

## Chapter 247 Let's Meet

At precisely nine o'clock in the evening, Rena made her way back to the splendid villa.

A soft, muted glow emanated from the hall, casting a gentle, golden hue. The vestibule exuded a warm ambiance that was pleasing to the eye.

Alexis, accompanied by Waylen, skillfully played the piano with fervor.

Dressed in a refined three-piece suit, Waylen had removed his jacket, revealing his slender frame. Catching sight of Rena, he delicately swirled the contents of his wine glass and inquired, "How was your shopping expedition?"

Relieving her weary legs, Rena set down her bag and settled herself on the sofa.

Alexis yearned to rush over to her...

She had taken up the piano in pursuit of her mother's trace but now... She would have to continue her musical education.

Tenderly, Waylen pressed Alexis' curly brown locks and earnestly uttered, "Play this piece five more times."

Alexis found herself unable to respond, speechless.

She viewed her father's actions as despicable. He hadn't displayed this behavior when he asked her to help him woo her mother!

Nonetheless, Alexis cautiously continued to play the piano, pouring her heart into each note.

Rena experienced a mixture of anger and amusement, addressing Waylen, "She's barely four years old. Why do you push her so forcefully?"

Crouching in front of Rena, Waylen massaged her feet while speaking in a hushed and gentle tone, "She possesses a remarkable talent, Rena... I have always wanted to apologize to you but, no matter how many times I do, your foot will never fully recover. That's why I desire Alexis to have another choice in life."

Rena remained silent, gazing at him intently.

Such a look from her was rare, for in the past, she had diligently evaded developing feelings for him.

After a prolonged moment, she whispered, "Even so, don't exert too much pressure on her. I want her to lead a more comfortable life. Besides... she will be fine under your care."

Waylen smiled. "It's a rarity to have some favor in Miss Gordon's heart."

The conversation shifted and they proceeded to discuss Cecilia for a while.

Throughout the day, Waylen had engaged in deep contemplation. As he cradled Rena's tender feet, he murmured, "I won't coerce you into anything because of Cecilia. Their affairs are separate from ours."

Under the soft illumination, Rena gazed at him intently.

Her eyes exhibited a tenderness and authenticity that surpassed her usual demeanor. It wasn't a calculated effort to appease him.

Waylen's heart quickened its pace.

In a low, raspy voice, he inquired, "Rena, do you harbor even the slightest affection for me?"

Extending her hand, Rena gently caressed his handsome face and confessed, "Yes."

Waylen's smile radiated warmth.

Just as their mutual passion began to stir, Alexis, filled with indignation, played the piece five times with fervor. She then darted over, requesting Waylen to massage her feet as well.

Waylen held an immense affection for Alexis.

Enveloping her in his arms, he not only tended to her feet but also her hands.

Finally, Alexis' jealousy subsided. Nestled in his embrace, she felt a twinge of bashfulness.

Rena tenderly tousled Alexis' hair and spoke to Waylen, her voice filled with affection. "She has developed a deep fondness for you."

Gently rubbing Rena's nose, Waylen chuckled and remarked, "I can hardly believe you're feeling jealous of a child."

That night, Rena continued to slumber alongside Alexis, sharing the same bed.

Waylen didn't mention anything about Rena sleeping in the master bedroom, nor did he proposition her for intimacy. Earlier, when he fingered her in the coat closet, she didn't resist his advances...

It was an indication that her resistance towards him wasn't as strong as it seemed.

There was no rush for him.

This time, he yearned to savor every moment with her.

He aspired for a genuine and committed relationship.

Under the night sky, Cecilia stood upon the balcony.

Juliette was taking care of Edwin, granting Cecilia a rare, tranquil evening of her own. In the past few years, this could be considered one of the most serene nights for her. Although she should have felt happiness, the accumulation of various events prevented her from being as carefree as before.

Suddenly, a mobile phone's ringtone resonated from within the room.

She hurriedly went to answer the call, the number displayed unfamiliar to her.

Without much thought, Cecilia promptly greeted the caller, "Hello."

On the other end of the line, there was a prolonged silence before a hoarse voice spoke up. "It's me."

Every drop of blood in Cecilia's body seemed to freeze in an instant.

It was... Mark.

