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Coco was anxious to know Keegan's answer.

Keegan glanced toward her room and proceeded to recite a string of numbers.

This left Coco utterly confused. "What are you saying now?"

"The barcode for your sketchbook," Keegan responded.

Coco was baffled.

Keegan lifted his index finger, gently tapped his temple, and said, "I thought you liked reading about people with superpowers. Do you know some people can remember things at a glance? I'm one of them." i Coco did not respond. 'How did he go from having amnesia to being so annoying?' she thought.

Keegan ruffled her hair and walked away, phone in hand.

Meanwhile, Stella turned around to see Marshall in the driver's seat of an MPV.

Stella walked over. "Mr. Moore, what are you doing here?"

Marshall smiled, saying, "I actually came here to see you. I was thinking of giving you a call, but then I unexpectedly saw you at the entrance." ' Stella was taken aback. "You're here to meet me?"

Marshall nodded. "Yeah. You mentioned earlier about accompanying me to apologize to Mr. Saun."

"Oh, right. I completely forgot about that."

Marshall looked at her with a mild gaze and asked, "Is today okay for you?" ' "Ye-" Stella paused, suddenly recalling what Coco had mentioned to her earlier.

After a moment of consideration, she altered her response. "I've just come back from a trip with my friend and really need some rest. How about tomorrow? My dad should be free then; it's the weekend."

Marshall nodded. "Alright."

Stella grinned.

Marshall hesitated for a moment, then lowered his eyes. "It's been long since I've seen you smile like this. Keegan's return seems to have improved every aspect of your life." 4 Stella's smile faded a bit at the mention of that name. Her expression turned serious. "I've caused you a lot of trouble during this time. I appreciate your help and will forever remember your kindness. If there's anything I can do for you, please don't hesitate to let me know."

"Anything?"

"Yes. I'd do anything as long as it's within my capacity," Stella replied.

Marshall smiled. "I don't need you to do anything for me. I just... If Keegan never regains his memory, could you give me a chance?" 3 Stella was taken aback. She said, "I'm sorry. I—"

"Stella, don't turn me down so quickly," he said, looking at her affectionately. "Did you know I was crazy about you after our first encounter at Rotona Pinnacle Hospital? I thought it was fate to encounter you three times in a week. I wondered if I could take our connection further during our fourth or fifth encounter."

"However, I learned about you being Keegan's wife during the charity banquet.

I've been trying hard to keep my feelings in check since then. But now, with this chance ahead of me, I want to pursue it, even if the odds aren't great." 1 Stella couldn't deny being touched by his words. She'd never heard such a tender and heartfelt confession before. In contrast, Keegan had always been awkwardly direct. He had kept his emotions hidden until after their divorce. 2 Marshall had consistently been calm and kind. He would understand if she refused. He had been accommodating and understanding, even when she used him to try and win Keegan back. Stella felt guilty for causing him pain each time she turned him down. 2 Looking down, Stella took a moment before saying, "If things don't work out between Keegan and me in the end, and you

still feel the same way, we can give it a try.” ’ Stella was pregnant. She believed that no man would be okay with her being pregnant with another man’s child.’ Marshall appears keen at the moment, but I’m sure his enthusiasm will fade once my pregnancy starts showing in a few months. He’ll probably turn down the idea of us by then.’

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Marshall paused, a moment of youthful charm flickering in his eyes.

Feeling guilty for the lie she concocted, Stella dared not meet his eyes. “Well, if there’s nothing else, I’ll be going in now.”

“Wait,” Marshall called after her.

Stella stopped and turned to look at him.

Marshall stepped out of the car, opened the back door, and pulled out a bouquet of flowers. “I passed by a flower shop on the way here and thought of bringing you some flowers. It’s been a while since you stayed here, and I thought your room could use a touch of freshness.”

The gesture left Stella stunned.

Marshall certainly knew how to make a move. 1 If this had taken place before she got to know Keegan, Stella would have probably fallen for someone as outstanding as Marshall. It wasn’t about the romantic aspect of the flowers, but Marshall’s attentiveness that touched her heart.

“Don’t you like it?” Marshall asked softly as Stella remained silent.

Stella accepted the flowers and smiled. “No, I love it. Thank you.”

Marshall smiled back, his gaze tender. “That’s good.”

Stella watched him leave. She adjusted the flowers in her hand and was about to enter the house when her phone rang.

She grabbed the device from her bag and answered the call.

“Hello, is this Stella Hall?”

“Yes. May I ask who’s calling?”

“We’re police officers from the city bureau. The case of your kidnapping has been closed, and there are some personal items of yours here. Could you come by to pick them up when you’re free?”

Glancing at the time, Stella replied, “I’m available right now. Can I come over immediately?”

“Of course. Please remember to bring your ID.”

After hanging up, Stella left the flowers in the guardhouse and took a cab to the police station.

Upon arrival, a police officer immediately approached and assisted her with the paperwork. Once everything was settled, Stella sat outside and waited.

In no time, the police appeared with a sealed bag.

The police opened it and took out the items inside for Stella to confirm.

