

## Chapter 11 Was He Holding Vivian

Bryan's kiss denied Eileen any chance to protest. The confines of the elevator felt increasingly narrow. Every slight noise was magnified, his steady breathing and the pounding of Eileen's heart included.

"Ding—"

The elevator announced its arrival with a chime. Bryan's gaze drifted downward, taking in Eileen's flushed cheeks and the delicate pink of her lips.

A smirk crossed his face, a silent testament to his intimate knowledge of her reactions, confident in her inability to resist him.

The sound of footsteps echoed from outside, signaling an imminent encounter. Swiftly, he removed his coat, placing it around her shoulders, and lifted her into his arms, exiting the elevator before anyone could get a closer look.

Eileen made no attempt to escape his hold. Presenting herself in such a disheveled state would only draw unwelcome scrutiny.

As they emerged, a group of men and women fixed their stares on them, watching as Bryan left with Eileen in his arms.

Just before slipping into the car, Eileen caught snippets of their conversation, a hint of recognition in their tones.

"Was that Bryan? Carrying Vivian?"

"They were just in the elevator..."

Had she and Bryan encountered acquaintances? This was not good.

Bryan secured her in the car and took his place in the passenger seat, his

back to the onlookers.

His demeanor was one of complete disinterest, yet Eileen couldn't bring herself to look back, the fear of recognition too great.

With her thoughts hastily reorganized, she started the car, driving away from the scene. At a junction, her eyes flickered to Bryan.

Since he settled into the car, he had been unusually silent, reclining in his seat without stirring. His eyes remained closed, radiating an intimidating aura. It seemed he was asleep.

Taking a deep breath, Eileen continued driving, steering towards Oak Villas.

Having been the driver for Bryan for three years, she was no stranger to the guards at Oak Villas, greeting them with a nod as they passed.

She requested their assistance to help carry Bryan into the house. Once inside, she removed his coat, tossing it onto the bed, and set a glass of warm water on the nightstand. Without hesitation, she left.

For the sake of her own peace, she preferred to spend an extra half hour on the road rather than bring him back to her place.

She got back to Springvale Lane around 1 a.m., took a speedy shower, and headed upstairs to get ready for bed.

Lifting the pillow, she discovered a check hidden beneath it—half a million dollars.

His generosity was astonishing, even more so than during their time at the company lounge.

The discovery chased away her sleepiness, leaving her to ponder over the check. Her initial thoughts remained unchanged. Refusing the money and confessing to Bryan sooner wouldn't guarantee his forgiveness.

But somehow, accepting the money brought a heavy burden to her heart.

She turned and cracked open the small window, drawing in a deep breath to soothe her nerves.

What choice or dignity was left for her now?

A bitter smile curled her lips as she picked up her phone to text Emilio.

"Dr. White, could you help me arrange the new medicine for my mother? I'll come by to pay when I can."

It was late, and Emilio was likely asleep, so she received no reply.

Setting her phone aside, she attempted to rest, but restlessness kept her awake for nearly an hour until sleep finally claimed her.

Deep in slumber, she was jolted awake by a sudden weight on the bed. A dark figure settled beside her, his presence startling her.

"It's me," Bryan's voice, low and near, broke the silence. He leaned in, his lips brushing hers lightly. "Eileen, you're quite bold, aren't you?"

His words hinted at her decision to send him straight back to Oak Villas. Eileen's eyes flicked to the digital clock on the nightstand. It was five in the morning.

Had he just woken up and come here?

"Mr. Dawson, I don't understand what you mean by that," Eileen responded. "Didn't you request me to escort you home?"

Bryan's hand gently found its place on her shoulder, the dim illumination from the window casting enough light for them to clearly see the expressions on each other's faces. One bore an air of innocence—the other, a resigned smile.

"You seem to have an excuse for everything. It's no use arguing with you," Bryan said.

He was a man who believed that actions conveyed more than words ever could. It seemed he did it on purpose, leaving her feeling both exhausted and sore, marking her body deliberately, even leaving visible signs on her collarbone. Eileen doubted she could show up for work the next day.

Her attempts to resist were overlooked. Eventually, she began to retaliate. This was not a moment of intimacy. It was unmistakably a

struggle. Although Bryan had the advantage, he restrained himself.

There were no injuries on Eileen. Yet, Bryan's shoulder bore a precise line of bite marks, and his back was scratched, some marks deep enough to bleed.

In the end, Eileen's energy waned. She fell into a deep sleep before he could disentangle himself from her embrace. Her brows knitted together in sleep, her hair cascading over her shoulder.

Bryan ceased his movements and carefully positioned himself beside her, recalling the fierce yet satisfied expression on her face as she bit him, which brought him a sense of contentment.

Drifting off once more, he held her quietly. The morning light crept in, yet failed to rouse them until the abrupt ring of the phone by the bedside did.

With his eyes still closed, Bryan reached out and answered the call.

"Bryan, where are you?" Vivian's voice filtered through the phone.

Bryan inhaled deeply before responding, "At home."

"You're still in bed?" Vivian probed, her tone a mixture of surprise and concern. "It's after seven already. Why haven't you gone to the company?"

