

Chapter 470 Your Love For Him Is Nothing But Self-...

Cecilia eased the door open, finding Mark engrossed in a call; probably hashing things out with the higher-ups from the company.

He wore a focused expression, but that changed as soon as he ended the call.

Spotting Cecilia and the kids, a gentle warmth spread across his features.

"Come here," he beckoned softly.

Little Olivia, with her innocent and limited grasp of the world, toddled over.

Struggling to climb the tall bed, she faltered. Not missing a beat, Mark scooped her up, planting a kiss on her forehead.

Edwin, older and with a touch more insight into grown-up affairs, entered with a hint of a scowl.

"Hey, dad," he greeted Mark, but then fell quiet.

Mark, sensing something amiss, inquired, "Everything okay?"


Meeting Mark's gaze briefly, Edwin murmured, "Now that you're grown-up, can you, I don't know, take care of yourself? So mom doesn't have to fret so much?"

A chuckle escaped Mark, though a tender sentiment swelled within him.

With a voice gentle as a whisper, he teased, "Worried about me, huh?"

Flushing, Edwin retorted, "I am not."

Recognizing the boy's feelings but choosing to leave them unspoken, Mark ruffled Edwin's hair, suggesting, "Hungry? Get Peter to show you

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where to grab a bite. The treats here rival those at Yarmose."

But Olivia seemed glued to the spot, not keen on heading out.

Cecilia watched as Olivia snuggled into Mark's chest, claiming her usual spot right against his slim midriff.

Edwin, however, had other ideas; lifting Olivia, he declared in a rough tone, "Time for breakfast. No breakfast means no lunch."

Amidst Olivia's protests and tears, her brother led her away.

The ward settled into a hushed stillness. A nurse approached, expertly setting up an IV bag for Mark before leaving just as swiftly.

Drawn to his side, Cecilia delicately held Mark's hand, tracing the numerous puncture marks.

Her voice just above a whisper, she asked, "Are you in pain?"

Resting, Mark lifted his gaze to meet hers; a moment passed before he murmured, "Are you worried for me?"

Cecilia's nod was almost imperceptible.

She took a seat beside him, wrapping her arms around him in a slow embrace.


His warmth was familiar, but she knew he had endured much the previous night. His health was fragile; had he not been so attentive, she couldn't bear to think of the outcome.

Feeling the slight shudder in her frame, Mark whispered reassuring words into her ear, "I'm okay, Cecilia. Please, don't cry. I'm okay."

She nestled her face into his shoulder, finding solace as he held her, offering silent comfort.

After a lingering moment, Cecilia murmured, "When I heard the news, my biggest fear wasn't the thought of you being with someone else; it was the fear that something might happen to you."

Her voice held a mature understanding, a far cry from the stark

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perspectives she once held in her youth.

Mark felt a pang of regret listening to her.

He smoothed her hair, reassuring her softly, "Cecilia, I promise there's nothing to worry about. I'm yours, completely."

She remained silent, simply holding onto the man she had cherished for so long.

As she began to speak, Mark silenced her, placing his forehead against hers. "Some matters are best left for men to handle," he whispered.

Glancing at him, she asked in a slightly quivering voice, "What do you mean?"

Mark chuckled, lightly pinching her nose.

They both knew what was left unsaid.

Perhaps it was the residual shock of recent events or maybe Mark's exhaustion, but when Cecilia arrived, he finally felt a weight lifted.

He nestled into her, letting sleep take him.

Cecilia, feeling Mark's complete trust in her, gazed at his handsome features. Even with age, his allure remained unchanged.

She playfully bit him, smiling at the thought that a younger woman might not have found him attractive if he'd aged differently.

Their intimate moment was interrupted when Peter returned with the children.

Noticing the scene, Peter grinned cheekily, while Edwin blushed but appeared content.

Cecilia, slightly flustered, gently laid Mark down and tucked Olivia beneath the quilt beside him.

A lover of sleep, Olivia nestled close to her father, sighing contentedly.

Peter signaled Cecilia, suggesting they step out for a private discussion.

Once outside, Cecilia whispered, "I'll handle Elaine."

Peter responded, "Mr. Evans is aware of your intentions. He insists on keeping you away from any unsavory dealings."

Pausing, he added, "Let Mr. Evans manage it."

Acknowledging him, Cecilia nodded.

A shadow crossed Peter's face. "We overlooked Elaine's previous actions, yet she betrayed our trust. There's only one route forward—ensuring she can't cause more issues."

