

After Death 31

Chapter 31

The gravity of her smile almost sucked Ethan in, but his rationale quickly pulled him back to reality.

He furrowed his brows. He had an unpleasant look on his face as he said, "What trick are you trying to pull, Olivia?"

Olivia said seriously, "I'm not trying to pull anything. I'm telling you that I'm giving you three months. After that, you can marry Marina and have a million babies with her for all I care."

When that happened, her life would be at its end. She would find somewhere remote and live the rest of her life in peaceful solitude.

Ethan saw the determination in her eyes. He felt like didn't understand Olivia anymore. He thought she was going to hate him, even after they talked it out. He did not expect her to be like this.

Ethan coldly glared at her. "What if I say no?"

"Then, I'll never sign the divorce papers. I can wait. Your girl and baby can't," Olivia said as she quirked an eyebrow. She had the usual taunting look on her face. "I'm giving you three months. We'll sign the divorce papers after then. After that, I'll leave Aldenvine and never come back."

Ethan sneered. "I know you won't leave your father behind."

She was about to die anyway. Why should she care about anyone else?

Olivia replied gently, "The doctor said the chances of my father waking up are very slim. It's not a bad idea for him to stay if he is going to still be in a coma."

Maybe when she reached the end of her life, she would ask the hospital to do the same for Jeff and terminate his life support. If she went away first, no one would be there to help him handle his affairs.

If Ethan were to one day lose his mind and throw her father's body into the sea, he would be mangled by the currents. She might not recognize him if she bumped into him in heaven.

It was probably a better idea for them to leave the world together. At least the journey wouldn't be too lonely then.

Ethan stayed silent. However, Marina interrupted the conversation. "Ethan, is it done?"

discussions of divorce had never reached a point of success. Marina couldn't sit and wait any longer, so she ended on taking matters into her own hands.

This time, she brought her child with her to secure Ethan's heart. She couldn't let anything sway the discussion this time.

She was carrying her daughter, an adorable little girl. She didn't look anything like Ethan, but she was a spitting image of

Marina

When Olivia noticed the child, she was a little surprised. Her heart felt like it was being squeezed. She felt like she couldn't

breathe.

If her baby survived, she would be as old as her daughter. She had lost her precious daughter, but Marina was lucky enough to

have twins.

The girl reached for Ethan. She gurgled, "Ahh, papa carry."

Ethan swiftly took the baby in his arms, and Marina stood beside him. She smiled gently at Olivia.

“Miss Fordham, Ethan does not love you anymore. Why are you even still here?”

She glanced at the divorce papers. A surprised look flashed across her face briefly, but she quickly regained her composure. Ethan has been more than kind to you. If I were you, I would learn my place. Don't be greedy. You might lose more than you gain if you do.”

Olivia looked at her coldly, and she rudely retorted, “That's why you never will be me.

This had a double meaning. However, Marina forcefully kept her smile since Ethan was there.

Olivia was fiddling with the pen in her hand. “Ethan, this is my condition. If you don't agree, we can drag this on. We'll see who lasts the longest.”

“One month.”

Ethan looked up, his eyes locked on her face.

Olivia tried to negotiate but received his heartless rejection instead.

“That's my final offer.”

There was no room for negotiation.

“Okay, one month it is.”

Chapter 32

After counting the days she had left, Olivia figured it might be a good idea to have a companion to celebrate the coming year.

Olivia, as she always did, extended her pinky finger and said, "Deal."

Ethan was stunned. Marina brattily rubbed herself against him and whined, "Ethan."

Ethan didn't look at her. He slowly extended his finger, hooked it with Olivia's, and said, "No take-backs."

They had finally come to an agreement.

This was the only method Olivia could devise. He would stay with her for a month, then she would return his freedom to him.

Marina groaned, "Ethan, I'm not rushing you to get a divorce or anything, but think about our baby..."

Olivia's stomach churned as she looked at how childish Marina was being. "I'm going to the bathroom."

Ethan was great at everything, except choosing people he wanted to keep in his life.

Although Marina was his neighbor, he didn't need to be with someone like her to torture himself. She lost respect for him for even standing next to Marina.

Or was Ethan a sucker for this kind of behavior?

Olivia thought about this on her way to the bathroom. Men just don't say no to a bratty woman, do they?

