

# A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0051

A photo fell from a book unexpectedly. Curious, Arianne picked it up. It was the day she moved into the Tremont Estate when she was eight years old. She was holding Mark Tremont's hand.

Having seen the photo in the newspaper, she had never seen an individual photograph as such. Why did Mark Tremont have it? Had he... intentionally kept it?

Arianne denied this belief promptly. He had probably kept it without much thought at the time and had already forgotten where he placed it. The book that held the photo was an old one and not of his preferred genre. He must not have flipped through it for many years.

It was another sleepless night.

Mark Tremont headed for the Nightlight bar after leaving the estate. Jackson West and Eric Nathaniel arrived soon after and asked for several bargirls to boost the mood.

Expensive liquors were spread out on their booth table.

Jackson West was the most familiar with places like this, as among the three of them he was the prime example of a rich family's profligate child. He was a regular here, so the

bargirls were inclined to cling to him. He did not mind them at all, welcoming them without protest.

Eric Nathaniel was not doing well and opted for juice instead of alcohol. "I can't. My stomach doesn't allow me to have fun drinking, I'll sit out."

Jackson teased him mercilessly, "You have such a fancy man's stomach!"

"I don't lack money, I don't care for sponging off women!" Eric rolled his eyes at him.

Mark Tremont drank quietly, the vibe he exuded prohibited anyone from coming close. Under the bar's dim lighting, all that was left of his handsome face was a perfect outline that was encased with frost. No bargirl dared approach him.

Seeing that he was not in the mood, Jackson said half-jokingly, "Mark, did you fight with your little wifey again? You need to be sweet with your words and spoil them women, why can't you understand? It's your birthday today, what's her issue with you? What's up with the two of you?"

Mark Tremont said nothing as he picked up his phone to make a call.

Half an hour later, Aery Kinsey who dressed invitingly arrived at the bar and promptly sat herself beside Mark Tremont, leaning against the side of his arm. “My darling Mark, I thought that you wouldn’t be looking for me anymore today...”

“Drink with me.” Mark Tremont pulled her into his embrace.

Both Eric Nathaniel and Jackson West stayed quiet in tacit understanding, no longer mentioning Arianne.

Sometime later when Mark Tremont began to look tipsy, Aery Kinsey went to the washroom and made a call. “Mom, I’m at the bar with Mark. I might not go home tonight...”

She blushed when she spoke, filled with confidence, looking at her reflection was alluring and adorable. She would have a chance as long as he was drunk.

Helen Cameran was quiet for a few seconds before she replied, “Bear Mark Tremont’s child as soon as possible. This is the only way to help Kinseys.”

Aery Kinsey pursed her lips. “Mom, I know I’m your favorite. I’m your only true daughter. That Arianne Wynn is worse than a bastard! Don’t worry, I’ll definitely become Mrs. Tremont!”

Helen Cameran's tone became distant as she refused to continue chatting. "I'm tired. Good night." She hung up right after that.

Aery Kinsey was disgruntled having never seen Helen Cameran act so distant to her, but once she remembered that Mark Tremont was still waiting for her, she touched up her makeup and went back to the booth.

Jackson West was amazing in livening up the atmosphere. Right after he took the microphone and shouted "Mr. Tremont here is footing the bill tonight! ", the whole place erupted in cheers.

Everyone knew that it was Mark Tremont's birthday today, though they were not whom he cared for.

He was well aware that the gift that Henry had produced was not prepared by Arianne at all. He just found it to be a waste of his effort to expose her.

Mark Tremont's glum was a contrast against the bar's vibrant scene. Midnight had passed but he did not show any sign of leaving despite being nearly blind drunk.

Anxious, Aery Kinsey wrapped her arms around his waist and spoke seductively into his ears, "Mark, dear... Let's get some rest? You've drunk too much..."

# A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0052

Smelling the stinging perfume scent, Mark Tremont instinctively pushed her away in repulsion. Both his gaze and tone were extremely icy. “Stay away!”

The whole booth was dead silent, only saved by the bar’s blaring music.

Aery Kinsey was startled, teary-eyed and shaken, as it was also her first time to see this side of Mark Tremont.

“Mark darling... why are you so mean to me? I’m just concerned...”

