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Always Been Yours Chap

Chapter 7 Love at First Sight

The ceremony was getting off to a slow and steady start in the banquet hall, and midway through, the emcee went up on stage to read out the name of the violinist for the solo performance. Gregory, who had been sufficiently bored since the beginning of the banquet, immediately lit up as he exclaimed, "Daddy, it's the pretty lady!"

Nicholas' gaze flickered over to the stage.

Presently, Tessa had already changed into an elegant beige dress, which had a modest cut that accentuated the curve of her waist and flattered her silhouette flawlessly. She was holding the violin Gregory had picked out for her earlier as she strolled gracefully to center stage.

When the track lights shone on the porcelain skin of her doll-like face, she looked dazzling.

For a minute, surprise flashed in Nicholas' dark orbs, and he thought he might actually be enchanted by her.

On stage, Tessa couldn't help being a little nervous as she stood tall and straight under the scrutiny of the deathly silent audience. This was the first time in her entire life she was performing before so many important and distinguished members of society, particularly ones as formidable as the Sawyers.

As she looked up, she unintentionally noticed Nicholas among the crowd.

His long and lean build seemed to stand out among the other guests, and the imperious air with which he carried himself made him look untouchable and high above everyone else.

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Inadvertently, she locked eyes with him, and she shuddered when she saw how his eyes resembled a deep and endless sea, like dark whirlpools that threatened to pull in and drown you with one look.

Her heart skipped a beat, and she quickly broke eye contact, meeting Gregory's eager gaze instead.

The little guy was perched on a highchair as he stared at Tessa with glittering eyes, the anticipation clear in his face.

For some reason, all the anxiousness drained out of Tessa as soon as she saw the child, and she even managed an easy smile.

Before she kicked off her performance, she leaned toward the microphone and said gently, "It's a great honor to be able to perform here today. The symphony I will be playing next is dedicated to the most adorable and brilliant little birthday boy. Here's to many more happy accomplishments, little one!"

The hall burst into encouraging and enthusiastic applause.

Tessa smiled graciously, then bowed. Having done so, she resumed her position at center stage, and as the noise in the hall gave way to silence once more, all the lights turned and fell on her.

Unfazed by the spotlight, she wedged the violin firmly beneath the curve of her jawline and poised to play the first chord.

Soon, the gentle melodious sound of the violin filled the hall, soothing the crowd as they immersed in the quiet beauty of the performance, much like how one might take in the choir of skylarks.

The petite woman on stage was like a fairy who had descended under the moonlight. Her features were soft and delicate, her beauty so ethereal. Her confidence was as dazzling as she was as the spotlight shone on her.

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Everything about her seemed so wonderful that no one could bear to look away from her for even a second!

What was more impressive was the sound of the violin, which appeared to have put the audience into a trance as the melody moved and transported them to some wonderland.

The audience were having a whale of a time, and they were each admiring the girl's skillful performance.

A while later, Gregory clapped his little hands as he applauded Tessa's breathtaking performance, and he turned to ask Nicholas excitedly, "Isn't the pretty lady brilliant, Daddy?"

Nicholas' gaze darkened slightly, but instead of answering Gregory, he asked, "Have you seen her before?"

The child nodded. "Yes, I saw her once when I tagged along with Great-Grandpa to one of those orchestra performances."

Somehow skeptical, Nicholas pressed, "Was that all? You didn't speak to her or anything like that after you saw her?"

Gregory shook his head and replied firmly, "No, but I like her a whole lot!"

While the father and son were discussing this, Remus was seated among the guests at another table, and his eyes were narrowed as he appraised Tessa, who was still on stage. He looked pensive and somewhat frustrated as he thought, Have I seen this girl before somewhere? Why does she look so familiar?

Before he could dwell more on this, the hall burst into thunderous applause and cut off his train of thought. As it turned out, the solo violin performance on stage had already come to a perfect end.

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Tessa came back to her senses after her musical reverie ended, and she bowed deeply before the distinguished guests below the stage.

Gregory even let out a few whooping cheers as he clapped his little hands tirelessly.

Just as Tessa was stepping out of the banquet hall, she handed the violin gingerly to the bodyguards behind her. "Could you please help me take this violin back to the music room? It's worth too much for me to hold on to it much longer."

"Of course," the bodyguard said readily, taking the violin from her and leaving in a hurry.

Now that Tessa had performed smoothly and returned the extravagant violin, she felt the weight slide off her shoulders, and she was elated. More importantly, she even got to celebrate the adorable little boy's birthday.

He must be happy now, she thought with a warm smile. I hope my performance lived up to his expectations.

Then again, she wondered if this meant she would never see him again. After all, they came from very different worlds, and the chances of them ever crossing paths in the future were slim to none.

For some reason, the thought of this left her feeling a little forlorn and reluctant.

Meanwhile, inside the hall, Gregory asked Nicholas when he saw Tessa go down the stage, "Daddy, I want to see the pretty lady. Can the bodyguards bring me to her, please?"

"No, we have to go home right now. Your grandmother's waiting up for you," Nicholas said with forced patience as he picked Gregory up from the chair and held him to his torso.

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He wasn't about to let his son get close to some strange woman with an unknown background. Heaven knows what ulterior motives she may have for being so chummy with Gregory!

"No, I want to see the pretty lady! Let me down, Daddy!" Gregory whined, wriggling and struggling to break free from his father's arms, but that did little to hinder Nicholas from bringing him out of the banquet hall.

"Stupid Daddy! You poopy head! I want to see the pretty lady! You told me that you would let me have whatever I want on my birthday!"

Nicholas ignored him as he stormed out of the hall wordlessly, the air around him growing dangerously cold.

"Liar! You're nothing but a big, fat liar! It's bad enough that you won't bring me to see Mommy, but now you want to stop me from seeing the pretty lady, too!" With that, Gregory began to sob piteously.

The word 'mommy' instantly made Nicholas think about that woman from five years ago. At that moment, hatred and rage seemed to course through him uncontrollably as he thought, You don't need a mommy who abandoned you for money, Gregory! You deserve better than that!

However, when he saw how miserably the child in his arms was crying, he felt his heart soften as he promised, "Look, I'll bring you to see her some other day, okay?"

It was as if he had uttered the magic words, for Gregory immediately stopped crying, and as he sniffled, he looked up at Nicholas with wide, sparkly eyes. "Do you really mean it, Daddy?"

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