

Mistress 3

The sender of the letter was a small independent publisher.

Rowena looked up at the building excitedly. She stood on Harlem Street, not in a wealthy neighbourhood lined with magnificent mansions.

The building in front of her was also an old building where paint flaking off in places and the grey wall was exposed, and it didn't even have a proper sign on it.

The unexpected appearance made her a little nervous, but she was all right.

It was the only one of the publishers to whom she had sent the manuscript that had sent her a reply.

At that time, a frightened voice caught the attention of Rowena, who was excited and she turned her head.

Her gaze fell on Melissa who was looking around anxiously.

"My lady, where are you? You said you're shopping at the department store."

Feeling guilty about the innocent look on her face, Rowena averted her gaze.

The fact that she submitted a novel under a man's name was a secret, and she shouldn't have known that this was a publishing company anyway.

The duke wished for her to remain a puppet that would stay at home quietly.

An attendant always followed behind her whenever she left the house, however, after three years, she found that when Melissa accompanied her, there was no additional attendant. So, she took advantage of Melissa, who knew nothing about it.

Melissa looked suspiciously at Rowena, who avoided answering, and glanced at the bag she was carrying.

"Isn't that men's clothing? What on earth are you doing with this?"

Hesitantly, Rowena raised her index finger and placed it to her lips.

"I'll tell you if you keep my secret."

Rowena remembered the last day she saw her parents.

It was when she was five years old.

—we will be back soon Rowena.

—You'll just have to wait five nights.

Her parents, who ran a small store, were the kindest people she'd ever met. They loved each other more than anyone else, and other people were out of their sight.

Rowena, their only daughter, was no exception to this...

Even as a child, Rowena knew... She knew that she always came in second place to them.

—Listen to your nanny and wait.

When the store was thriving and they could afford to relax, her parents went on a honeymoon that they had been putting off. They never looked back at Rowena, who was held in her nanny's arms...

Then they left and never came back. There they caught a contagious disease and died fighting the disease.

As soon as the news reached her, her relatives crowded around the orphaned Rowena. They divided up her father's property as if they had been waiting for their death.

However, no one wanted to take Rowena with them.

—We're too poor to take such a young girl.

—Do you think it's just you? We are also busy because of our newborn baby.

—But that doesn't mean we can send her to an orphanage.....

Rowena remembers clearly what she saw and heard on that day. In the end, they agreed to pay a small amount of money and leave her to a foster family, when a stranger showed up at their door.

—Then I'll take care of Rowena.

—Then I'll take care of Rowena.

The adults, startled by the unexpected visitor, opened their eyes.

—You left home as soon as you turned 18, didn't you?

—What have you been doing with your life?

—I won't reply, as I'm sure you're just asking out of courtesy.

The man replied coldly and turned his back to Rowena, who sat down in a corner.

Rowena looked closely at the man. He had blond hair like her mother's and dark eyes.

He looked like her mother, but a little warmer.

Rowena blinked while asking, and the man bent his knees, then sat down so they were at eye level.

—My name is Jeremy Dish, he said, I'm your mother's younger brother.

The man remained quiet for a while, perhaps because he was not good at talking.

He held out his hand to her.

—I've never raised a child, and I'm not interested in it, but... But I think I can be your friend and guardian.

—you can come with me if you like.

There seemed to be a light behind him, and his friendly but gentle voice brought tears to her eyes.

as her shoulders trembled, a large hand embraced her back.

—I think we're going to get along just fine in our way.

Rowena nodded instead of replying.

She had lived in such a place for twenty years. A two-story house with three rooms in a remote countryside area known only to a few acquaintances.

Even though her maternal uncle Jeremy Dish, a poor aspiring writer, became a famous author and earned many royalties, life was always the same. She was satisfied with her everyday life, which was neither lacking nor lavish.

It was a place where every single thing had its unique charm. In the front yard, she grew a small field and raised two hens and a goat. It was a friendly and small valley.

Then one day, a letter arrived addressed to her from a friend. It was a letter from her childhood friend with whom she used to play together when they were young.

[Long time no see. Rowena. How have you been?

I'm fully settled in the capital. I'm living a very happy life.

Are you still dreaming of becoming a novelist?

If so, please come visit me soon. You can even submit your novel to a publishing company and we can spend some time together at my house while waiting for the results.]

At twenty, she was young and naive. And she was too pure.

Rowena hopped on a train to the unknown capital city, relying only on her friend's letter. But her heart, which was full of hope and expectation, disappeared the moment she arrived at the house she had mentioned in her letter.

[Sorry, Rowena. I had no choice, either. Your uncle on your mother's side is a rich novelist, so ask him to pay for me!]

The childhood friend she trusted betrayed her, and bringing her to the capital was part of the plan.

Her friend posed as "Rowena Philone" and left leaving a huge debt in her name.