

## Chapter 8 The Pact

Was this manor Chris' home? Was he the patient's grandson?

Hanna instinctively took a step back, but Chris had already hopped out of the car and was strolling over.

"So? Cat got your tongue?" he teased.

"I... I'm here for you."

Hanna, not wanting to expose her identity in front of Chris, concocted a tale on the fly, saying, "I just had a major blowout with the folks and got the boot. I'm homeless now; thought I'd come to crash at your place."

Chris' gaze darkened. "Hop in."

He was perplexed, but with his grandfather's health changing, he couldn't afford any delays.

Hanna got into his car meekly, but her mind was racing.

If he found out that she had treated his grandfather, he could scrutinize her even more intensely—he wasn't one to trust easily!

She slipped off her coat, let her ponytail loose, and nonchalantly let her hair fall. Intentionally, she covered her eyes with her bangs.

She had her mask on earlier; she hoped the manor's staff wouldn't recognize her.

The staff and doctors updated Chris on his granddad's stable condition.

"Where's that doctor?" Chris inquired with a furrowed brow.

The butler, with due respect, replied, "She already left. She claimed to be a friend of Mr. Neal Sullivan and wanted the medical tab settled with him. She also said if any issues cropped up, we could reach out to her."

Chris squinted, saying, "Bring her to my room. I'll check on

Grandpa upstairs."

Only then did the butler notice a woman beside Chris, head bowed in silence.

The butler was taken aback. There was a flicker of recognition, but he couldn't put a finger on where he had seen her.

Was this the woman slated to tie the knot with Chris?

Without probing further, the butler politely addressed Hanna, "Miss, kindly follow me."

Hanna breathed a sigh of relief. She trailed the butler upstairs, pondering her escape plan.

Soon, Chris returned to his room.

Casually taking off his suit jacket and rolling up his sleeves, he sat across from her.

"Miss Wheeler, have you decided to marry me?"

Hanna's heart skipped a beat!

Why the hell was he revisiting this?

She clenched her fists, mustering composure. Biting her lip, she replied, "Lucky for me, you've taken a shine. But the engagement to your nephew isn't off the table..."

Chris eyed her, saying, "Don't sweat the small stuff. It's a cinch!"

Hanna fell silent.

Observing the poker-faced man, she was at a loss for words.

Why the insistence on marrying her?

Now that she had left the Wheeler family, she could annul the engagement with Ryland when the time was right. There was no need to do it by tying the knot with Chris.

"I owe your foster parents. We made a pact that I would marry and look out for you." Chris noticed her hesitation, adding, "As my better half, you'll live cushy, no strings attached to the Wheeler bunch!"

Her foster parents flashed in Hanna's mind at the mention of them.

There was something about them. They had saved a teenage boy, and they had tossed around the idea of marrying her off to him in the future.

Was that teenage boy Chris?

But Chris' tone was icy, making her wonder if her foster parents coerced him into making that deal.

"No need, Mr. Willis." Hanna gritted her teeth, deflecting him. "They were just gabbing, not a serious thing..."

"I stick to my word!" Chris asserted, unwavering.

Hanna bit her lip and changed tack. "While going upstairs, I overheard the butler mentioning your granddad's ailment. How's he holding up?"

Chris glanced at Hanna, saying, "He's in the clear, but not fully lucid. Once he's back on his feet, I'll take you for a visit."

As soon as he finished, his phone chimed.

Checking the number, he stood up, heading out to take the call.

Hanna breathed a sigh of relief.

Chris spoke to Neal on the phone. "Big thanks for the favor. Your recommended doctor did wonders. I'm thinking of keeping her on as a private physician to speed up Granddad's recovery. The bill is no hassle."

Neal chuckled. "She's likely tight on cash. I'll send you her number; sort things out with her."

Thanking Neal, Chris dialed the number, but to his surprise, a phone rang from the room behind him after he punched in the digits.

He frowned immediately.