

Chapter 49 Don't Forget Me Again

Kimberly woke up suddenly from the vivid dream, her vision blurry as she took a moment to collect herself. She got out of bed and walked to the window, opening it to let in the fresh, salty breeze from the sea.

The room was dark, illuminated only by moonlight that spilled onto the floor and highlighted her slender silhouette.


She massaged her sore temples, troubled by the dream she had just experienced.

Back then, severe blood loss had led her into a deep coma after she had witnessed the violent deaths of two people—a brutal event that had deeply affected her.

Her parents, anxious for her to recover, had sought ways to erase the traumatic memories of that day.

Whatever technique they used managed to blur those memories, and the passage of time had further deteriorated the details. When Kimberly later encountered Declan, she didn't recognize him at all.

That changed when Declan showed her a pale handkerchief embroidered with roses. At that sight, she was overwhelmed with emotion and snatched it from him, her pulse racing. The delicate embroidery was clearly her mother's work.

"Was that you? You were that boy, weren't you?" Kimberly asked sharply, her eyes brimming with tears. She looked at Declan, her usual cool demeanor replaced by a mixture of surprise and joy. 

Declan initially looked away, but then met her gaze firmly, his tone steady yet sincere. "Don't forget me again, Kimberly. My name is Declan Walsh. I've been looking for you for so long."

Walsh. I've been looking for you for so long."

Reflecting on how Declan had used those words to exploit her naive admiration and love, manipulating her, and how he and Valerie had caused her such pain over three years, leading to her death, Kimberly's expression turned bitterly sarcastic. She gripped her wine glass tightly and gulped down the remaining wine in one swift go.

People could indeed change, Declan was proof of that.

They had been married for three years, and once, she had asked him to play the Moonlight Sonata for her, the same piece that had mesmerized everyone on the cruise years earlier. Declan had sharply refused, saying, "I can't play that."

Kimberly recalled how she had looked at him in disbelief. "You can't play it? But how? You played it so beautifully on that ship all those years ago." Even at ten years old, Declan had displayed a mastery that matched her own musical skills!

"Would you be pleased if I confessed that I simply don't want to play it for you?" Declan had responded, his eyes flashing with disdain and irritation. He pulled his arm away from her and straightened his suit meticulously. "I don't have time to spare for you. I'm here to give you a warning; keep your distance from Valerie. Should anything happen to her, it'll be you and your family who suffer the consequences."

By that time, Declan had risen to the highest of circles, powerful enough to challenge even the Howard family. From this lofty position, he looked down upon Kimberly, showing no inclination to offer even a sliver of effort or affection towards her. More precisely, he had never held any respect for Kimberly.

Kimberly had sat stunned on the floor, watching as his distant figure vanished down the corridor. How ridiculous. It wasn't that he couldn't play the song for her; he simply chose not to.

Even during her pregnancy, he remained indifferent, his mind solely on Valerie.

Shaking off these memories, Kimberly looked down, her lips curling into a bitter smile.

No matter how often she revisited that painful past, this time, she was determined not to be weak. "Declan, Valerie—just you wait."

Next door, the bathroom door swung open and Chris emerged from the steam, his presence dominating and intense.

Barefoot, he approached the full-length mirror. His sculpted body, broad shoulders, and slim waist were accentuated by water droplets that traced a path down his bare chest, ending at the white towel wrapped around his hips. Every muscle was pronounced, from his defined abs to his strong arms, it was a breathtaking sight.

Seated on the nearby couch, Felix couldn't resist whistling in admiration. "Seriously, Chris. If your family ever hits hard times, you could work as a toyboy at a club to earn some cash. It's not just the ladies; even a straight guy like me can't stop staring at your physique."

Then, with a playful smile, he added, "Hey, Chris, do you mind if I touch those abs?"

"Looking for trouble?" Chris retorted, his expression unchanging as he grabbed a towel to dry his hair. He shot Felix a frosty look through the mirror's reflection, a clear warning in his eyes.

Felix pouted, looking visibly disappointed as he reclined on the sofa with his drink. "Oh, come on. You put all that effort into shaping a body like that surely expecting someone to admire it, right? Why does Kimberly get the privilege to touch those abs and not me? Isn't that a bit unfair, Chris?"

Chris paid no mind to Felix's playful grumbling, tossing the towel aside and settling onto the couch. With his legs crossed, he radiated an effortless authority that dominated the space, even shirtless.

Felix eagerly set a clean glass on the coffee table in front of Chris and poured him a drink, a fawning smile on his face.

Chris looked over at Felix with an incomprehensible expression. "You've heard already? Did Rocco spill the beans?"

Felix, cradling the drink in both hands, presented it to Chris with an apologetic smile. "I'm sorry, Chris. Had I known that Kimberly was the one you've been obsessed with for the past fifteen years, I wouldn't have made such comments! You really kept it under wraps."

Chris eyed Felix sideways, taking the glass and swirling the contents lightly, signaling his acceptance of the apology.

His tone was cool, carrying a hint of warning. "Then you'd better keep it tight, or don't expect me to care about our long friendship."

"Understood, understood," Felix replied, grinning subserviently, his curiosity piqued. "But really, when did you realize that Kimberly was the girl who saved you back then?"

"Does it really matter?" Chris retorted, his gaze growing intense as he

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sipped half the glass in one go.

The realization that Kimberly had entirely forgotten him weighed heavily on his heart.



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