Every time she was coy and flirty like that in the past, he would grab the moon and stars for her.

One month.

Okay, he was willing to give her one month.

Olivia just squatted by the toilet bowl and vomited her guts out. She shouldn't have jinxed herself. She was just thinking that morning that her stomach had been doing much better in the past few days. Now, she was back to square one.

There was a big patch of fresh red blood that came with it. No matter how many times she looked at it, it chilled her to the

dark omen.

She forced herself to make peace with it. She wasn't going to suffer for long.

Just as she was about to leave after freshening up, she felt someone tug the bottom of her fur coat.

Olivia looked down and saw a little boy that looked a lot like Ethan. It was his son. He had one hand on the sink while another held onto the corner of her coat. There was drool in his mouth as he babbled incoherently, "Ahh, mama!"

She was supposed to hate him. He was the product of Ethan and Marina, after all.

However, she had been a mother, even if it was for a short time. She couldn't hate a child.

Olivia lowered herself and poked the tip of the boy's nose with her finger. She said fiercely, "Hey little troublemaker, don't you dare become like your father when you grow up. You better give your woman the world and worship the ground she walks

on,"

Little Connor stretched out both his arms and rushed toward Olivia. "Carry!"

Olivia pulled a face to scare him. "I'm a bad lady. I might kidnap you and sell you. Doesn't that scare you?"

Connor laughed. He was far from scared.

His nanny quickly rushed over with a baby stroller. She was very anxious as she said, "Ahh, my dear! You gave me such a scare! Why are you in the women's bathroom?"

The moment she saw Olivia, she quickly dragged the boy over. For a second, Connor was still giggling, but in the next, he looked hurt. "Mama, carry!"

"Young Master, don't call her that. She is not your mother."

Then, the nanny picked the boy up and hurriedly left. Olivia looked at his cute and chubby face, and her eyes filled with tears. Her heart ached.

She stared at the chubby hand waving her goodbye as he babbled, calling for her, "All, Mama!"

Olivia was standing by the entrance of the ladies' bathroom. By the time Brent found her, her face was lousy

Chapter 33

Olivia was beautiful. Even when she wept, she looked alluring. It was heart-aching to see someone so beautiful and so sad.

Brent said to her softly, "Madam, Mr. Miller is waiting for you."

Olivia snapped back to reality. She reached out to wipe the tears from her face. She suddenly started sobbing again.

“Oh, Brent. I must look awful, don’t I?”

Brent had worked for Ethan for many years. He was no stranger to how vibrant his wife was. In the short span of two years, he gathered that she was like a withering flower: yet to witness her full bloom, and perhaps may never get to.

“Don’t worry. You still look beautiful. No one is as beautiful as you are.” Brent handed her a tissue.

Olivia wiped her tears as she said, “I used to hate people who cry easily. I’m slowly becoming someone I hate. I’ve become someone I swore never to be.”

Brent looked at her sorrowful eyes and responded with something that shocked even himself. “Then, why are you still holding on?” He knew that Ethan had spent the whole night thinking and changing the terms of the divorce. It was obvious that he was ready to let go.

The Fordhams were bankrupt. Jeff, who was responsible for it, was barely alive. He had tormented and hurt Olivia for two years. He was planning to let her go.

Hence, she was given a generous alimony to ensure her a comfortable life for the rest of her days.

Leaving was the wise decision now. Olivia knew when to back down. Did she think that there was a chance that Ethan would change his mind?

She had finally climbed out of that misery and now, she wanted to go back in again. She was repeating her mistake and bringing herself suffering all over again.

Olivia didn’t answer the question but said, “If my baby was still alive, they would be about their age.”

Brent wanted to say something but stopped himself. In the end, he just said, "Madam, you're still young. There will be another chance for you to be a mother."

She sighed. "I'm not having any more children."

Desolation colored Olivia's face. Brent could tell that something was off. He wanted to ask more, but Olivia said, "Let's go."

Ethan was already waiting for her in the car. The aloof look on his face showed indifference. He didn't even turn to look at her. After via got into the car, he folded his arms. He was distant and cold as he said, "What do you plan on achieving in one

Πολ

Olivia threw herself into Ethan's arms.

