to seek justice for Daphne first thing tomorrow.

"Have a safe trip."

For some unknown reason, Stephen was reluctant to see her go.

Perhaps she resembles Rosalie too much.

Yet, she isn't Rosalie. She's only a woman who looks like Rosalie, a passerby in my life. And she has her own life to live.

Evan caught a glimpse of the reluctance and affection in Stephen's gaze on Nicole, and a wave of agitation washed over him.

Not only does Levant want to marry Nicole, but Sir Musgrave is falling for her, too? We can't stay here any longer. She is so attractive to men. Should I lock her up in a cage once we reach home?

Leaving the courtyard, they went back to their room to pack their belongings.

"Mommy, you can't investigate who your daddy is anymore. What should we do now?" Juan asked as four pairs of innocent eyes stared straight at her.

The children seemed very concerned about this.

Trying to sound as carefree as possible, Nicole replied, "It's okay. I don't care who that heartless man is. Besides, we can always investigate again in the future when there's a chance."

Evan's lips curled up. "What if I say you'll know soon?"

Nicole froze at his words. She turned around to look at him. Did he find some clues?

"Evan, tell me if you know anything. Don't keep me in suspense."

Why can't he tell me directly instead of keeping me guessing?

"Is that the right attitude to ask for something?" Evan questioned while looking at her.

Urgh. Am I the one with a bad attitude now? He's getting so full of himself. What kind of attitude does he expect from me?

After much thinking, Nicole wrapped her hands around his arm with a flattering smile. "Mr. Seet, you're a kind man. In fact, you're the best guy in this world."

The four kids turned to glance at her flirtatious expression. They were amazed by her flexibility and how thick-skinned she could be.

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"Really?" Evan furrowed his brows, surprised by her sudden change of demeanor.

"Yes! A kind man like you never keeps things to himself. Tell me now."

"I'm not a kind man, so you're not being truthful." He was dissatisfied with her response.

Nicole frowned. What should I say to please him, then? I can't be telling him that he's the biggest meanie in the world.

“John, please take the kids and get going. I need to talk to my wife.” John immediately did as per Evan’s instructions.

The four kids immediately scurried off. After walking some distance away, Juan asked curiously, “What’s Daddy and Mommy going to talk about?”

“I don’t know. The way Mommy praised Daddy just now made me blush.” Nina covered her cheeks with her hands.

Walking behind her sister, Maya asked, “Why were you blushing?”

“I couldn’t stand the flattery. Mommy is so thick-skinned, lying through her teeth like that.”

Juan replied, “It doesn’t matter that Mommy is thick-skinned as long as Daddy likes it.”

“That’s right. I just wish that they’ll be fine together, so we won’t need to worry about them. My little heart has gone through too much; I need to eat more to nourish my system.”

Nina rolled her eyes at Maya. She’s going to become as fat as a beached whale.

However, she dared not to poke fun at her sister after experiencing the powerful Maya’s Hammer.

Trailing behind the kids, John eyed the little ones with a strange look.

Mr. Seet’s kids are so sensible and mature. They behave as if they’re grown-ups. I also wonder what Mr. and Mrs. Seet are talking about.

Meanwhile, Nicole looked at Evan and asked sincerely, “What do you want me to say so that you’ll be satisfied?”

Evan’s thin lips curled up in an enchanting smile.

Just as she figured out what the man was about to do, he had already forcefully pinned her to the wall.

“Evan, what are you doing?”

With an arm against the wall, he leaned closer to her ear and asked, “Should I lock you up when we get home?” His voice was cold yet alluring.

The lashes of Nicole’s big, watery eyes fluttered.

What does he mean? Why does he want to lock me up out of the blue?

“Who gives you the right to lock me up?”

The man placed another hand on her waist and squeezed it gently.

“Because you’ve been naughty.”

Naughty? Is this a valid reason? He’s just trying to frame me!

“Nonsense! I’m as docile as a sheep,” Nicole refuted him in all seriousness.

In an instant, Evan’s gaze on her changed.

How can she say those words unabashed when she's so aggressive?

