

Chapter 580 Marcus, I Have Never Loved You

Marcus' fingers trailed tenderly over Melissa's skin.

Tremors ran through her as she lay beneath him.

Abruptly, he inquired if she had ever harbored love for him.

Despite the time they shared, Marcus had never addressed Melissa with such gravity.

Melissa's body went slack under his weight.

Despite Marcus not taking her, a sense of embarrassment washed over her.

It made her more embarrassed.

She experienced pleasure that he gave her, yet she hesitated to meet his gaze. Turning her face away, her red nose pressed against the pillow as she took a soft breath.

"Did you ever love me?"

Marcus persistently caressed her. As arousal heightened he whispered in her ear, repeatedly asking his breath uneven. If she didn't respond, he would escalate, though he refrained from truly engaging with her.

In the end, tears streamed down Melissa's face.

"No! Never!"

Could she admit to it? The world knew her as a deceiver. She had a boyfriend, yet she inexplicably found herself drawn to Marcus.

She questioned herself, wondering if she only cooked and did laundry for Marcus in exchange for financial support.

Only Melissa was aware of the genuine sentiment behind her actions.

Her affection for Marcus was profound, yet she couldn't bring herself to confess.

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Now, when he inquired about whether she had ever loved him, she grappled with the decision to tell the truth. Clutching the valuable bracelet he had given her, she chose to leave instead. If she now admitted affection for him, she worried about how she would confront his family and friends.

Amidst her uncertainties, it became apparent that her lack of knowledge extended even to distinguishing between champagne and wine.

Incompatible worlds separated them. Melissa never envisioned a lasting connection with Marcus merely based on his fleeting affection. Tastes could shift.

Once fond of Ryan, her affections also waned.

Yes, she had strayed from faithfulness.

Melissa found herself drawn to Marcus, someone she knew she shouldn't have developed feelings for.

Beneath him, she sobbed uncontrollably. "I never loved you, Marcus. If your resentment needs an outlet, I'll compensate with my body. I'll repay the 800 thousand dollars."

Marcus withdrew his touch.

His gaze descended upon her form.

Eventually, in a rough tone, he inquired, "Do you believe your body can make amends for my losses?"

Melissa's face nearly disappeared into the pillow.

Tears streamed down her face, as if she might lose her breath. Under the pressure he applied, her delicate frame seemed on the verge of breaking. Though she yearned to pull out the thin quilt to cover herself, he forbade her from doing so.

He surveyed her form.

Melissa whispered hesitantly, "But this is all I possess."

Marcus remained motionless.

His gaze lingered on her eyes, as if anticipating further words. When silence persisted, he released his grip, gradually distancing himself.

Marcus got up, took the thin quilt, and draped it over her, providing warmth and comfort.

Before her, he straightened his attire, swiftly restoring a polished demeanor.

Melissa huddled on the bed.

Pain pervaded her body, marked by remnants of his touch.

His voice, frigid, cut through the air. "What value do you place on your body? If mere physical satisfaction is my desire, I can easily find countless beauties. Must I persist with you?"

You claimed to never love me.

Fine, I won't coerce you. My overthinking led me astray. I apologize, Miss Brown. Henceforth, we release any debts between us. You owe me nothing and the 800 thousand dollars need not be repaid. It's best if our paths never cross again."

Numbness enveloped Melissa as she listened.

Meeting his icy gaze, she raised her eyes.

A sudden awareness struck her—his smile had been absent for an extended period of time.

Despite his stern demeanor, he used to always playfully smile while teasing her, a sight she found enchanting.

Heat welled up in Melissa's eyes.

A desperate impulse surged within her, urging her to forfeit dignity and plead for his stay. She even entertained the ignoble thought of an intimate encounter with him this very night.

But she recognized her unworthiness

As expected, Marcus uttered with indifference, "I need not be with someone who has shared herself with another."

Subsequently, he strode toward the door.

"Marcus," her voice trailed from behind

He halted, refraining from facing her. Evidently, he awaited her words.

Shrouded in the thin quilt, Melissa murmured, "You haven't touched the noodles. They're cold. I'll heat them up for you."

Marcus abruptly turned his gaze.

His gaze bore into her, a sneer playing on his lips. "Miss Brown, comprehend your actions. If feelings for me are absent, cease playing the innocent and docile lamb. Yes, I once held affection for you, but that's bygone. Regarding the noodles, consume them on your own."

Firmly gripping the doorknob.

The sound of sobbing reached him from behind. Despite the emotional turmoil, he steeled his heart, opened the door, and walked out.

He believed it to be the conclusion.

He had never shown humility to anyone in his life. This woman had deceived him repeatedly. He saw no need to continue pressuring her.

Marcus desired her in her entirety, not just a frail acceptance.

The door swung open and then closed.

A chill breeze entered, triggering violent coughs in Melissa. Her complexion turned unusually crimson, and the coughing persisted. Hastily donning a shirt, she stumbled out of bed to pour a glass of warm water.

Sipping half the glass, a modicum of relief washed over her.