She had never expected to receive his call again. After all, they had parted ways on bitter terms. She had left with a heart full of despair and hatred.

Her lips quivered slightly but, in the end, no words escaped her mouth.

In contrast, Mark remained much calmer. Speaking in a low tone, he inquired, "Your brother mentioned that you haven't returned home in two years. Is that true?"

Cecilia's throat felt constricted.

Suppressing her emotions for a prolonged period, she managed to force out a response, her voice strained, "Mr. Evans, what is the purpose of your call? We made it clear to each other that we

would never have any contact."

Mark's tone held a hint of gentleness, as if he were coaxing her. "Your brother mentioned that you haven't been faring well."

Cecilia closed her eyes slightly and uttered, "I am doing fine now."

A heavy silence enveloped them...

After what felt like an eternity, Mark spoke up again softly. "I am in Duefron. Could we meet? In that apartment."

Cecilia's patience finally reached its limits.

"Meet? Mr. Evans, what do you take me for?"

Am I some delectable dish that you grew tired of but now suddenly remember? Or am I one of your many lovers?"

I am not a whore, Mr. Evans!"

Mark's breath caught for a moment.

Despite everything, his voice remained tender. "Cecilia, all I am suggesting is for us to meet and have a meal together."

Exerting control over her emotions, Cecilia responded in a gentle voice, "Mr. Evans, I will not go back there again."

With that, she abruptly ended the call.

In the middle of the night, she found solace in shedding tears alone on the balcony, her sorrow lingering for an extended period.

She couldn't pinpoint when exactly she developed an attraction towards Mark. It could have been while observing him diligently working at the hospital, smoking alone late at night, or witnessing his profound loneliness...

She referred to him as Mr. Evans at first, and then gradually, Uncle Mark.

She dreaded the possibility of Mark blaming her brother for what happened to Rena back then. Hence, she constantly trailed after Mark, trying to cheer him up with her presence.

After a considerable period of time, he permitted her to stay by his side.

He was a habitual night owl. Sometimes, when drowsiness overcame her, she would doze off on the sofa in his office. One night, upon waking up, she found him gently tucking a blanket around her. In the warm glow of the lamp, his features appeared exceptionally captivating. Unable to resist, she called out to him, "Uncle Mark."

Eventually, they shared a kiss.

Mark was significantly older than her, a mature man who possessed the ability to effortlessly captivate a woman.

That particular night, he playfully explored her body.

However... he refrained from engaging in sexual intercourse.

It was her first time experiencing the intoxicating allure of a man's touch...

In the days that followed, she diligently avoided encountering him.

He never sought her out again.

On the eve of Alexis' departure, Mark drowned his sorrows in alcohol. Concerned for his well-being, Cecilia visited him.

In his inebriated state, Mark exuded a striking handsomeness.

She couldn't resist the impulse to kiss him...

Subsequently, they had sex.

On the small sofa, she continuously referred to him as Uncle

Mark, surrendering herself to him...

At that moment, she didn't fully comprehend the depth of her feelings for him. All she knew was that every aspect of him held an irresistible allure.

She believed that their relationship would only last for one night.

However, he began frequently traveling to Duefron, for business as he claimed.

He acquired a beautiful apartment, tastefully decorated. Whenever he visited, he would seek her out.

In that apartment, they savored moments of tenderness.

He cooked for her and, afterward, they would make love...

During that period, she felt entranced, knowing well that she shouldn't allow herself to succumb to his charm. She just couldn't help it.

He never discussed marriage or their future together. Despite this, she couldn't resist the urge to seek him out in Czanch...

It was only after visiting Czanch that she realized they could never truly be together.

Both of them were unattached...

Yet, from the beginning to the end, the only thing he offered her was clandestine happiness within the confines of that apartment.

He never even acknowledged their relationship publicly.

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Mark sat inside the car.

As the car halted near the apartment building, he placed a call.

In truth, he shouldn't have come but he couldn't resist making this special trip, even keeping it hidden from his personal secretary.

Cecilia declined his offer.

Mark ascended the stairs and unlocked the door to the apartment. He had already arranged for it to be cleaned beforehand.

Everything remained unchanged, except for the absence of that one person.

Mark, known for his scheming nature, had never felt such deep desolation and longing to see someone in his entire life.