Fidgeting nervously under his piercing gaze, she turned her head aside. "You... You said I'll get to know who my dad is soon. Did you find any clues?"

"I found an important person. Everything will be revealed as soon as we see him."

An important person who's related to this matter?

Nicole mulled it over for a moment. Suddenly, her eyes lit up. Could it be him?

"Is... Is it Wesley?"

Evan gave her a nod.

"Are you surprised?"

Yes, I'm really surprised. Once I meet Wesley, I'll be able to uncover the identity of my biological father, the b*stard who abandoned my mom! And I'll make him regret it.

"How did you find him?"

Evan gave her an enigmatic smile. No matter who she wants to see, I'll find the person for her.

Nicole was totally bewitched by his charming smile.

"Evan, you're so good to me; let me repay you."

Wrapping her arms around his neck, she closed her eyes bashfully and pouted her lips in a tantalizing way.

"Is that all?"

Obviously, Evan was looking for more.

"Is this not considered repayment? What else do you want?"

He reached out and gently pinched her ivory cheek. "Of course not! The repayment I want from you is..."

While speaking, his hand was already trailing along her body.

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Glancing left and right, Nicole clenched her jaw and scowled at him. "We're still at the estate. I think we should first escape from here."

Evan gazed at her anxious face and caressed her supple cheek with the back of his hand. "Alright, but there'll be an interest charge after getting out of here."

An interest charge? Sure.

With her hands on her cheeks, she tried to hide her shy smile.

“Who’s making out over there? Aren’t you afraid of getting caught while cheating?”

A voice called out from afar and gave Nicole a jolt in surprise. Realizing that it was a bodyguard, she pursed her lips.

This isn’t cheating, but normal interaction between the parents of four kids. But making out under the bright lights is, after all, a little inappropriate and too conspicuous.

Casting another glance at the bodyguard, Nicole’s face flushed beet red. She stepped on Evan’s foot and scuttled away hurriedly.

Watching her run away in a haste, a half-smile formed on Evan’s face. He then went after her.

The couple went back to their room one after another. The kids had done packing by then and were waiting for their return.

Juan asked excitedly, “Mommy, Daddy, can we go now?”

With a sleepy face, Maya said, “Mommy, I want to sleep. I can’t keep my eyes open, not even with my hands.”

Nicole looked at the other three kids. “Are you guys sleepy? Do you want to get some shut-eye before we go?”

“Mommy, we should go now. We won’t be able to leave if the old witch comes to stir up trouble.”

“How about Maya then?”

“Mrs. Seet, I’ll carry Maya. Let’s leave the estate first. We’ll find a hotel for the kids to rest afterward.”

Weighing her options, Nicole decided to go with the plan. They couldn’t sleep peacefully here anyway.

As they left, Stephen’s bodyguards made way for them so no one could stop them.

The moment they were out of the estate, Nicole’s heart overflowed with relief.

“Mr. and Mrs. Seet, will Lady Musgrave get mad when she finds us missing tomorrow?”

Nicole’s gaze darkened at the question. I guess Sir Musgrave will be able to handle it.

“Let’s go,” Evan said.

The group headed to a nearby hotel for a temporary stay so that the kids could get a good rest.

While checking in, Evan asked for two rooms. One for John, and the other one for the rest of them.

In the room, Nicole’s eyes flicked between the four kids on the bed and Evan, who was lying on the floor. She couldn’t help feeling sorry for him.

“Why didn’t you take one more room? As the president of the Seet Group, you can obviously afford it.”

“I want to sleep together with you guys.”

Evan insisted to be by their side. He was worried that something unexpected might happen because the hotel was very close to the estate.

“Do you want to sleep on the bed?”

Evan glanced at the bed and saw Juan sprawled out on it. Maya never stopped kicking while Nina kept rolling around. On the other side of the bed, Kyle deliberately kept a distance from the three.

The kids had occupied the entire bed. There was hardly enough space for Nicole, let alone him.

“There’s no space for you on the bed. Why don’t you sleep on the floor as well?”

Nicole recalled the times she had slept on the floor and the backache that came to her the next morning. No, thank you. I really don’t want to sleep on the floor ever again.

