

Chapter 561 It Is Our Wedding Night

Leonel, carrying Evelyn, led the way into the elevator, with Alexis following.

The doors closed behind them, offering a brief respite from prying eyes.

Upon reaching the CEO's office on the top floor, Alexis found herself taken aback. Everything was as she had left it, including the snooker table she had placed there.

The rest of the office furniture was in its familiar spots, as if she had never left.

Catching her gaze, Leonel remarked casually, "I've been too busy to play much pool. Maybe you can teach Evelyn someday. Look at how long her legs already are! I think she'll grow tall. She could be a good player."

The thought of Evelyn growing up healthily stirred a pang in Alexis's heart, a reminder of her daughter's illness. She touched Evelyn's head tenderly, lost in thought.

Leonel's gaze on Alexis was searching, silently questioning why she hadn't returned sooner. "Her disease was diagnosed a year ago, wasn't it?"

Alexis had indeed returned only after exhausting all other options with the best specialists. Her return to Leonel was a last resort, a decision made in the absence of any other hope. This fact lingered heavily between them.

Without a word, Alexis lowered her head, acknowledging the unspoken truth.

Leonel, managing to contain his emotions, didn't press the matter further. He placed Evelyn on the sofa in the rest area, and then opened two takeout boxes from a five-star hotel.

Inside were Evelyn's favorite dishes.

Perched on Leonel's knee, Evelyn ate quietly before asking, "Dad, are you and Mom fighting?"

Leonel glanced at Alexis, who was looking out the window, her eyes tinged with redness. His voice softened. "Let's just eat. There's a court trial this afternoon, right?"

His tone was noticeably gentler than before.

Neither wanted to argue in Evelyn's presence, so Alexis sat down, though her appetite was poor, and she ate very little.

After finishing feeding Evelyn, Leonel turned to Alexis, concern evident in his voice. "Is the food not to your liking?"

Observing Alexis, Leonel noted that she seemed thinner than before. He pondered the common belief that women usually gain weight after childbirth, yet Alexis had lost much weight.

"I haven't dined out much in recent years," she replied to his unspoken question.

Leonel continued eating, his voice growing hoarse as he asked, "Does Calvin cook well?"

Alexis glanced at Leonel, who didn't look up, as if he had just asked a casual question. She nodded slightly, "Not bad."

Leonel, suddenly more insistent, pressed on, "How 'not bad' is it?"

Alexis felt a bit cornered. "Leonel, can we not bring him up? If we want a peaceful coexistence, that is."

Leonel looked up at her, a trace of coldness in his eyes.

This exchange upset Evelyn, who burst into tears.

"Daddy's being mean. I don't want Daddy. I want Calvin."

Leonel's expression, already dark, grew even more troubled. He hadn't realized how sensitive a three-year-old could be.

He didn't raise his voice, but Evelyn sensed his anger.

Leonel always had a soft spot for Evelyn.

Her tears pained him.

He stopped eating, lifted Evelyn onto his lap, and gently wiped away her tears.

Evelyn leaned on his shoulder, still sobbing.

Alexis felt helpless and didn't attempt to take Evelyn from him. Leonel then said calmly to Alexis, "You go ahead and eat. I'll have the driver take you to the law firm later."

He then carried Evelyn to the lounge.

In the lounge, he tenderly wiped her face with a warm towel and lulled her to sleep. He had even prepared a pajama for her at the company—a comfortable pink one-piece nightgown.

After her meal, Evelyn was ready for a nap and asked Leonel to lie down with her, finding comfort in resting her head on his abdomen.

Leonel acquiesced to her requests.

Meanwhile, Alexis descended the stairs alone. Once the CEO of the Exceed Group, the employees still referred to her as Miss Fowler.

The company was abuzz with over 18 different versions of the love-hate saga between her and Leonel.

Earlier, Leonel had been joyfully distributing wedding favors, but now, as Alexis descended the stairs alone, she could hear the whispers of the female employees. They speculated that since marrying Leonel and having a child, Alexis had lost her appeal to him.

Sitting in the car, Alexis could sense that even the driver, Ross, had overheard the gossip.

