

Chapter 496 A Longing He's Held For So Long

Edwin was consumed by desire, almost on the brink of madness.

Never had he imagined he would engage in such intimate acts for a woman.

Even if she was the sole recipient of pleasure, witnessing her disoriented expression, a result of his doing, stirred an indescribable excitement in his heart and body. It felt as though he had complete control over her. ①

She was his.

Laura belonged to him in every sense.

Laura eventually stopped her resistance, lying askew on the white pillow, softly sobbing.

Edwin recognized her fear, for what he did was indeed too intense.

He raised his head, his gaze deep and mesmerizing as he observed her, a blend of admiration and possession.

Once he had his fill of watching, he leaned in to kiss her lips. Laura resisted, humming in disdain and trying to push him away.

But how could she ever resist Edwin?

Eventually, they were thoroughly entwined, their passionate kisses lingering until their mouths were filled with each other's taste. Edwin didn't withdraw; instead, he observed her in the darkness.

Laura shivered, uncomfortable, her face turned away.

Edwin chuckled softly, kissed her chin, and decided to come clean. "About our relationship, everyone at home knows except for my Mom."

Laura's delicate nostrils quivered.

Edwin lowered himself, gently embracing her, his face buried in her hair as he murmured, "After the New Year's Day, we'll go public, okay?"



He could envision the storm that would follow.

Cecilia would surely be heartbroken and initially disapproving, but no matter how challenging it might be, Edwin was determined to give Laura a future.

He hadn't always been without reservations.

He had hurt Laura before, but in the end, he just couldn't forget about her.

Now, he could finally admit to himself that he liked her.

Having lived for twenty-six years, he had fallen for Laura.

Laura quietly curled up in his arms, her slender shoulders evoking pity, and it was a while before she uttered, "Edwin, I haven't made up my mind yet."

Recalling what she had just said moments ago, she couldn't help but feel a tinge of embarrassment.

However, Edwin had a penchant for being the cheeky devil, particularly in the intimacy of the bedroom. He silenced her with a tender kiss, and after a prolonged moment, he asked, "Did I please you just now?"

Laura's embarrassment deepened further.

She gently pushed against him and said, "Release me. I need to take a shower."

Adamant and not willing to relinquish his hold, Edwin continued to press her down.

Laura, her irritation evident as she bit her lip, issued a warning. "If you persist, I'll leave right now."

Edwin finally relaxed his grip a bit; as she got up, he couldn't help saying, "You looked absolutely stunning just now. Laura, I've never seen you quite like that."

Laura silently pushed him aside and made her way to the bathroom.

The bathroom's light spilled out, illuminating her figure and casting a soft glow on her.

Edwin's Adam's apple bobbed slightly as he watched her.

Later, when she emerged, he refrained from any further playfulness, simply holding her close as they gazed at the snow outside the window. Laura fretted about the challenge of leaving in the morning, but for Edwin, hugging her was all the warmth he needed.

That feeling was something he had yearned for, for a long time.

In the quiet of the night, Laura awoke to find Edwin insisting on intimacy.

Beneath the thin quilt, the air was charged with alluring tension.

Every soft moan and gasp was pure poetry.

She had indeed found pleasure in their shared moments, but it took Edwin quite some time to gently coax her into slumber, her head resting on his shoulder. In the soft moonlight, Edwin couldn't tear his gaze away from her petite face; he never seemed to get enough of it.

Silently, he pondered, "Despite not being entirely satisfied, why does my heart feel so content?"

Early in the morning, Edwin's phone rang, and it was Mark on the line.

He carefully slipped out from beside the slumbering young woman and tiptoed to the bathroom to take the call.

Mark's voice was hushed, a clear indication that he was keeping the conversation from Cecilia's ears.

"You've really outdone yourself, huh?" Mark snapped.

"Just because I don't object your relationship anymore, you immediately take her out for the night? It was Peter's birthday yesterday, and you were lucky that he was inebriated. If he hadn't been, I think he might have given you a piece of his mind."

Mark was fuming as he yelled, "Hurry back! But first, make sure she gets home safely. You may be shameless, but that girl's reputation still matters!"

Edwin furrowed his brow, saying, "Dad, Laura's still catching some sleep, so let's not disturb her."

Mark swallowed his words.

She was still in dreamland.



Lowering his tone, he advised, "In any case, when she does wake up, see her off, alright? Cut out the sneakiness. If you're keen on dating her, do it right. When the time feels right, make a proper proposal."

He tactfully omitted any mention of Cecilia, likely an attempt to ease the situation for Edwin.

A moment of silence hung between them before Edwin spoke again, his voice filled with gratitude. "Dad, I appreciate it."

Mark grunted and disconnected the call.

