Chapter 16 Visit By The Father And Son

Jean knew that Bianca loved him, but he also knew that she did not love him as much as he loved her.

That was why, in order to make sure the proposal succeeded, once he decided to propose that noon, he asked his parents to invite his grandparents, aunts, and uncles over.

All in all, there were more than a dozen of his relatives, young and old.

After Bianca followed the Langdons upstairs, she was stunned in place the second they opened the door...

Similarly, Nina stared at her relatives crowding the house, looking at them like they were ghosts.

"You're here, you're here!" The one who spoke was Jean's father's second sister. When she saw the girl standing at the door, looking just like how she looked in the photo, the older woman immediately grabbed her mother's arm and said excitedly, "That's Jean's girlfriend, Bianca Rayne. She's right there at the door! Oh, what a beauty. Come over here and check her out, Mom..."

Bianca was rendered speechless.

'Come on in." Jean looked at her tenderly, tugging at her hand.

Out of politeness, Bianca had to force herself to smile at all of Jean's relatives.

Jean's grandmother never once let go of Bianca's hand, holding it in her palm and patting it gently every time she said anything.

Bianca was getting a premonition of something that felt neither good nor bad.

Her gaze sought Jean out and found him smoking on the balcony, his hands in his pockets. He looked stressed, as though something was weighing heavily on his heart.

Dinner was especially fancy that night.

Nina said, "This food is better than anything we've had, even during New Year's..."

Jean's grandparents and parents sat at the main table.

Jean and Bianca took their seats there as well.

Everyone else sat at another table.

As they ate, they only chatted about trivial things.

Bianca was almost done with her meal and was about to put down her cutlery when Jean suddenly looked her in the eye and said, "Come with me."

The two of them went to one of the smaller bedrooms.

It was Jean's room.

"What's the matter?" Bianca's voice was very soft and gentle as she asked, like the sweet warm sunshine in the mid-morning between dawn and noon.

Jean's gaze on her was determined and tender at the same time. He took her hand, his voice trembling slightly as he said, "I have to apologize to you. What happened this morning was

my fault."

"Oh, don't worry. I'm not angry about it anymore."

That was Bianca's reply.

"Thank you. Thank you for understanding my fears and worries." Jean reached out and pulled her into his embrace, closing his eyes as he said weakly, "You don't know how scared I am of losing you."

Bianca fell silent.

Jean continued, "You know, I fell in love a long, long time ago, from the moment you first set foot in my house. Back then, you were a high school freshman... I really felt like I was sinning for loving such a young girl. I tried turning my affections to other girls, but I never felt anything for them other than annoyance. Eventually, I realized that you would grow up someday. All I had to do was wait quietly.

"Finally, you grew up, and we had the chance to study overseas together.

"You have experienced harrowing events in the past. When you came clean and told me everything, to be honest, I was devastated..."

When she heard that, Bianca's body could not help a tiny shudder.

So he did mind, after all!

"Hear me out." Jean hugged her even tighter and continued, "I wasn't upset because you were unclean. I was upset at myself. I hated myself for not walking into your life from the start. I hated myself for not taking care of you well enough, for allowing you to suffer like that.

"Bianca, you must understand. No other man in the world has loved you longer than I have, with more conviction than I do..."

Perhaps it was because he truly was terrified of losing her, but Jean's voice gradually went from slight trembling to choked sobs.

Of course Bianca was moved.

Her heart felt like a puddle of warmth in her chest.

Finally, her prayers came true. There really was someone who loved her sincerely.

She was trying her best to forget everything in the past. That rich and powerful man from back then had wanted that too, after all.

She still remembered what that lady butler said to her. "I hope you have a good life from now on."

After that incident, Bianca had wondered to herself. Would she really be able to have a good life after what she went through?

Still, that was the path she had chosen, and she was not going to regret walking it. If she did have a good life after that, she would consider herself fortunate. If she did not, she would have no one else to blame.

Bianca figured that a good life did not need to be one filled with wealth and power. She just wanted someone who loved and understood her, someone with similar values in life. All she wanted was to have someone like that to cherish, and to cherish her in return, so that they may share a peaceful and uneventful life until they turned old and contented.

This someone was, without a doubt, Jean Langdon.

Bianca stepped out of his embrace and looked at him as she said, "Don't be so insecure. You're making me feel really guilty. I'm not all that special at all; no man would notice me."

Jean could not help but remember that bouquet of fresh flowers, flown in especially for her.

"Even if someone did, I know I'll be able to hold myself back," Bianca said solemnly.

Jean's confidence was restored now, and he held her hand again.

The two of them left the room.

Bianca wanted to walk toward the couch, but Jean forcefully kept her in the middle of the living room with a hug.

"What are you doing?" Bianca looked up at Jean with a questioning gaze. His expression had suddenly turned strange.

Just then, in front of all his relatives and elders, Jean pulled a black silk jewelry box from his pocket and opened it toward her!

"Whoa, that's so sudden!" Nina could not help a gasp, her hand flying to her mouth.

No wonder he called all these relatives over. He had been planning to propose all along!

Jean fell onto one knee in front of Bianca. In front of his entire extended family, he beseeched her, "Marry me, Bianca Rayne. Join my parents and relatives as part of my beloved family. Become my closest lover..."

Bianca, "..."

She had never even imagined the day she would be proposed to. She always thought that marriage was a long way away for her.

"Say yes, dear!" Jean's mother could not help but grow anxious when Bianca failed to respond.

Nina nudged Bianca as well.

She had no other choice.

From the day she nodded and agreed to date Jean, Bianca had known that, barring unforeseen circumstances, it was only a matter of time before she married Jean...

Bianca stayed and chatted with Jean's grandparents until it was past 9pm before she finally managed to escape.

Jean drove her back to her neighborhood.

Bianca got out of the car.

"You can just leave me here. I want to have a little walk on my own."

Too much had happened that day, and it had been a veritable rollercoaster. She needed some time to herself to get her mind sorted.

"Okay. Sleep early." Jean did not push her too hard.

After they bid each other goodbye, Bianca watched him drive his Audi Q5 away.

The streetlights in the neighborhood were on, so it was not dark at all. Some people were still walking around the area in a bid to strengthen their bodies.

Bianca walked back toward her block. When she reached the door and put her hand into her bag to find the keys to the block, a little boy's voice called out to her, sweetly and full of anticipation. "Lady!"

She turned around and followed the source of the voice.

What she saw made her pause.

Behind the streetlamp, there were two people standing straight and solemnly. One was an adult and the other a child.

Luke Crawford's defined features were hidden in the shadows where the light could not reach. His expression was less than kind when he stared at her, his cold gaze harboring a nasty temper that was on the brink of an outburst.

Meanwhile, the boy was biting his lip pitifully, with nary a trace of his previous arrogance at the hotel. He looked at his father and then at Bianca.

"Why... are you two here?" Bianca was absolutely stumped.

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