

Chapter 19 The Photo

"Maggie wants fifteen thousand dollars a month. I think that's too expensive for us."

"That's easy. We'll fire Maggie, and you stay at home to look after Grandpa. By the way, Grandpa has a health checkup tomorrow morning. He needs someone to accompany him to the hospital. I am not available tomorrow morning. You take the day off and accompany him to the hospital."

"No. I'm not free tomorrow."

"Rhonda, the main reason I married you was for you to take care of my grandfather. If you can't do that, what's the point of our marriage?"

Rhonda tried explaining her situation.

"My grandmother is getting surgery soon. I have to stay in the hospital with her. After the surgery, I will resign from my job and stay home to look after Grandpa. I promise."

"I can wait, but my grandfather can't." Eliam looked at Rhonda coldly, anger evident on his face.

"Rhonda, don't be too selfish. You're thinking only about looking after your grandma. But what about my grandpa? What did you promise me when we got married?"

"That's right. You should have thought twice before taking the five hundred thousand. Since you gave your word, you must do it." Maggie added fuel to the fire.

Rhonda's eyes gradually turned red.

Eliam had risked his life to save her yesterday, but he seemed cold and ruthless today. Looking at the anger on his face, she realized she

shouldn't have had any high hopes for him.

"Okay, I'll take Grandpa to the hospital tomorrow." Then, she ran back to the bedroom, crying.

Maggie snorted. "Mr. Sloan, don't be softhearted. Girls like her are greedy and selfish. They never care about others."

Eliam glared at Maggie. "Learn to be contented in life, Maggie. Don't treat others as fools."

The intensity of Eliam's gaze frightened Maggie. She forced a smile and left.

Rhonda felt wronged.

She wasn't upset because she couldn't be there for her grandmother tomorrow but because of Eliam's attitude toward her.

If Eliam had tried discussing it with her amicably, Rhonda would have tried her best to balance the situation and look after both the elders. But his businesslike tone made her uncomfortable.

After crying for a while, Rhonda took out her phone and called Leonard. She decided to ask him to accompany Nora tomorrow.

It took a long while for Leonard to answer the phone.

As soon as the line connected, Rhonda heard sounds of quarrel from Leonard's side.

"Leonard, what's going on? Why is it so noisy?"

"It is okay, Rhonda. What can I do for you?" Before he could finish his words, the screaming grew louder.

"Leonard! This is the shabby suit your sister gave me! I don't need it. I'm returning this to you!"

"Michelle, don't make trouble out of nothing. In what way did my sister offend you?"

"I'm making trouble out of nothing? You know what? I will. What can you do? You are such a loser. You always talk about your sister. Why don't you marry her?" ☹️

"Michelle, are you out of your mind?"

Rhonda was taken aback.

The noise on the other end of the line seemed to grow louder. Rhonda silently hung up the phone, feeling helpless.

It began raining heavily in the middle of the night.

Rhonda woke up to the loud rumble of thunder. Eliam slept in the study like he always did. She suddenly remembered that she had washed the blanket in the study in the morning. Eliam had nothing to keep him warm tonight.

She picked up another blanket and walked to the front door. However, the wind was too strong, and she couldn't push the door open. Rhonda tried several times with all her effort and finally succeeded. The raindrops stung her face. She walked along the eaves to the door of the study. ☹️

The light was still on in the study, but the curtain was closed. Rhonda wasn't sure if Eliam was asleep.

She knocked on the door but no one answered.

Her back was drenched in the rain. She clutched the blanket tightly in her arms to keep it away from the rain.

She knocked on the door again. "What's the matter?" Eliam asked in a muffled voice.

"It's cold. I brought you a blanket."

The room fell silent again. She waited for a long time, but Eliam didn't open the door. Rhonda's teeth chattered; she was shivering in the cold. Thinking he wouldn't open the door, she turned around to leave.

At that instant, the door opened.

Eliam stood at the door. His hair was disheveled, and his shirt was loose with his collar wide open. He looked frail like he would fall down the next second.

"What happened to you?" Rhonda worriedly stretched out her hand to check his temperature.

As soon as she touched his forehead, Eliam slapped her hand away.

"I'm fine." Eliam took the blanket from Rhonda and was about to close the door.

However, Rhonda quickly reached out to stop him. "Are you okay? You look unwell."

"Rhonda, stop pretending to care about me. I'm afraid I'll misunderstand your intention."

"Misunderstand what?" Rhonda was taken aback.

Eliam couldn't believe Rhonda was still acting dumb. He had overestimated himself.

Nobody in this world would care for him other than his grandfather.

Eliam was frustrated that he shut the door. Rhonda placed her hand on the crack and tried stopping him. But it was too late.

The door slammed against her fingers. It was too painful that she almost cried out.

Rhonda waited for a while, but Eliam had no intention of opening the door again, so she dejectedly turned around and left.

Rhonda got up early in the morning the next day. She called Leonard first and asked him to accompany Nora for the pre-operative examination today.

Then, she came to the study. Seeing that the door was ajar, she pushed

it open and walked in.

Eliam's study was a simple room with a table, a single bed, and a bookshelf on the wall.

Although these pieces of furniture were simple in style, they were made of annatto. Rhonda guessed they were expensive.

There was a box of anti-cold medicine and half a glass of water on the desk. It seemed like Eliam had taken the medicine this morning before leaving for work.

When Rhonda turned around to leave, she found a book on the bookshelf that was about to fall. She walked over and took it out.

Just as she was about to place it back in its original position, a photo fell out of the book.

It was a photo of Eliam and a girl in a bikini at a beach.

The two were holding hands. The girl was grinning happily, whereas Eliam looked a little serious. But looking at the intimacy between the two, it was obvious they were a couple.

Rhonda's heart sank.

She placed the photo back into the book and walked out, closing the door of the study behind her.

Richard had to take several tests on an empty stomach. Therefore, Rhonda didn't have breakfast either.

At half past eight, Rhonda arrived at the hospital with Richard. It was the same hospital where Nora was admitted. Richard was consulting a renowned foreign expert from the international department. ⓪

Rhonda and Richard waited in the lounge because the doctor hadn't arrived yet.

Richard inquired about Nora's illness and said he would like to visit her

after her surgery.

Rhonda's face flushed with embarrassment. She hadn't told her grandmother about her last-minute marriage yet, fearing Nora would overthink and worry, which might affect her condition.

Noticing that Rhonda looked upset, Richard asked if Eliam forced her to sign the prenuptial agreement. He also said if that were the case, he would not let Eliam divorce her.

Rhonda knew the prenuptial agreement bothered Richard. "Grandpa, although I voluntarily signed the agreement, I know I can't disrespect our marriage. I promise you that as long as Eliam doesn't take the initiative to divorce me, I won't divorce him."

Just as Rhonda spoke, the photo she saw in the morning flashed in her mind. She believed the girl in the photo was Eliam's first lover. Considering he still kept the photo, Rhonda felt he hadn't forgotten her.