Yesterday, she was filled with hatred and wanted to get back at him. Once she saw the evidence, she was conflicted. She hated Ethan for what he did to the Fordhams and hated him even more for his betrayal.

However, Jeff's wrongdoings were clear as day. She knew him well enough. Since things were getting nowhere, she wanted to put an end to everything with all she had left of her life. She wanted to leave

the world without regrets.

Ethan did not return her affection and only said coldly, "I am getting engaged to Marina after the new year."

Olivia's fingers that were tangled in his coat tightened, and the smile on her face froze.

The backseat was dead silent. The heater was on in the car, but the driver, Kelvin, could feel the chill in the atmosphere.

After a long while, Olivia finally looked up from his arms. "I just want a month."

Ethan saw how fragile she was, and a feeling that he could not explain swirled in his heart. "Even if we had a year, nothing would change, let alone a month. Do you understand?"

Olivia bit her lip. "I understand. But you're mine for a month, okay?"

Chapter 34

Ethan replied, "Okay."

For the first time in more than a year, both of them gave in. She tightly wrapped herself around him like she did before. His finger moved slightly but eventually rested on his side.

The car drove to Ethan's company. He asked Kelvin to send Olivia home.

Olivia went to the hospital instead of the Miller residence. Jeff was still unconscious and had been moved to a normal ward.

Olivia sent the helper home and personally prepared a bowl of warm water to wipe down his face and fingers.

She muttered, "Dad, I know your secret. I wish it wasn't true. Please wake up and tell me that it's not, will you? Tell me you didn't do those things, that you didn't kill Jodie.

"Dad, I have stomach cancer. Ethan doesn't know, and it's for the best. If I give my life to him, will he let go of his hatred?

"My life has been smooth sailing thus far. You took really good care of me while I was growing up. You're the best dad in the world. No matter what you've done to others, you will always be someone I respect. I'll fix the damage you've done.

"I know you would never let me do this if you were still here, but I have no choice. I love him. I fell in love with him eight years ago. It doesn't matter if it's only one month. I'm willing to put up with it."

Olivia had a lot on her mind. She sat by her father's bedside for a long time, venting.

She knew that her time on earth was slowly depreciating. This was the only thing she could do for her father.

She went back to the Miller residence in the afternoon. Ethan was a man of his word. He never broke any promises he made.

The moment Olivia reached the Miller residence, she saw Marina, who had been waiting by the porch for a long time.

Since Ethan was not present, she removed her facade. She looked like she was about to start trouble.

She glared fiercely at Olivia. "Do you think he's going to come running back to you? Give up, Olivia."

Olivia wasn't angry. She stared at her calmly. "Marina, do you love Ethan?"

Marina was startled. She never expected Olivia to suddenly ask this question.

Af

ment, she answered, "I decided to marry him and no one else more than ten years ago. I met him earlier than you

him more than you do. You can't win."

Olivia smiled wryly and responded, "I know that."

She raised her head and said lightly, "I don't know if you believe me, but I never wanted to be your enemy. Even today."

The dead could never win a fight against the living. Moreover, a conversation would not make her business with Ethan disappear.

"I only want one month. After one month, I will leave the city."

"Do you take me for a child? You..."

Before she could finish, a loud baby's voice yelled, "Mama!"

A small bundle of joy wearing a teddy bear onesie appeared in the snow. He waddled his way with his unsteady feet toward them. He fell after taking two steps. He ended up crawling.

Connor swiftly crawled toward Olivia. Olivia was faster than Marina. She went forward and quickly scooped him up from the

snow.

The little angel looked very happy. He reached out with his chubby hands and tried to hug Olivia's neck.

Marina swatted his arm away, causing the baby to cry. Olivia's heart ached at the sight of this, and she tried to hug him to stop the crying.

Chapter 35

Olivia was initially confused by Marina's dramatic response. She wondered how she could trip on flat ground. It all had to be a charade she was orchestrating.

She knew Ethan was coming back. Of course, she brought the baby wherever she went. It wasn't even a surprise that she would fall with the baby in her arms. Even the angle she fell looked like it was intentionally going to hurt the baby!

She was ruthless. She would even use her baby as leverage to get what she wanted.

When she saw that Connor was about to hit the ground, her body acted faster than her rationale. She immediately caught Connor and cushioned his fall with her body.