Cecilia regarded Peter, She began to grasp the challenges Mark faced regularly.

Yet, just as quickly as it had appeared, Peter's stern expression melted away.

He casually mentioned, "There's an informant within the Evans' estate in Duefron. Mr. Evans intends to keep his mother in the dark, fearing it might devastate her to learn someone she's trusted for decades has betrayed her."

Understanding the gravity, Cecilia nodded.

After their brief talk, Peter departed swiftly to address urgent matters.

Outside Mark's room, four bodyguards kept a vigilant watch, ensuring only select visitors entered.

Later that afternoon, Mark stirred awake.

Feeling the warmth of Olivia cuddling close, he met her big, expectant eyes.

"Lunch," she stated simply.

Checking the time, Mark realized it was already past two.

Concerned, he sat up, noting Edwin's presence.

"Olivia's been awake for a while," Edwin remarked.

The kids hadn't had lunch yet? He gently chided Edwin, who sat nearby, "Why didn't you feed her?"

Feeling better, Mark carried Olivia to the restroom. Once done changing her diaper, he planted a kiss on her forehead.

Cecilia began setting out the meal.

Hungry, Mark was midway through when he paused, asking, "Is it okay for you to stay? What about the filming?"

Tossing her hair nonchalantly, Cecilia replied, "We're recasting a supporting role. Filming's on hold for now."

Mark didn't press further.

Both were acutely aware of the looming issue with Elaine.

After taking a few bites, Cecilia whispered, "Once I finish this drama, I'm done with acting."

Mark met her gaze, sensing the gravity behind her words.

Even with their children present, she confessed, "I want to be with you, always. No more separations."

Without words, Mark reached under the table, softly gripping her hand.

"Eat up," he coaxed gently. "You seem to have lost weight."

Their meal continued in silence, the atmosphere punctuated only by their children's quiet eating. Eventually, Mark offered, "I'll be the provider of our family. You my dear, pursue whatever makes you happy."

Cecilia nodded in acknowledgment.

To Edwin, it seemed his father held an air of authority.

The boy perceived that Mark treated Cecilia with tender protectiveness, akin to a guardian watching over a cherished treasure.

Three days passed with Mark in the hospital.

Cecilia listened, her silence speaking volumes.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Elaine slammed her hands on the table, causing a raucous.

Guards rushed in, restraining her.

Struggling to maintain her composure, Elaine retorted, "You don't truly care for him. Even now, he doesn't have a proper home. He relies on meals prepared by others. Have you ever personally cooked for him? I would. I could genuinely care for him."

Cecilia absorbed Elaine's accusations, and then countered, "You think the way to a man's heart is through his stomach? And with spiked food? Mark had health concerns, which is why he relied on specialized meals. But do you genuinely believe a man would choose a partner simply based on culinary talents alone? Such a simplistic view."

She continued, "I don't need to prove myself to you by showcasing cooking skills. If Mark desires a home-cooked meal, I'd gladly prepare it.

But your judgment of my worth based on that is laughable."

Pausing, Cecilia reflected on the root of Elaine's malevolence.

Elaine and Mavis shared a similar delusion, believing they were the saviors to the men they loved. But in reality, their motives were steeped in self-interest, masking their true ambitions. Compassion for such individuals was undeserved.


As Cecilia gracefully exited, Elaine's spiteful outbursts followed.

Yet, they were swiftly interrupted by a sharp slap.

Emerging outdoors, a gleaming black limousine awaited.

Peter, leaning against it while taking a drag from his cigarette, looked up as Cecilia approached. "Did your talk with her conclude?" he queried.

Acknowledging with a nod, Cecilia retrieved a document pertaining to Elaine. Scanning its contents briefly, she remarked softly, "Her childhood traumas have led to her present-day dysfunctions. Peter, handle this as you deem appropriate. I don't want her disrupt our life anymore in the

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future."

Comprehending her wishes, Peter made a quick call.

By nightfall, Elaine was set free.

As Peter observed Cecilia, her placid facade concealed the depth of her resolve.

To Peter, she appeared delicate, yet her decisions bore a weight greater than that of Rena's. Affluent families had an unwavering determination to safeguard their interests.

Masking his thoughts, Peter gestured for Cecilia to enter the limousine.

The ride to the hospital was silent, her mood evidently somber.

