

## Chapter 605 To Repay The Debt For Him

In Max's books, letting go had been equivalent to breaking up for good. She couldn't bring herself to accept that kind of ending. The thought tore at her. Henry had refused to go back with her or give her a child. Their story was coming to a close.

"I give you my word, Max. Your family's secrets will stay safe with me. I'll never breathe a word to anyone," Henry had said, his voice steady.

Max, however, had been troubled by another issue. "What about your own future? Will you end up marrying someone else? Will you have a child with another woman?"

Henry hadn't answered right away. As his parents' only son, he couldn't possibly shake off the weight of carrying on the family line. Even if his heart wanted to stay loyal to Max, his family would never let that happen.

A long silence had passed before he finally spoke up. "What about you? Will you go searching for another man if I can't give you a daughter?"

She hadn't hesitated. "Yes. If you can't help me have a daughter, I'll have to find someone who can. I have to fulfill my responsibility to my family."

That answer had landed hard. Henry let out a long, tired breath. "Same answer here," he admitted quietly.

The conversation had reached a clear impasse, with neither able to give the other what they needed.

If Max hadn't chosen not to end Henry's life, there was no doubt he'd go back to his family, marry someone chosen for him, and do exactly what was expected—develop a family and keep the family line going. The same was true for her. Sooner or later, Max would need to find another man to have a child with.

Max had never dreamed that the man she'd loved with her whole heart could turn out to be so heartless and cold. The urge to kill him had flared when pain and fury collided, but she couldn't go through with it. Anger won out, and she walked away instead.

At the door, Max had turned back for one last warning. "Don't forget what you swore. If you ever let my family's secrets slip, I will come after you."

And so, their relationship had ended. Just like that, Max had faded from Henry's life. It was as if she'd never existed.

Henry had done exactly what his family expected upon his return. He married a woman from a family of equal standing as arranged by his family, and raised a house full of children. He was everything a husband should be—thoughtful, gentle, always attentive. But his heart was never truly his wife's. No one knew that every bit of affection was just a mask for a love he'd lost. He'd never stopped loving Max.

This was how the book ended. The way Max and Henry's love story unfolded, with every tender word and heartfelt moment, left a lasting impression. Each line in their tale painted a picture of how deeply they cared for each other and how much it hurt when they parted ways.

Told through Henry's eyes, the book closed its door on Max after their goodbye. The narrative turned inward, focusing almost entirely on his memories and thoughts.

After parting from Max, he stepped into his family role and did everything expected of him, but happiness never found its way back to him. Regret and longing became his constant companions.

Some nights, Henry would picture Max building a new life, maybe even holding a daughter with another man in her arms. The thought of it stung so much that he could only sit in silence, tears slipping down his face for all he'd lost.

At the close of the novel, Henry's words lingered in Elliana's mind: "You only fall in love once, and when it's gone, all that's left is emptiness."

Finishing the final page, Elliana felt a heavy sadness settle over her. The writing wasn't flashy or showy, but each feeling came through raw and honest, striking right at her core. When she snapped the book shut, she

concluded this love story was a tragedy.

Elliana set the book aside, turned to Charles, and asked, "Any idea who the author might be?"

Charles shook his head, looking uncertain. "No clue. It's always just been there on my grandfather's shelf. I must have read it a hundred times as a kid, and he never minded, but he did warn me not to let anyone else know about it."

After pausing to gather her thoughts, Elliana added, "You said that before Cameron died, he gave clear instructions for this book to be buried with him. Did he ever explain why he wanted it taken to the grave?"

Charles took a moment to comb through his memories before responding. "He didn't offer a reason. All he told us was to stop looking for Cutler. When we pressed him, he said something very strange."

"What exactly did he say?" Elliana asked.

Charles hesitated and then explained, "He claimed he owed a debt, and that Cutler had taken his place to settle it. At the time, we figured the illness had made him confused. We didn't pay it much attention."

Elliana turned the book over in her hands, her mind racing. "Sorry if this sounds wild, but what if Cameron actually wrote this book himself? What if the story is his personal experience?"

Gatlin shook his head instantly. "No way. My father adored my mother dearly. I've never heard of him having a romance with another woman before marrying my mother, nor has he ever mentioned anything about Delta. He was always devoted to the family."

As Cameron's son, Gatlin found it impossible to believe his father's heart belonged elsewhere. Elliana saw where Gatlin was coming from, so she didn't push the idea.

Still, deep down, Elliana had already made up her mind—Cameron must have been the author, Max and the Serpent Society were real, and Cutler had probably vanished because of Max. Now, she knew her next step would be to uncover the truth about the Serpent Society.