However, the weight fell mostly on the arm where her mediport was. The doctor reminded her many times not to pick up heavy objects and risk hurting her arm.

She couldn't be bothered with that as the baby was falling. Although he wasn't a newborn, and he was small and light, she didn't think about what it would do to her body.

She fell fast. Her world spun, and her arm burned with excruciating pain.

When she opened her eyes, she saw the baby lying in her embrace. His set of big eyes looked at her curiously. Olivia could finally relax. Thank heavens he was fine.

Ethan quickly came over. The first thing Marina did when she got up was scold Olivia. "Miss Fordham, I know you hate me, but Connor is a child. How could you even think about hurting him?"

At a glance, any bystander would assume that Olivia was trying to hurt the baby.

It wasn't the first time Marina had tried to frame her. Olivia couldn't be bothered to fight. She was breaking out in a cold sweat from the pain in her arm. Even breathing hurt.

Ethan didn't scold Olivia. He bent down to pick up Connor, but the boy refused to leave. His tiny hands grabbed onto Olivia's collar as he babbled something that no one understood.

Ethan glared coldly at Connor. Although Connor was young, he immediately shut up. He looked at Olivia, aggrieved. He looked like he wanted her to carry him.

Marina took Connor from Ethan. He started crying again, not wanting her to touch him.

"Ethan, Connor wants you," Marina said pitifully. "I brought him here, but I didn't expect that Miss Fordham would..."

Ethan unpleasantly interrupted her whining. "I'm sending the both of you home."

Olivia was still flat on the ground, facing the sky. She wanted to get up, but her body felt like it was eighty years old. She had no strength to get up from the fall.

She needed a hand, so she looked toward Ethan. "Ethan, could you..."

Ethan glanced at her from the corner of his eye and said, "I'll come back later."

Olivia could only watch his cold back as her mouth curled into a wry smile. Oh, how cruel he could be.

In the past, he would comfort her even when he knew she was faking her pain. Now, he didn't believe her when she was hurting so much that she couldn't get up. This had nothing to do with trust—his heart was no longer with her.

Snow fell on her face. She recalled when she was dating Ethan. He looked cold and aloof as he walked ahead of her. That day, she sprained her ankle on purpose. She sat on the ground and counted in her heart how long it would take for him to turn around.

He turned back the moment she counted to three and rushed toward her.

It was the first time she had seen panic on his face. She wrapped her arms around his neck and said coyly, "Maybe you shouldn't walk so fast next time."

Chapter 36

She counted until he reached his car. He did not turn back.

Olivia lay forgotten on the ground, unmoving. Although the side effects of the treatment had reduced significantly, her body still felt weak. The hard fall felt like it had broken her bones.

Brent and the rest were with Ethan. Madam Burgess used to be around, but she left. Now the house was empty.

Snow fell from the sky, and cold wind came from all directions. Her hands and feet were frozen.

She thought, "Someone please help me."

Her bag was not far from where she was, but she could not turn over and reach for it.

She could only stare at the snowflakes floating in a cruel ballet in the sky. Tears slowly fell from her face as she whispered, 885, 886..."

By the time she counted to 1038, Olivia had recovered enough strength to stand. She used one hand to support herself and got

1. up.

She was freezing. When the car arrived, the tip of her nose was red from the cold. She couldn't raise the arm she used to catch the boy, so she had to use the other to help her breathe.

"Miss, you must be cold. Are you going to the hospital alone? It's getting late. You should be careful. You should have someone with you. You're a beautiful lady. There have been a lot of stories in the news about ladies like you going missing." The driver warned her when he saw that she was going to the hospital alone at such a late hour.

Olivia put her hand down. She was warming up from the heater in the car. She watched the scenery outside the window rapidly passing by. Her mouth curled into a smile as she said, "Thank you, sir, but I'm fine. My family will be with me soon."

She didn't have any family.

Luckily, Keith was done with work. She had been waiting for the on-call doctor.

She saw a familiar face when she opened the door.

Keith walked in wearing a white coat and his head down. His face looked even more elegant with his silver-rimmed glasses resting on his nose.

Olivia didn't know he was working tonight. It would be too obvious if she backed out now. Keith lifted his head while she was deliberating on what to do.

The eyes behind the glasses became more vibrant at the sight of her. Then, they quickly turned into a look of concern.