Upon reaching the hospital, they were met with an unexpected visitor—Waylen. Entering Mark's room, Cecilia found him engrossed in a seemingly intense conversation with Waylen.

The latter, sensing her presence, turned, catching Cecilia off-guard.

Momentarily taken aback, Cecilia only found her voice when Waylen teased with a light smirk. "Did I catch you by surprise?"

Whispering his name, "Waylen," Cecilia approached and inquired gently, "What brings you here?"

Cecilia shared a bond of deep affection with Waylen, often seeking his guidance and assurance.


Observing their rapport, Mark couldn't suppress a pang of jealousy. To mask his feelings, he mentally plotted to spend more time with his niece in hopes of making Waylen feel the same sting of envy.


Adjusting his shirt, Waylen replied, "I was on business nearby and thought I'd stop by."


Glancing at Olivia and Edwin, he added, "I'll take the kids with me for a while."

Though Cecilia was hesitant to part with her children, she conceded,

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considering Mark's recovery.

Furthermore, the hospital was no place for young Olivia.

Cecilia saw them off. After ensuring the kids were settled, Waylen paused to tuck a stray strand of Cecilia's hair behind her ear.

"Rena's been concerned about you. She sent me to check in," he said. "I spoke with Mark, and he seems well. He has a fierce independence about him. Rena just tends to worry unnecessarily."

Embracing him in gratitude, Cecilia felt a wave of warmth.

Hesitating briefly, Waylen reassured her, "Remember, Cecilia, no matter the circumstances, even when everything seems bleak, you still have your brother by your side."

As he climbed into his car and drove away, Cecilia watched him go, a cascade of thoughts flooding her mind.

Without Mark, she imagined a life alongside her brother and sister-in-law—a life that seemed undeniably appealing.

Returning to the ward, she found Mark engrossed in a magazine while Peter was immersed in phone calls, his expressions shifting more rapidly than the pages Mark was turning.

Upon noticing Cecilia, Peter excused himself.

Mark beckoned her over.

Nestling beside him, she heard his query, "Did you meet Elaine?"

Cecilia nodded.

"I needed to understand her perspective."


Caressing her slender waist, Mark remarked with a hint of teasing, "You can be such a child at times."

Indignant, Cecilia retorted, "Why didn't you ask Waylen to leave Olivia and Edwin here? Some uncle you are, not uttering a word in protest in his presence!"


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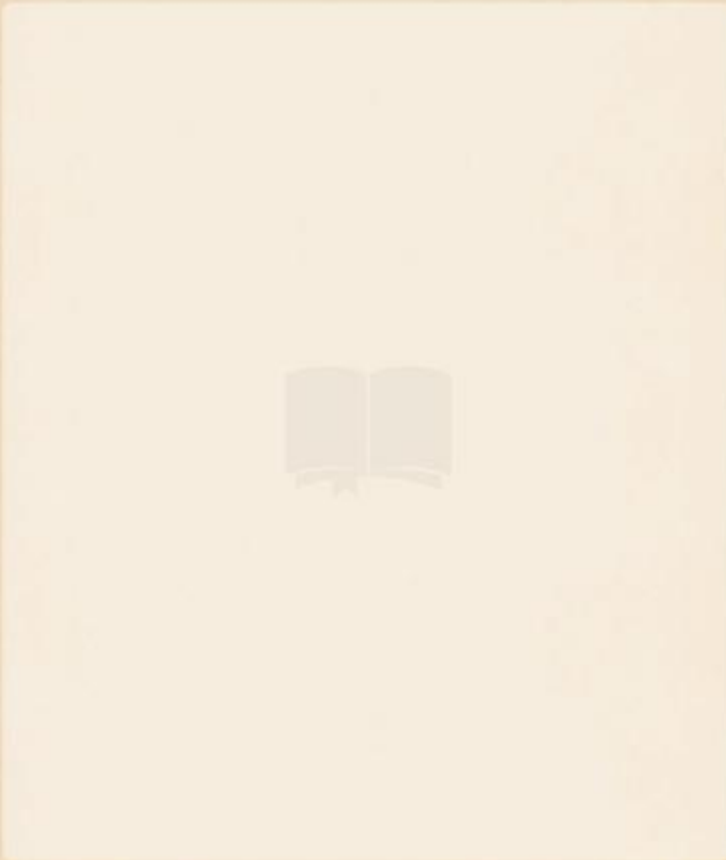
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Gazing at her intently for a while, Mark finally murmured, "I just wanted some time alone with you."



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