

Chapter 642 Marcus, You're My Only Hope

After seeing Shawn and his family off, Melissa offered to assist Julie with the cleaning, but Julie insisted, "You've just returned. Go and rest. I'll handle this."

After pondering for a moment, Melissa inquired, "Julie, have you considered living with Shawn? He's changed for the better now. It's not like before."

Moreover, Julie was Shawn's mother, so Melissa couldn't continually keep Julie away.

Julie did the dishes neatly and then shared, "I've talked it over with Janet. Shawn will focus on earning money while Janet takes care of their daughter. She can manage. Besides, I'm concerned about Matthew; he's still young, and I'm not comfortable leaving him with others."

Melissa felt deeply appreciative of Julie's consideration.

After deliberation, she proposed to Julie, "I'll provide you with \$20,000 monthly. You can pass it on to Janet. This way, Yvonne can enjoy a better life. Children need proper care at her tender age."

Julie gently patted Melissa's hands and accepted the offer.

Subsequently, Julie inquired softly, "Are you certain things won't work out between you and Mr. Fowler?"

Melissa nodded affirmatively. "Yes, I acted impulsively before."

Julie consoled Melissa, "What a shame! Mr. Fowler is indeed quite handsome."

Melissa was at a loss for words.

Returning to the bedroom, Melissa found Matthew playing with his toys.



on the carpet. Upon seeing her, he reached out his arms, asking for a hug.

It was only then that Melissa could finally spend some quality time with her son.

Having not seen each other for a month, Melissa showered him with kisses, but it never seemed sufficient.

Matthew would start kindergarten next year. In the meantime, Melissa would often read picture books to him. As she went to open the drawer of the bedside table, out of habit, she remembered the diamond ring she had placed there last time.

"Daddy took it," Matthew stated matter-of-factly.

Melissa snapped out of her reverie and regarded Matthew. Despite his youth, he articulated, "I gave the ring to Daddy when I found it. He put it in his pocket."

Melissa remained silent but pressed a kiss to her son's forehead.

Matthew sat quietly in his mother's embrace, listening to her tale. Eventually, he grasped her hand and corrected, "Mommy, you misread it. It's three sheep, not rabbits."

Melissa lowered her head, gently rubbing her chin against her son's silky hair.

She murmured softly, "I'll read it again, then."

However, Matthew's thoughts strayed elsewhere. Nestled against Melissa's embrace, he queried in a hushed tone, "Will I get a new mommy someday?"

"What do you mean?"

Matthew, feeling a strong bond with Melissa, continued to share in a gentle tone. "At Grandpa's house last time, Grandpa was upset with Dad. He shouted at Dad, saying he already had a woman, yet he pursued another. Grandpa asked Dad if he wanted two wives. Mom, will Dad find a new mommy for me?"

Melissa speculated that Marcus might have met someone new.



Matthew was still tender in age and probably couldn't understand all this.

Melissa cradled Matthew, reassuring him softly, "You'll stay with me. Your dad might find someone he likes later on, but you don't have to call her mommy."

"I don't have to call her my new mommy?"

Melissa planted a kiss on his forehead and reassured him, "No, you don't."

Matthew felt more at ease. Nestled in Melissa's embrace, he eventually peeked out and asked, "Did you and dad break up?"

Melissa's nose twitched slightly.

For a moment, Melissa struggled to explain it to Matthew, but he persisted. "Dad mentioned he argued with you, like how I argue with Daniel. Mom, Daniel and I make up quickly. Will you and dad make up too?"

Melissa embraced Matthew tenderly.

Matthew fell silent.

The little boy had a limited understanding of adult relationships, yet he sensed the dynamic between his parents. Nevertheless, he remained remarkably compliant, never resorting to tantrums.

After soothing Matthew to sleep, Melissa reclined against the headboard, softly caressing his cheek.

Matthew's resemblance to Marcus became increasingly apparent.

Melissa showered quietly before settling beside Matthew, contemplating the future.

She intended to relocate to a four-bedroom house by next year. Regarding their current residence, she planned to sell it to Shawn at an affordable price once he found stability, a gesture of gratitude toward Julie.

Melissa's phone suddenly chimed.

Seeing Marcus' name on the caller ID, Melissa paused briefly before answering. "What's going on?"

Rising from bed, she made her way to the bedroom balcony, where the chill greeted her.

Marcus spoke casually. "I'd like to bring Matthew over on New Year's Eve. Is that alright with you?"

Melissa was taken aback.

In truth, she knew that since Marcus learned about Matthew's existence, she couldn't prevent him from seeing the child, especially since they were co-parenting. After pondering for a moment, she said, "That's fine. How about four in the afternoon?"

Her tone was professional.

The atmosphere grew tense.

Only the sound of their breathing filled the air. After a prolonged silence, Marcus murmured softly, "I'll come get him at four in the afternoon, the day after tomorrow."

With that, he ended the call.

Marcus focused solely on arrangements for Matthew during the conversation.

Melissa felt that their current relationship seemed more strained compared to when they first reconnected. If it weren't for Matthew, they might have remained estranged from each other indefinitely.

On this cold winter night, Melissa stood outside for quite some time, clutching her phone in her hand.

Early the next morning, Melissa rose and accompanied Julie and Matthew to the shopping center.

Melissa purchased several sets of clothes for Julie, Matthew, and Yvonne. However, Julie halted Melissa from buying more, stating, "I already have plenty of clothes in my closet. If you want to shop, you should focus on yourself. Now that you've been promoted, you should

pay more attention to your wardrobe. You can arrange to go shopping with Miss Green another day; she seems to care about you. She visited us twice when you were in Heron."