He didn't think Olivia would come and see him this late. He rushed over quickly. "Is something wrong?"

Olivia was so cold. Her hands were numb, and her arm ached.

She said quickly, "Keith, my arm hurts."

The look on Keith's face changed the moment he heard that the arm with the mediport was hurting. "Quick, let me see. You studied medicine so you should know this. If the mediport loosens, it can cause your heart to constrict. You could be in great danger!"

This was not a small matter. Olivia had been very attentive toward that arm. However, what happened today was unexpected. Keith began to examine her. Thankfully, the mediport was intact. Keith let out a

breath of relief.

Without apprehension, Olivia suggested, "Keith, help me take it out."

"Take it out? You still have a few more rounds of chemotherapy..."

Olivia looked into his anxious eyes and said lightly, "I'm done with them."

Chapter 37

Keith had no idea what she had gone through the past few days. She used to have an inspirationally strong will to live. But now, her eyes had a dark intensity to them, something he had never seen.

They were pools of still water, devoid of ripples.

"Was it him? Did he do this to you?"

Olivia shook her head. "No."

"But he has something to do with it, right? The Olivia I know wouldn't make this decision."

Hurt flashed across Keith's face. He looked at the snow drifting on the wind outside the window and sighed. "Maybe he did love you once, during that one winter. But this winter, he's chosen someone else. You should let him go, Liv."

It was obvious that she had been blinded by love and lost herself. She was oblivious to the history the both of them had and was refusing to give up.

Olivia knew that Ethan's love for her was in the past. Even if he let go of his hatred toward her, Leia's death would be a constant needle buried in his heart. It would leave him in agony for the rest of his life.

Since he decided to marry Marina, she would use whatever was left of her life to find closure and make amends. Even if Jeff regained consciousness, Ethan wouldn't make things difficult for him.

This was the best decision for everyone involved.

Keith looked at her again. The vulnerability in her eyes was replaced with a rare determination.

He sighed. "Since you've made your decision, I have nothing to say. Olivia, you know the consequences of removing the mediport. Are you sure?"

He seemed to love asking Olivia this. Olivia smiled and firmly said, "Yes."

She pulled off part of her clothes and revealed her pale shoulder and her arm. The wound from before had healed over.

She insisted on doing it without anesthesia. It was a simple procedure for Keith.

Although she was lucky that the mediport was still attached, her arm took subdermal damage from Connor's fall. Her skin was bruised.

Keith carefully treated her wound. The sharp scalpel cut open her wound that had just healed over. A suffocating pain spread through her and into her heart.

She resisted the urge to scream. Keith felt sorry for her seeing her wincing.

His hands were still moving when he said lightly, "You can scream if it hurts."

It was what the doctor told her the last time. Olivia insisted on bearing the pain as she gritted her teeth, one hand gripping the cold table tightly.

Keith quickened his pace. Her arm hurt so much that it felt numb when the wound was sewn up. She was drenched in cold sweat and lay on the chair lifelessly.

Keith brought her a cup of water. He sat opposite her and said patiently, "Olivia, I've followed up on your dad's condition with his doctor. There's an eighty percent chance that he'll wake up if we can get the world's best neurosurgeon, Leo, to operate on him."

"I've looked him up. Leo vanished after an accident five years ago. No one knows where he is."

Olivia recovered with some water and rest. She could barely breathe from the pain from the wound touching the gauze. Yet, she forced herself to stand and was prepared to leave.

"Thank you, Keith. You don't have to worry about me from now on. It doesn't matter if I've divorced Ethen; he won't let me interact with other men. I don't want to cause trouble for you."

Chapter 38

Olivia stumbled as she stood up. She smiled frailly. "I fell in love with him the moment I laid eyes on him. I've loved him for so many years. I—I can't just let him go."

Keith saw tears streaming down her face. He wanted to wipe them for her, but he was in no position to. He could only stay still

and look at her.

Tears slid down her chin. Olivia smiled wryly. "I know it's suffocating. But, the thought of watching him marry another girl hurts more than my cancer. I have no reason to live, so I'm choosing to die.

"I recently stumbled upon a saying. If you knew you were destined not to end up with the man you love dearly, would you choose to live through the joy and hurt and watch it end, or turn around and leave before it even starts?"