The bargirls beside them did not dare make even a sound. The entire city knew that Mark Tremont was gentle and flawless, the epitome of perfection, as he was always amiable to everyone and anything.

Jackson West and Eric Nathaniel, however, were not the least bit surprised. Having known each other for over a decade, they probably understood each other better than themselves.

Worried that a scandal would break out if someone were to make a fuss, both men hoisted Mark Tremont up. “Let’s go back?”

“I don’t want to see her...” Mark Tremont mumbled faintly.

“Then where do you want to go? Eric will send you. He didn’t drink today, he can drive,” offered Jackson.

Nothing came from Mark Tremont for quite a while. Eric then suggested, “We’ll go to a hotel and decide after he sobers up. I’ll send him. You have fun.”

Jackson West agreed since he had yet to enjoy the nightlife to his heart’s content. “I’ll leave him to you then...”

Aery Kinsey left the bar with Eric Nathaniel and Mark Tremont, Eric asked her after they got into the car, “Aery Kinsey, you going back? I’ll send you first, then Mark after.”

Still shaken up from Mark Tremont’s sudden change of character, Aery Kinsey dared not stay too close to Mark Tremont now. However, she still was clear with her goal. “No, I want to stay and take care of Mark!”

Eric was no fool to the consequences of an inebriated pair of man and woman staying in the same room and matter-of-factly rejected, “I can take care of him. You should go home.”

Aery Kinsey insisted, pressing on with a cutesy tone, “Don’t wanna... I want to keep Mark darling company...”

Eric could feel an impending headache. He had called Arianne Wynn twice on Mark’s phone previously, so he had subconsciously memorized her number. He texted her, “Mark’s drunk at the same bar. Come over.”

Arianne Wynn was not yet asleep, guessing that it was either Jackson West or Eric Nathaniel when she saw the text message. Not wanting to keep them waiting for too long, she quickly got up and draped a coat over herself.

Not wanting to wake Butler Henry again, as she was no longer a young child, Arianne ran straight out to the junction slightly more than half a mile away from the Tremont Estate to hail a cab. A strenuous run later, she felt as if her lungs were going to explode when she was gulped by the frosty night air.

Aery Kinsey was uneasy when she saw that Eric Nathaniel had yet to start his car. “Eric, what are you waiting for? Let’s go!”

Eric leaned against his seat and answered nonchalantly, “We’ll wait for a bit. Mark’s drunk too much. What if he suddenly throws up? We’ll see how he’s doing and go when he isn’t gonna puke. I just bought this car, let’s be a bit cautious.”

Aery Kinsey was unable to rebut. She had asked her chauffeur to leave when she arrived at the bar earlier, not planning to go home anyway. It was either she let Eric

Nathaniel drive her or hail a cab on her own. She, however, would rather die than to sit in a cab that all sorts of people had ridden in, as it disgusted her.

When Arianne Wynn arrived, Eric Nathaniel spotted her swiftly and feigned coincidence, winding down the car window and greeting her, “Arianne!”

Arianne walked forward speedily when she saw him. “Where’s Mark Tremont?”

Aery Kinsey frowned and wound the window down to look at Arianne, as if challenging her. “He’s right beside me. Why? Are you here for him? He said that he doesn’t want to go back tonight. He doesn’t want to see you!”

## **A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0053**

Arianne spotted Mark seated next to Aery. She also noticed that Aery’s arm was coiled around Mark’s. “I’m his wife. It’s my responsibility to determine where he goes and to consider his safety.”

The word “wife” put a hateful look on Aery’s face. “You...! He’s already made it clear, he doesn’t want to go!”

Out of pretense, Eric disembarked from the car and helped Mark down. “Stop causing trouble, Aery... A member of his family has arrived. Let Mark go.”

Aery, still unresigned, grabbed Mark's arm. "Mark's already said that he doesn't want to see her. Quit fooling around, Eric!"

Arianne didn't give two hoots about whether Mark returned home or not, but she also refused to back down at the prospect of him following Aery.

Before she could speak up, Mark suddenly shook Aery off and demandingly said, "Ari... Come here!"

There was no doubt that he was speaking to Arianne. This was the first time Arianne ever heard him call her by that name, so she was a little absent-minded. After a momentary daze, she walked up to him and supported him. "Shall we go home?"

Mark wrapped his arms around her and mumbled into her neck, "Go..."