Engaged in aiding Yvonne with her new shoes, Melissa glanced up and remarked, "She never mentioned that."

"She inquired about Mr. Watson," Julie supplemented.

Silent, Melissa persisted in assisting Yvonne trying her new shoes. Perhaps due to her momentary lapse in focus, Yvonne couldn't resist calling out to Melissa.

Melissa snapped back to attention and tenderly patted Yvonne's hand.

Julie sighed heavily. "Miss Green is actually a fine young woman. Why hasn't Mr. Watson considered marrying her? She comes from a decent family and loves him sincerely. Men can be so disappointingsometimes."

Melissa preferred not to dwell on the topic.

Observing Melissa's expression, Julie ceased discussing the matter further.

After shopping and enjoying lunch outdoors, as they prepared to depart, Matthew suddenly exclaimed, "Daddy!"

Melissa followed Matthew's line of sight.

Peering through a pane of glass, Melissa observed Marcus sipping coffee with a woman who appeared to be his new partner. However, upon the woman's turn of head, Melissa was taken aback to discover it was Violette.

They were back together?

It wouldn't be appropriate for Melissa to just leave at this moment, especially since Marcus had already seen her.

Marcus, with his penetrating gaze, calmly regarded Melissa and Matthew in her embrace. He then turned to Violette, seated across from him, and remarked, "I'll ponder this issue. Inform your parents to await further updates."

Violette, her eyes glistening with tears, pleaded, "Marcus, you're my only hope."

Sporting a slight smile, Marcus rose from his seat and addressed Violette, "Excuse me for a moment." Violette followed suit and saw Melissa as well.

Melissa's son, cradled in her arms, looked utterly adorable.

Violette confessed to harboring a twinge of jealousy. She couldn't shake the feeling that Marcus might not have chosen Melissa if not for the child. Yet she had heard rumors of their breakup.

Marcus exited the cafe, and Matthew reached out, requesting to be held by him.

Marcus nodded in acknowledgment at Julie and inadvertently cast a glance at Melissa. He then took the boy from her and tenderly inquired, "Have you had lunch?"

Matthew seized Marcus' hand and placed it on his tummy, prompting a giggle from the boy.

Marcus caressed the tender boy, melting his heart, yet he remained indifferent toward Melissa. In a detached tone, Marcus remarked, "Matthew's hands feel chilly."

Melissa forced a smile and replied, "We're just about to head home."

Spotting Violette approaching Melissa didn't dwell on it. Assuming they were together and on a date, she stated, "I won't keep you any longer. You can collect Matthew tomorrow."

Marcus' gaze held depth.

Meanwhile, Violette stood beside Marcus, playfully engaging with Matthew. However, Matthew grew bashful, burying his face in his father's shoulder, hesitant to converse with Violette.

Violette gazed at Marcus, her expression adorned with a sweet smile.

Julie's heart sank as she observed the scene, realizing the slim chances of reconciliation between Marcus and Melissa. Just as Julie



contemplated speaking up, Marcus nodded slightly and passed Matthew over to Melissa.

Matthew wore a somber expression.

Melissa maintained her composure, nodding politely to Violette before departing with Julie and the kids. Once they were out of earshot, Julie couldn't resist commenting, "Do you think Mr. Fowler did this deliberately? You two barely split up, and now he's with someone else."

Melissa opened the car door and ushered the children inside.

Melissa murmured softly, "They were a couple from the start. Now they've simply reunited."

Marcus and Melissa had been intimate in recent days. In truth, it was unfair to Violette. But was it fair to anyone involved?

Melissa wished those days hadn't occurred.

Upon returning home, she found herself in a sour mood. Opting to arrange flowers and listen to music to lift her spirits, she recognized the need to maintain a positive attitude despite Marcus having a new girlfriend.

Yvonne was overjoyed, harboring a fondness for Melissa.

Later in the evening Janet arrived to collect Yvonne. Grateful, she expressed her appreciation to Melissa, who held a special fondness for Yvonne.

The presence of an additional child infused the household with liveliness.

On New Year's Eve, Melissa urged Julie to spend time with her own son's family. Left alone with Matthew at home, Melissa received a visit from Marcus in the afternoon to retrieve Matthew.

Marcus stood outside the door, displaying a strong sense of respect for boundaries.

Cradling Matthew in her arms, Melissa instructed him to be polite and show courtesy to others when he went to the Fowler mansion.

Matthew hesitated, his voice carrying a sweet plea. "I want to stay with you, Mommy."



Melissa hugged him tenderly.

She longed to celebrate the new year with Matthew, yet she recognized the Fowler family's commendable patience and restraint in not forcefully reclaiming him. She couldn't demand more.

She put the boy down and got to his level, coaxing him for an extended period of time.

Matthew eventually relented.

Marcus had been waiting outside the door. When Matthew emerged, Marcus bent down and scooped him up. Melissa approached the door silently and remarked, "If Miss Finch ever wants to visit the Fowlers' house and things get awkward, feel free to call me to pick up Matthew at any time."

Marcus furrowed his brow.

Matthew played with his squirt gun, remarking "Mom said I don't have to call Daddy's new girlfriend 'Mommy.'"

Suddenly, Melissa felt a twinge of unease.

She delicately tucked a stray lock of hair behind her ear.



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