

Chapter 36 She Was His Mother

Roxanne's eyes parted slowly. She blinked twice when the full light of the room greeted her gaze. However, she was more stunned when she caught sight of sea blue eyes staring down at her. Confusion and a faint sense of panic seized her chest immediately. Who was this man?

She sprang up immediately. As she tried to sit up, she felt a splitting headache, as though her head was being hit by a large wooden plank. She groaned in pain, her left hand rose up to her head, she rested it on her forehead. Roxanne took one swift look around the room. The bed she was lying on was two times smaller than hers. The room smelt of methylated spirit and antiseptics, a stark contrast to her normal deodorant and lavender scent. Her eyes looked away from the young man by her side and she followed the rays of sunlight that hit her face to the window beside her. While it was large, the draperies on it were a different color.

Roxanne's eyes widened. She wasn't in her room! Then, where was she? And who was this man looking over her?

He must have noticed she was anxious, because he stepped back and turned away from her, without uttering a single word. Roxanne followed his gaze, her eyes rested on Peter.

Immediately, relief flushed over her, and she felt her panic slowly disappear. One familiar face was all she needed to know that she had not been kidnapped by an English gang member. She had seen too much movies about UK gangs not to fear them.

However, she was still confused. Peter looked as though she had just risen from the dead. The relief on his face was very obvious, it only made Roxanne wonder what had happened to her.

When she tried to speak, her head ached the more. Peter noticed this and rushed to her side.

"Miss Harvey," he said aloud. His voice was laddered with concern, and so was his gaze. Roxanne stretched out a hand to him to assure him that she was okay.

"Peter..." she finally spoke when she managed to find her voice. Her eyes swept across the room again.

"Where am I?" she continued.

Roxanne noticed Peter look over to the young man who was previously standing in front of her. She could not read the looks that the both of them shared, but Peter plastered a smile on his face and turned back to her.

"The palace infirmary," he spoke. Peter's eyes fell to her second hand which lay by her side on the bed. "How are you feeling?"

"Like my head is about to burst open and my brain wants to fall to the ground," she replied. She had not intended to amuse him, but Peter chuckled, and so did the young man by his side. Roxanne took a closer look at his face, he couldn't have been more than twenty years of age. And there was something oddly familiar about his eyes, it was as though she had seen them before.

He turned his face away from her immediately. Roxanne did not know what to make of this, but she looked away from him and focused her eyes on Peter.

"What happened to me?"

On hearing her question, Peter shot up a look to Arthur again, but Roxanne failed to notice this. Her eyes were closed as she slowly massaged her head by herself.

Peter was relieved to know that his plan had worked. If she did not remember how she got here, it certainly meant that she did not remember anything that happened that night. In fact, he was certain that the last memory she had of herself, was in her chambers.

Her mind was like a clean slate. And he was happy about that.

Now, he just had to find a lie good enough for her to believe. He could not afford to make any mistakes.

"You passed out," he spoke, his tone had not lost the concern in it, but there was a sharp edge in his voice, and it caused Roxanne to open her eyes.

"I did?"

Peter seemed to frown for a brief second. Why did she ask like she did not believe him? However, he had started with one story, and he had to complete it.

"Yes. You did. I presume you were stressed from all the reading and sorting of files. I am sure that his grace would give you a week off. You need to recover and be sure that you're strong enough."

Roxanne's eyes narrowed on his. She found it hard to believe. She had collapsed? She had barely done anything to stress her. Besides reading files and anticipating her days ahead.

Peter noticed the query in her eyes and spoke out again. All this while, Arthur was beside him, his fists clenched to his side. This weird lady did not believe Peter - at least not yet. But she did not remember anything about what happened last night either.

"I am sure your body is not used to this environment. The weather, the food, the scenery, even the scent. Perhaps you were homesick. But, when I wanted to give you a copy of his grace's top clients, I found you sprawled on your bedroom floor. I tried to wake you up, but you weren't responding, so I had to rush you here," Peter spoke again. He made sure to sound as believable as he could this time.

And it seemed to work, because Roxanne's eyes softened immediately. She smiled, but it was a sad smile. Perhaps, Peter was right. She knew she missed home terribly, she must have fallen sick, like he had said. Roxanne's eyes glittered with gratitude as she looked at Peter.

"Thank you, I really appreciate your caring for me."

Peter returned the smile and was about to say something when they heard loud footsteps approach the door. With the pace, whoever was stomping towards them was very furious. Roxanne wondered who it might be. The footsteps stopped, and a female voice spoke from the door.

"You," It said. The disdain and irritation in the voice was enough to send cold down her spine.

Roxanne, Arthur and Peter turned towards the door immediately.

Peter bowed his head, and so did the young man beside her.

"Your majesty," Peter said.

"Mother," the other boy muttered.

But Roxanne continued to stare at the woman. She was confused, but in awe of the woman's beauty and elegance.

The woman stood, clad in a white suit jacket, and trouser. She stood tall, firm and confident in white heels. Even though her eyes seemed to have heavy bags under them, it did not stop them from causing Roxanne to melt under her stare. 'Who was this woman?' Roxanne thought to herself.

Her presence in the room alone had sent Roxanne's heart racing, and not the good kind of race. She felt a faint sense of fear and intimidation.

It did not help that the woman was staring down at her. She took few steps into the room. And with every sound of her heels on the marble floor, Roxanne's heart pounded against her chest.

How could one woman have such a domineering presence?

The woman tore her eyes away from Roxanne and focused them on Arthur.

"What are you doing here?"

Roxanne turned towards the man the lady spoke to. He bowed his head down as he spoke as well.

"Mother, I ..."

"Mother," the thick baritone that followed caused Roxanne's body to freeze instantly. She felt her stomach turn, but with pleasure. This time, the cold that froze her spine was pleasant, it warmed her insides. She knew that voice like she knew her own palm prints.

Roxanne's eyes turned to the door. And her heart melted once she saw him. Was he here to see how she was doing? He must have heard what happened to her, and decided to come and see if she was okay. Did he care about her?

She continued to stare at him, but he did not spare her a single glance.

The woman he called mother... Roxanne paused.

She was his mother?

Roxanne's eyes swept over the woman once more. She could not believe that such a young woman had a son of Lancelot's age.

"Your Grace."

"Brother."

Peter and Arthur said simultaneously. Lancelot only looked at them, but his eyes did not even spare Roxanne a glance. Within her, she felt her heart fall.

Madeline turned to her son, a scowl on her face. Lancelot ignored it and walked closer to her.

"If there's anything you want to say, say it to me."

He sounded so cold, even colder than his ice blue eyes.

Roxanne watched in silence as the woman hissed and walked out of the room, brushing past him.

She hoped that Lancelot would look down at her. Even if he didn't smile, he could at least acknowledge her presence.

But, he simply turned away from the room and walked behind his mother.

Roxanne felt her heart shatter to a million pieces. He had ignored her on purpose. Why would he do such a thing?

She came all the way here, more than 7 hours and an ocean away from her home just to work for him, the least he could do was care about her well-being, something he obviously did not do. Her sad eyes turned away from the door and focused on Peter.

He had a reassuring smile on his face.

But Roxanne was far from reassured.

What was really going on?