Olivia laughed at herself. "If I hadn't met him, I would have chosen to turn around and leave. However, such is fate that I am unable to escape. He and I agreed that he would keep me company for another month. We will get divorced after. By then, I will take the step back to look around, like you want me to."

Keith looked at how clumsy each of her steps were. Her right hand rested on her left shoulder as she walked. She kept her back turned to him as she said, "Keith, thank you for everything you've done for me. I don't deserve you."

She slowly inched her way to the chilly outdoors. There was a blizzard howling outside. Her silhouette drifted further away into the distance.

Keith did not want to let her go. He looked out the window and watched her disappear.

The corner of his lips curled into a helpless smile. Why was she so persistent? Was Ethan really worth it?

Keith likened her to a pious priest on a vision quest, looking for a holy place that never existed in the first place.

The lights were on when Olivia got back to the Miller residence. She looked at the cozy mansion in the snow, reminiscing how it had been three years ago.

Warm air flooded her the moment she opened the door. She took her shoes off and found Ethan busy in the kitchen.

As usual, he was there.

He was wearing a gray cashmere sweater. His forearm muscles pushed against his rolled sleeves, making him look especially attractive. His left arm bore a long and ugly scar.

The scar was from when he shielded her from a thug that was coming at her with a sharp knife.

Ethan was focused on cooking when he felt a hug behind him. He was stunned and stopped as Olivia buried her head into his

back.

He continued cooking for a bit more and turned the flame off. He stood at the stove and did not turn back. He said softly, "Where did you go?"

"I was at the hospital for my arm."

He knew how she could be. He had to care for her quite intently, even when she got a small cut. Her fall this time was much worse than that.

It didn't matter what Marina said. Ethan was not blind. He could tell that she was trying to save Connor.

"Thank you for today. Connor was okay."

After that, Ethan skillfully plated the food and brought it to the dining table.

Olivia was rooted to the spot, shocked. It was the first time he had ever thanked her. A wave of regret followed.

The "thank you" was meant to set a professional distance.

She wanted to tell him, "Ethan, I went to get my arm stitched up. It still hurts now. Can you make it better, please?"

Looking at his tall back, Olivia muttered to herself, "What's there to thank? I hate that little punk. I, of all people, hope he hurt

Ethan didn't expose her horrible attempt at lying. He called out to her from the side of the dining table. "Come and eat. Wash your hands first."

Rays of light from the chandelier fell on him. Without his suit and tie, the wooly cashmere sweater added a domestic warmth to him. Even his elegant face was less cold than usual.

He was wearing the apron she got him three years ago. It almost looked like nothing had changed.

Olivia went toward him smiling and saw that the table was filled with the spicy food she used to like. If he paid attention to what Madam Burgess had been making for her recently, he would realize that her palate had changed.

He no longer took notice of her like he used to. They tried so hard to revert to the life they had, but that life was far behind them.

A lot of things ended silently, like his love. The answer to everything now was silence and distance.

Although her stomach couldn't handle spicy or oily foods, she had hoped for a feast like this for two years. So, she pushed through the discomfort and ate it.

Since her life was on a countdown, she appreciated every meal she had even more. It was one meal less for every meal she finished.

Ethan had known her for a long time. He could tell when she was faking happiness. It was obvious that she was forcing herself to be happy. Had his cooking skills depreciated after two years?

Ethan finally spoke to break the silence, "Is the food not up to your standards?"

"No, it's great. It tastes exactly like how it used to. I was thinking about how long we hadn't eaten together and how much longer we still have."

The old Ethan would have said “forever”. Now, he stared at the snow outside the window and remained silent.

Olivia set herself up for that. Why would she ask such a dumb question?

One month was the last ounce of grace he could extend.

Before he could answer, she started to feel a piercing pain in her stomach. She hadn’t eaten spicy food in a long time. It hurt so bad that she was tearing up.

“I’m done. Please help yourself.” Olivia got up and rushed upstairs.

She vomited into the toilet severely. Looking at the globs of blood, she could tell that she didn’t have much time left. She had to seize every moment.

Olivia showered, avoiding the wound on her arm. She noticed that she was experiencing hair loss. However, stopping her treatments now would stop her hair from completely falling out.

