

# The Day I Kissed An Older Man By Cher the Cherished

## Chapter 341 to 360

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### Chapter 341

Sherlyn was incensed. “How can you still be so arrogant at this time, Corinne? I’m not surprised that everyone on the Internet is calling you shameless. I think you deserve it!”

“I deserve it, you say? Does that mean you deserve it too because you got dragged into this?”

“You...”

Lilliana could not stand it anymore and leaned over to her daughter’s cell phone. She then said to the camera, “When did you become so evil? You were the *one* who ruined Sherlyn’s career! Goran would’ve given her his full support, and she was due to make our family proud once she becomes the next generation of Goran’s lead actress! You were the one who interfered with that, and that once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is now gone!

“You even spread rumors that she’s not Marvin’s daughter, which caused such a huge family conflict between us! We’re lucky that Marvin gave us another chance and did another DNA test to prove that Sherlyn is the daughter that Marvin and I had! All this just proves that you’re merely sowing discord!

“Now you’re scamming people and tarnishing the reputation of our family! What kind of heart do you have, Corinne?”

Corinne curled her lips. “Scams? Isn’t that your specialty? Didn’t you get to where you are today using deceit and lies? You secured Goran’s backing for Sherlyn using the same means, right? The only reason you failed was because the truth had been revealed! How is this my fault? Besides, I, don’t have the talent **for** lying like you do. You can have that honor.”

Lilliana became livid. “W–What did you just say?!” “Why is Corinne so sharp–tongued today?! She’s usually so polite to them in front of Marvin.”

Sherlyn snatched the phone and flew into a rage. “How dare you say that about my mother, Corinne! Who do you think you are? I’m warning you! If you don’t apologize to her, I’ll–”

Corinne’s temples hurt from Sherlyn’s annoying voice. She raised her hand to rub her ear and clicked the cross in the upper right corner to turn off the video call.

Sherlyn called again, but she ignored it.

She had no time to listen to the Carew’s’ nagging because she needed to get down to business.

Corinne clicked into his group chat with Aaron and Xanten.

[Aaron, could you deal with those wreaths that were sent to the Carew’s and find a way to stop those netizens from sending weird stuff to them?]

Aaron remained silent, but a message came instead from Xanten. [He went to investigate that Anna -related matter that you instructed earlier.]

Corinne rubbed her temples. She had forgotten about that when she argued with the Carew’s.

[Send someone else to do it, Xanten.]

[Already on it, boss. I’ll get someone to warn all the wreath shops and funeral businesses in the

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**city** not to accept any orders or send any items to the Carew’s.]

[Great.]

Xanten went offline to do as told.

Corinne began her operation to rid the Internet of the slander. She opened a special software with a red mark hidden in the encrypted folder of the computer, clicked on it, then entered a long string of passwords to access the deepest recesses of the Internet that ordinary people could not access

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When Corinne was about to remove all the posts and microblogs online that illegally exposed her personal information, a user with the ID 'Road To Success' appeared suddenly and excitedly messaged a few emoticons in quick succession.

[You're online, master! I need your help with something!]

'Road To Success' was the username used by Sunny.

After a series of recent incidents, Corinne had a distaste for the Riveras and replied slightly, [What's the matter?]

[Road to Success: A friend of mine is being cyberbullied. Could you help me remove all the posts that slander her and expose her personal information? Everything that's written in those posts is fake! I've even mobilized my comrades in the AJ Alliance to hack and delete those posts, but some of them have been set up with advanced defense barriers, and our skills have not yet reached the level of being able to crack such defenses.]

Corinne cocked her eyebrow in surprise. 'Why would Sunny—the young man who protected his sister so much—want to help me behind his sister's back?' Corinne wondered. 'Can pigs fly now?'

When she recalled how disappointed Sunny's expression was when she was at the hospital that day, not to mention the way he pointed at her and cursed at her, she became curious as to his motives and tapped the keyboard to ask, [Isn't she your sister's love rival? I remember you cursing her a lot in the past. When did she suddenly become your friend?]

[Road To Success: She is my sister's rival, but she isn't a bad person, and she did me a big favor once too. My siblings misunderstood her recently and nearly had her sent to jail, so I'm

overwhelmed with regret right now. I can't watch her being slandered like that! I want to help her! So please, master! Could you lend a helping hand?]

Although Sunny had the distinctive temper of a rich kid, he was better than his pious elder brother in that he could distinguish good from evil and knew how to reflect on his actions.

Corinne was going to help herself anyway, so she went along with the flow and typed a one-word reply, [Okay.]

Road To Success was very ecstatic. [Awesome! Thank you, master!]

Less than three seconds later, Road To Success reacted and said, [Wait a sec! How did you know that the Corinne I wanted your help with is my sister's rival? I don't remember telling you who that friend is!]

Corinne went straight to business and ignored him.

Road To Success sent another star-eyed emoji of admiration. [You truly live up to your name of being one of the world's two top hackers! The omnipresent Jade Rabbit knows it all!]

Corinne was speechless. 'What kind of stupid logic is that? He's like a blind follower!'

She tapped the keyboard with great intensity, and after entering a series of complicated codes, she directly entered the backend of VeeTube. Sunny was unable to hack into the backend of such

**big** companies due to their extensive defense systems, so he could only sneak in *by* following Jade Rabbit's ID.

Corinne opened the search engine in the background and prepared to search for the relevant posts so they could be deleted with a single click. However, the search results returned empty, and all the posts had been deleted.

It was all quiet regarding topics relating to her. Those posts about her school, phone number, home address, and other personal information had been removed.

Corinne found it a little strange and typed to 'Road To Success', [Seems to me the AJ Alliance deleted all the posts.]

[Road To Success: That can't be! There were barriers on a lot of the posts, and our people couldn't delete them at all even after spending a long time on them! Wait!!? What's going on?

Those posts have all disappeared! They've been deleted!]

Corinne frowned slightly. 'If Sunny and his gang didn't do it, then who did?'

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Few people could hack into the backend of such a highly-encrypted system, much less control it remotely like her. 'Who'd do something so risky **for** me?'

[Master! Look! I think that ID did it!] Road To Success discovered that someone was hacking the edited videos that were circulating online of Corinne staging an accident. Within a few seconds, all the videos online were corrupted so they could not be played.

Corinne narrowed her eyes and saw the ID of the hacker.

Road To Success sent a brash message to that well-known hacker and asked, [May I ask who you are, mighty hero? Why do you want to help Corinne? Do you know her?]

The hacker ignored Sunny and remained focused on what he was doing.

Corinne came back to her senses, typed a message, and sent it. [Long time no see, Ghostlord.]

A few seconds later, the other party replied to her, [Same to you.]

That brief exchange of pleasantries came as such a shock to Sunny that he nearly fainted.

Holy moly! Ghostlord? The Ghostlord?! The world's number one hacker?!

Ghostlord ignored Sunny, while Corinne did not bother him anymore.

Ghostlord was a mysterious person known to be the top hacker in the world. He or she had won 10 consecutive championships in the Global Hacking Contest for 10 consecutive years. When Corinne started to participate in the hacker competition, Ghostlord had already retired as a contestant, and the two of them never met as opponents in the hacking arena.

However, her performance in the Global Hacking Contest was just as outstanding. Her abilities were comparable to the Ghostlord's standards, and many people longed to compare the two of

them.

Two years ago, the two of them met once at a global hacker offline forum.

Since there was an unspoken rule that prevented hackers from revealing their identities offline, everyone wore masks and wore costumes, so their appearance was protected. It was hard to even tell their gender since everyone used voice changers to speak.

That was her first time meeting Ghostlord, and when they had a chat with each other, they realized that they shared many similar opinions and thus became friends. However, their friendship was based only on the mutual appreciation of each other's skills, and they had no interest in each other's offline identities.

Ghostlord was rarely online, and Corinne was surprised that they would show up and help her. ‘Why would they help me when they don’t know that my real identity is Corinne?’