Clearing his throat, he offered some reassurance. "Don't pay attention to what those gossipy women say. They're clueless. Leonel does care about you."

Alexis smiled faintly, looking down.

She doubted Leonel's care for her now. In her heart, she believed he resented her, maybe still harboring some feelings but troubled by her past three years with Calvin. That might explain his erratic behavior, the push and pull in their relationship.

She feared that after the second baby's birth, Leonel might find their life together dull and want to move on without her.

Everyone sought happiness, and a clever man like Leonel would make his choices wisely.

Leaning back in the car seat, Alexis listened as Ross chatted about the Fowler family and future prospects, even bringing up Waylen and Rena.

She pondered how to explain the situation to her parents.

Her love for Leonel had once been deep, but now their marriage felt like child's play, making a wedding seem pointless.

Neither she nor Leonel had mentioned it. Perhaps they were in agreement on this.

Arriving at the law firm, Alexis called Leonel in the afternoon to remind him to wake Evelyn and give her medicine.

Leonel's response was lukewarm, a stark contrast to his earlier enthusiasm about getting married to her.

After hanging up, Alexis mused to herself, 'Maybe there's more to his mood than just anger towards me. He could be experiencing early menopause.' Ordinary people would struggle with his temper, and Alexis, known for her own fiery disposition, recognized that their relationship had changed.

He no longer tolerated her as before, making conflicts inevitable.

Determined to keep her composure, Alexis resolved to hold back her emotions as much as possible.

Following her court trial, Alexis made her way to the hospital to visit Calvin.

She carried his favorite flowers with her. Entering his room, she found Calvin in good spirits, comfortably propped against his bed's headboard, immersed in a book. It appeared to be a parenting manual.

As she entered, Calvin didn't look up, almost as if he had expected her arrival.

"There you are," he said casually.

Alexis placed the flowers in a vase she found in the cabinet. Glancing at the book, she asked, "You've read that before. Why read it again?"

Calvin's gaze shifted leisurely to her belly.

"Aren't you about to have a baby? I thought it might be useful to brush up on it," he replied.

Alexis remained silent, her gaze softening.

She wasn't sure how to tell Calvin that she and Leonel had got married earlier that day, nor did she want to argue that she was coerced, which would come off as hypocritical.

She also couldn't bring herself to tell Calvin that after she got pregnant, she planned to take him back to Braseovell.

If his health continued to decline, she wanted him to stay in the country, knowing there would always be a place for him in the Fowler household.

But she kept these thoughts to herself, instead focusing on adjusting the bouquet and inquiring about his health and medication. Half an hour later, a servant brought Calvin his dinner, and Alexis stayed to watch him eat.

Seeing him with a good appetite brought her some relief.

As she was leaving, Calvin's voice stopped her. "You're with him again, aren't you?" he asked, his tone calm.

Alexis tensed slightly, but didn't deny it.

"Yes."

Calvin's hand clenched the quilt, but his voice remained steady and gentle. "That's good. Evelyn needs a father like Leonel."

He acknowledged his own limitations, realizing he couldn't offer much to Evelyn and felt like a burden to Alexis.

But in Alexis' heart, Calvin was not a burden—he was family.

Turning back, Alexis approached his bedside, tenderly stroked his hair, and embraced him gently.

Calvin's treatment was essentially a costly battle against time, trading vast sums of money for a prolonged life.

Over the past three years, he had spent tens of millions on medical expenses, a feat impossible for most.

Alexis, however, was prepared to sacrifice everything for him.

Calvin was also enduring his own struggle. He fought through the pain, determined to stay alive, partly because he didn't trust Leonel.

He wanted to ensure that Evelyn was well taken care of with his own

After a moment, Calvin gently urged her, "Go back. Don't be upset because of me anymore."

He silenced any attempt she made to speak further.

Arriving back at the villa around 9 pm, Alexis stepped out of the car and immediately bumped into a solid figure.

The familiar warmth of his breath made it clear it was Leonel holding her.

In the dimly lit front yard, their faces were obscured, but their proximity was unmistakable. Feeling uncomfortable, Alexis took a step back, and Leonel released her.

He lit a cigarette, holding it idly as he asked with a hint of irritation, "You went to see Calvin at the hospital?"