Aery trembled with rage. Didn't Mark hate Arianne? If he hated her, why was he following her?! Why was he putting on such an intimate display with her?!

Eric heaved a sigh of relief. "Ah, right... Arianne, there's no one to drive you, right? I'll do it. Aery, you can wait for Jackson."

Arianne ignored Aery's angry glare and helped Mark into the back of the car again. She waited for the car to start up before saying, "Thank you, Eric."

Eric did not reply, but smiled instead. Mark could do whatever he wanted when he was sober, he didn't care. However, he was drunk now, so he had to make sure that he returned home safely; this was his obligation as a friend.

It took Arianne quite a while to settle Mark when they returned to Estate. By then, she was on the brink of collapsing from exhaustion.

As she gazed upon his peaceful sleeping face, Arianne was suddenly seized with a wicked urge to stroke his hair. This was the only time he seemed very docile and not threatening.

Just as she was about to retract her hand, Mark suddenly reached out and grabbed her wrist. "Come here!"

She jumped in fright. After ascertaining that he wasn't feigning drunkenness and that this was only an involuntary action, she heaved a sigh of relief. Then, she carefully moved closer and asked, "What is it?"

"Sleep with me..." he growled, forcefully pulling her into his embrace.

Arianne's face was completely buried into his chest. He was hugging her tightly. She blushed when she caught his scent. His strange words could make a girl lose herself in a reverie.

Although they were both still very unhappy with each other before he left, she was not silly enough to quibble with a drunk man. Hence, she obediently nestled herself into his arms and found a comfortable position.

Alas, he was not so obedient. His hand moved onto her face, then stroked her cheek with his fingers and thumb. Then, it shifted down, brushing past the clean nape of her neck and pausing on her delicate collarbone.

It was as if his hand had magical powers, bringing heat along with it wherever it went. Her heart raced, and she instinctively tried to relax her breathing.

He had no intention of stopping. Soon, his hand continued its journey down and lingered on her body.

## **A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0054**

Arianne instinctively wanted to escape, but she was afraid of provoking him into a drunken rage. Hence, she simply gritted her teeth and stayed still, praying that he would soon fall asleep...

The more she hoped for one thing, the more it happened otherwise. Not only did he continue his excursion, but he also seemed to have gotten addicted to it and became annoyed with her clothes getting in the way. His hand changed direction and slipped in through her collar!

She held her breath, her cheeks now burning as if they were on fire. Finally, unable to endure it any longer, she murmured carefully, "Mark..."

He heard her voice. "Mmhmm...?"

"You should get an early night's rest... Go to sleep..." She was too afraid to say anything else. She even made sure to watch her tone.

He shifted closer so that they were eye to eye and stared at her through his drunken, blurry vision. "Don't you want to leave? I'm giving you a chance..."

Then, he flipped over and climbed on top of her, tearing open her pajamas with his hands.

A large surface area of her flesh became exposed to the air. Her chest felt a chill.

All of a sudden, she was like a fish stranded on land. All she could think about was opening her mouth and fighting for air.

Mark did not forget to simultaneously switch off the room's lights. She stared at the devastating shadowy figure on top of her, under the cover of darkness.

The strong smell of alcohol on his body and his increasingly forceful hands gave her the urge to run away. She instinctively reached out and pushed him away then quickly escaped from underneath him. "You're drunk! Get some sleep..." She urged, holding her pajamas tightly against herself as she stood next to the bed.

Mark's vision gradually cleared up in the darkness. His expression hardened, the edges turning cold. "Heh... Were you just as disgusted when Will Sivan touched you?"

Arianne stiffened. She had no way of recalling her memories from that night, three years ago, hence, she didn't know how she reacted to Will. However, it was clear that Mark could not get over this critical juncture.

Even if he had touched her, even if she was willing to spend the rest of her life with him, that incident would always be a thorn in their sides. They couldn't pull it out, and it would steadily agonize them.

After a period of silence, a storm arrived. Mark tore into the study room after venting his frustrations, leaving a mess behind.

Arianne silently sat on the side of the bed. Meanwhile, Mary sighed as she cleaned up. “Ari, servants like us shouldn’t concern ourselves with matters between you and sir, but... It won’t do any good if you both continue on like this. You should say what’s on your mind, don’t hide it.”