At that moment, Road To Success was still jumping excitedly in the dialog box. [Ahhh! My idols! I met Jade Rabbit and Ghostlord online at the same time today, and I saw them meeting each other with my very eyes! I have witnessed history!]

No one bothered about his self-contained joy.

Corinne ignored Road To Success and asked Ghostlord, [Do you know that Corinne girl who’s being slandered by everyone?]

Ghostlord replied, [Do you know her too?]

The word ‘too’ seemed to imply that they knew her, but Corinne could not be sure of that.

Corinne was a little surprised, but she did not want to reveal her identity, so she replied, [I don’t know her, but someone hired me to delete those posts. How did you come to know her?]

Ghostlord then replied, [You seem quite curious about her.]

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Corinne was speechless. Even though they were separated by a screen, she could sense an

inexplicably strong aggressiveness similar to that of a wild beast guarding its cubs. It could also be likened to a despot showing his possessiveness.

She may have rubbed Ghostlord the wrong way with her question. Hackers were very defensive, and it was normal for them to dislike revealing too much about their offline affairs.

Corinne

was the one who crossed the line. When she realized that, she decided not to ask any f

urther and changed the subject. [Not at all. I was just asking casually. Will you be going to this year's Global Hacking Summit?]

[Ghostlord: That depends.]

Corinne then typed, [On what? Is something holding you back?]

[Ghostlord: I'm married. My wife is very strict. It wouldn't be convenient to travel far.]

Corinne found it interesting because she did not expect Ghostlord to be such a family man!

She replied, [Congratulations! As it happens, I got married recently too.]

At this time, Road To Success popped up again and sent a banner to interject, [Did the two of you big shots get married to each other offline? Whoa! This sounds just like the plot of a movie! You're of different genders, right? Master, you're a woman, right? I don't think Ghostlord is a woman. Or are you both men?]

Corinne was at a loss for words, and it seemed Ghostlord felt the same way, too.

Corinne then silently kicked the talkative Road To Success out of the deep web. Then, she said sincerely to Ghostlord, [In any case, I hope to see you at this year's hacker summit, and I look forward to discussing the vulnerabilities of the NuevaNova system recently developed by EKX Enterprises and the techniques to bypass their system.]

[Ghostlord: We can have a chat about it if the chance comes up.]

Everything had been settled by Ghostlord, so Corinne quit the deep web since she no longer had any purpose there. All of a sudden, she remembered that there she still had to design the building for the Holdens' new headquarters.

She wanted to come up with a sketch within three days and send it to Jeremy, but three days had passed, and she was unable to start on it after being held up by everything that happened.



She decided to take advantage of the time she had then.

Corinne immediately opened the drawing software and sketched out the inspiration she had thought up before.

At that time, Jeremy exited the deep web in the study and massaged his brows wearily.

He picked up the phone, looked at the time, and decided to send a message to Corinne.

[Can I come in there for a while?]

Corinne was concentrating on drawing the design when she heard her phone ring twice.

She picked it up, looked at it, then frowned and replied, [Why do you want to come in for a while? Is something the matter?]

The man replied, [Nothing. I just wanted to see you.]

Corinne

turned on the phone camera, smirked at it, and took a selfie for him. [There! You can look at me as long as you like! Good night, and don't bother replying! I'm going to sleep so on!]

Jeremy was stunned, and he laughed in anger. 'That d\*mn girl is so frustrating yet so adorable at the same time.'

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At the Riveras, Lucas sat leisurely on the chair in front of the dust-free built-in bookshelf and read a book by a foreign author while holding a cup of hot coffee in his other hand.

His secretary, Edmund, stood to one side and reported the situation dutifully. "Sir, about those videos and posts online, it's clear that Corinne has been wrongfully accused. Should we clarify to the public on her behalf?"

Although Edmund could *not* understand why Corinne would disrespect his employer, that did not change the fact that Corinne helped the old

man on Yonder River's shore the other day. Had she not been around, the old man would have been hurt by that ignorant female internet celebrity.

Lucas narrowed his handsome eyes and remembered the arrogant way in which Corinne ignored him. He took a slow sip of coffee and said softly, "She is Jeremy's woman. We don't need to intervene even if something happens."

When Edmund heard that, he realized that Lucas was right—the Holdens' scion could not have been incapable of protecting his own woman. 'Guess I'm just worrying too much, then.

Lucas put down the coffee cup gracefully and said again, "The current priority is to find out how and where that video came from. Be sure to find out for me."

At the mention of that, Edmund said helplessly, "Sir, your subordinates have tried investigating this, but nothing could be found. We confiscated that celebrity's cell phone right away, and she couldn't have had the time to get a backup. Since then, the cell phone has been with you, and no one else has touched it except for the time we handed it over to the police for them to collect evidence."

A look of alertness flashed across Lucas's eyes. "Does that mean someone touched the cell phone that was in my possession while I wasn't paying attention?"

Edmund hesitated for a moment and nodded. "Sir... I do believe that it's the only possibility."

Lucas closed the book in his hand. "I've always kept my cell phone in the drawer of this study. If anyone touches it, they have to have broken in here!"

Edmund felt that it was unlikely for a family member to have done it. "Let me think... Only Miss Anya would dare to enter your study without your permission, and I'm sure it couldn't have been her. Other people wouldn't have dared to come in..

While Edmund was talking, Anya held a plate of pastries and walked in through the door with a smile on her face.

“Lucas! I bought some custard tarts from Fortuna Artisanal Bakers for you to try!”

“How thoughtful.” It was rare for Lucas to see his younger sister smiling so heartily, and even though he was not interested in sweet pastries, he took a small bite of the tart to taste it.

Anya blinked expectantly. “How is **it**? Is it delicious?”

He smiled gently and coaxed her, “Of course. You bought them, after all.”

Anya smiled sweetly in return.

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The tart’s sweetness began to fill his mouth, and he suddenly stared at his innocent sister for a long time. He was pensively silent for two seconds, and he then opened his mouth to ask, “Anya, did you enter my study these past few days and do something with the cell phone in my drawer?”

Anya was startled and asked innocently, “I didn’t. What’s wrong?”

Lucas narrowed his eyes slightly and asked, “Did you know that there’s a smear campaign against Corinne on the Internet?”

An imperceptible guilty conscience flashed across Anya’s face, and she nodded calmly. “Well, I did hear about it when I went to have a meal with my friends, but I haven’t read anything yet. Is something wrong?”

Lucas frowned, and his gentle eyes became sullen.

“Are you sure *you* have no clue what’s going on?”

"I don't!" Anya shook her head aggrievedly. She had a hurt expression, and her eyes were filled with tears. "Lucas... Do you doubt me?"

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Lucas' face softened when he saw Anya's eyes reddening. He reached out to wipe away the tears that were about to fall from the corners of her eyes and said, "There, there. Don't cry, Anya. I was just asking..."

Anya sniffled sadly. "But your tone says otherwise. You sounded so mean..."

Lucas sighed with resignation. Then, he continued to patiently explain to her, "Anya, that phone has never left the drawer in my study, but now, there's an edited version of the video posted online to slander Corinne, resulting in a public uproar.

"I was just going through a standard procedure of making sure no one in our family is the culprit before letting Edmund question the other staff in the household.

"Do you now understand? And you should know that, as your brother, I'll always trust you a hundred percent, okay?"

Anya

wiped away her tears and nodded like a little girl. "Okay. If this is the case, it's totally understandable that you'll suspect me, since I'm the only one in this house who has total access to your study."

Lucas patted her head. He regretted being so harsh on Anya and knew he should have trusted her more. After all, she had always been a sensible little sister.

"But it really wasn't me. You know I won't ever do something like that. It's just not in me. Besides, I wasn't the only one who went into your study. Recently, didn't you ask Sunny to finish his homework in your study before he was allowed to go out to play?"

“Felix—the servant in charge of taking care of Sunny—and all the other servants who brought in refreshments for Sunny, they had been into your study too. You should interrogate them and see which one of them would do something so despicable as to slander Corinne on the Internet!”

“Sunny?” The expression on Lucas’ face immediately became serious.