Edwin's heart warmed as he returned to the bedroom, where Laura was finally awake.

She was perched on the edge of the bed, gazing pensively out the window.

She wore his shirt from the previous day, which draped loosely over her, accentuating her petite frame.

Edwin tenderly enfolded her in his embrace and softly inquired, "What's on your mind?"

Laura remained perturbed by the events of the night.

Her reluctance to engage with him was evident.

Edwin let out a light chuckle. "I did bring you pleasure as well, didn't I? And, well, I didn't even insist on--"

Laura interrupted him abruptly.

He really had no shame, did he?

Back when they used to share a living space, she hadn't fully grasped just how thick-skinned he could be. If only she had known, she surely would've needed some serious contemplation.

Sensing her mood, Edwin understood it was time for a heartfelt conversation.

Before he could utter a word, Laura initiated the conversation, her voice hushed, "Edwin, there are a multitude of issues between us. Give me some time to mull it over."

He was more than willing to grant her that space.



With a nod, he agreed, "Alright, I'll give you the time you need. But that doesn't mean we should stop going on dates."

Laura curiously inquired, "What's the reasoning behind that?"

Edwin playfully nudged her with his straight nose, causing her to turn her face away as she let out a soft, amused chuckle.

She held a soft spot for him.

And he always had a way of knowing.

Laura bit her lip, steering the conversation in a different direction. "The snow has stopped. I'd like to head home."

Edwin planted a gentle kiss on her lips and replied, "Sure thing! Have breakfast with me, and then I'll escort you back."

Following his request, he dialed the front desk to order breakfast for two. As the waiter rapped on the door, Edwin found himself passionately locked in a kiss with Laura by the window. He had refrained from fully indulging last night, and until then, his ardor still burned brightly. Laura playfully evaded his kisses, casting a somewhat pitiful glance his way.

The persistent knocking at the door eventually forced him to release her.

After they enjoyed their breakfast, he offered her a ride home, and miraculously, his car roared to life.

Laura, not one to be easily fooled, turned her head away.

Her eyes were slightly red, resembling those of a timid rabbit.

Edwin leaned in, whispering tenderly, "This car can be quite temperamental at times. It's acting up. Should I consider getting a new one?"

He was skilled at persuasion, and Laura's heart inevitably softened.

A woman's heart could indeed be swayed by persistence, and after a night shared with Edwin, her thoughts began to waver.

She genuinely pondered the possibility of her and Edwin, and whether Cecilia might not be entirely opposed. Could she, with her obedience and politeness, find acceptance?

Contemplating those matters, she couldn't help but feel somewhat

bashful.

Observing her, Edwin understood her inner conflict.

He reasoned that after the holidays, they could bring everything into the open. Both of them were of a suitable age for marriage, and he was eager to take care of her without further delay.

Edwin chauffeured Laura back to her home.

As their luxurious car slowly glided through the imposing black wrought-iron gates of the Garcia mansion, the security guard regarded Edwin with deep respect.

The car eventually halted, and Laura prepared to get off.

Edwin tenderly clasped her hand, saying, "I'll accompany you inside."

Laura wanted to protest, but Edwin had already unfastened his seat belt and gracefully emerged from the vehicle.

Peter was nursing a hangover from the previous night.

When he awoke in the wee hours, only to find his beloved daughter's room vacant, his fury knew no bounds.

Throughout the birthday festivities, Peter had been muttering curses nonstop, starting as early as five in the morning while he impatiently waited in the living room for the rascal to return with his daughter.

It wasn't until nine o'clock that they finally made their appearance.

Peter's eyes bulged with anger, and Lina wore a displeased expression.

"Who was the one constantly refilling the glasses last night?"

Humph! Now you're concerned about our daughter. Where were you earlier?"

Peter, uncharacteristically, fixed a stern gaze on Lina. "Did Mark intentionally keep me inebriated just to create an opportunity for his precious son? I've always maintained that Edwin is shrewd, inheriting every ounce of cunning from his father! Out of all the young women available, why did he have to pursue our daughter?"

Lina scolded him sharply, "Because you can be so foolish!"

Peter was caught off guard by her blunt remark.

As Laura and Edwin made their entrance and heard the argument, Laura couldn't help but feel a touch of embarrassment.

Peter's bias was evident.

Both had clearly spent the night away from home, yet he directed his scolding solely at Edwin.

Peter ranted about Edwin's reckless behavior, all but ignoring Laura's role in the night's events.

Unimpressed by the spectacle, Lina rolled her eyes.

Edwin gently patted Laura's shoulder and assured in a hushed tone, "You go upstairs first. I'll handle this."

Laura hesitated briefly.

Lina spoke with warmth in her voice. "We need to have a conversation with Edwin, Laura. You go on upstairs."