She gazed emptily at the two bowls of noodles on the table. They had long gone cold, and the once vibrant green vegetables had now turned yellow.

She refrained from reheating them.

Silently, she sat and consumed the noodles, finishing two bowls.

As she ate, memories of the past flooded back.

In the upscale apartment where Marcus resided, after she prepared meals, he consistently claimed he couldn't consume the food alone. He would invite her to join him, requesting her company while sharing a meal. Additionally, he would task her with picking up food for him. Moreover, he expressed a dislike for beef and insisted she finish it all.

Paradoxically, he occasionally requested she prepare beef and indulged her in its consumption.

Despite his playful teasing, it held no intent. Melissa found herself yearning for those moments, yet she comprehended their irretrievable nature. Marcus harbored resentment toward her.

She mechanically ingested two bowls of noodles, despite the discomfort gnawing at her stomach.

Reclining on the bed, Marcus' lingering scent permeated the quilt. She inhaled deeply.

Throughout the night, tears streamed down her face.

At the age of eight, Melissa lost her parents. Adopted by Ryan's family, she naturally grew close to him. Later in life, when she handed 800,000 dollars to the Jenkins family, they accepted the money but berated her as shameless.

Melissa settled her debt with them.

Yet another debt lingered with Marcus.

Melissa had never openly voiced grievances about her background but on this particular night, she permitted herself to contemplate it in solitude. In that moment, she pondered what might have been if she had a different origin if the Jenkins family hadn't adopted her, if Ryan wasn't in the picture, and if the burden of the \$800,000 wasn't hanging over her. It was the only time she allowed herself to entertain thoughts of what could have been had circumstances been different.

She would have found the courage to confess her feelings to Marcus.

It wasn't about Marcus' social standing or looks; it was simply a fondness for him. She appreciated even the pleasure he displayed when teasing her.

Fate tethered her to an unfavorable lineage.

Her past was marked by unfortunate experiences.

Perhaps, henceforth, Marcus would find her repulsive. Once she repaid him, she vowed to vanish from his presence, sparing him any further distaste.

Marcus retreated to his hotel.

He had abstained from food since noon, and a subtle ache throbbled in his stomach.

Yet the more pronounced pain resonated in his head.

As he leaned against the sofa in front of the French window, smoking he internally ridiculed himself. "Marcus, you are truly contemptible. Continuously you've displayed a soft heart, offering her excuses and opportunities to acknowledge her mistakes and seek repentance.

But all she seems to perceive is that she owes you \$800,000.

You're deluding yourself."

Marcus, troubled by a stomachache, extinguished his cigarette and summoned room service, ordering a bowl of noodles.

Ten minutes later, the doorbell chimed. He approached, intending to welcome the waiter.

To his surprise it wasn't the waiter but his new secretary, Sophia.

Clad in a white bathrobe adorned with bunny-eared headgear, the young girl exuded an air of innocence tinged with a hint of allure.

Meeting Marcus' gaze, Sophia offered a shy explanation. "Mr. Fowler, I just completed my shower and intended to discuss tomorrow's schedule with you. Encountering the waiter, I requested the noodles from him."

Marcus fixed his gaze on her.

Positioned at the door, he barred her entry.

Uttering in a deliberate, resonant tone, he questioned, "What delusion led you to believe I'd make a move to my female secretary? Why assume I'd approve of this attire? Now, leave."

Marcus, typically gentle with women, departed from his norm, sternly

commanding her to leave.

Caught off guard, Sophia's eyes welled with tears, and she struggled to regain composure.

Wasn't Marcus fond of bunnies?

Rumor had it that he frequently encouraged Melissa to consume carrots.

Sophia stood in shock as Marcus forcefully slammed the door, nearly shattering it. However, it seemed this wasn't sufficient to release his anger. He retrieved his phone from his pocket and dialed Sylvia, who was in Duefron.

Late into the night, Sylvia, already in bed, received a call from her boss.

Despite the late hour, she didn't dare to ignore it and steeled herself to respond.

Marcus' cold voice issued instructions.

"I expect to see you before eight o'clock tomorrow morning

Additionally, inform Sophia to leave. I have no desire to encounter her again.

Henceforth, I prohibit any rabbit-related items—be they clothing, food, or otherwise—from entering my sight. Female employees with the surname Brown are barred from the company, and individuals with the last name Brown will not be hired in the future."

A gulp escaped Sylvia.

The clock had already struck one in the morning. How could she make it to Warsew? Even driving would span five or six hours.

Furthermore, there were no flights to Warsew at this hour.

Contemplating her fat paychecks, Sylvia clenched her teeth and roused herself from bed.

Hastily donning her clothes, she affirmed, "Alright, Mr. Fowler, I'll be there promptly at eight tomorrow morning. I'll also ensure that in the future, you're spared any discomfort by screening out relevant personnel."

Eager to convey more, she found herself cut off as Marcus ended the call.

Sylvia eyed her phone, pondering the gravity of the situation and wondering what triggered Marcus' rage. Had he perhaps encountered Melissa?