Anya

pretended to be startled. Then, she said anxiously, “Lucas, do you think Sunny could’ve done it in a moment of anger? You know, because he wanted to make Corinne pay for what she did **to**

Rosie?”

Lucas got a headache just thinking about that idiot brother of his. He scoffed and said, “I’m going to disown him if he did that. What Rosie did was illegal. Not to mention, she also put your safety at risk, so she got what she deserved. Sunny had no right to blame it on Corinne.”

Anya realized Lucas was really angry, so she tried to defuse the situation. “It might not be Sunny, then. I’m just worried...”

Apart from Anya and I, the only person in this household who knows Corinne is that idiotic brother of mine. I don’t think any of the servants know her, so why would they go to all the trouble to do something like this to someone they don’t know?’ thought Lucas.

After he calmed himself, he turned to Anya and gently said, “Anya, you must be tired after going out with your friends. You weren’t feeling well this afternoon too, so you should head to bed. I still have some work I need to finish.”

“Okay, I’ll **leave** you to your work then. But remember to take it easy. I’m sure the investigation will turn up with something soon. Goodnight, Lucas.”

After that, Anya went out of the study with a smile on her face, but her face immediately darkened the moment she stepped outside of the door.

'Sh\*t! The plan is backfiring on me,' thought Anya, gritting her teeth.

She never expected Lucas—who had always been indifferent to outsiders—would waste his time on Corinne. What was worse was that she would be done for if Lucas found out she was the one who posted the video online. Therefore, she had no choice but to use Sunny as a diversion to buy herself more time.

Lucas' face returned to its usual seriousness after Anya left his study.

"Edmund, get that idiot brother of mine in here. I need to ask him some questions," he ordered. "Yes, Mister Lucas," said Edmund.

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While Edmund was on his way to get him, Sunny was spending his time feeling distressed about being kicked out of the deep web by his master, Jade Rabbit. He wanted to access the deep web again but could not, no matter how he tried, because Jade Rabbit had locked up his ID for 48 hours.

'Why?' He banged the keyboard in frustration. He had no choice but to go to VeeTube and other web pages to check the latest development of 'Corinne the scammer incident'.

It's a good thing the cyberbullying post and the videos are all gone. This way, at least, the matter won't spread further, making it worse,' thought Lucas. 'Next, I have to find a way to help Corinne clear up her name. Otherwise, she won't be able to move freely in public places. The angry mob will definitely chase after her if she's recognized... Should I ask Lucas for help?'

However, Sunny knew that Lucas was famed for his cold-heartedness and that he would not waste his time on anyone other than himself or other members of the Rivera family. Therefore, he certainly would not lift a finger to help Corinne with her predicament.

Sunny sighed. He leaned back in his chair and rested the back of his head on his interlocked fingers in annoyance, thinking...

'Oh, that's right! Lucas has the female influencer's phone. I can clear Corinne's name as long as I can get the unedited video and post it online! But...how can I get it from him?'

"Mister

Sunny, Mister Lucas has asked for you to see him in his study," said Edmund from outside

the door.

The sudden voice startled Sunny so much that he and the chair fell to the ground, causing him to

yelp out in pain.

"Mister Sunny, what happened? Are you okay?" Edmund asked when he heard the commotion in

the room.

Sunny climbed up from the floor and angrily said, "I'm fine! I've already finished my homework for the day, so what could Lucas possibly want from me?"

"I'm not sure either, but you'll know once you go see him."

"Alright, alright. I'll be there right away."

Sunny felt very uneasy. Nothing good ever came out of meeting up with Lucas. He would either get a lecture or be forced to study.

Five minutes later, Sunny arrived at Lucas' study with a frown on his face. "I heard you were looking for

me, Lucas."

He knocked on the door but no one answered, so he pushed open the door and discovered no one was inside.

“Lucas? Are you here?”

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Sunny snuck into the study, and after confirming Lucas was not there, a bright idea popped up in his mind. He would make a copy of the video on the female influencer’s phone so that he could post it online once he was back in his room.

He remembered seeing Lucas putting the female influencer’s phone in the right-hand drawer of his study table when he was forced to do his homework in the past few days.

After he had made up his mind, he looked around one last time to make sure no one was in the room. Then, he went to open the drawer, and sure enough, the phone was in there.

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Sunny quickly took the phone out of the drawer. Then, he plugged one end of the data cable into the phone and the other into Lucas’ computer before plugging in his flash drive. He did all of that very swiftly, but just when he was about to copy the video into his flash drive...

“What are you doing?” asked Lucas coldly, appearing in the room.

Sunny immediately froze in place. He stiffly raised his head and said, “Lucas... I was... was just looking up some information on the computer...”

Lucas narrowed his eyes. “Why would you use my computer instead of yours?”



Sunny started

to panic even more. “Umm.... I... I suddenly remembered I missed out on some information when I came in here, and I was worried that I’ll forget again if I didn’t look it up now, so I thought I could just use your computer...”

While he spoke, Sunny had sneakily unplugged the data cable and put the female influencer’s phone into his pocket.

Lucas’ expression remained unchanged. He easily saw through what Sunny did. He took a step forward and stretched out a hand. “Hand it over.”

Sunny pretended he did not

know what Lucas was talking about. His eyes darted around as he said, “Hand... Hand what over?”

“How dare you still lie when you’ve already been caught in the act? Is this where you put your mind into? Learning how to lie instead of studying?”

At the mention of studying, Sunny became a little ashamed of himself. He knew he could not keep his lie from Lucas anymore, so he obediently handed over the phone to him.

“Lucas, I’m sorry. I admit I took the phone, but I just wanted to...”

Lucas took the phone and held it up in front of Sunny’s face. “I don’t care what you were thinking, but you shouldn’t have posted that video online to slander someone who’s helped your grandfather in the past!”

“What...?” Sunny was stunned. He did not understand the words coming out of Lucas’ mouth.

Lucas scoffed. “Did you really think everything is fine just because you blurred out our grandfather’s face? I only testified against Corinne at the police station because I thought she had done something to hurt Anya. You know I won’t tolerate anyone who did anything to hurt her. The police had concluded that the case had nothing to do

with Corinne, and you still did something like this to slander her? Aren't you afraid of the others calling the Rivera family ungrateful?"

"Lucas, what are you talking about? I wasn't the one who posted that video online," said Sunny, feeling very hard done by.

Lucas frowned when he saw how firm Sunny was. He could not help but think he had gotten the wrong person...

"Lucas. Sunny. What's going on? I was on my way down to get some water, but I heard the two of you arguing," said Anya, who suddenly appeared in the study dressed in her pajamas. She looked

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at the two of them with worried eyes.

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Sunny was happy to see her because he knew she would always take his side. He immediately ran up to her and said, "Anya, Lucas was so mean to me. He was accusing me of doing something I didn't do even when I told him I wasn't the one who posted that video online to slander Corinne."

Anya frowned and gently patted Sunny on the shoulder to calm him down. Then, she turned to face Lucas and said, "Lucas, you shouldn't accuse Sunny when you don't have solid proof. What if

you were wrong..."

At that moment, Edmund walked over and reported, "Mister Lucas, we found the editing software and the original file of the edited video, as well as the login history of the female influencer's VeeTube account, on Mister Sunny's computer."

'What?!' It was then Sunny realized that the reason Lucas called him over was to lure him away first so that Edmund could check his computer. 'But how is it possible that my computer has those things? No. This couldn't be happening. What's going on?'

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Lucas' expression darkened. He slammed the female influencer's phone loudly on the table and glared vehemently at Sunny.

"Instead of studying like I told you to do, you spent all your time on that hacker league of yours. Did you really think no one will ever find out about what you did just because you think you have a few tricks up your sleeves? At least clean up all your traces if you want to pull shady stunts like this," mocked Lucas.

Sunny was starting to tear up. He forced back his tears and said, "Lucas, it's true that I've joined a hacker league, but I swear to god, I have nothing to do with that video. I have no reasons to hurt her."

"How dare you still deny it when we've caught you red-handed?"

