

## Chapter 12: I'm Sorry

There was something in Gabriel's tone that convinced Rosalind to open the door. She didn't want to let him in, but if she didn't open the door, he might keep pestering her. So, she let out a heavy sigh, opened the door, and didn't stare at Gabriel's face, wishing he would go away soon.

She sighed with sagged shoulders. "You see yourself, I'm not in a good mood."

He wrapped his arms around her waist. "That's why I'm here, darling." Gabriel escorted Rosalind inside and closed the door. He pulled her head to rest on his chest. "Rose, if you need anything, tell me. I'll give it to you."

That's when Rosalind couldn't help herself. She sobbed and buried her face in his chest. So, he brought her to the couch and sat there while she sat on his lap, sobbing hard.

He consoled her by murmuring some comforting words. "There, there. You will be okay, darling. I promise you. I'll take care of you."

Rosalind sobbed harder, as it was the first time someone told her that. She always felt lonely, even when she had Jeremy as her boyfriend. But now, a stranger came to her and told her everything she wanted to hear and comfort her when she needed it the most.

After spending five minutes of crying, she took a deep breath and moved herself from his embrace. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't cry and wet your shirt, but you came at the right time."

Gabriel said nothing. He only rubbed her hair and stared at her. "So, will you consider my offer?"

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Rosalind gulped, as she didn't know what to answer. It was such a lousy day for her, and here came Gabriel and his offer. Would it be better for her to accept his offer?

As if he could read her mind, Gabriel said, "You don't need to work hard anymore, darling. You only need to stay beside me and be there for me when I need you."

"Why?" Her voice was hoarse after the cry. "I'm nobody. You can choose some celebrities."

"I know." But then Gabriel shook his head. "I don't want any celebrities. I want you."

"Why?"

"Do you want to know?"

Rosalind nodded because it was weird that a prominent figure like him could want her. "Tell me."

He lifted her chin with a hand. "Kiss me first. Then I'll tell you."

Her stare ran to his lips. Those were lips to kiss and be kissed. But kissing him might loosen her defense. Yet her curiosity was bigger than her resistance. So she bent her head and touched his lips with hers. It was a pure and innocent kiss.

However, Gabriel wasn't satisfied with that. His arm wrapped around

her waist, and he touched her chin with another hand. Later, he captured her lips with his, deepened the kiss, and stroked her waist with another hand. 1

She sighed, content with his kiss and touch. His tongue pushed inside her mouth and touched her tongue, sucking it until she moaned.

Rosalind grabbed Gabriel's hair and whispered, "Gabe ...."

"My Rose."

He kept kissing her. When Rosalind's hand circled his neck, he laid her on the couch and covered her body with his. "Say yes, darling. Say you are mine."

After thinking for a while, Rosalind finally said, "I can't be your mistress despite you using a lovely word of lover." She gazed at him. "But if you want to marry me, I'll agree."

"Marry you?" Gabriel raised his eyebrows. "Are you sure?"

She nodded. Clenching her hands together, Rosalind deliberately did it because she was sure Gabriel would refuse and leave her place right away. She knew he didn't have any girlfriends for many years. It was a bluff, but she didn't want to waste her time with someone who would only use her and discard her later.

"Sure."

Rosalind blinked her eyes. She thought she had misheard him. That's why she gasped. "What did you say?"



"I said sure. I will marry you," he replied calmly.

"What?! But—"

He placed his pointer finger on her lips, stopping her words. "Rose, I have three conditions. I agree to marry you if you will do this. First, you will spend the night with me, starting from tonight. Second, we will get married in a month. Third, no one knows about this arrangement as it will be a contract marriage for five years."

Rosalind's eyes widened. It was unexpected that Gabriel would agree to her request to marry her. But then, would it be the answer to her situation? Marrying him meant she would enjoy a luxurious life with him. He was much older than her, but then, what was the difference? Jeremy was seven years older than her, but he only used her.

Gabriel rubbed Rosalind's cheek to get her attention. "What do you think?"

"Can you give me time to think?"

He let out a frustrated sigh. "You will waste both of our time by thinking, darling. Just say yes, and we can enjoy our lives together."

"Despite it's a marriage, if it's a contract marriage, I'll still feel it isn't a real one."

"The contract will protect you. I did it because I wanted you to be safe. In the contract, you see you will have everything you need and more."

"Gabriel ... what will happen after five years?"

He kissed her forehead. "We can prolong the contract, or we can tear it. We will marry legally, darling. You will have my name."

She gulped. It seemed too good to be true. "What if I'm pregnant later?"

"It's good." He placed his hand on her stomach. "I always want to have a son and a daughter. If you can give me children, it'll be great."

"But I don't want them to experience divorcing parents. I don't want my children to choose their parents." Her eyes were dimmed. "I'm an orphan, and I would trade anything to have parents .... I don't want my kids to experience sadness and brokenness like me."

He kissed her forehead. "Then we won't need to divorce, darling."

Rosalind moved herself to sit on an old navy couch next to him and bent her head down to think. She was afraid of the future, while Gabriel had everything. If they had children, he could take them away as easily as snapping his fingers. She couldn't win against him in court. Even though she hadn't had them, only imagining it brought a nasty feeling to her stomach.

Finally, she lifted her head and gazed at Gabriel. "Gabriel, I'm sorry. I can't accept your offer."

"Why?"

"You are too powerful. I can't imagine losing my children one day. It will crush my life." Taking a deep breath, she shook her head. "I'm grateful for your offer, but it's better for you to choose another

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woman. I'm sure many will gladly accept your offer.\*

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