Bryan, with his voice rough from sleep, admitted, "I drank too much last night."

The sound of his sleepy voice and the sight of his uncovered torso momentarily captivated Eileen, though she had little time to savor the moment.

Silently, she slipped out of bed and hurried downstairs, her restless night evident in her bloodshot eyes and the dark shadows beneath them.

After a quick attempt to freshen up and just as she was about to apply some makeup, Bryan entered the room. He stood a full head taller than her, their eyes meeting in the mirror's reflection.

"You should take today off. Rest for the day," he suggested, his tone leaving no room for argument.

Eileen, caught off guard, hesitated before inquiring, "Will my salary be affected?"

Bryan, showing a hint of dissatisfaction, replied, "No."

With that settled, Eileen quickly stopped and made way for him. "I'll fix you breakfast then. After you eat, you can head to the office on your own. You drove here yourself, right?"

Without waiting for his reply, she moved to the kitchen, bustling about with a sense of purpose.

Bryan noticed the absence of his toiletries from the previous day. Opening the bathroom cabinet, he found them tucked away in a corner.

His discerning palate was evident when he saw the same breakfast as before, causing him to frown involuntarily.

It turned out it wasn't her culinary skills that had her rushing. She seemed eager to see him off.

Though he wished to discuss this matter further, the pressing demands of work forced him to postpone such conversations.

After a quick meal, he set off for the office. Eileen, meanwhile, changed into something more comfortable and set out for the hospital to cover Ruby's medical expenses.

She headed straight to Emilio's office to request the bill, telling him, "If my mom asks, don't mention we've upgraded the medication for now."

Emilio, without lifting his gaze from his work, assured her, "Don't worry. I've got it covered."

As Eileen awaited the bill, a message from Vivian popped up on her phone.

"Eileen, aren't you coming to the office today?"

Just as Eileen was about to respond, Emilio handed her the completed bill, prompting her to set her phone aside and proceed with the stack of files to the payment counter.

Amid the day's tasks, she forgot to reply to Vivian, who, growing

impatient, called her.

"Eileen, where are you?" Vivian's voice carried a note of anxiety.

Before Eileen could formulate a response, the hospital's paging system announced a call, inadvertently revealing her location to Vivian. "Which hospital are you in? I'll come find you," Vivian insisted.

"Miss Warren, is there something you need from me?" Eileen queried, puzzled by Vivian's eagerness to meet.

The sound of a car door opening and closing echoed on Vivian's end. "We'll discuss it in person. Just tell me which hospital you're in," Vivian said.

Eileen provided the hospital's address before ending the call. She then handed over the payment documents to Emilio. She bypassed visiting Ruby's ward, heading directly to the orthopedics department for medication for her legs, keen on keeping her terminally ill mother's condition a secret from Vivian, fearful of exposing her identity.

Exiting the hospital with the prescribed medicine, Eileen immediately noticed Vivian scanning the area from the roadside.

Approaching Vivian, Eileen greeted, "Miss Warren."

Vivian's eyes fell on the medication in Eileen's grasp and, recalling a past event, she inquired, "Were you also hurt that day the reporters swarmed my house?"

"Yes," Eileen replied, pointing to her knee. "I injured my knee, so Mr. Dawson granted me the day off to get it checked."

Observing Eileen with a complex look, Vivian expressed her sympathy. "I apologize for the inconvenience. I'll ensure Bryan makes it up to you."

"Thank you, Miss Warren. Was there a particular reason you wanted to see me today?" Eileen asked with a polite smile.

Vivian gestured towards her car. "Please, get in. We can talk more comfortably inside."

It was evident Vivian had driven here herself, as there was no chauffeur

in sight, leaving just the two of them in the car.

The urgency of Vivian's request had Eileen feeling an unexpected knot in her stomach.

"Last night, at the D.V Club, were there any women present?" Vivian wasted no time inquiring.

Eileen nodded. "Yes, quite a few. Most of the secretaries there were women, about five or six of us in total."

"Did you notice if any of the female secretaries seemed unusually close to Bryan?" Vivian's intense gaze bore into Eileen.

Caught off guard, Eileen said, "What exactly are you asking?"

Vivian pressed on, her voice tinged with urgency. "Just a simple yes or no will do."

Eileen shook her head. "No, I didn't notice anything of the sort."

"When did you two leave the club?" Vivian asked.

After a brief pause, Eileen responded, "Around eleven thirty. Mr. Dawson was drunk, so I settled the bill and sent him home."

A visible wave of relief washed over Vivian, her posture slackening as if a heavy weight had been lifted. "I knew it! Bryan wouldn't cheat on me!"

Vivian's words caused Eileen's heart to flutter with unease. "Are you saying that Mr. Dawson and a female secretary..."

"A friend messaged me after one in the morning, claiming to see Bryan kiss a woman in the club's elevator!" Vivian's voice cracked slightly, her eyes brimming with tears at the thought. "But since you two left at eleven, it couldn't have been him."

Eileen looked at Vivian, puzzled. The timing and the details didn't quite add up. Vivian's friend probably had seen that at around eleven that night. But why had that friend chosen to tell Vivian the news at one in the morning?