"I'm not denying it. I really didn't do it."

Lucas was getting fed up. "Edmund, lock him up in his room, and make sure he doesn't get anything to eat until he has admitted his crime."

Edmund hesitated for a second, but he did not dare to defy Lucas' order.

"Yes, Mister Lucas."

Sunny wiped away his tears and said stubbornly, "Fine! If you won't let me eat, then I won't eat! You're a fool, Lucas. You not only wrongly accused Corinne, but you're doing the same thing to me now, too. One day, you'll get your karma!"

Edmund was worried that Sunny would make Lucas angrier than he already was, so he quickly dragged him out of the room.

Seeing this, Anya secretly breathed a sigh of relief. Then, a victorious smile appeared faintly on her lips. 'My plan has worked. Lucas will never suspect me now.'

While Sunny

was on his way to Lucas' study and before Edmund brought someone to check Sunny's computer, Anya had snuck into

Sunny's room to tamper with his computer. Yes, she uploaded all the things Edmund said were found on Sunny's computer.

She had no choice but to do that. There was no way she was going to let Lucas find out that she was the one who edited the video and posted it online. She was willing to sacrifice Sunny to save herself.

'It's a pity that I couldn't completely screw over Corinne this time... thought Anya. Then, pulling back from her thoughts, she put on a worried face and said, "Lucas, I'm sure Sunny..."

Lucas waved his hand to stop her from going any further. "He's not a little kid anymore. He needs to learn that every action has consequences. I'll handle this matter, so don't you worry about it. You should go rest now."

"Alright, then. Don't stay up too late, Lucas," said Anya with a sigh. Then, she walked out of the study.

"Mister Lucas, Mister Jeremy has many talented people from all walks of life working under him.

Even though Mister Sunny had changed his IP address, Mister Jeremy's people would still be able to find out the real IP address very soon. What if, by then... he thought that you were the one who posted the video online?" Edmund asked anxiously as soon as he came back from Sunny's room.

Lucas raised his eyebrow. "So what if he thinks that?" he asked fearlessly.

“I just think that it’s best if we avoid any conflict with the Holden family. The Rivera family and the Holden family already have bad blood from the previous generation, and this has affected Anya not getting married no less. If the conflict escalates, it’ll only make Anya’s life more miserable. The matter with the video is indeed Mister Sunny’s fault.”

Lucas knew that Anya still had feelings for Jeremy. In fact, he had mentally prepared himself for her to always have feelings for Jeremy. Due to this reason, he had no choice but to de-escalate whatever conflict there was between the two families.

He rubbed his temples, and after thinking about it for a while, he ordered, “Tomorrow morning, bring Sunny over to Jeremy’s place to apologize. Explain to him what happened and then give the original video to him for disposal. If he’s still not satisfied, tell him I’ll be willing to meet up with him to go over the matter whenever he wants.”

“Yes, Mister Lucas,” said Edmund with a nod.

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Late at night, Anya secretly snuck in some food for Sunny.

The two bodyguards standing guard at Sunny’s door hesitated to let her in but in the end thought they might as well. They knew Lucas had always given Anya whatever her heart desired.

Therefore, even if Lucas was there himself, he would have let her in too.

Besides, they did not want to risk incurring Lucas’ wrath. What if Anya went to tell on them?

Therefore, the safest option for them to take was to simply let her in.

When Anya went in, Sunny was lying face down on the bed and crying his heart out.

“Sunny? Sunny, get up. You’ll suffocate like that.”

Sunny was startled to hear Anya's voice. He immediately sat up straight and wiped away the tears from his eyes. Then, he turned around to face her and said tearfully, "Anya, what are you doing here? How come you're not asleep?"

"I can't sleep 'cause I'm so worried about you, so I thought why not drop in for a visit." Anya pulled some tissues out from the box and walked over to wipe away Sunny's tears. "Just look at you. You shouldn't cry like this since you're a big boy now."

Sunny could not help himself either. He felt so wronged that the tears just fell out of their own accord. In fact, what Anya said to him made him even angrier. "Anya, I was falsely accused. I didn't do what Lucas said I did. The reason I had the female influencer's phone in my hand today was because I wanted to clear up Corinne's name!"

Anya was a little taken aback. Her hand that was wiping away Sunny's tears froze midair while a sinister glint flashed across her face.

'Sunny risked himself to help Corinne, too? I don't get it. What makes her so special that everyone wants to help her out? Not only did Lucas spend his time investigating the source of the leak, but even the usually cowardly Sunny dared to steal the phone from Lucas' drawer?! They must've been taken in by her innocent act...' thought Anya.

Sunny frowned when he saw Anya spacing out with a weird expression on her face. "Anya, what are you thinking about? Don't tell me you don't believe me, too?"

Anya snapped out of her trance and immediately looked at him gently. "Nonsense! Of course I believe you, but you should know how Lucas is. He only believes what he sees for himself and will not be swayed just because you're his little brother. He'll never go easy on you since you don't have proof that you weren't the one who posted the video online. This is what you should do tomorrow; find Jeremy and apologize to him. Tell him you didn't know what got into you. This way, it'll make both Lucas and Jeremy less angry at you."

Sunny was shocked. He pushed away Anya's hand and said, "Anya, are you serious? You want me to apologize for something I didn't do? No way am I doing that! Why should I when I didn't do anything wrong?!"

Anya sighed and looked disappointed. "Sunny, I'm not going to force you... It's just that, you know my biggest wish is to marry Jeremy and spend the rest of my life with him. But because of what

happened between our two families in the past, I'm not able to do that at the moment. Now the matter with the video will only worsen what little left of goodwill we have with the Holden family. I might just as well give up the hope of ever marrying Jeremy! Sunny, can you please just do this for me? Pretty please?"

Anya's eyes reddened and tears threatened to roll down her cheeks. Anyone with a heart would have felt their heartstrings tugged at the sight of her big, sad puppy eyes.

## Chapter 351

Sunni's resolve was

Late at night, Anya secretly snuck in some food for Sunny.

The two bodyguards standing guard at Sunni's door hesitated to let her in but in the end thought they might as well. They knew Lucas had always given Anya whatever her heart desired.

Therefore, even if Lucas was there himself, he would have let her in too.

Besides, they did not want to risk incurring Lucas' wrath. What if Anya went to tell on them?

Therefore, the safest option for them to take was to simply let her in.

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Starting to shake. He would do anything for Anya, but...

"But Anya, I think Jeremy and Corinne are-

Anya must have guessed what he was going to say, and she did not want him to continue, so

she cut him off gently, "I know that Jeremy treats Corinne very well, but it's not like he can just ignore her. She's his wife after all, and I'm sure he's just putting up a show for the elders in his family. Besides, he's a responsible man. Even if he has no feelings for Corinne, he'd still make sure she's

well taken care of."

Sunny frowned and said, "No, that wasn't what I was going to say. I really think Jeremy treats Corinne differently. In fact, I think he treats her better than..."

Anya cut him off again. "As I said, they're acting all lovey-dovey toward each other because they don't want the elders in the Holden family to know that everythi

ng is fake. He's only being nice, protective, and gentle to her on the surface. It's all for t  
he sake of his own family's reputation, not because he has feelings for her.

"He told me before that he only got married to Corinne to make the elders in his family h  
appy and that he'll end the marriage after his grandfather's  
health is better so that he can come back to me,

"Also, you should know very well that an aloof man like him would never fall in love with  
another woman in one short month. I know him the best; that won't happen."

Sunny thought Anya's reasoning was sound. The Jeremy he knew would never fall in lo  
ve with another woman when he was still in love with Anya.

After thinking about it, he could not bear to see Anya suffering so much, so he said, "Alri  
ght, then. I'll do it for your sake. I'll go tell Jeremy that I was the one who posted the vide  
o online and apologize to him tomorrow."

"Oh, Sunny! Thank you! Thank you so much!" Anya hugged him and cried happily. "I kn  
ow you're a good kid after all. I'm so glad to have a little  
brother like you. Rest assured I'll find the culprit who put all those  
things inside your computer to clear up your name!"

