

Chapter 18 Leon Is Back

Once Evelyn left the Moonlake Villa, she headed straight for the apartment she had been renting.

She had first picked the place simply because it sat close to the office and made late nights easier to manage.

She had always regarded the apartment as nothing more than her workspace, while Moonlake Villa was the place she truly thought of as home.

But now, the modest apartment was the only refuge left for her.

The moment she crossed the threshold, she powered up her laptop, typed in a rapid sequence of commands, and signed into a secure messaging platform.

Before she had gone to the Moonlake Villa to recover her father's possessions, she had already sent a message to Leon.

Half a day slipped by, yet the screen stayed empty, not a single reply appearing.

Evelyn shut the laptop with quiet disappointment.

Apparently, Leon still had not chosen to forgive her.

In the past, she had wounded him far too deeply.

Forgiveness had never been something she had any right to expect.

Exhaustion pressed heavily on Evelyn. She sank back against the couch, closed her eyes, and slowly drifted into sleep.

In the haze of that half-dreaming state, her mind wandered back to five years ago.

Leon had insisted on taking her overseas so her injured hand could undergo surgery.

But she had refused.

At the time, she had said, "Leon, I've already made up my mind. From this point forward, I'm going to devote myself to being by Carster's side. I'm planning to abandon medicine."

She could still remember the shattered look that filled Leon's eyes.

"Evelyn, do you even realize how much I once envied your gift for medicine? Our mentor taught countless students, yet none of them ever met his expectations. You weren't even twenty, and still, you inherited everything he had to pass on. When he died, he said he carried no regrets. But now, you're telling me you want to throw that talent away? All just to be by a man's side? You've let our mentor down."

Evelyn could not find a single word in her defense and could only weep while apologizing again and again.

When Leon left that day, he spoke coldly. "I regret ever introducing you to him. You are unworthy of being his student."

Leon, who had cared for her for so long, left the country with reddened eyes and never once turned back.

Five years went by, and he didn't return even once.

Even in sleep, tears gathered along Evelyn's lashes and quietly slipped down her cheeks.

Just then, the sudden shrill chime of the doorbell tore through the quiet.

Evelyn snapped awake from the dream and realized the world outside had already fallen into darkness.

Beyond the door, everything lay silent.

Her phone screen showed that it was one in the morning.

Who would come see her at such an hour?

Wariness rose in Evelyn at once.

She had just opened her mouth to ask who was there when a message from Nicola appeared on her phone. "Evie, open the door."

Was Nicola here?

But why would she show up in the middle of the night?

Evelyn did not even pause to put on a robe before hurrying to pull the door open.

"Nicola, did something happen? Is it my mom—"

Evelyn stopped talking the instant she saw who was standing outside.

It was not Nicola but a tall and lean man.

He looked to be around thirty, with thin gold-framed glasses resting on the bridge of his nose, giving him the composed air of a scholar.

Yet deep shadows hung beneath his eyes, and rough stubble shadowed his jaw, making him appear exhausted.

The instant their eyes met, tears fell from Evelyn's eyes, blurring everything until she could barely make out the figure before her.

She wondered if she was still caught inside the dream.

"Leon... is it really you? Am I still dreaming?" she muttered.

The person standing before her was Leon.

But she could not quite believe it.

He had not even answered her message. How did he suddenly appear right in front of her?

Leon nudged his glasses into place and spoke in a calm, gentle voice. "Evelyn, aren't you going to invite me inside?"

The moment that familiar voice reached Evelyn's ears, her tears spilled even faster. "Leon, why did you come?"

Leon let out a quiet sigh and lightly flicked her forehead with his fingers. His voice carried a sense of indulgence.

"You need me. Of course I came back. Otherwise, who would stand up for you, Evie?"

Evelyn could not restrain herself any longer. She flung herself into Leon's arms and dissolved into uncontrollable sobs. "I'm sorry. I should never have walked away from medicine. I should never have let you down or failed our mentor. I thought you would never forgive me, that you would never come back."

Leon returned the hug and slowly smoothed her hair.

"I see you as my sister, and you are the only one who inherited our mentor's teachings. There was no chance I would ever abandon you."