The morning light filtered through the thin curtains, slanting into the room and spilling over my mother's body like a layer of golden gauze.

As I stared in disbelief, my mother murmured something in her sleep and turned over, lying on her side with her back to me.

Her back was as white and smooth as jade, her arms long and fair, her shoulders rounded. The curves of her body rose and fell like a fleshy gourd, her skin smooth and firm. Beneath the sheet, her buttocks were round and perky, her legs crossed. Her plump, fragrant feet were delicate and soft, their backs creamy and smooth, with no hint of bone—so tempting that one couldn't help but want to cradle them in their palms, gently caressing and kneading them, indulging in their touch.

The morning already stirred a restless heat within me, and my erect member felt as hard as iron. Seeing such a sight only intensified the strange sensations in my body—my lower abdomen burned with desire, and my heart raced uncontrollably.

No! I shouldn't look, I shouldn't look! It's improper to stare!

I quickly squeezed my eyes shut, even holding my breath for a moment.

The room was filled with the lingering scent of alcohol, mingled with the faint, rich fragrance of orchids—her natural scent. Breathing it in only fueled the fire within me.

After holding back for a long time, I couldn't resist cracking my eyes open a sliver to steal another glance at my mother's jade-like body sprawled across the bed.

Hesitating for a moment, I reached out and grasped the sheet bunched around her waist, gently pulling it up until it covered her snow-white neck.

Even though I was careful, my fingertips still brushed against her skin, which was as smooth as milk. A tingling sensation shot through my body, as if I'd been electrified.

"Mmm~!"

My mother let out another soft murmur, as if she were about to wake up.

If we were to see each other in this situation, it would not only be difficult to explain but also incredibly awkward.

I held my breath, quickly rolled out of bed, slipped on my slippers, and fled the bedroom as if escaping.

Just as I stepped out of the room, I bumped right into Beibei, who had just come out of the bathroom.

Rubbing her eyes, she looked at me groggily and frowned, asking, "What are you doing? You look so flustered, like you've seen a ghost."

Afraid she might peek into the room and catch sight of Mom sleeping on the bed, I hurriedly closed the door and said offhandedly, "None of your business."

Beibei bared her teeth at me but accidentally noticed the small tent in my crotch. Her face flushed red, and with a huff, she pretended nothing happened and turned back to her room.

I walked to the bathroom with my legs clamped together, took off my pants, and released my firm erection, wanting to relieve the accumulated urine.

But it was really hard to pee in a state of arousal, and my mind couldn't help but keep flashing back to the image of Mom lying drunk on the bed.

Especially when I thought about how I had actually shared a bed with Mom and slept through the night, I felt my whole body grow hot, a strange flutter in my heart, and the veins on my rock-hard erection bulged as it kept rising.

I reached out, grabbed my erection, and stroked it a couple of times, wanting to release the surging desire, but I felt a strong resistance inside, as if doing this would be a betrayal and a desecration of Mom.

After struggling internally for a long time, I finally managed to pee, hastily pulled up my pants, and left the bathroom.

Usually, Mom would get up to make breakfast, but she was suffering from a bad hangover today and hadn't gotten up even by almost eight o'clock. I had no choice but to go downstairs and buy some ready-made breakfast.

After setting the table, I didn't feel comfortable waking Mom up, so I went to call Beibei for breakfast instead.

Pushing open the door to her room, the hum of the air conditioner greeted me, along with a wave of cool air.

I saw her wearing light pink pajamas, hugging the blanket with both her arms and legs as she rolled around on the bed, her sleeping posture anything but graceful.

I went over and tapped her on the forehead. She let out a soft "Mmm~," like a kitten's murmur, but instead of waking up, she hugged the blanket even tighter.

"Get up, get up," I tapped her forehead again.

Beibei opened her eyes, looking at me blearily, and complained with a face full of annoyance, "What are you doing? I was sleeping so well."

"Get up, or the food will get cold."