Coincidentally, Penney descended the stairs at that moment.

Lina requested her to escort Laura upstairs.

As Laura made her exit, she stole a quick glance at Edwin, who responded with a faint smile, causing Peter to sneer coldly. "You're still working your charms on her!"

Edwin couldn't help but chuckle as he replied, "Uncle Peter, it's a mutual affection."

Peter huffed in response.

Only after Laura had ascended the staircase did Peter, still experiencing a hangover, adopt a more solemn demeanor.

He wasted no time getting to the point, stating, "Edwin, I don't object to the two of you being together, but can your mother accept it? Can you resolve matters within your family? If you can't manage these issues, I'd rather Laura marry an ordinary man."

Edwin didn't hesitate for a moment. "I will take care of everything. You needn't worry."

Sensing Edwin's sincerity, Peter allowed a softening of his expression.

However, deep down, he couldn't help but harbor concerns.

Years ago, Cathy made such a huge scene and ruined Cecilia's wedding. Could Cecilia truly overlook it and accept Cathy's daughter?

Furthermore, despite nothing really happened, Mark had a history with Cathy, and now, Edwin became deeply involved with Laura. Wasn't it too scandalous?

Peter felt exasperated on behalf of both father and son.

After some contemplation, he adopted a stern tone and said, "Edwin, we are the girl's family. We don't force matters. Whether you two can be together ultimately rests on your shoulders."

Edwin nodded in understanding.

But Peter couldn't help feeling a lingering sense of unease. Should he truly let this rascal off so easily?

However, he had witnessed Edwin's growth and knew he had faced his fair share of hardships. Edwin and Laura made a striking couple. Despite the intricate web of their relationship, how could he really bring himself to separate them?

Then Edwin took his leave.

Lina fetched some essential oil to massage her husband's aching head.

Peter seized her hand and exclaimed, "That's enough, dear! The more you rub, the worse my head throbs! Why didn't you mention this earlier?"

Lina cast her gaze downward, a demure expression on her face. "Mr. Evans has been aware of it for a while. It wasn't my place to speak about it."

She let out a soft sigh and added, "What truly matters is that Laura cares for him."

Peter fell into a pensive silence.

Edwin returned home, where little Olivia awaited him in the yard. As soon as he stepped out of the car, the young girl rushed to him, clinging to his arm and whispering, "Dad was really furious last night! Eddie, you're quite the daredevil."

Edwin gently patted her head and retrieved a bag of candy from his

pocket.

He bought it during his stroll with Laura the previous night.

Olivia's face lit up with delight as she selected a piece of candy to savor.

As Edwin stepped inside the house, the butler leaned in and whispered, "Sir, your father wishes to see you in the study."

Edwin nodded and proceeded as instructed.

Inside, Mark sat, cigarette in hand.

Upon Edwin's entrance, he promptly extinguished his cigarette and inquired, "Did you escort her back home?"

Edwin responded with a soft hum of affirmation.

Mark didn't react with anger but instead posed a calm question. "What's your plan?"

Edwin spoke in hushed tones. "Let's get through the new year's holiday first. We've been separated for quite some time now, so I'd like to give her some time to think. If Laura agrees, we can arrange a dinner involving both families. I'll speak to Mom about it."

Mark let out a cold, mocking chuckle.

"Look at you, all grown up and calculating! Planning each move meticulously, aren't you?"

He continued, "You observed your Mom softening up and conceived the idea of bringing Laura home for the New Year's Day to win her over. Step by step, gaining her favor, right? Impressive, Mr. Evans. Not only do you excel at deceiving young women, but you also possess the art of charming your own mother. And Olivia, she's your little informant as well, isn't she?"

Under normal circumstances, Edwin might have countered Mark's words, but he chose to remain silent this time.

He was counting on his father on this!

Cecilia always heeded Mark's advice. When it came to persuasion, Edwin knew he lagged far behind his father.

While Mark's tone dripped with sarcasm, he couldn't deny that the young man possessed a certain shrewdness.

In truth, it wasn't the opportune moment to make their relationship public.

The two young lovebirds needed time to sort things out; after all, who could guarantee it would all work out?

Mark dismissed Edwin with a casual wave of his hand and muttered, "You're a nuisance! Go and see your Mom. She thinks you were out gallivanting last night, claiming you've gone wayward and lost your decency."

Edwin simply laughed, further infuriating Mark.

"Get lost! You rascal!"

Edwin proceeded to console Cecilia.

Unexpectedly, he then received a call from Vanessa.

Edwin's demeanor remained frosty as he replied, "Vanessa, let's part amicably. Or rather, we can say we never truly began. My father's going against the Smith family has ceased. You don't need to plead for mercy anymore."