Arianne shook her head stubbornly. “I’m fine...”

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Mark did not come home for the next few days. Tiffany’s family affairs had grown increasingly miserable, and Arianne was anxious. However, Mark still refused to see her.

Now that the contract between Glide Design and the Tremonts was complete, she, the person-in-charge, had to send the sketches over to Tremont Tower. She knew that this would be her only chance to see Mark.

This time, Mark’s secretary was around. As expected, she was a woman who resembled a top model. Her body and facial features were top notch. She could even make an ordinary business suit look stylish. She couldn’t keep her eyes off her.

“Whatever it is, leave it to me. Mr. Tremont doesn’t usually welcome guests,” the secretary dully said when she saw Arianne.

# A Ruling Passion – Chapter 0055

Before Arianne could respond, the secretary snatched the sketches from her hand and sent them into Mark's office. Just as she was deciding on whether to barge in to see him, the secretary returned. "Mr. Tremont says that whatever you've given him is rubbish. These are his exact words."

Arianne did not expect this outcome. The boss of Glide Design, the company she was working in, was Eric. Most designers from their department were profoundly qualified. Based on these two conditions, the odds of an overall veto shouldn't have been too high.

Noticing the skepticism in her eyes, the secretary shrugged helplessly. "Mr. Tremont has personally reviewed the sketches. You don't have much time now. You'd better rush as much as you can. Mr. Tremont won't be lenient just because your boss is Mr. Nathaniel. He simply can't be lenient in these matters."

Arianne summoned her courage, cut past the secretary, and stormed in. "Mark Tremont! I need to speak with you!"

The secretary hurried after her. "Mr. Tremont, I'm so sorry. She barged in just when I wasn't looking!"

The man seated before his desk was like a mountain of ice. He opened his thin lips and said, "Forget it. You may go."

The secretary mumbled a response and cast Arianne a complicated look as she left.

After some deliberation, Arianne gathered her nerve and said, "I know you don't want to see me, but it's been so many days. The police haven't solved the case. Tiffanie's family is going to go mad from being pressed by debts..."

Mark closed the cap of the pen in his hand, crossed his arms, and leaned slightly back into his chair. "What does that have to do with me?" he asked with a blank expression.

"Only you can save her..." she said, her voice lowering to a whisper. She wouldn't hesitate even if he wanted her to beg on her knees.

"Heh. You've really overestimated yourself, Arianne. Why should I listen to you and help her? Don't waste my time!" Mark's tone left no room for discussion.

Arianne was momentarily distracted. She began to suspect that the drunk man who had called her "Ari" and fumbled around the nape of her neck wasn't the same man before her at all. She didn't recognize him one bit.

She almost bit a hole into her lips when she realized that she hadn't even brought a bargaining chip to barter with him. How was she going to discuss anything with him now?

Impatience was written across the space between Mark Tremont's brows. "You may go," he said icily.

She stubbornly rooted herself to the spot, refusing to move. For one fleeting moment, a terrifying thought crossed her mind. He hated her the most. If she were to jump down from here and die, would she be able to grant him peace for the rest of his life? A life with no more hatred?

"Mark... If I die, will your hatred disappear? You've been so good to everyone but me. Would you agree to help Tiffanie...? Am I correct in assuming that you're refusing to unclench because she's my friend? I don't think that your benevolence to anyone is out of obligation. You're good enough, and I'm the one in the wrong. I'm responsible for tarnishing your world."

Hearing these words, Mark released his arms, which were crossed in front of him. He pressed them down on the armrest of his chair. "What are you saying?"

She stared at him and smirked. "If you want me to die, I won't hesitate. Please help Tiffanie..."

He got up and walked towards her with anger burning in the depths of his eyes. "Are you threatening me with death? Or do you think that your life is all that valuable to me?"

She shook her head. "I've never thought that my life was worth anything to you. However, I think... that one simply wishes for their most hated enemy's death..."

He reached out and pinched her chin forcefully between his slender fingers. She frowned in pain.

“You’re wrong. Letting you die would be too easy on you. I want you alive so that I can torture you! Death will only be a release. You’d better put out this idea of yours!” he said in a voice that resembled an Asura from hell.

Arianne stared at him in astonishment. She never imagined that his hatred towards her had reached this stage.