

## Love Until Death Do Us Part

### Chapter 16

The hot spring area in the villa was split into several zones, with different medicinal herbs steeping in each pool.

Athena and Kevin soaked separately.

She had just taken a dip in the medicated **pool** and was planning to **grab** Kevin and head out, but Kevin, not wanting to go back to his homework, was playing hide and seek in one of the other pools, refusing to emerge.

“Mommy”

**Payne** couldn't believe his eyes, he had stumbled upon Belle!

Athena, worried that Kevin was playing hooky to avoid homework, marched right up, scooped up her boy, and made a beeline for

**the door**

Payne was carried **single-** handedly back to the room by Athena, who set him down and said. “I'm going to **cut** some fruit, and when I come back, you'd better be hitting the books, got it?”

Athena left, **and** Payne looked around, realizing he was back in Belle's kid's room,

On the child's bed lay a khaki-colored bunny plushie. Payne climbed up, grabbed the bunny, and held it close.

He had had an identical bunny once, one that Kent said was handcrafted by his mom before he was born.

Only with that bunny could he sleep peacefully, and he had named it **dd**.

But then Louis wanted it, didn't get it, and sneakily swiped it **when** Payne wasn't looking.

He chased after Louis to his room, they scuffled, and **dd** was torn to pieces.

That was the only thing his mom had left for him.

That bunny had been with him **for** four years through dirt and lost fur, he couldn't bear to throw it away.

Louis had ripped off the bunny's head and pulled out all the stuffing

"This bunny was sewn by my mom!"

"Your mom is dead! And this bunny is too!"

After that,

no matter how many toys Dad, Yolanda, and the rest of the Bradshaw family bought him, Payne didn't want any

So how come there was a bunny just like the one in Belle's son's room?

This was a bunny designed and made by his mom, something no one else in the world could make.

"Kevin, how come you haven't started your homework yet?"

Athena walked in with a tray of fruit and saw the kid sitting on the bed, shoulders shaking, face drenched in tears.

Payne turned around, his obsidian eyes brimming with big, rolling tears cascading down his chubby cheeks.

Athena's heart melted instantly, even though Kevin was a master at dodging homework, seeing Kevin in tears like this

"Kevin, how about just finishing three pages of practice tonight? You haven't done homework in three days, and the teacher is practically camping out at our doorstep! We can leave math for tomorrow morning, okay?"

Kevin attended Stardale City's most posh preschool.

Even though the school preached fun learning, the competition among the wealthy parents was fierce. Kevin's classmates knew over a thousand words and spoke other languages like pros.

Since school started, Kevin had consistently ranked at the bottom.

His grades were one thing, but the preschool kids all looked up to Kevin as the boss. This put pressure not only on the teacher but also on the parents of Stardale City's elite, worrying that Kevin would lead their kids astray.

Hearing Athena's sweet, coaxing voice, Payne cried even harder.

Why did Belle mistake her own kid for him again?

And why was there a bunny identical to dd by the bed?

Payne's nose was red, tears and snot streamed down as he reached for the bunny, feeling the familiar plush texture

He wanted to hug the bunny close but didn't want to dirty someone else's toy with his snotty face

Payne knelt on the bed, crying louder and louder until suddenly, a pair of arms reached around from behind and pulled him into a

1515

Chapter 16

warm embrace.

Athena crossed her legs, placing the child on them, and wiped his face with a tissue.

Her voice was sweet and patient as she negotiated with Kevin,

"How about this, we finish three pages of practice tonight, and I plan to hire a few more tutors to help spark your interest in foreign language and math."

Payne grabbed the tissue and blew his nose, "Mommy, I'll go do my homework right now."

He stopped crying; he just wanted to be Belle's good little boy.

If he finished Kevin's homework, she would be happy!!

Payne fought to stop crying: he had cried hard, and though the tears had stopped, he couldn't control the sobs in his throat. He turned and nestled in Athena's arms for a while, closing his wet, black-lashed eyes, basking in Athena's warmth,

Athena pampered him but wouldn't let Kevin just lie in bed and skip homework.

Seeing that Kevin's resistance to homework had subsided, she lifted Payne off the bed.

Payne opened Kevin's backpack and took out a brand-new workbook.

He wiped away his tears and snot, flipped open the workbook, and found that **the** homework was way too easy! Meanwhile, in another hot spring pool, Kevin was hugging the wall, listening intently to the noises outside.

"Oh my god, how did you end up in this pool?"

Kent had searched several hot spring rooms before he finally found the elusive kid.

Payne and Kevin wore identical navy blue bathrobes, **the** standard-issue children's attire in the villa's hot springs.

"Hey," Kevin recognized Kent!

Kent thought Payne was hiding because he had a tiff with Newman and had been looking for him for a while.

He softly persuaded, "Let's go back."

Kevin's little mind was racing, sure that this old guy would lead him to Devil. If he managed to beat Devil, maybe his mommy would reward him with a week off from homework!

Kevin grasped Kent's hand, "Let's go, take me to Devil!"

Chapter 17