

Chapter 609 Alexis Ran Into Matthew! (Part One)

Melissa paused, her thoughts interrupted by Matthew's joyous consumption of his small bowl of mutton stew.

She nearly spoke up but decided against it at the last moment.

Julie offered a comforting smile. "Enjoy your dinner first. We can talk later."

She then whispered to Melissa, cautioning her not to let Matthew overhear, praising the boy's keen intelligence.

Melissa's smile, in response, sparked a suspicion in Julie.

She speculated that Melissa must have encountered Marcus several times already upon her return to Duefron, given her distracted demeanor.

After the meal, Matthew retreated to his room, engrossed in his new toy, while Julie cleaned up the table.

Later, she brought a paper bag filled with cash to Melissa's room, finding her fresh from a shower and drying her hair.

The bag contained a significant sum, easily totaling four or five hundred thousand dollars.

"Julie, how did you come by such an amount?" Melissa inquired puzzled.

Julie glanced at a medical record on the dressing table before answering nonchalantly. "Told you I got lucky and won a small lottery prize! You know, if you had a car, you might not have caught that cold— And now that you're working for someone as important as Mr. Waston, it seems odd to take public transportation every day. I thought you might use this money to buy a car."

Melissa set the towel aside, considering the money.

With her own savings, the combined sum was indeed enough for a nice car. However, she decided it was time to share her real thoughts with Julie.

Looking up, Melissa spoke softly. "Julie, I'm thinking of returning to Heron, where our headquarters is."

Julie, taken aback, sought clarity.

"Why the sudden move? You've just bought this nice apartment, and Matthew is about to start kindergarten. Is this about Mr. Fowler?" She hoped Marcus hadn't revived old troubles, given his outward decency.

Melissa found herself too mortified to discuss Marcus' actions, while Julie maintained an air of obliviousness, feigning ignorance to the undercurrents of Melissa's dilemma.

Taking a moment to gather her thoughts, Julie continued, "You're just starting to establish your career here. Moving back to Heron means starting anew. Without Mr. Waston's support, it's unlikely the work environment there will match what you have in Duefron. I think you need to give it some serious thought."

Melissa presumed Julie had just grown comfortable with life in Duefron and was resistant to change environment.

She nodded in understanding. "I'll reconsider it, I promise!"

She tried to give the money back to Julie, but Julie insisted, "Please, hold onto it for me. My day-to-day expenses are minimal, mostly just groceries. And well — If he discovers I have this money, it'll all be wasted."

Julie was referring to her son, Shawn Wilson, who, much like his father, had fallen prey to gambling.

Julie's husband had squandered their finances on gambling and her son had followed in his footsteps. Despite his faults, he had always treated Melissa and Matthew kindly though Julie's concern was evident as she worried about her son discovering the money.

Melissa pondered before responding "I'll keep the money safe for you. Perhaps, if your son overcomes his gambling habit, this could be his chance to start a small business."

Julie's greatest worry was indeed her son.

Yet, she couldn't take Marcus' money to help her own son, and sadly she couldn't reveal that part to Melissa.

Claiming fatigue, Julie excused herself to sleep, leaving Melissa to secure the money and drop the subject.

As Melissa prepared for bed, Matthew, her little boy, approached with a pillow in hand.

Despite being almost three, he was smaller than other children his age. He snuggled into Melissa's embrace, his presence a reminder of her hesitation to risk exposing him to her cold.

She considered moving him to Julie's room, but his pleading eyes melted her resolve.

"Matthew wants to stay with Mommy tonight," the boy pleaded.

Overwhelmed by tenderness, Melissa relented, and as they lay in the darkened room, she felt an enveloping warmth. She introduced the topic of Heron to Matthew, describing it as a bustling city, wondering if he'd be open to relocating.

"Mommy, what does 'bustling' mean?" Matthew's curiosity was evident in his gentle voice.

"It means it's a vibrant place, filled with people, cars, and towering buildings," Melissa explained, painting a picture of urban life.

Matthew blinked with confusion. "Duefron has lots of cars and people too, and I really like it here. Plus, we get snow in the winter and there's my new toy! Mommy, have you seen it?"

Melissa found herself speechless at Matthew's words.

The realization that neither Julie nor Matthew wished to leave Duefron solidified her decision to stay.

Marcus, having not shown up for the next few days, seemed to have moved on, providing Melissa with a sense of relief.

She deposited the half million into a bank account in Julie's name and instead used her own savings to buy herself a nice white BMW.

The day they went to collect it, Matthew's excitement was palpable, his joy bouncing around the car's back seat. Julie, equally impressed, couldn't resist praising "Such a beautiful car suits you perfectly. A vibrant young woman like you deserves nothing less."

Celebrating the new purchase, Melissa treated them to dinner at an upscale restaurant, sharing promising news.

"Mr. Waston has hinted at awarding me some initial shares in the company for my hard work. This could mean a salary hike and possibly, a move to a larger house with enough room for each of us."

Julie's smile couldn't have been broader at the thought.

Yet, the day's schedule demanded Melissa leave for work right after dropping them at the French restaurant, earning a light complaint from Julie. "Working on a Saturday? Plus, Matthew and I seldom dine in places this grand. What if we make a fool of ourselves?"

Melissa reassured them with a forehead kiss to Matthew. "Don't worry. It's just a meal. And I taught Matthew some table manners required last night."

Matthew, puffing up with pride, assured, "Yes! Don't worry, Julie. I'll be a big help."

With a reluctant shake of her head, Julie led Matthew into the bustling restaurant.

Their visit coincided with the lunch rush, where they found themselves amidst a crowd, including Alexis and Evelyn.