Sunny simply nodded. He had no doubt that Anya was going to do what she said  
she was going to

1. do.

Anya was about done crying. She got up and wiped away her tears before she brought  
out the food she snuck in for Sunny. "Here. These  
are all your favorite foods. I can't bear to see you go hungry. Hurry up and eat them."

Sunny was in no mood to eat but did not  
want to let Anya's effort go to waste, so he bit into some  
toast.

Anya looked at her naive little brother with relief. Then, she smiled sinisterly and thought, 'No one will ever suspect me now that I've convinced him to apologize to Jeremy. It's not like he'll lose out much, anyway. The worst thing that'll happen to him is probably Lucas going to give him another earful. But if Lucas found out that I was the one who posted the video online... he'll never trust me again. Plus, it'll make Jeremy like me even less. D\*mn if I'm going to let that happen. Sorry Sunny, but I have no choice but to sacrifice you for the sake of my happiness.'

The next day, Corinne was still not awake by the time Jeremy walked out from his study. He made his way to the bedroom and knocked on the door.

No one answered from inside, so he turned the doorknob, only to find out that it was locked.

"Please wait a moment, Mister Jeremy. I'll get the spare key right away," said Bowen as soon as he saw what happened.

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Jeremy put up his hand to stop him. "There's no need. From now on, whenever she locks the door, no one is allowed to open the door with the spare key. This is, of course, except when her safety is **called** into question."

"Yes...Mister Jeremy," replied Bowen, a little stunned.

This was completely different from Jeremy's initial attitude. Previously, he would unhappily ask the servants to open the door with the spare key whenever Corinne locked her door. No one was allowed to lock the door to his bedroom, let alone locked him out of his bedroom. Bowen had never seen this submissive side of Jeremy.

Jeremy stopped knocking and fished out his phone to call Corinne. The phone rang for a while before she finally answered.

“What?!” said Corinne sleepily and angrily. It was obvious she was not happy being woken up.

“Get up. It’s time for breakfast,” said Jeremy.

Corinne had stayed up the whole night to do her drawings and did not sleep until the early morning. Therefore, she was in no mood to do anything else other than sleep.

“I’m not hungry. Have breakfast without me,” she said and immediately hang up the phone.

Jeremy’s expression darkened when he heard the busy dial tone of the call. He had always been the one who called the shots around there, but it seemed like karma had sent Corinne to torment

him.

He massaged his temple tiredly before calling her again. “Can you at least open the door so that I can go in to see you?”

“Didn’t I already send a selfie to you yesterday? You can use that selfie of me to look at me all your want!” said Corinne impatiently.

Jeremy frowned and said, “No, that just makes me thirst for the real you even more! Don’t you know that?”

At the mention of the word ‘thirst’, Corinne instantly woke up. “Mister...is that the only thing you. have in your mind? Don’t you think it’s too early in the morning to ask for that?”

Jeremy was visibly amused by her misunderstanding. He smiled and said, “Alright, alright. Go back to sleep. I won’t bother you anymore.”

“Hmph! I’m going to call you to wake you up the next time you’re sleeping! See how you’ll like it,” said Corinne angrily. Then, she hung up her phone with a huff.

Instead of being angry, Jeremy found the whole thing funny. In fact, there was nothing but adoration in his eyes. He put away his phone and ordered Bowen, "Nobody is to bother her. After she wakes up, ask her what she wants to have for breakfast and make it for her."

"Yes, Mister Jeremy. Rest assured that Ma'am will be well taken care of," said Bowen. He never thought he would live long enough to see Jeremy acting like that, so much so he thought he was imagining things.

'Is this really Mister Jeremy? Why, he looks like he's enjoying the whole thing.

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Dare I say he even looks younger than before?

Bowen had known Jeremy long enough to know that his employer was not the type to smile or show any signs of emotions on his face. Therefore, he could not believe it when Jeremy was smiling so happily just because of a short phone call with Corinne. It was truly unbelievable.

'Looks like the other servants and I will need to treat Ma'am with more respect now that Mister Jererhy is seriously falling head over heels for her, thought Bowen.

Since Jeremy failed to rouse Corinne from her bed, he went downstairs to have his breakfast alone. Tommy deferentially walked into the dining room and reported the results of what Jeremy asked him to do yesterday.

"Mister Jeremy, we have found the female influencer."

Chapter **353**

"Lucas

had ordered his men to teach her a lesson after finding out what she did to his grandfather at the embankment of Yonder River. Apart from that, her live-stream account had been indefinitely restricted by the platform, so she could

no longer do any live-stream. Thus, with no way to make a living, she went back to her hometown.”

Jeremy gave no comment and continued to eat his breakfast slowly.

There, Tommy continued his report, “The female influencer said that she was afraid that her family’s job would be affected since she knew she had crossed someone she shouldn’t have. That’s why she has been lying low in the countryside for the past few days.

“She also said that she wasn’t the one who posted the video that slandered Ma’am and that someone must’ve hacked into her VeeTube account. She’d been warned not to tell anyone that she had met Grandfather Rivera on the embankment of Yonder River or the fact that she had been taught a lesson by the River family.

“Her phone was confiscated by Lucas’ men on the spot, so she could not possibly have the original video. Even if she does have the video, she wouldn’t dare to use it. Not after what Lucas’ men did to her.

“Mister Jeremy, I’m afraid the culprit who posted the video wasn’t her. It was definitely someone else.”

Jeremy’s expression remained unchanged because he was not surprised by Tommy’s report at all. Last night, he already found out that the real IP address of where the video was posted came from the Rivera family and not the female influencer. He picked up the glass of milk on the table and silently drank it.

Tommy sneaked a peek at Jeremy’s face, thought for a while, and said, “Mister Jeremy, I’ve

already asked the female influencer to record herself saying that she wasn’t the one who posted the video online and to explain that the facts weren’t as they were reported online, as well as to describe what really happened that day.

“We’ll then need only to send the video to all the media companies in the city for publication, and by doing so, we should be able to clear up Ma’am’s name. However, it’ll of course be more effective if we have the original video of what happened that day on the embankment.

“Most of the netizens now are very tricky to deal with. I can say with confidence more than half of them will question whether the female influencer had been coerced into recording the clarification video. Then, they’ll ask why she didn’t put the original video online.

“As for the Rivera family... Well, I must say they’re the most ungrateful bunch. Ma’am got into the mess she was in now because she wanted to help Grandfather Rivera, and now that the mess had gotten out of hand, they didn’t even step up to help the person who saved their grandfather.”

Jeremy instantly narrowed his eyes at the mention of the Rivera family.

Tommy must have understood Jeremy’s concern for he quickly said, “Miss Anya saved you once, so it’s hard for you to do anything to the Riveras.”

1. The whole thing was tricky to deal with exactly because it concerned the Riveras

The Rivera family is the Rivera family, and Anya is Anya,” said Jeremy suddenly. His tone was one of calm and ruthlessness

Tommy was a little taken aback. From that simple statement alone, he understood that Jeremy had no intention to go easy on the Rivera family because of Anya.

“What should I do next Mister Jeremy?” asked Tommy seriously.

Jeremy was about to give his order when Bowen suddenly walked into the dining room in a hurry and sad. “Mister Jeremy, the Riveras are here.”

What? The Riveras Speaking of the devil!' Tommy was stunned and puzzled at the same time. Apart from Anya, this was the first time anyone else from the Rivera family had come to the Holcers estate.

The two families held deep-seated grudges toward one another, and though the younger family members did not see each other as enemies, they would never show up at each other's houses

unannounced either.

What do they want?" asked Jeremy with a raised eyebrow.

"A jolly-looking subordinate said he brought Mister Sunny here to apologize to you and Ma'am, and apparently, Miss Anya is in the car as well,"

Let them in' said Jeremy darkly.

Yes Mister Jeremy,' said Bowen. Then, he went to get the guests.

Not long after, Lucas' right-hand man, Edmund, came in with Sunny in tow. Anya, however, was nowhere to be seen.