She looked at her reflection in the mirror. Although she looked pale and sickly, her skinny face accentuated her eyes. At least, she could leave this earth beautiful.

Ethan was in the home office. Olivia knocked on the door and went in. He was wearing gold-rimmed glasses.

They both wore glasses. Keith looked elegant and classy when he did, but Ethan looked fierce and severe. The glasses couldn’t hide the dangerous look in his eyes.

He looked up and then at her coldly. Olivia immediately said, “I want to see the auroras. You owe me a honeymoon. In Iceland.” Back then, she and Ethan had only signed the papers; they did not have a wedding. If anyone caught them together on camera, he would ask for it to be deleted. No one knew he was married.

Apart from the marriage papers, everything else a girl dreamed of—the wedding, the dress, and the honeymoon—never happened.

That was why Ethan pampered her greatly after they were married. It was as if he was compensating.

Ethan put down the pen he was holding, adjusted his glasses, and said in a low voice, “You know I’m busy at the end of the year. Plus, it’s hard to predict when the auroras will appear.”

He was trying to say that he couldn’t afford it.

Chapter 40

Now, the man who was willing to spend half a year nurturing a rose garden for her because of something she said, was no longer willing to spend a few days with her outside of the country.

When He loved her, he was head over heels. Now that he didn’t, he was unsympathetic.

Olivia gently tugged the corner of his shirt and begged, “I don’t have much time left. Can you give it to me, please?”

“Olivia, don’t take advantage of the situation.” He looked at her coldly. He assumed she was referring to the month they agreed on. He didn’t even hesitate to reject her idea.

“Am I taking advantage of the situation?” Olivia mocked. “You think you’re wasting your time with me? You’re preparing for your engagement, aren’t you?”

The tips of Ethan’s slender fingers gently tapped on the surface of the table. He coolly looked in her direction and said, “I told you I was getting engaged.”

Although his face remained expressionless, Olivia could see the challenge in his eyes.

She was the one who begged for the month. She deserved it.

She looked at him silently, then smiled. "Pardon my wishful thinking. Sorry to bother you."

Olivia opened the door and left. Then, a man's voice called out from behind her. "Pick somewhere local."

She stopped in her tracks, and her face was filled with excitement. "Let's go to Mohe."

Olivia left delightedly! There was a lower chance of seeing the auroras in Mohe Town, but having him spend her last days with her was enough for her.

It was late into the night. He slept beside her. Olivia wasn't asleep. She curled her body carefully. It was as if there was a sea between both of them.

She didn't dare get too close to him, afraid he would notice the wound on her arm.

He immediately faced the other side when he got in bed and had no intention of paying attention to her. Olivia quietly looked out the window into the night, struggling to fall asleep.

He left for work early the next day. Olivia kept herself busy. She was hoping to atone for her father during her last days. She followed the address in the document and went to a psychiatric hospital to visit one of the victims, Belle Sanders.

place like

She was sent there two years ago due to her tendency toward self-harm. This was the first time Olivia had visited this. It was quieter than normal hospitals with the occasional sight of security guards wearing protective gear. It was as if the place would go to war anytime.

The nurse who was bringing her up to Belle's room repeatedly reminded Olivia to maintain a certain distance from the patient.

Belle had a roommate. She saw Olivia and started giggling. Belle was a quiet girl. Her long hair rested over the number on her gown. She was hugging her knees as she looked out the window; her eyes were lifeless.

“Belle.” Olivia gently called for her. She had met Belle once previously at an innovation competition. She was full of vigor, and her eyes were radiant back then.

The person on the bed moved and turned curiously toward Olivia. Before Olivia could speak, she grabbed her hand and shushed her, saying, “Keep it down. Someone is trying to take my baby.”

Olivia looked at the pillow in her arm. She didn’t want to trigger her so she nodded and asked, “Who is trying to take your baby?”

“Tap, tap, tap.” The sound of high heels resounded in the hallway. Belle was so terrified of the sound that she hid behind the curtains, shivering.

“She’s here. She’s here to take my baby!”

Before Olivia could speak, a woman in a white lab coat and a nametag on her chest that said ‘director’ stood at the entrance. She said fiercely, “Belle’s mental state is clinically unstable. She does not have the capacity to entertain guests. Miss Fordham, please leave.”