

## Chapter 435 She Had Been Waiting For Someone

Cecilia could have said something to provoke Mark.

But... she chose not to.

Instead, she stared at him, and her eyes welled up with unshed tears and turned red.

Mark felt a pang of regret, but he found no words to offer her solace.

After a prolonged silence, Cecilia spoke softly, her voice tinged with hurt. "I'm not as good as you, Mr. Evans, having so many confidants."

Those were the words of a wounded heart.

In the presence of an outsider, Mark chose not to respond.

Albert was sensible. "I'll wait you in the car. You two should sort out this misunderstanding."

He smiled reassuringly and added, "Mr. Evans, it seems there's a significant misunderstanding here."

Then, with Edwin cradled in his arms, Albert made his exit.

Cecilia headed toward the door, too.

Mark reached out and clasped her hand. He said in a hushed tone, "Cecilia!"

She gently shook off his hand and whispered, "I'm leaving."

Sensing her anger, Mark tenderly apologized, "It's all my fault. Can you forgive your Uncle Mark, just this once?"

Cecilia felt tears welling up, but she held them back.

Mark gently caressed her face, his concern evident. "How is the baby?"

In the past, she might have lashed out at Mark and argued for a long time because he had hurt her deeply.

But now, he was ill.

Cecilia refrained from agitating him further. She reasoned that if she expressed her anger, it might worsen his mood, subsequently affecting his health. She was inherently kind-hearted. Even she hadn't really contemplated a future without him at the moment, she wanted him to stay healthy. So, despite her pain, she suppressed her grievances and replied, "The baby is fine."

Then, she met his gaze.

Mark's face appeared pale and gaunt.

He looked back at her, a soft smile playing on his lips, tinged with a hint of melancholy.

She sensed the weight of his thoughts.

At that moment, an indescribable ache gripped Cecilia's heart.

It was as if the confident and composed Uncle Mark she had admired had disappeared.

He was just an ordinary man now.

He couldn't even admit to feeling jealous.

Cecilia's voice caught in her throat. "I'm going back. Please take care of yourself."

Mark inquired, "When is your next prenatal check-up? I'll come with you."

Cecilia looked up at him.

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She spoke softly. "Thursday, two weeks from now, at nine in the morning."

Mark remained silent. He simply brushed his fingers gently through her hair, reminiscent of the past... At that moment, Mark seemed both like a guardian and a lover.

No promises were exchanged between them.

She didn't assure him she would remain by his side once he recovered.

And he didn't bring up the topic of remarriage.

Their two children became their sole link.

Cecilia exited the ward. A wave of sadness washed over her, and she wandered to the end of the corridor, standing there alone.

For a long time, she let her tears flow freely.

Due to Mark's illness and the transformations this affliction had wrought upon him...

She pondered, even despite their separation, she wished for the robust Mr. Evans she once knew.

One thing she didn't know was that the whole time she lingered at the aisle's end, mirrored the duration Mark spent standing at the ward's door and watching her.

He hadn't divulged it just now.

Since local treatment wasn't enough anymore, he had to seek medical help abroad.

This was why he wanted to accompany her for a prenatal check-up before he had to leave.

Cecilia descended the stairs.

Albert, despite their strained relationship, immediately stepped



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out of the car and opened the door for her as she approached.

"Wow... Shouldn't you be delighted to meet your old lover?

Why the red eyes?" he remarked.

Cecilia settled into the back seat and retorted, "It's none of your business."

Albert fastened his seat belt and glanced back. "Do you think I willingly involve myself in your affairs? It was your sister-in-law who asked me to keep an eye on you. She was worried you'd be upset and might experience abdominal pain. Frankly, I don't get you. Don't you both care for each other? And now you're pregnant. It would be a pity if he doesn't make it."

Cecilia had no desire to talk to Albert.