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Chapter **354**

"Mister Jeremy," greeted Edmund with a bow. "Mister Lucas had asked me to return your car and to convey his gratitude to you for lending him the car yesterday. If not, he and Miss Anya would be stuck waiting on the Yonder Bridge for at least two hours or so for someone to get them."

"If he's so grateful, why isn't he here personally to thank me then?" asked Jeremy indifferently.



Edmund had spent many years working under Lucas to know how to deal with this kind of situation. However, he still could not help but feel a little pressure when it came to dealing with Jeremy.

“My deepest apologies, Mister Jeremy. Mister Lucas is away on a business trip. Otherwise, he would’ve personally come to thank you.”

Jeremy wordlessly cut the bacon in his place as if he was the only person in the dining room. What Edmund said might have worked on other people, but not on him. It was obvious to him that Lucas was not sincere about thanking him.

Edmund remained awkwardly standing where he was. Then, he suddenly turned to Sunny and said, “Mister Sunny, go on. Tell Mister Jeremy what happened, and make sure you apologize sincerely to him after that.”

“Fine...” The usually high-spirited Sunny had his head drooped. The emotions he had been holding back in the car came out all at once. He took a few steps forward and dropped his head even lower as if he was ashamed to face Jeremy.

“Jeremy, I’m sorry. I...”

He felt it hard to go on so much, so he thought he was going to puke out some blood right there and then. However, he finally bit the bullet after thinking about Anya and Lucas’ future.

“It was me! I was the one who posted the video online to slander Corinne. I did it to make her pay for what she did to Rosie! I stole the female influencer’s phone from Lucas and edited the video to make it look like Corinne was in the wrong so that everyone would hate her! I’m the only one to blame for this fiasco.”

Tommy looked at Sunny with shock written all over his face. Of all the people in the world, he would have never guessed it would be him who posted the video online. While it w

as true Tommy thought Sunny to be a little naughty, at the same time, he knew there was not a bad bone in that boy. There was no way he would do something as despicable as this.

However, after thinking about it carefully, he remembered all the troubles Sunny had caused Corinne before. Therefore, it was not that surprising that he would come to admit his wrongdoings. In fact, Tommy should have seen it coming.

Edmund was a little puzzled as to why Jeremy seemed to not show any reaction after Sunny's confession. He thought about it for a while and then said, "Mister Jeremy, Mister Sunny is still young and doesn't know the way of the world. We're sorry to have caused trouble for you and Missus Holden. Rest assured that Mister Lucas had punished Mister Sunny accordingly the moment he found out about what he had done. Today, I've brought him here for you to punish him however you see fit."

He was right. The whole thing was tricky to deal with exactly because it concerned the Rivera family.

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Jeremy put the bacon into his mouth and chewed slowly as if he had all the time in the world. He then put down his cutleries, took a sip of water, and gracefully dabbed the corners of his mouth with a napkin.

Some people in the world did not even have to frown for others to feel a sense of oppressive pressure. For some reason, Edmund and Sunny could not help but feel the walls closing in on them:

"Answer me this, do you know what Corinne did at the embankment that day?" asked Jeremy calmly with a raise of his eyebrow.

Sunny nodded and said, "Yes..."

Jeremy narrowed his eyes. "Do elaborate."

Sunny was panicking. "Corinne helped out my grandfather, who went blind recently, and if it wasn't

for her, my grandfather would've been beaten up by that female influencer.

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"And this is how you repay her? Well, I guess it'll be foolish of me to expect anything less than

n the Rivera family. You must've been taught that it's only right to repay those who helped you with revenge!"

Sunny felt both bitter and ashamed at having to admit to doing something he did not do. However, he had no choice but to shoulder the burden for the sake of Anya and Lucas.

"No, that's not true. Lucas and Anya had always taught me to not bite the hand that feeds me! It's just that I was too stupid to pay their words any mind. I now know I was in the wrong for slandering Corinne.

"Jeremy, it was I, and I alone, who did this. It doesn't have anything to do with my family, so please don't drag them into this. I'm willing to take whatever punishment you have in mind for me."

Jeremy scoffed. His face was as black as thunder. "How dare you tell me who I should and should not punish when you're the sinner? My poor wife helped your grandfather out of the kindness of her heart, and what did she get in return? A bunch of people bullying her online! You and your whole family will surely pay..."

"Jeremy!" exclaimed Anya tearfully. She suddenly appeared in the dining room and had run over to protect Sunny. She looked at Jeremy with her big, sad puppy eyes and said, "Sunny's still just a kid! He didn't know any better. I was shocked to find out he'd do such a thing, too.

"Nevertheless, I'm his sister, and as his sister, I can't bear to see him like this. Jeremy, for my sake, can't you just let him off the hook this time?"

Jeremy stared at the teary-eyed Anya with a frown on his face.

Noticing his hesitation, Anya quickly grabbed Sunny's elbow and said, "Sunny, kneel now to show Jeremy how sorry you are. He's not that bad of a person, so he'll surely forgive you if you just show how remorseful you are about the whole thing."

Sunny looked at Anya in astonishment. No matter how much he was unwilling to do what she said, he had no choice but to do it. Frowning, he slowly got down on his knees when...

“Get up!” a woman’s voice rang down from upstairs before Sunny’s knee even hit the floor.

It was Corinne.

Everyone immediately looked up, only to see Corinne walking down the stairs lazily yawning.

Jeremy’s eyes lit up at the sight of her. ‘My little rascal is finally awake.’

Once she was downstairs, she side-eyed Sunny and said, “Boy, you need to man up. You shouldn’t kneel just because someone told you to.”

Sunny had already straightened himself up, and he lost all of his usual arrogance the moment he saw Corinne coming down the stairs. He dropped his head and said, “But, I did something bad to you...”

Corinne glanced at him and said, “Are you sure you were the one who did it?”

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Sunny was a little taken aback. He looked up and looked at her in astonishment. ‘Could it be...she doesn’t think I was the one who did it?’

Anya immediately knew the situation would not turn out well for her if she allowed this to continue. Her eyes became teary again as she pushed her way in front of Sunny and tearfully pleaded, “Corinne, you can take your anger out on me, but please, just let Sunny go. He’s still young

and has a lot to learn. If you let the matter slide this time, Lucas and I will make sure he learns his lesson.”

Corinne raised one of her eyebrows. “Oh? Did I hear wrongly then? Didn’t this man here say that Jeremy could punish Sunny however he sees fit? And yet here you are, pleading for us to let the matter slide. Who exactly is in charge in the Rivera family? Or is this your family’s way of worming out of wrongdoings?”

Anya was speechless. Her face immediately stiffened, and she looked like she was going to burst into a sob. “No matter what, he’s the only little brother I have. Please, I beg of you...”

Corinne immediately put her hands into a cross position and said, “Save your tears, Anya. They don’t work on me. You should go cry to those who actually care about you.”

Then, she gestured meaningfully with her chin at the man sitting down at the dining table. Jeremy was totally speechless.

## Chapter 356

Anya’s eyes were completely red from all the crying. She forced back another round of tears and said, “I’m sorry. I know I shouldn’t cry, but I’m just worried about Sunny...”

Sunny’s heart immediately went out to Anya. He held on to her trembling shoulders and said, “Anya, don’t worry about me. I’ll be okay. I’m willing to bear the responsibility alone and will accept any punishment from Jeremy, so why don’t you go back with Edmund first?”

“But Sunny...” Anya could not get any further with her words as she was sobbing too much.

Corinne laughed and said, “Miss Anya, I must say I really admire you.”

Sunny looked at Corinne with a puzzled expression on his face. “What is she laughing about?”



Anya was stunned. She turned her doe eyes to Corinne and asked innocently, “Corinne, whatever do you mean by your words? You admire me?”

Corinne nodded.

“Yeah, I really admire you. You have a bestie who was willing to do everything to set me up for you, though it’s quite unfortunate she eventually ended up in prison. Then, your precious little brother posted that video online to slander me. After that, he willingly came here to admit his wrongdoing and to receive his punishment.