They were belongings stolen by the kidnapers during the incident—specifically her purse and some jewelry.

There were only a handful of things in the bag, and they were all accounted for.

Stella closed the bag and suddenly realized that the pendant that used to hang on it was gone.

She opened the bag again and checked, but it wasn’t there.

Seeing her rummaging around, the officer asked, “What’s wrong? Is something missing?”

Stella nodded and said, “There used to be a rabbit pendant on this bag. I thought it might be inside.”

“There was no rabbit pendant when we searched for evidence at the scene. Are you sure you’re not mistaken?”

Stella was momentarily stunned. “I wouldn’t be mistaken. My best friend also has one like it, and it’s always been here. On the day of the incident, I saw it was still there when the kidnapers took my things. Maybe it got lost.”

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wever, no one knew where the pendant was.

Following that, Stella recalled the day Jackson was taken away at the memorial service and asked, "Officer, is this kidnapping case related to Jackson Kane, who was arrested a few days ago?"

The cop replied, "Jackson Kane has been released. There's no direct evidence linking him to the case. Moreover, the two suspects claimed they didn't know him. We also found that Cody Hunter happened to be at Jackson's gathering purely by coincidence."

Stella nodded and said, "I see. Thank you."

Whether Jackson was involved with the kidnapping or not, Chandler was undoubtedly implicated. Keegan's move was a clear warning to Chandler.

The actual perpetrator was already deceased, and the remaining suspects admitted solely to the kidnapping. They claimed the deceased had hired them for extra money but refused to reveal any further details.

With that, the case was closed.

Stella was genuinely unwilling to accept it, but there was nothing she could do for now.

Early the next morning, she called Wenham. "Dad, are you home today?"

Wenham had plans to go fishing with friends, but hearing his darling daughter's voice, he replied, "Yes, I am. What's up, sweetie?"

"Nothing, I'm thinking of coming home for lunch. If you're not at home, I won't bother."

Wenham was speechless. "How does my presence affect whether you come home for lunch?"

Stella laughed. "It's mainly because I want to have lunch with you."

Wenham was overjoyed to hear that. "You can come. I'll be waiting for you. Tell me what you want to eat, and I'll have Samantha prepare the dishes in advance."

“What do you want to eat?” Stella asked him back.

“I’m fine with anything, sweetie. If you’re not coming back, I’ll manage with something simple. If you are, we can enjoy some delicious food together,”

Wenham said lightheartedly.

This banter amused Stella. “You’re making it sound so sad.”

Judging from Wenham’s words, Stella realized he was unaware of Jaylene inviting Keegan to the house.

‘Was it that Jaylene didn’t mention it, or did Coco get the timing wrong?’ After some thought, Stella felt that Jaylene probably hadn’t told Wenham about Keegan going over for lunch.

Considering Wenham’s temper, he would have exploded and skipped lunch altogether had he known that Jaylene was bringing Keegan.

Stella tapped her fingers on the table and chuckled, ‘Dad, have Samantha prepare something lavish. You can choose the dishes. I suspect there won’t be a shortage of guests.’

Wenham didn’t quite grasp the meaning of the last sentence at the time, not until Jaylene arrived with Keegan at the Saun residence.

Keegan was dressed in a refined suit and brought a collection of gifts. Seeing him with Jaylene, Wenham thought he was there to propose. He almost considered grabbing a nearby flowerpot to knock some sense into him.

“Nice to see you, Uncle Wenham,” Keegan greeted politely. “Grandma knew I was visiting you, so she carefully selected some gifts. I hope you like them.”

Wenham hadn’t spoken yet when Darcie stepped forward to receive the items.

“Oh, you didn’t have to.” She looked Keegan up and down before asking with concern, “How’s your health?” Keegan nodded. “I’m almost near full recovery. I have a check-up in a few days.

If all goes well, I should be fine.”

Darcie sighed, “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. Rest well, and you’ll have a lot of good luck ahead of you.”

Wenham cleared his throat. With a stern expression, he said, “Don’t you think it’s impolite to visit someone’s home without giving them a heads-up? Where are your manners?”

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Keegan looked puzzled, glancing at Jaylene for an explanation.

She clarified, “Dad, Keegan told me he was coming. It was my bad for not keeping you in the loop. I wanted to surprise you.”

Wenham did not understand her thought process. ‘It sure is a surprise.*

‘Stella is coming home for lunch. She wouldn’t be pleased if she found these two together. Why does Jaylene have a crush on Keegan of all people? This isn’t good, especially considering he’s dealing with amnesia and doesn’t even recognize Stella.’ The more Wenham thought about it, the less he liked Keegan.

While Jaylene was preparing some fruit in the kitchen, Wenham turned to Keegan and asked, “Do you really not remember Stella?”

Keegan lowered his gaze and replied, “Mhm.”

“What’s Jaylene to you then?”

“She saved my life.” Keegan explained.

“That’s all?” Wenham doubted his response, his sharp gaze piercing through Keegan. “You were missing for a month, and you showed up with Jaylene after that. What happened between you two during that time? Why are you suddenly so close to her?”

