

THE DIVORCE PRESCRIPTION

Chapter 597

Declan's eyes were bloodshot. He hadn't been home much lately. He didn't want Pamela or Aileen to know what he was really doing, nor did he want the world to know of their existence. He was trying to protect them. However, Pamela had suddenly fallen ill.

"Mom, why didn't you tell me you were sick?" he asked.

Pamela smiled weakly. "Declan, I wasn't in pain. Hailey took good care of me and made sure the best medicine was used. I didn't want to be a burden to you. I just wanted you to live a happy and peaceful life. If your father were still here, that's what he would have wanted too."

Pamela didn't want Declan to follow in his father's footsteps, so she had always tried to guide him away from that path.

Declan clutched her hand tightly. "Don't worry, Mom. This time, things will be different."

Pamela's tears slid down her cheeks. "My darlings..."

Hailey and Aileen stepped forward, each taking one of Pamela's hands.

Pamela placed their hands together and softly said, "I'm leaving now. Don't be sad. I'm just going to see your father. All these years, I've been here with you while he's been alone over there. He must miss me very much."

Hailey broke down in tears.

Pamela turned to Declan. "Declan, I'm leaving Aileen in your care. She's your sister, so you must take good care of her."

Then, she added, "Hailey's a wonderful girl. Having her by your side is a blessing. Treasure her."

Declan choked up. "I will, Mom."

Pamela smiled faintly. "I've lived a happy life. I had your father in my youth, and then I had you two. Life is never perfect, but sometimes, a little bit of happiness is enough."

With those final words, she slowly closed her eyes and passed away peacefully.

There were many things Pamela never had the chance to say, such as her regrets about her husband and her longing to watch her children grow. Yet, time had run out. She was gone.

Declan and Aileen broke down in tears, calling out for their mother.

Later, Hailey found Declan standing alone in the dimly lit hospital corridor. He leaned against the wall with his black sweater clinging to his frame, making him appear thinner than usual.

He lowered his head in silence, letting the darkness consume him.

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Hailey approached him quietly. "Declan, I've ensured everything i handled for Mrs. Zamora. If you need to go, I understand. I'll stay here and take care of Aileen."

Declan straightened up, his eyes bloodshot from exhaustion and grief. He knew

he had to leave. Stella was likely already looking for him.

At this moment, he couldn't even stay by his mother's side.

If not for Hailey, he might not have made it in time to see her one last time.

The weight of life's burdens had fallen on him early, leaving him with no choice but to push forward. The more it pushed him down, the more hatred burned within him.

He would have his revenge.

Declan looked at Hailey. "Thank you, Hailey. For everything."

There was so much to say, yet he didn't know where to start. All he knew was gratitude.

He was thankful that Hailey had come into his life and had stayed with him through the toughest times.

Hailey stepped forward and wrapped her arms around him, pressing her face against his chest, listening to the steady rhythm of his heartbeat.

"You don't have to thank me, Declan," she whispered. "If you want to cry, just cry. I know how much this hurts."

He tried to hold back his tears, but the warmth of Hailey's embrace and the comfort of her gentle words made it impossible.

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He reached out and pulled Hailey into a tight embrace.

Declan sobbed uncontrollably. "Hailey, I don't have a mother anymore. I don't have a father or a mother."

Hailey held him just as tightly. This was the first time he had ever let his guard down and allowed someone to see him so vulnerable.

She nodded. "I know, Declan. You still have Aileen and me. I'll always be here for you."

Then, she rose onto her toes, cupped his face in her hands, and pressed a gentle kiss to his forehead.

This time, her kiss was full of tender affection.

Declan held her again, pulling her back into his arms.

Declan had to leave, but the hospital took care of Pamela's final arrangements. Hailey and Aileen brought Pamela's ashes home.

Hailey carefully placed the urn and Pamela's memorial plaque on the small table, arranging a few candles and fresh flowers around them.