“Seems like everyone was just jumping at the chance to go through fire and water for you so that you get to remain clueless and innocent. You have to teach me some of your tricks someday, Miss Anya.”

On the surface, Corinne sounded like she was complimenting Anya, but if one were to dig deeper, one would find that she was actually mocking her.

Anya frowned imperceptibly. It was then she realized just how formidable a foe Corinne was. When she first met her, she thought nothing of her. Sure, Corinne was pretty, but it was a bimbo kind of pretty. At this moment, however, she found out just how wrong she was about Corinne.

‘She’s not as simple as she looks,’ thought Anya.

Anya widened her doe-eyes innocently and said softly, “Corinne, it seems as if you’ve misunderstood me. I have no idea what Rosie and Sunny were...”

Corinne ignored her. In fact, she did not even wait for her to finish speaking before she walked over to the dining table. She then glanced at the breakfast spread laid out for Jeremy and asked, “Where’s my breakfast?”

Jeremy looked up at her and said, “So you’re hungry now? Didn’t you say you weren’t hungry when I tried to wake you up?”

Corinne shrugged and spread out her palms. "I wanted to continue sleeping, but you guys were being so loud down here, so I thought I might as well have some breakfast before going back to sleep."

While she was talking, Tommy perceptively stepped forward and respectfully pulled out the chair next to Jeremy for Corinne to sit, which was exactly what she did.

Jeremy looked sideways at her with a stern frown on his forehead. "You said you didn't want to

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eat just now, so the kitchen didn't make you anything. Now there's no choice for you but to wait patiently for them to make you something."

**"Fine,"**

**said** Corinne with a pout. She did not have a choice but to wait patiently for the kitchen to make her something.

Moments ago, she did not feel hungry while she was still lying in bed, but since she was up, the hunger pang seemed

to be causing a riot in her stomach. She glanced at the glass of milk next to Jeremy's hand and reached out to take it. Then, just when she was about to take a sip...

Jeremy grabbed her hand and snatched away the glass.

"What are you doing? Can't I even have some milk now?" asked Corinne unhappily.

'He told me he likes me yesterday, and today, he won't even share his food with me. Does he even know the meaning of 'like'?' thought Corinne.

Jeremy only had to take one look at her scrunched little face to know what she was thinking.

"You shouldn't drink milk on an empty stomach. What if you get diarrhea?" lectured Jeremy sternly.

“Oh my god, Mister! When did you become so Nagy?” asked Corinne with a frown. Jeremy glared at her and replied, “I’m only doing this for your good.”

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Corinne simply scoffed.

Anya watched the interaction between Corinne and Jeremy. How they were behaving was as nothing out of the ordinary, yet it was the most intimate she had ever seen Jeremy being with another woman. Her eyes sank and she clenched her fists tightly, so tightly that her fingers dug into her palms.

At that moment, Edmund also felt like they were intruding on something, so he quickly took out something he was sure Jeremy would be interested in..

“Mister Jeremy, Mister Lucas asked me to give this to you. This phone used to belong to the female influencer. The original video remains untouched on the phone. We hope this will help you clear up all those unfounded rumors about Missus Holden.”

Jeremy glanced at Tommy, signaling him to take the phone.

Tommy immediately took the phone from Edmund’s hand and checked the video stored inside. It was as Edmund said; only then did he nod at Jeremy.

“Mister Jeremy, how do you intend to punish Mister Sunny?” asked Edmund.

Jeremy did not answer him. Instead, he looked questioningly at Corinne with one eyebrow raised. He, who had always called the shots without consulting anybody, was actually asking for Corinne’s opinion.

Corinne was puzzled. ‘Why is he looking at me like that? Is he asking me to come up with the punishment?’

After thinking about it for a while, Corinne glanced at Edmund, and then at the sad-looking Sunny.

“Leave Sunny here. The rest of you can go now,” she said languidly.

Edmund started to panic a little when he heard that!

“Missus Holden, Mister Sunny is just a kid. I hope that...

Corinne did not have to wait for him to finish speaking to know what he was going to say. She scoffed and interrupted him, “Your employer sure has rubbed off on you. If you have no intention to let us punish him, you shouldn’t have brought him here. Now that he’s here, you might as well just leave him here as I said!

“Or is what you said just empty words? The Riveras are in the wrong here. Not to mention, I was just trying to help out a member of your family. Do you seriously think there’ll be no consequences to all the things the Riveras have done?”

Edmund’s face became as black as thunder, but he did not dare argue back. Initially, he thought that Jeremy would let Sunny off the hook for Anya’s sake, or even if Jeremy wanted to punish Sunny, he would do so lightly. Therefore, he never expected that the wild card Corinne would be so difficult to deal with.

However, no matter how aggrieved Sunny felt, he did not want to let Corinne look down on him. He puffed up his chest, held his head up proudly, and stepped forward.

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“Edmund, take Anya home first. I’m going to stay here and take whatever’s coming for me,” he said resolutely. He was willing to accept whatever punishment Corinne had for him.

Edmund hesitated a little. He knew it would be as good as starting a war with the Holden family if he was to forcefully drag Sunny out of the place then.

This is out of my league. I should go back to ask Lucas for further instructions,’ he thought.

Thus, he made up his mind to retreat for the moment. He turned to Anya and said, “Let’s go, Miss. Anya.”

Anya looked at Edmund and said nothing.

Then, she looked pitifully at Jeremy—who was sitting at the head of the dining table—only to discover he was not even looking at her: Instead, all of his attention was focused on Corinne.

Anya's heart immediately sank. After thinking it through, she turned to Edmund and said, "Edmund, you should be in a rush to head back to Lucas' office, right?"

Edmund nodded. "Yes, Miss Anya. I'll be heading to Mister Lucas' office after dropping you off at home."

"If that's the case, you don't need to send me home," said Anya. Then, she looked at Jeremy and continued to say, "Jeremy, can I get a ride with you later? My house is just along the way to your office, so it should be convenient for you to give me a ride."

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Jeremy narrowed his eyes at Anya before turning back to face Corinne with a questioning look, asking her what he should do.

Corinne furrowed her brow. "Why is he looking at me like that again? What... Is he asking me to be the bad guy here 'cause he's too embarrassed to turn down his 'savior'? Man, he's really devious, huh? Oh well, I'll help him out this one time, seeing as how he's been really nice to me for the past

few days."

Corinne rested her chin on one hand and lazily turned to look at Anya. "Miss Anya, you know that your brother's subordinate can't be late to work, yet you don't seem to realize that this applies to your Jeremy, too."

The combination of the word 'your' and 'Jeremy' caused the man beside her to frown.

Anya felt wronged. The corners of her eyes turned down, making her look even more fragile and innocent. "No, Corinne. I didn't mean it like that... I just thought that it'll be fine if Jeremy is late since he's the boss of the company, whereas Edmund is just an ordinary

y worker who has to clock. in at work on time. Lucas has a strict system in place and will punish anyone who's late to work."

Corinne smirked. "Oh my, you're certainly very considerate of others. No wonder the people around you are so willing to go through fire and water for you. However, you've forgotten one thing. It was your brother who sent Edmund here, so he's technically on the clock, therefore he shouldn't be punished if he's late to the office. Besides, I believe that Edmund wouldn't have worked with your brother for so many years if your brother was that harsh to his right-hand man."

Here, Corinne took a yawn before adding, "But I'm fine if Jeremy is willing to give you a ride 'cause it's true what you said—your house is along the way to his office after all."

She smirked before turning around and raising her eyebrows mischievously at Jeremy. "Am I right,

Mister?"

Jeremy did not answer her. Instead, he coldly ordered, "Tommy, please send Miss Anya back to

her house."

"Yes, Mister Jeremy."

Anya's gaze faltered when she heard that. "Jeremy, aren't you going to the office today? Can't you just give me a ride? You don't have to trouble Tommy..." she said in a manner that made it obvious to anyone there that she was pretending to not want to trouble Tommy.

Jeremy remained indifferent to Anya. He gestured with his chin at Corinne. "The little rascal is getting jealous, so I think it's best if I don't give you a ride."