He was about to disconnect the call.

Vanessa hastily interjected, "Edwin, I'm in Czanch."

She mumbled, "I'm standing at the gates of your home."

Edwin felt exasperation welling up within him.

His voice took on a frigid edge as he remarked, "Vanessa, we were never at that stage, were we? Why make things awkward for both of us?"

With that, Edwin ended the call, choosing not to entertain her any further.

He had expected her to fade away after being rebuffed.

That evening, a servant discreetly whispered something in Edwin's ear during dinner.

Edwin's expression underwent a subtle shift.

The servant conveyed that Vanessa had spent the entire day squatting at the gates of Evans Gardon. She was thinly dressed, devoid of identification or money, and appeared resolute in her determination to gain entry.

Edwin responded in a hushed tone, "I'll go take a look."

He left the dining table, where Cecilia and young Olivia were enjoying their meal. With a hint of teasing, Mark quipped, "Did you get yourself into trouble? Has some woman just come to seek her child's father?"

Edwin nonchalantly patted his trousers and replied, "Dad, rest assured, I'm as pure as they come. I don't entangle myself with other women."

Exasperated, Mark affectionately scolded him as a rascal.

Outside the gates of Evans Gardon, Edwin discreetly handed the servant some hush money to ensure that Cecilia remained unaware of Vanessa's presence.

Then, he laid eyes on Vanessa.

In the chilly weather, she was clad only in a thin wool dress.

Her legs were exposed to the biting cold.

Her typically composed visage had reddened from the unforgiving weather, presenting a pitiful sight.

Yet, Edwin's heart remained as unyielding as iron.

He furrowed his brow and questioned, "Vanessa, what's the purpose of all this? You claimed it was a mere collaboration, but your actions suggested something entirely different. Who's at fault here?"

Vanessa's voice quivered as she replied, "You never mentioned reconciling with Laura!"

In the dimness, Edwin lit a cigarette.

"Our affairs have no bearing on you!"

Suddenly, Vanessa took a step closer and embraced him before he could react.

Her entire body pressed gently against his.

She gazed up at him and softly uttered, "Did you spend the night with her, Edwin? Whatever she can offer you, I can, too! And I'll do it better!"

Drawing closer, she attempted to kiss him.

However, Edwin pushed her away.

He had always been straightforward, even in his dealings with women. "Vanessa, do you intend to undress right here and now? Don't you think you're making a spectacle of yourself?"

Vanessa's patience reached its breaking point.

She exclaimed, "Of course, I'm well aware of how undignified this is! Edwin, I've harbored feelings for you for eight long years, a full eight years! Why do you think we were arranged to be together? Why do you think I've tolerated you, knowing you were entangled with Laura and still willing to marry you? Because I like you!"

She literally risked everything for this man, but Edwin remained impassive.

It didn't go unnoticed that she brought up Laura.

He lowered his voice and chastised her, "Are you out of your mind? Have I ever claimed to have feelings for you? Who I'm with, who I'm close to; what relevance does it have to you? Stop this drama!"

Vanessa quivered as she responded, "You're right! It's my fault; I fell for you first! Edwin, can't you just look at me, consider me?"

"No!"

Edwin retrieved his wallet and withdrew two thousand dollars.

"Find a place to stay! Have someone from your family pick you up."

He turned to depart, unwilling to engage further with the woman who appeared to be losing her composure.

As he walked away, his thoughts drifted to how much more endearing Laura was, only shedding soft tears, a stark contrast to Vanessa's demeanor.

Vanessa, however, remained persistent.

She spoke softly. "I didn't bring any identification, so I can't check into any hotel."

Edwin turned back, his expression one of disdain. "So, you're clinging to me now?"

Vanessa offered no denial.

In the midst of this tense exchange, Edwin's phone rang, and it was Laura

calling.

She couldn't find one of her earrings, a personal item she didn't want others to eventually find in his possession. But she wasn't sure if he really took it, so she called to ask.

Laura inquired about it in a soft tone, and Edwin responded gently, "Yes, it's in my pocket."

Feeling somewhat embarrassed, Laura was about to say something.

But Vanessa's voice intruded through the phone, "Whose call is that, Edwin? Is it Laura? We're getting married, and you're still in contact with her?"

Laura was taken aback.

Infuriated, Edwin responded icily to Vanessa, "You're deranged!"

Then, in a softer tone, he assured Laura, "There's nothing like that. She just appeared at Evans Gardon."

Laura's heart began to race.

She suddenly recalled the harsh words of the household staff from earlier years of her childhood, insinuating that Cathy had gone to Evans Gardon to disrupt Mark's marriage.

In a moment of impulse, she abruptly ended the call.

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