Keegan tightened his lips and took a moment before responding, “Uncle Wenham, what happened in the past month is a personal issue. I’m not prepared to discuss it at the moment.”³ Wenham’s expression grew stern. “Keegan, I’m not concerned about your feelings for Jaylene. But if you choose to be with her and hurt Stella, I won’t be quick to forgive you!”

Keegan looked at him and replied, “Jaylene has been your daughter for over twenty years. How can you be biased just because she’s not your flesh and

blood?" 2 Upon hearing that, Wenham became furious. He was about to speak when he noticed Stella in the living room, hand in hand with Marshall.

"Stella?" he exclaimed.

Keegan paused and glanced over.

Stella was in a red dress, her coat slung over one arm while the other held onto Marshall, who carried two bottles of wine. They appeared quite the striking couple.

Stella didn't spare a glance at Keegan. Instead, she smiled at Wenham and said, "Dad, I hope you don't mind that I brought a friend over to join us for lunch." Stunned by the scene in front of him, Wenham finally understood why Stella had asked for a grand lunch.

"I don't mind at all. You rarely bring friends home. How would I mind?" Although he didn't know why Stella brought Marshall, Wenham didn't mind showing her support.

Marshall was also very polite. "Mr. Saun, I'm sorry for any inconvenience caused by my grandfather's actions before. Please accept these gifts as a token of apology."

Though Wenham did not like Frederick, he didn't extend that resentment to Marshall.

It was unclear if Keegan's memory loss had made him unpleasant, but Wenham found Marshall quite appealing.

He immediately put on a smile and said, "You didn't have to. What happened between me and your grandfather is in the past."

Taking the gifts Marshall brought, Wenham opened them, and his eyes lit up.

"How did you know I like this wine?"

Marshall smiled modestly. "I wasn't sure, so I asked Stella, and she helped me choose."

Wenham felt even more pleased hearing that his daughter knew his preferences.

“Even if you had some help, it shows you care. Unlike some people who bring me some ginseng and desserts.”

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Wenham’s remark rendered Keegan speechless.

His attitude toward the two could not be any more different. He barely acknowledged the gift Keegan brought but praised Marshall, especially upon learning that Stella had assisted in choosing them.

In the past, Keegan might not have endured this injustice and stormed off.

However, possibly influenced by Jaylene, he remained surprisingly silent. He did not retort even as Wenham sarcastically teased him.

Stella couldn’t bear to see Keegan being berated. She cleared her throat to interrupt Wenham. “Dad, put the wine away. Marshall has work this afternoon, so we won’t be drinking today.”

Wenham nodded, “Sure. Make sure Marshall feels welcomed. I’ll be there shortly.”

Stella agreed, and Wenham carried the two bottles of wine to the wine cellar.

“Marshall, come have a seat.”

Stella adjusted the backrest, gesturing for Marshall to sit. He took a seat beside her, directly across from Keegan.

Stella placed her coat aside. She turned to Marshall and said in a hushed voice, “What would you like to drink?”

“Plain water or tea will do,” Marshall replied, brushing off a fallen leaf from Stella’s shoulder. In a low voice, he added, “You’re a bit underdressed. Are you cold?”

Stella glanced at Keegan from the corner of her eye before saying, “No, I’m not.”

“It’s the dead of winter, and you’re wearing a skirt. Are you sure you’re okay?”

Stella lifted the hem of her skirt, revealing her legs. “I’m wearing tights.”

She lightly pulled on the tights and said, "They're pretty thick. N Marshall seemed genuinely surprised. "I didn't know you were wearing tights."

Stella chuckled. "Why would I go bare-legged during winter?"

Before they could say anything else, they heard the loud sound of a coffee cup being placed on the table.

Marshall paused and looked over to the source of the noise. "Keegan, sorry. I didn't expect you to be here today. If I knew, I'd come another day."

Keegan replied indifferently, "Why? Am I getting in the way of something?"

"Not at all. I'm just concerned that Stella might feel awkward."

Keegan pursed his lips. "I thought you'd be the one feeling awkward. After all, she's still my fiancée on paper. Ethically and logically speaking, shouldn't you be keeping your distance?"

Marshall raised an eyebrow. "You say that she's still your fiancée. Yet, you're here with another woman. Do you think that's appropriate?" i Keegan's gaze darkened. "Nothing is going on between me and Jaylene! The fact that you know she has a fiancée, yet you still go out with her doesn't exactly make you innocent either."

Marshall frowned. "Since when did I go out with Stella?"

"Cut the act," Keegan sneered.

Marshall was confused. 2 Stella looked at Keegan and suddenly said, "So what if Marshall and I go out together? It has nothing to do with you. IV Keegan froze for a moment. "You're still my fiancée! Does it not matter?"

"Oh," Stella shrugged. "I thought you were fine with it.

Weren't you the one who urged me to follow my heart? 2 "Yet now, when I've done just that, you're trying to assert dominance and proclaim yourself as my fiancée.

"Keegan, did your memory loss affect your thinking? Have you forgotten what you said to me not too long ago?"