Corinne was

speechless. 'Hello, I'm jealous? Mister is way out of line. How can he use me like that w

hen

he's the one who doesn't want to give a ride to Anya? That's emotional blackmailing!

Anya was a little stunned. Her eyes were filled with hurt, and she was about to say something more when Tommy beat her to it. He raised his hand slightly as a gesture of invitation and said, "Miss Anya, please follow me out. I'll take you home right away."

Anya had no choice but to smile awkwardly, even though the expression of unwillingness was

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written all over her face. "Alright, then. Sorry for taking up your time, Jeremy. I'll leave with Tommy

now, she said politely.

Jeremy nodded and did not spare another glance at her.

Anya mentally gritted her teeth before smiling at Corinne. "Bye, Corinne. I'll come another day to

visit you."

"Off you go, then said Corinne.

Anya was speechless. She marched away angrily with Edmund following behind her.

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Sunny stayed behind in the dining room, waiting for Corinne and Jeremy to give out his punishment.

The maid placed a steaming hot plate of breakfast food in front of Corinne, who was so hungry that she immediately dug in. As she was shoveling the bacon and egg into her mouth, she sensed a pair of eyes boring into her. She did not know how to describe the look, but the closest

she could get was that it felt like she was being entwined by a flaming thread that was getting tighter around her body.

She instinctively frowned and glared at Jeremy. "Mister, why are you still here? Shouldn't you be off to work right now?"

Jeremy furrowed his brow in mock anger. "You just can't wait for me to leave, huh?"

Corinne shook her head. "No, it's not like that. It's more like you've finished your breakfast, so instead of wasting your time here, shouldn't you head off to work where your staff is waiting for you?"

Jeremy pursed his lips and said, "There's no rush."

Corinne twitched the corners of her mouth. "Okay, I won't say anything more now that I know you're not in a rush, but can you not stare at me like that while I'm eating?"

Jeremy raised his eyebrow. "Can't I even get a good look at you after how you left me to sleep alone in the study last night?"

Corinne scoffed and mockingly said, "From ancient times, any emperor who was found late to work always used the excuse of being seduced by a temptress, and said innocent woman would have to carry the shame of being called a temptress for the rest of her life. Mister, I hope you're not thinking of making it a habit of being late to work every day because I really can't have your staff calling me a temptress."

"Nonsense! Who'd ever dare to call you that?" Jeremy actually laughed when he heard what she said. Instead of being angry, he was delighted to find the many creative ways Corinne could come up with just to make him go to work on time.

Corinne rolled her eyes. "Of course they wouldn't call me that to your face, but they'll surely talk about me behind your backs, and I can assure you it's not going to be something nice about me."



Jeremy pinched her cheeks out of both adoration and frustration. Then, he said gently, "Fine. To not have them call you a temptress, I'll go to work now, but just wait and see how I'll deal with you. little rascal once I'm back home."

Corinne simply laughed at his threat.

Jeremy got up from the dining table and put one hand on the back of her chair before bending down to look her deeply in the eyes. It was obvious he was asking for a goodbye kiss, but Corinne was a little unwilling to give him one because there was a minor—Sunny—in the room.

Thinking *on* her feet, she quickly picked up a piece of ham with a fork and shoved it into his mouth. Jeremy was a little taken aback, and even though his eyes were filled with unhappiness, held

nonetheless swallowed the ham. Even though he did not get what he wanted, he was willing to concede to the fact that Corinne fed him out of her own accord.

"Be a good girl while I'm gone, yeah." Jeremy straightened himself up and ruffled up her hair. Then, he put the coat the maid passed to him onto the crook of his arm before marching out of the house.

Corinne remained seated at the dining table. Blinking awkwardly and blushing madly, she picked up the glass of warm milk off the table and drank it in a bid to calm herself.

Sunny—who witnessed the whole thing—was dumbstruck. He never saw such vivid behaviors from Jeremy. In fact, the Jeremy he knew was humorous and cold.

Jeremy was like a different person around Corinne. It was as if he really loved her and that they were just flirting in the way that every couple in the world would do. He would n

ot believe it if anyone were to tell him that Jeremy could show any signs of emotions other than aloofness if he had not seen it personally.

Thus, Sunny became wary of Corinne because if things were to continue like that, she might just really steal Anya's beloved Jeremy away from her. He feared that Anya would not be able to take the news and would end up doing something crazy.

After Corinne finished her breakfast, she got up from the dining table and walked toward the direction of where Sunny was standing.

Sunny, to his credit, did not back down.

"Do whatever you want to me! I'm prepared to accept any punishment!"

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Corinne completely ignored Sunny. Instead, she yawned, walked past him, and up the stairs. She had only one thing on her mind, and that was to go back to sleep.

Sunny was dumbstruck. He chased after her unhappily and said, "Hey, Corinne! Aren't you going to punish me? Hello?"

Corinne paid him no mind and continued walking up the stairs.

Anger began to rise in Sunny. He did not like being ignored and was about to go upstairs to give her a piece of his mind when Bowen grabbed his arm and said, "Mister Sunny, Ma'am would like to take her nap now. Why don't you wait for her to wake before asking her to punish you?"

Sunny furrowed his eyebrows. "Why is she so lazy? It's already late morning and she still wants to sleep?"

Bowen did not like anyone from the Rivera family talking like this about his employer, so he dropped his usual politeness and said, "In any case, you're not to bother Ma'am. You're to wait for her quietly until she decides to come down on her own accord!"

He then instructed the other servants to keep an eye on Sunny in case the latter decided to make a fuss to wake Corinne up.

Sunny had no choice but to do as Bowen said. After all, he was not in his own home, and he had been brought up to respect the rules in other people's homes.

He watched as Corinne went up the stairs. Then, he sat down on the sofa and decided to kill time by checking if there was any news about the video on his phone. Fortunately, there was none.

Tommy worked quickly. Although he was tasked to send Anya home by Jeremy, he also made sure to instruct his subordinates to post the original video and the clarification video of the female influencer online. Then, he notified the various media agencies to create a buzz around the two videos so that they could become viral.

In the end, the tide of public opinion had been reversed.

The online social media users who participated in the cyberbullying of Corinne immediately felt ashamed of themselves. Some of them publicly apologized to her, others deleted their comments, and a few even became big fans of hers.

It seemed like the incident was a blessing in disguise. Due to her looks and her kind-hearted personality, she had gotten herself some loyal fans. The social media users became even more fond of her when it was discovered that she clawed her way out of the countryside to study in one of the most prestigious schools in the city. She had always kept this information on the down-low, which only served to fuel the netizen's interest in her.

Unfortunately for Corinne, she did not have a VeeTube account. Otherwise, she could have seen the number of followers grow by a million overnight. As for Sunny, well, he was just relieved to know that everything had turned out well for her in the end.

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It was already late in the afternoon by the time Corinne woke up from her nap.

She got up from her bed, went to the bathroom to wash up, and changed into a fresh set of clothes before turning on her computer. She wanted to make some improvements to the design sketch she—fueled by a burst of inspiration—had spent the whole of last night drawing.

After the drawing was completed and double-checked, she emailed it to Jeremy using her work email address to ask him for his opinion. The only thing for her to do was to wait for his reply.

Originally, she set aside three days to complete the drawing, but she did it in one day. Therefore, she was all spent. After a while, she decided to go out to get some fresh air and relax her mind, so she turned off her computer and went downstairs.

Sunny was excitedly playing the game on his phone when Corinne came down the stairs.

Bowen immediately went up to greet her. “Good afternoon, Ma’am. I didn’t wake you up for lunch as I thought it was better to let you sleep. What would you like to eat now? I’ll ask the kitchen to make it for you right away.”

Corinne was surprised by the change in Bowen’s attitude. He had definitely become more respectful toward her.

Actually, she always thought that Bowen was one of the good ones among the servants. He was not like the other servants who would act respectfully to her face but then talked about her behind her back. However, she also knew that Bowen previously was only treating her like a guest instead of the woman of the household.