Aileen clasped her hands together and closed her eyes for a moment of silent prayer.

"Aileen, we'll keep vigil tonight. You're coming home with me tomorrow," Hailey said.

Aileen hesitated. "Hailey, I want to stay here."

"No, it's not safe for you to be alone," Hailey said firmly. "You're coming with me, no arguments."

Aileen nodded reluctantly. "Alright."

Hailey gave her a reassuring smile and gently patted her head. "There's plenty of room at my house. My dad and housekeeper are wonderful people; they'll love having you there. You don't have to be afraid. It's late, and you have school tomorrow. Your exams are coming up. Go get some rest-I'll stay up."

Aileen shook her head. "I want to stay up with Mom too."

Hailey didn't argue. Instead, she grabbed a thick blanket and spread it across the floor. "Then we'll stay here together."

"Okay."

They curled up under the blanket, and soon it grew warm. Aileen took out her study materials and quietly reviewed her notes. She wanted to be strong, brave, and live up to the future her mother had envisioned for her. s̃novel

Hailey watched her with a sense of pride and turned up the lamp slightly.

An hour later, Aileen fell asleep with her book in her arms. Hailey gently took it away and tucked her in.

As she gazed at Pamela's memorial plaque, memories of the past surfaced—how she had first come here, how she, Declan, Pamela, and Aileen used to sit together, laughing over dinner.

Now, one of them was gone.

Sadness weighed on Hailey's heart, and she slowly drifted into sleep.

At that moment, the door creaked open, startling Hailey awake. "Who's there?"

Hailey saw a tall, imposing figure step inside. It was Declan.

Declan had returned in the cold, deep hours of the night.

Hailey's expression lit up with surprise and relief. "Declan, why are you back?"

Without answering, Declan walked over and knelt by the table. He lit a small candle for Pamela, watching the flame flicker before lowering his head in quiet reflection.

When he first walked in, his eyes immediately landed on the two small figures curled up together. These two were the most important people in his life now.

For the first time in days, being here brought him a sense of peace.

He turned to Hailey. Her eyes were swollen from crying, and dark circles shadowed them from lack of sleep.

Reaching out, he gently pinched her cheek. "I'm here. Get some rest."

Hailey looked at Declan. "Declan, are you staying tonight?"

Declan had just finished coaxing Stella and had snuck back. He still had to leave before dawn, but for now, he had a little time.

"I'll stay until you fall asleep," he said.

Hailey lifted the blanket and patted the empty space beside her. "Then get in. It's warm."

Declan slid under the covers, lying beside her. Hailey curled up next to him, resting her head on his arm. Then, she gazed up at him.

Declan felt a piece of his heart soften. He reached out and pulled Hailey into his arms.

The two of them held each other tightly. Declan glanced at Aileen, who was sleeping soundly beside Hailey.

"When did Aileen fall asleep?" he asked.

"Around 10:00 pm. She was studying until then-her exams start tomorrow. She'll be testing for three days. I'll take her to the exam hall in the morning, so you don't have to worry."

Hailey spoke softly, reassuring him that everything was under control.

Declan smiled slightly. This felt like how his parents used to be his father would be out working while his mother took care of everything at home.

However, Hailey had no obligation to do this for him.

He was tied up with things he couldn't control, yet Hailey had always been by his side.

Lowering his gaze, Declan murmured, "Hailey, I..."

Hailey reached up and covered his mouth with her hand. "I've heard enough words of gratitude. Don't say anymore. Everything I do, I do willingly. Besides, Aileen is so smart-give her ten years, and she'll be someone amazing. When that happens, I can ride on her coattails. Consider it an investment."

Hailey smiled, her eyes curving into crescents.

Declan tightened his arms around her and pressed a soft kiss to her hair.

Just then, Hailey grabbed his shirt and sniffed him like a little puppy. Declan raised an eyebrow. "What's wrong?"