“I need to sleep on the bed to look after the kids. What if they fall off the bed?”

Evan fell silent. Not wanting to force her, he switched off the lights.

Soon after falling asleep, the woman heard a dull thud.

In a daze, she struggled to open her bleary eyes. Is there an earthquake?

Listening carefully for a short while, she didn’t pick up anything strange, so she closed her eyes and fell into a deep slumber.

At midnight, she heard another thud. Just as she chose to ignore it, Maya’s sobs echoed in the room.

She promptly switched on the lights and was stunned by what she saw.

Evan was sitting on the floor with Maya in his arms, coaxing her to sleep, while Juan and Nina had fallen to the floor as well.

Only she and Kyle were left on the bed.

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Right away, she got up and walked over to Evan. Maya had fallen asleep in his arms.

“They just can’t stay put while sleeping. How did they fall off the bed?”

“Yeah. Tell me, how did they fall off the bed?”

Aren’t you the one who wanted to sleep on the bed with the kids so they wouldn’t fall off?

Nicole was utterly clueless. The only thing she noticed was the dull thuds which sounded one after another.

She was groggy and even thought that there had been an earthquake until she heard Maya’s cry. Only then did she realize her kids had fallen onto the floor.

Evan gently placed Maya on the floor beside Nina and Juan. He then carried Kyle off the bed and onto the floor as well, to the spot next to where he was sleeping.

Seeing that, Nicole asked in surprise, “Why do you put all of them on the floor?”

“So they won’t fall again.”

Huh? Is that a good reason to make them sleep on the floor?

She was still dumbfounded staring at the kids when Evan covered them with a blanket. He then turned around and lay on the bed.

“Are you sleeping on the bed?”

“Yeah, since no one is on it.”

It finally dawned on Nicole why Evan had moved all their children to the floor.

Pursing her lips, she climbed on the bed. Right after she lay down, the man hopped on top of her.

“What are you doing?”

“What do you think I’m doing?”

Tsk, tsk. How shameless.

“Like I said, there’ll be an interest charge after leaving the estate.”

Hold your horses! The kids are right here on the floor. Get a grip!

The next day.

Slowly opening her eyes, Nina found herself lying on the floor. She was bewildered.

She sat up at once and saw Juan and Kyle staring at the bed, shocked.

“What happened? I remember we were on the bed last night.”

“Yeah. How did we end up on the floor?”

Hearing the whispers beside her, Maya opened her eyes as well. Perplexed, she stared blankly at her siblings beside her.

What’s going on?

Rubbing her eyes while sitting up, the girl was astonished when she saw her parents on the bed.

Juan sighed. “It must be Daddy who secretly put us on the floor.”

Kyle agreed instantly. “I think so. I never roll around when I sleep. There’s no way I could have fallen off the bed.”

Maya scratched her head. I remember hearing a thud and feeling pain in my arms and legs. Daddy then carried me. And that’s all I can recall.

“Daddy must have wanted to sleep on the bed, so he made us sleep on the floor.”

“He wanted to sleep together with Mommy.” Kyle nodded firmly.

Juan massaged his neck to ease the soreness while saying in a bitter tone, "They pulled such a dirty trick on us just because they wanted to sleep together."

Staring at the floor, Nina looked at her fancy pajamas and pouted her lips. "That's right. How could they do this to us?"

The kids' protests eventually woke their parents up.

Having overheard the children's conversation, Nicole pinched the man beside her.

How are we going to explain ourselves now?

Evan turned his head and saw the four little ones sulking and glaring at him.

Letting out a dry cough, his expression grew surly as he asked, "Did you guys carry me to the bed?"

Maya shrugged with an innocent expression.

Nina was confused. Did that actually happen? Why can't I remember anything?

Is that even possible? How can the four of us carry a man as heavy as Daddy? Juan couldn't believe what he had just heard.

Kyle was amazed. Daddy is good at twisting the truth.

"Don't do it again," Evan said with an ice-cold look.

He then got out of the bed and took the kids to wash up.