"Yes, I did," Alexis responded.

"Do you also want to control this, Leonel?"

Leonel didn't answer her question directly. Instead, he pointed out, "It's late. Evelyn's asleep. Mrs. Douglas, remember you're married now. If you're so concerned about your former lover, think about your husband's patience and Evelyn missing her mother."

Leonel's words were laced with sarcasm.

Alexis brushed past him, saying, "I'll be more careful in the future. To your satisfaction, Mr. Douglas."

As she spoke, she found herself pressed against the car door.

Leonel extinguished his cigarette and turned to look at her. In the moonlight, her face appeared pale, the shadows under her eyes hinting at sleepless nights and tears shed that afternoon.

Leonel touched her face, his voice low. "Do you know what makes a man truly satisfied?"

Alexis' expression darkened.

She surveyed Leonel from head to toe and replied, "I recall you're supposed to abstain for a week. Besides, didn't we marry to have a child? I don't see the need for us to be intimate before my next ovulatory period."

Leonel's gaze lingered on Alexis's face for a long moment before he chuckled, a hint of mockery in his voice.

"What, can't stand even a single day without him? Mrs. Douglas, it's been a day since we married, and I've yet to see you smile. But with Calvin, you're so visibly affected. Do you remember you're now married to me?"

Interrupting him, Alexis retorted, "Did you marry me just to make sarcastic remarks? Leonel, yes, I do want a child, and I kept that from you. If it's unbearable for you, there are other ways. You wanted this marriage—"

"But I never asked you to keep seeing Calvin," Leonel cut in sharply.

"Alexis, what if I insist that you stop seeing him? I really can't stand his presence in our lives."

Alexis wanted to protest, to say she couldn't agree to that, but she didn't want to escalate the situation.

She simply said, "I'll make sure to come home early in the future," before pushing past him and heading into the villa.

Leonel remained outside, slowly lighting another cigarette, lost in thought.

Inside, Alexis entered the dining room.

The table was laid with many dishes, most of which were her favorites, barely touched.

Was Leonel waiting for her?

A wave of mixed emotions washed over her as she sat down, her eyes lingering on the cold dishes.

There was also a velvet box and a silver candlestick on the table—the setup for a candlelight dinner, likely to celebrate their recent marriage.

Yes, today was the day they had gotten married.

Leonel's footsteps approached from behind. He came in, tossing his coat over a chair back before sitting opposite Alexis.

It was then that she noticed he was still wearing the same clothes from the morning, including the particularly elegant lapel pin. She rarely saw him dressed so formally— "If you wanted dinner with me, you could've called," she said, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Would you have come home if I had called?" Leonel asked, his eyes downcast.

Alexis watched as he put away the velvet box, seemingly deciding not to give it to her.

She didn't inquire about it and began to eat in silence.

After she took a bite, Leonel abruptly took the plate away, his tone harsh. "They're cold. What if you have a stomach later?"

Alexis remained quiet, the tension between them palpable.

Leonel headed to the kitchen to reheat the dishes. Returning with the warmed food, he poured himself a glass of red wine. Alexis frowned at the sight. "You just had surgery. You shouldn't be drinking."

Instead of responding, Leonel pushed the glass towards her, hinting for her to drink. "It's our wedding night," he said.

Alexis hesitantly picked up the glass, swirled the wine gently, and finally took a sip, drinking half of it.

Leonel watched her closely before asking, "Have you made things clear with him? How did he take it? Is he okay with you marrying me? Did he argue with you?"

Putting down her glass, Alexis met Leonel's gaze and spoke up slowly.

"Leonel, listen to me. Just because we've got married doesn't mean I should endure your sarcasm all the time. Calvin is very important to me. If you can't understand that—"

Leonel cut her off, his smile casual, almost dismissive.

"What are you worried about? Mrs. Douglas, relax. I'm not petty— I just wonder if Calvin can handle knowing you're with me, that the woman he cares about spends her nights in my bed. That at any moment, I can touch you, even be intimate with you. It must be maddening for him, right?"

Alexis stood up abruptly, but Leonel's stern voice stopped her.

"Sit down. Did I say you could leave? As I mentioned, it is our wedding night."