"Let it get cold then~! Get out. You're so annoying~!" Beibei rolled over and pulled the blanket over herself. She always liked to do this—turn the air conditioner way down and then sleep under the covers.

"Didn't you say you were going out with your classmates later?" I tugged at her hair and said, "Hurry up and get up, or you'll be late."

Beibei sighed, sat up with extreme impatience, her brows furrowed, and complained, "It's finally a holiday, and you're acting like a nagging old lady every single day. Aren't you tired of it?" Then, muttering under her breath, she rolled out of bed, deliberately bumped into me, and went out to wash up.

I don't know why, but ever since our parents divorced and I became the only man in the house, a sense of responsibility naturally arose in me, and I couldn't help but want to take charge of things.

Especially when I saw Beibei's carefree and unserious attitude, I couldn't help but think of my old self and felt the urge to nag her a bit.

After Beibei finished washing up and came out of the bathroom, just then, the door to my bedroom opened, and Mom, with messy hair and a pained expression, walked out.

Mother and daughter bumped right into each other, both freezing in surprise.

After a long while, Beibei asked in confusion, "Mom, how come... you came out of this room? Did you sleep in brother's room last night?"

She hesitated to say more, but her meaning was clear.

Mom pretended to be calm, rubbing her temples as she said, "I just went in to get something." With that, she walked past Beibei and headed toward the bathroom. As she passed by me, she glanced sideways, her expression somewhat awkward. She opened her mouth as if to speak, but after a long pause, she said nothing and walked away.

I guessed Mom had already figured out what happened—she had gotten drunk and entered the room herself, so she couldn't blame me.

But would she think I took advantage of her while she was drunk?

After all, I do have a history.

During breakfast, Mom kept her head down, not saying a word, and tried her best not to look in my direction. She probably found the situation quite awkward.

Since she didn't ask, I naturally couldn't bring it up to explain, as that would seem like protesting too much.

"Mom, I'm going out with friends this morning," Beibei suddenly broke the silence.

"Go ahead," Mom replied calmly.

"Give me some money," Beibei said with a silly grin.

Mom glanced at her. "Didn't I just give you pocket money? You spend so recklessly—what are you buying?"

"I'm going to Dad's place today. He's all alone, lonely and miserable. As his daughter, I should at least buy him something to show my filial respect."

Mom said solemnly, "He has a daughter to keep him company."

Beibei was displeased. "That's just a tattered coat he picked up from outside. I'm Dad's real little cotton-padded jacket."

"Don't say that in front of your dad," Mom warned.

Beibei retorted defiantly, "She's the one who ruined our family—why can't I say it? I will!"

Mom's expression remained unchanged. "It's not entirely her fault."

"Mom, she hurt you so much. How can you still defend her?" Beibei grew agitated.

"I'm not defending her. It's just that your dad and I..." Mom trailed off and sighed. "Never mind, you wouldn't understand."

"You always say that. Why did you and Dad really get divorced?"

Afraid that Mom would dwell on unhappy memories, I tapped her bowl with my chopsticks and scolded, "Don't you know not to talk while eating or sleeping?"

Beibei shot me a glance and snorted. "Old maid."

After breakfast, Mom went back to her room, changed into a black pinstripe suit, put on flesh-colored pantyhose and high heels, and hurried off to work. As she left, she only reminded me to come back early tomorrow—nothing more.

Maybe Mom felt a little embarrassed too.

In the morning, Beibei went out with friends, while I headed to my tutoring class with my backpack. We each had lunch on our own, and in the evening, we made our way to Dad's place separately.

This was the agreement when our parents divorced: every week, both of us had to spend at least one day there, or at the very least, have a meal together.

In the evening, as I left the tutoring school, the setting sun cast a rosy hue across half the sky.

I walked alone on the way home. As I passed by Longhe Bridge, I suddenly spotted a familiar figure standing ahead.

She was wearing a white short-sleeved T-shirt, denim shorts, and sneakers. Her once-long hair had been cut short, now styled into a natural, fluffy bob, with side-swept bangs framing her delicate, lovely face.