Hailey frowned. "Declan, you smell like another woman's perfume!"

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sharp, ability

women had an pick up on these

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Declan's heart skipped a beat. He had spent the entire day with Stella,

SO

it was inevitable that he had

picked up her scent.

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Hailey tilted her head up, pouting. "Confess now, Declan. Whose perfume is that?"

Declan hesitated, debating whether to tell her about the wedding. "Hailey, I..."

Yet, she cut him off. "It's Stella's, isn't it? I knew it! You've been with her all day!"

She pouted stubbornly. "Declan, I don't know why you're with her, but I won't allow anything intimate to happen between you two. Don't even think about marrying her. I won't allow it!"

Declan swallowed the words he had been about to say.

"Hailey, if I ended up marrying Stella..."

"Then I wouldn't want you anymore," she said immediately.

Declan froze. Maybe it was better not to say anything after all. He didn't dare.

He was afraid Hailey really would leave him.

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That important figure was coming soon, and Declan didn't even know if he would survive. Right now, he couldn't promise Hailey anything.

Declan knew he was being selfish. He couldn't give her anything, yet he still held her tightly in his arms. He was terrified of losing her.

Hailey reached up and wrapped her arms around his neck. "Declan, you're mine. Do you hear me?"

This was Hailey's possessiveness over him.

Declan cupped the back of her head and kissed her red lips.

The kiss was brief, and he soon pulled away. Hailey nestled obediently in his arms.

"Hailey, go to sleep," Declan murmured.

Hailey was indeed feeling sleepy. She closed her eyes and drifted off.

When Hailey woke up, Declan was already gone. The high school entrance exams had begun, and Hailey escorted Aileen to the exam hall. The first day

went smoothly, and Aileen estimated that she had scored close to a perfect mark.

Declan had been the top scorer in the province during his exams years ago, and Aileen was just like her brother. Hailey had complete faith in her.

The next day, Hailey dropped Aileen off again and waited outside.

Suddenly, a sleek sports car roared up. The driver's door swung open, and out stepped Ewan.

Ewan rushed over to Hailey. "Hailey, why are you still here?"

Hailey barely spared him a glance. "I'm waiting for Aileen to finish her exam. This is an exam hall-no loud noises or unnecessary people allowed. Please leave."

Ewan wasn't offended by her coldness. Instead, he smirked. "You're treating Declan's little sister so well, but do you even know what Declan is doing right now? You're such a fool!"

This wasn't the first time Ewan had come to stir up trouble, and Hailey was immune to it by now. She didn't even look up. "Ewan, what are you trying to say now? That Declan is at the casino? Fine, I get it. Stop talking."

Ewan let out a sharp laugh. "Hailey, Declan isn't at the casino. Why don't you take a wild guess where he is?"

Hailey glanced at him. "Whatever you're trying to say, I don't want to hear it. Please leave."

Ewan stared at her. "Hailey, don't you really want to know? Well, I'm going to tell

you anyway. Today is Declan's big day!"

"Big day?" Hailey frowned. "What do you mean?"

"Declan is marrying Stella today!"

His words nearly made Hailey's ears

explode in shock. She shot to her

feet, staring at Ewan in disbelief.

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"Ewan, what nonsense are you spouting? How could Declan

possibly be marrying Stella?bget

it you're making up rumors again. I won't believe you."

She turned to leave.

However, Ewan stepped in front of her. "If you think I'm lying, why don't I take you there and show you?"

Hailey took a step back. "No. I don't want to go."

Ewan hesitated. "Hailey..."

Hailey covered her ears with her hands. "Enough! I don't want to hear another word!"

Ewan laughed mockingly. "Hailey, look at how weak you are. You're scared, aren't you? You're afraid that Declan and Stella are really getting married!"

With that, Ewan grabbed Hailey's slender arm. "Running away won't solve anything. The more you're afraid, the more I want you to see it with your own eyes. Come with me!"