Adorning her coat and retrieving the car key, she prepared to depart. Her husband offered to drive her. She declined with a slight shake of her head. "You'll need to drive our child tomorrow morning. I'll handle this carefully."

At that moment, Sylvia vowed to purchase a million-dollar diamond ring by the end of the year, financed by the credit extended by Marcus.

Handling a man in the aftermath of a breakup was challenging a burden she alone bore.

At eight o'clock in the morning in Warsaw, Sylvia arrived at the hotel.

Sophia, upon seeing her, behaved like a spoiled child and questioned why Marcus was being so unreasonable.

Sylvia retained a sense of injustice.

Unfortunately, she lacked someone to confide in.

Wearing a light smile, she remarked, "We are paid not just for our work skills but, most importantly, for understanding the boss' intentions. Sophia, you fell short on this. You've pissed Mr. Fowler. I can't defend you this time."

Anxious, Sophia pleaded, "Sylvia, I've been doing well."

Sylvia dismissed her concerns with a wave. "However, Mr. Fowler isn't content with your performance. Sophia, let me be blunt. You overstepped the boundaries. It's not the surname Brown or the secretary role that Mr. Fowler finds appealing. Sometimes, men's feelings for women can be inexplicable, but having feelings alone is not sufficient. Mr. Fowler has spent over a year in the company of Melissa. I believe Melissa has consistently made him feel comfortable and content throughout this time."

Sophia stood in stunned silence.

She believed she possessed greater intelligence, was more sociable, and comprehended men better than Melissa.

Not wanting to engage in an argument with Sophia, Sylvia issued a direct command. "Return to Duefron and submit your resignation. I'll instruct the human resources department to provide you with an additional

month's salary."

Sophia remained unaccepting

Sylvia, lowering her head with a smile, advised, "Had you been prudent, you wouldn't have provoked Mr. Fowler once more. Now one more mistake, it's not just your job at stake. I fear you might not be able to continue residing in Duefron."

Checking her watch, Sylvia promptly entered the elevator.

In a dazed state, Sophia gazed at Sylvia's retreating figure. She doubted the significant influence Melissa supposedly held.

She questioned how a woman could inflict such pain on Marcus.

Sophia soon discovered the truth.

When she hailed a taxi with her luggage, Sophia spotted Melissa across the street.

Melissa was employed at a breakfast shop. Sophia deliberately walked over, intending to say something to Melissa. However, as Sophia approached, she noticed the vivid red hickeys on Melissa's neck, indicating the intensity of the situation at that moment.

Did Marcus visit Melissa last night?

If Marcus couldn't erase Melissa from his thoughts, why did Melissa endure such a challenging existence?

Abruptly, Sophia lost the desire to inquire anything between them.

She feared the potential exacerbation of her feelings if she sought answers.

She feared the realization that her desires might be something others cast aside.

However, Melissa persevered, tending to customers, handling transactions, and procuring breakfast despite her weary body. Day after day, Melissa navigated this challenging existence.

In a hushed tone, Sophia finally muttered, "Fool!"

With her luggage in tow, she departed briskly.

Melissa glanced up and spotted someone familiar. The recognition

hovered at the edge of her consciousness but elusively slipped away. Eventually, she lowered her head, completing the transaction and returning the change to the customer.

In the suite on the top floor, Sylvia retrieved the spare key card and opened the door.

Upon entering, thick smoke greeted her, but fortunately, there was no trace of alcohol.

She believed Marcus had exercised some restraint.

Clothes were scattered all over the floor, prompting Sylvia to pick them up and fold them up one by one. Eventually, she discovered Marcus in the main bedroom.

Although Sylvia held the position of Marcus' chief secretary, she rarely delved into his daily affairs.

Marcus preferred not to have his secretary assume such responsibilities.

Yet he had summoned her, indicating a need for care. His appearance was disheveled, and his face was pallid.

"Mr. Fowler?"

Sylvia extended her hand, brushing Marcus' forehead, detecting a slight warmth—evidence of a fever.

Marcus stirred, his voice hoarse.

"You're here. Summon a doctor for me."

Closing his eyes, he added, "I'm experiencing a mild stomach ache and dizziness. Summon the hotel doctor and arrange breakfast."

After a moment's contemplation, Sylvia suggested, "I noticed there's a diner across the street. Shall I have some wonton soup delivered?"

"Whatever," Marcus replied, massaging his forehead.

His gaze drifted toward the ceiling still not fully alert.

A seasoned professional, Sylvia had endured an all-nighter and remained in high spirits.

She promptly summoned the doctor and placed a comprehensive breakfast order.

Additionally, she gathered all of Marcus' dirty laundry, preparing to dispatch them to the hotel's dry-cleaning service.

Meanwhile, across the street, as Melissa busied herself in the cashier, the proprietress approached abruptly, announcing "There's a takeout order from the hotel across the street. Melissa, being the youngest and most presentable, you'll handle the delivery. It's for the presidential suite. I hear it costs an arm and a leg for one night there; so it's an opportunity to broaden your horizons. Go, and remember to share your insights about the hotel later."

Melissa was then handed a bag containing a bowl of steaming hot wonton soup.