Maya was the most cooperative one in following her father's instructions.

Although Nina sensed that something was off, she couldn't quite put her finger on it, so she didn't ask further.

Juan and Kyle exchanged meaningful looks. They knew their dad lied, but unfortunately, they had no proof.

Fine, I can't argue against Daddy anyway. We've already slept overnight on the floor; we have no choice but to accept the fact.

Nicole stealthily gave her husband a thumbs-up. I never knew Evan is so skilled at fooling the kids. He's even more shameless than I am.

Meanwhile, at the estate.

Portia was fuming with rage the moment she realized that Nicole and her kids had left the estate the night before.

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"He promised to give me an explanation. How could he let them go?"

“Ma’am, Sir did instruct us to let them leave. Without his blessing, no one could have gone out of the estate in the middle of the night.”

After hearing that, Portia stood up and stormed toward Stephen’s study.

At the same time, knowing his wife would come for him, the man intentionally waited in his study.

Stepping into the room, Portia demanded an explanation from Stephen with a frigid expression.

“Stephen, you have to give me and Daphne an explanation as promised!”

“Asking them to leave is the best way to handle this,” Stephen said in a steady tone with his eyes fixed on Portia.

It sounded like he had contemplated these words for some time.

The woman snorted loudly with indignance. “They hurt Daphne, yet you allowed them to leave just like that. How is this the best way to handle this matter? Stephen, I don’t agree!”

Stephen had already anticipated that Portia would say this.

He then spoke sternly, “Don’t you already know why the kids hurt Daphne?”

What’s he trying to say by questioning me this way?

“If we look into this matter, we’ll find that Daphne was the one who started it. She brought this upon herself!” he added.

Portia felt a pang of disappointment as she glared at her husband.

Daphne went against the kids and Nicole for my sake. And I have my reason for wanting to deal with that woman. It all started because she wanted to seduce you! But you sided with her and her kids so blatantly and even released them in the middle of the night. Doesn’t that mean my request for an explanation, as well as Daphne’s injury, are not as important as Nicole? That homewrecker indeed has a way with men!

“Stephen, you favor Nicole so much. You even let her and the kids enter the tea room which even I’m not allowed in. Have you fallen for her? Is that why you showed such partiality toward her?”

Instantly, the man slammed the table forcefully. “Nonsense!”

“Is that not the case? Then why do you treat her differently?” she questioned him harshly.

It’s because of Rosalie. Nicole looks so much like Rosalie, whom I’ve wronged. I did this to atone for my mistakes, even though I know full well that she isn’t Rosalie. For some unknown reason, I feel close to Nicole, but it’s not the kind of affection between a man and a woman. After all, the love I have for Rosalie is irreplaceable.

Stephen remained silent as his eyes glinted with an inscrutable emotion. Portia balled up her fists, taking his silence as his admission of guilt.

He finally admits it. He must have asked Nicole to leave on purpose to avoid my reprimand. I bet he’s hiding her somewhere so he can cheat on me. When the opportunity arises, he’ll probably be so smitten

with her and make her the duchess. Stephen Musgrave, I've been with you for years but you never loved me. While I don't have your heart, I must have the duchess' title! Anyone who tries to usurp my position can only die!

Suppressing her anger, she glowered at his back for a moment before storming out of the study.

Stephen watched her leave while sighing inwardly.

I hope this is the end of this mess.

However, Stephen's wish didn't come true. Things turned out against his will.

After Portia left, she immediately commanded someone to locate Nicole's whereabouts.

"Money isn't an issue as long as you can make her vanish forever," she emphasized.

"Yes, Ma'am."

Just as she finished talking, Levant came over hastily.

He had come to confront her about Nicole.

"Mom, did you chase them away?"

Portia cast a look of disdain at Levant. If you haven't brought the homewrecker here, I wouldn't be so troubled.

"Why? Are you going to look for her and bring her back?" she asked through gritted teeth.

"Mom, why must you kick her out?"

The woman sniggered at him. "Don't accuse me. I didn't chase her away; she left on her own in the middle of the night. Ask your dad if you don't believe me."