He pressed on the accelerator and continued, "In my opinion, you should have him by your side; make sure to torture him and make him feel the pain... Truth be told, he's quite handsome, not any less than your arrogant brother."

Cecilia wiped her tears away, trying to compose herself.

"Albert, are you still up for dinner?" she asked.

Of course, Albert wanted to. Even though he knew Rena wouldn't accept him, he felt it would still be nice for him to check on her every once in a while.

As a result, they headed to the villa.

But all Albert observed that evening was Cecilia's tears, her sorrow palpable in every moment.

Two weeks later, Ross accompanied Cecilia to her prenatal appointment. Because Mark had intended to join her, she refrained from inviting her family this time.

Ross dropped Cecilia off at the ward entrance.

He flashed her a reassuring smile.

Cecilia gently knocked on the door and stepped inside. The moment she entered, she noticed the ward was impeccably neat.

Sunlight streamed into the room.

The bed was neatly made as though it had never been occupied.

Everything appeared spotless and orderly, devoid of any trace of Mark.

Cecilia stood there, bewildered.

Where could Mark be?

A nurse on her rounds approached Cecilia, noticing her confusion. She pulled out a letter from her pocket and handed it to her.

It was a letter left for Cecilia by Mark.

There were several words scrawled on the white envelope.

To Cecilia.

Cecilia promptly tore open the envelope, finding only a single sheet of paper inside. The words inscribed on it were brief.

"Cecilia, don't wait for me.

If you meet a good man, seize your happiness."

The letter slipped from her trembling fingers.

Cecilia lowered her head, unable to bring herself to pick it up. Tears streamed down her cheeks, unabated.

Even now, she remained uncertain if she was waiting for Mark. Was she waiting for him to recover, to utter the words, "Forgive me, let's begin anew. I'll commit to daily exercises, care for my health, and bring you happiness."?

She hadn't found the answer yet.



Yet he had told her not to wait.

Was she really waiting for him?

She didn't, not really. She had simply come over and anticipated that he would join her for her prenatal check-up like he promised.

She had simply thought about letting him pick their baby's name.

She had simply hoped her presence would provide him with the courage he needed to keep going.

But in the end, he left her behind once more.

Life offered a plethora of choices, but he never chose to stand by her, regardless of the circumstances—good or bad. Cecilia couldn't help but think that if she had been 18 years old again, she might have just rushed to him without hesitation.

However, she was over 30 years old now.

She had more to take into consideration, especially since she was mother now.

But he just left.

No one seemed more heartless than Mark.

Ross sensed something amiss and was taken aback upon entering the ward. "Miss Fowler, why are you crying?"

Cecilia gently wiped her tears away.

"I'm not crying," she said, her voice unsteady. "My eyes hurt from the wind."

Ross observed the letter on the floor and picked it up carefully.

Cecilia slowly took the letter and ripped it to shreds. She managed a smile, tears glistening in her eyes. "Ross, from now on, let's just forget about this man."

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Cecilia understood that Mark's illness was grave.

Recovery was uncertain.

Death loomed over him as a real possibility.

Yet his choice seemed designed to prevent her from bidding him farewell.

In Cecilia's eyes, Mark's actions felt unbearably cruel.

Cecilia's voice quivered as she said, "Ross, please accompany me to my prenatal check-up."

Ross's heart trembled, and he wordlessly escorted her out of the room.

Afterward, no one mentioned the incident again.

Later, Waylen did some digging and discovered that Mark's condition had worsened that night. Peter had contacted the hospital in Rouemn and arranged for Mark to be transferred overnight.

Mark left behind only a letter for Cecilia.

He had departed without a trace of hope.

He chose not to allow Cecilia to see him for the last time.

From that day on, Mark had vanished from both the Fowler family and Duefron.

Almost everyone forgot there had been such a person in their midst.

Yet, Edwin whispered "dad" in his sleep at night, calling out to Mark as if he were still present.

After that day, Cecilia neither called Mark nor reached out to Peter. In her mind, Mark ceased to exist...