That's right, it was Anuo. Her appearance here was no coincidence, nor was it the first time. Every time I returned to my dad's place, she could accurately predict my route and wait for me by the roadside.

I walked closer and closer, her gaze following me all the while, but I pretended not to know her, shoved my hands into my pockets, and strode forward.

As I passed by her, she unhurriedly fell into step behind me.

"Big brother, you're out of school. I've been waiting for you here for a long time." Her voice was light and pleasant, soft and sweet with a hint of huskiness, still as captivating as ever.

I pretended not to hear and kept walking.

"Big brother, there's a blockbuster coming out next Friday. Let's go watch it together."

I continued to feign ignorance, not even glancing her way.

Unbothered, she clasped her hands behind her back, skipped ahead of me, turned around to face me, and began walking backward.

Tilting her head playfully to one side, her large, dark, round eyes blinked as she looked at me and said, "Big brother, something really funny happened. One of my classmates got dumped by her boyfriend and cried her eyes out, all snot and tears. It was hilarious."

I shot her a sidelong glance and saw her eyebrows raised high, the corners of her eyes brimming with joyful amusement, looking particularly delighted. I asked coldly, "Are you happy that someone else got their heart broken?"

"Of course I'm happy. It's not me who got dumped, so why shouldn't I be happy?" After a moment of thought, she lowered her head and muttered quietly, "Heartbreak isn't such a big deal anyway. I didn't even cry."

I was taken aback. Seeing her hanging her head, looking dejected, I couldn't help but ask, "You got your heart broken?"

"Yeah." She looked at me, pouting with a pitiful expression, and said, "I tried talking to him, but he ignored me."

I thought for a moment before realizing that the person she was talking about—the one who broke her heart—was actually me.

But this little girl was truly cunning, mixing truth with lies in her words, making it impossible to figure her out. I had no idea what game she was playing.

Narrowing my eyes, I stared at her and said coldly, "You've already torn our family apart. Even if you wanted revenge, you've already had it. What more do you want?"

After a long pause, Anuo retorted, "Do you really hate me that much?"

"What do you think?"

"It's not entirely my fault."

"Oh, really? So it's all our fault, then?"

Anuo turned her face away and muttered softly, "It was your mom who got pregnant with someone else's child first. I just caught her."

I abruptly stopped in my tracks, glaring at her, and said through gritted teeth, "Say that again."

Anuo took two steps back, pretending to be frightened. "Are you going to hit me again? It hurts, you know." Seeing the fierce look on my face, she chuckled and said, "Alright, alright, I said the wrong thing. Don't be angry~! Big brother~!"

I snorted coldly, walked past her, and ignored her. She quickly bounced after me, chasing me and saying, "Big brother, are you upset? Should I tell you a joke?"

"Don't tell me any jokes. It'd be best if you didn't talk to me at all. My mom said I shouldn't have any private contact with you. Stay away from me."

Anuo muttered under her breath, "Your mom says, your mom says, you listen to everything your mom says. Such a mama's boy."

"Sigh~! You're right, I am a mama's boy. Now stay away from me!"

When I returned to the old house, Beibei had already arrived first. She was lying on the sofa playing with her phone, her fair and adorable little feet kicking up and down, looking quite relaxed.

"Where's Dad?"

"He's cooking in the kitchen," Beibei replied casually without even turning her head.

"All you do when you come home is lie on the sofa and play with your phone. You never think to help Dad with anything," I scolded.

Beibei turned to look at me. "I wanted to help Dad, but he told me to leave. I'm just following orders by playing with my phone. If you have a problem with it, take it up with Dad."

"You're getting more and more impressive."

"And you're getting more and more naggy."

I shook my head with a bitter smile and ignored her. Walking to the kitchen door, I saw Dad with his back to me, wearing an apron tied around his waist as he bent over to chop vegetables.

"Dad, I'm back."