He sat on the sofa throughout the night.

Recalling the intensity of their past connection, he remembered how she would lie in his embrace and affectionately call him Uncle Mark.

There had never been a girl as pure and uncomplicated as her.

Everyone around him seemed seasoned and sophisticated.

Individuals like him had long lost their innocence, but in his early forties, he found himself entangled in a love affair with a young woman. He cherished her, yet he didn't wish for her to be entwined in his dangerous world.

His world held too many perils.

However, she lacked the means to protect herself, so he had to divert his attention to safeguard her.

Subsequently, following that incident two years ago, she appeared disheartened, and he also began to feel that they were ill-suited for each other...

They had been separated for over two years, and he had believed



that he had moved on, but Waylen had unintentionally reopened his old wounds.

As it turned out, he hadn't truly gotten over her.

The first rays of morning sunlight streamed into the apartment.

Mark rose and prepared breakfast. Subsequently, out of habit, he made his way to the bedroom, intending to wake the girl and share their usual meal together. She had a hearty appetite but was undemanding. She always had a fondness for junk food.

However, the bedroom was empty.

The fragrance of her hair had long dissipated from the bed.

Mark walked out of the bedroom with a heavy heart and ate breakfast alone...

Peter called, informing him of a meeting scheduled for ten o'clock.

Mark responded casually, "Postpone it until tomorrow. I'm in Duefron. I want to see Rena and Alexis."

Peter understood the situation all too well.

He sighed, recognizing that Cecilia was the sole person in Mark's life whom he had failed.

Mark indeed went to visit Rena.

He brought toys that Alexis adored and arrived early. Fortunately, he managed to avoid encountering Waylen, as the man had departed on a business trip early that morning.

However, Rena was perceptive. She felt a slight unease upon seeing Mark.

Observing the loving expression on Mark's face as he spent time with Alexis, Rena couldn't help but think of Edwin.

In a hushed voice, she inquired, "Uncle, have you ever considered starting a family?"

Mark smiled. "What? Are you here to persuade me on behalf of your grandmother?"

Rena remained silent and prepared coffee silently.

After a while, she softly said, "I've noticed how fond you are of children."

Mark lifted Alexis and planted a tender kiss on her cheek. "I have Alexis, and that's enough."

Alexis returned the affectionate gesture, holding Mark's handsome face in her small hands. Speaking softly, she remarked, "Edwin is handsome too. He has brown hair and smooth skin, just like me."

Mark furrowed his brow and inquired, "Who is Edwin?"

Rena placed the coffee on the table and cradled Alexis in her arms. "He is a child from the Fowler family."

It wasn't a falsehood.

Without dwelling too much on it, Mark forced a smile.

He had come here to inquire about Cecilia, yet Rena remained tight-lipped, refusing to utter a single word regarding her. Mark thought Rena was astute.

While conversing with Mark, Rena tossed a phone to Alexis.

Alexis glanced at Mark and then at her mother.

Rena smile, and Alexis instantly grasped her intention.

With determination, Alexis began typing on the phone.

"Auntie Cece, I miss you."

"Mom isn't feeling well. Can you come and drive me to school?"

Afterwards, Alexis tossed the phone onto the sofa.

Mark voiced his disapproval. "It's not suitable for such a young child to play with a phone."

Rena discreetly checked the messages and smiled. "She was just checking her kindergarten homework. Waylen always insisted that she do it on her own."

Thereafter, Mark fell silent.

He remained seated for a while before preparing to take his leave. His mood was already sour.

Rena invited him to stay for another cup of coffee. Just as the sound of a car echoed in the courtyard, she smiled and remarked, "Alright, I won't keep you any longer if you have other business to attend to. I'll bring Alexis to visit Grandma in Czanch another day."

Mark gently patted her head, turned around and departed.

Rena accompanied him to the door.

In the drive way, a white Bentley glided to a gradual halt. Cecilia emerged from the car's backseat, wearing a smile. "Rena, Lexi mentioned that you weren't feeling well..."

Cecilia suddenly froze, her gaze locking onto Mark.

Likewise, Mark stood motionless.

He hadn't anticipated seeing her here. His gaze grew intense, and he momentarily lost his composure.

Cecilia had transformed in ways he never could have imagined.