Winter settled in, casting a chilly ambiance over the land.



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During the evening of New Year's Eve, the members of the Fowler family gathered within the grandeur of their mansion.

Laughter and joy filled the air, especially with the children running around, their voices adding a lively melody to the night.

Despite the smile Cecilia wore, an underlying sense of loneliness clung to her, a fact that didn't escape Rena's notice. It stirred a pang of sadness within her.

Feeling Rena's turmoil, Waylen tenderly placed his arm around her shoulders and comforted her silently.

Korbyn gathered the group of children and distributed gifts.

It was evident that Leonel had received the most presents.

Korbyn affectionately tousled Leonel's hair and praised him. "You performed exceptionally well. You set a great example for your younger siblings."

Alexis, her lower lip protruding in a playful pout, chimed in, "I did a good job too! I helped change Marcus' diapers."

Marcus nodded vigorously, his eyes gleaming with excitement.

Korbyn handed Alexis another gift. "I was planning to give it to you in secret."

Alexis took it happily.

Meanwhile, Edwin sat by the door, gazing quietly out of the window, lost in his thoughts.

It was snowing on New Year's Eve.

In the midst of the falling snowflakes, Edwin waited patiently for someone special.

His anticipation was for Mark.

Edwin longed for Mark to arrive on New Year's Eve, lift him in his arms, kiss him, and affectionately call him a "Silly boy"



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before presenting him with a gift.

Yet this year, Edwin's eager eyes searched in vain for a long time, but he still couldn't catch sight of Mark.

Some whispered that Mark had met his demise.

While others claimed he had heartlessly abandoned Edwin, his mother, and his sister.

Edwin's eyelashes were dusted with snow.

He sat still.

His body was rigid, but in his heart, Mark's warm presence lingered. He could almost feel Mark beside him, sitting next to the fireplace with him, their laughter filling the room as they played with blocks and shared tales.

Yet, despite the illusion of Mark's company, a palpable emptiness pervaded the hall.

Cecilia observed her son from a distance and was well aware of the weight of his thoughts.

The urge to join him tugged at her heartstrings.

But Waylen gently touched the back of her hand and whispered, "Let me handle it."

Cecilia nodded, her eyes tinged with redness.

Waylen said gently, "It's New Year's Eve, and you're about to give birth. Don't cry; it's ominous, okay?"

Waylen asked Rena to keep Cecilia company.

Then he walked to the door and saw Edwin gazing at the snow outside, stiffly holding his small form in his arms.

In a daze, Edwin thought he had caught a glimpse of Mark.

Waylen sat beside Edwin.

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Waylen enfolded him in his arms to shield him from the cold. Then he lowered his head and asked gently, "Are you missing your dad?"

Edwin remained silent.

Mark's departure had deeply traumatized Edwin. He had always been an introverted child, and now he had retreated even further into his shell.

After a long pause, Edwin finally spoke up.

"I heard that he took Laura with him."

Waylen gently ran his fingers through the boy's hair, his touch soft and reassuring.

He chose not to reveal the painful truth: that Laura had been mistreated by the servants in the villa, prompting Mark to take her away to ensure her safety.

Edwin stared at the snow, his eyes clouded with sadness.

"Is he still alive?" he asked softly.

Waylen's voice caught in his throat as he replied, "Yes, he is still alive."

Edwin murmured, "Why didn't he come back to see me and my mom? Sometimes, mom cries at night."

Waylen pressed a gentle kiss to Edwin's head.

He then said, "Grow up quickly, Edwin. Be there for your mom when she needs someone to rely on."

Edwin nodded, his young face determined despite the sadness in his eyes.

Waylen continued, "What would you like as your New Year's gift?"

Edwin contemplated for a while before uttering softly, "Can you call me 'silly boy'?"

Waylen felt his eyes welling up.