Dad glanced back and grinned. "You're back. Go rest in your room for a while. Dinner will be ready soon."

I walked over to his side and saw the kitchen counter filled with ingredients. It seemed he was preparing a big meal for our family gathering. But I was used to it—it was always like this.

"Is there anything I can help you with?"

"Go back to your room, go back. There's not much work here. I can handle it."

"Do these vegetables need washing?" I took the leafy greens out of the plastic bag.

"Well, you can pick them then," Dad said, straightening up and rubbing his lower back with his hand.

"Does your back hurt?" I asked, stepping over to give his back a couple of firm pats.

"I'm getting old. Standing for a while makes my back ache," Dad sighed.

I was about to comfort him, to say he was still in his prime, when I accidentally noticed a few strands of white hair at his temples. A wave of sadness and heartache washed over me, and I patted his back even harder.

"Alright, alright," Dad said, stretching a bit before returning to chopping the vegetables.

After picking and washing the vegetables, I set them aside and looked for other tasks to help with. After a moment of silence, I tentatively asked, "Dad, how has Anuo been lately?"

"What do you mean?"

"Has she been giving you any trouble? Or has she been acting strangely?"

"Not at all. She's been very well-behaved. Why do you ask?"

"I'm just still a bit uneasy about her. I always feel like she might try to harm you."

Dad turned to look at me. "Don't overthink it. Anuo is very good. That child has suffered a lot since she was young. She matured earlier than most kids and is quite sensible. She's never given me any trouble. Stop being so suspicious. Every time you come, you bring this up."

"I'm just worried she might hurt you."

"She won't."

"How do you know?"

"She..." Dad hesitated, then shook his head and said to me, "Never mind. How has your mom been these past few days?"

"She's been doing well. Eating well, sleeping well, and full of energy."

"Hmm... that's good."

We both busied ourselves with our tasks. After a long while, I asked, "Dad, have you ever thought about getting back together with Mom?"

Dad remained silent, not answering my question.

"Dad, is it that you still can't get over that hurdle in your heart? I think Mom didn't want to be honest with you because she didn't want to hurt you." I

paused, noticing Dad still hadn't said anything, and continued, "To be honest, I think, knowing Mom as well as you do, you must know she would never do anything to betray you. Mom must have had her reasons."

"Enough! Stop talking." Dad paused his work, head bowed, muttering, "Don't meddle in adult matters. Just focus on your studies, get into a good university next year, and your mom and I will be more than satisfied."

After a moment of silence, I still couldn't let it go and pressed further, "Haven't you ever considered getting back together?"

"Keep talking and you can leave."

Seeing Dad was genuinely annoyed, I quickly smiled and said, "Alright, alright, consider me meddling."

After bustling around in the kitchen for a while, he finally prepared a table full of delicious dishes.

Honestly, Dad's cooking skills are impressive—it's a shame he isn't a professional chef.

Beibei reached for the ham, but I tapped her hand with my chopsticks. She glared at me in pain, about to snap, when Annuo sat down beside her.

Forgetting her anger at me, Beibei shot Annuo a disgusted look and moved to another seat.

Although the two girls didn't get along, they had grown familiar with each other over time.

Once the meal began, Beibei chatted happily with Dad, while I chimed in occasionally. Annuo, as usual, kept to herself, quietly eating without a word.

Just as Beibei was animatedly sharing funny stories from school, I felt a faint, ticklish rubbing sensation against my ankle.

Here we go again, I thought.

Leaning back slightly, I discreetly glanced under the table. Annuo had slipped her white-socked foot out of her slipper and was pressing it against my ankle, gently rubbing it before sliding it up my left leg and stopping right between my thighs.

Amid Beibei and Dad's lively conversation, Annuo's white-socked foot pressed lightly against my crotch through my pants, sometimes tapping, sometimes rubbing, teasing me to no end.

Though it stirred something in me, I'd built up enough resistance by now. She pulled this trick every meal—couldn't she at least switch it up?