He was usually composed and rarely displayed vulnerability, yet now, he found himself unable to hold back the tears.

"Silly boy."

A faint smile curved Edwin's lips, carrying a subtle determination within it.

Edwin followed Waylen back to the hall. Despite the liveliness around them, an unspoken agreement hung heavy in the air, and nobody dared to mention that certain man...

Outside, the snow continued to drift down softly. Waylen and Rena decided to stay overnight.

Rena tossed and turned, her mind restless and sleep eluding her.

Over the past four months, she had made six trips to Rouemn.

Mark's condition was deteriorating rapidly.

Rena had never disclosed the full extent of it to the Fowler family, and even in front of Waylen, she rarely discussed Mark's condition. It was too painful to put into words.

In the dim light, Waylen gently brushed his fingers against her cheek.


"Having trouble sleeping?" he asked softly.

Rena met her husband's gaze in the darkness and nodded silently.

A heavy silence hung in the air.

In a soft murmur, Waylen shared his father's plan with Rena. "Dad has a friend whose son is also divorced. That man has taken a liking to Cecilia. He's a good person, a decent man. Dad's suggestion is for them to meet after the baby is born and maybe a bit older. Perhaps Cecilia and that man could find



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Waylen felt it was necessary to discuss this with Rena.

Rena understood his implications.

She rested her head on his shoulder and replied gently, "Let's wait and see what Cecilia thinks when the time comes."

Waylen smoothed Rena's hair.

He murmured, "If things don't work out between them, we can just let Cecilia be on her own. we're family and we'll always be there for her."

Rena closed her eyes.

After a brief pause, she opened her eyes and expressed her unease. "Waylen... I can't shake this feeling that something might happen tonight. Stay awake with me, just in case."

Waylen paid heed to her warning.

They lay on the bed and talked intimately, sharing the private moments of a loving couple.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the house, Cecilia cradled Edwin in her arms.

Throughout the night, Cecilia remained wide awake, her anticipation of the impending childbirth keeping sleep at bay.

Her hand tenderly cradled her swelling belly, feeling the gentle movements within.

In just two weeks, their little one would come into the world, yet she hadn't picked a name for her baby.

In the dim light of the room, Edwin's voice broke through the silence as he murmured "daddy" in his sleep.

Cecilia touched her son's face gently, and her heart ached for the little boy... She longed to explain everything to him, yet she

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welcome a new member into the family.

Waylen was behind the wheel, his focus steady on the road, while Korbyn provided directions.

Rena held Cecilia in her arms. While Edwin, who had insisted on accompanying them, sat next to Rena.

Cecilia broke out in a cold sweat because of the pain.

She was sweating profusely. Clutching onto Rena's waist, she called out Rena's name, her voice strained, as if she were speaking in her sleep.

Rena tenderly rubbed Cecilia's belly, offering soothing words. "You'll be fine as soon as you arrive at the hospital."

Upfront, Waylen's grip on the steering wheel was firm, his attention solely on the road.

The snowy night made the journey treacherous; every turn had to be navigated with extreme caution. Hence, he didn't allow his attention to wander elsewhere.

He drove himself, deeply concerned for both his sister's and the baby's safety, unwilling to leave anything to chance.

Half an hour later, the black Bentley came to a halt at the hospital, and a team of medical staff swiftly approached, rolling a stretcher toward them. Cecilia was gently transferred onto it and rushed straight to the delivery room.

In the grip of pain, Cecilia was in a daze, her mind clouded.

In her delirium, she muttered a name that still held her heart captive.

Mark.

Waylen was taken aback

He tenderly leaned down and kissed his sister's forehead and whispered in a hoarse voice, "I'll call him, Cecilia."

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"No. Don't do that."

Cecilia, amidst her pain, shook her head weakly.

Sweat streamed down Cecilia's forehead, and embarrassment tinged her face. Tears welled up in her eyes as she pleaded, "Waylen, please don't call him."

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