

Chapter 18

Leon lowered his gaze, his eyes settling on her flushed, parted lips.

He didn't move, but the warmth in his expression kept rising.

They were so close that he could see everything clearly.

Behind Angela's tear-rimmed eyes was an urgent, lost, helpless light — a soul adrift.

Leon's throat tightened as he swallowed. "Angela, you're drunk."

He started to pull back, but Angela lifted her head, her scent brushing against him.

Her arms looped around his neck, dragging him down hard toward her.

Their lips met.

It was pressing, clinging, and tangling, like sinking into the curve of a protective shell, warm and safe.

...

Morning came.

Angela woke staring at the ceiling, dazed for a moment.

Hadn't she gone to Secret Haven to drink? How did she get back to the hotel? When?

She pushed herself upright and noticed her clothes had been changed, her phone was charging on the nightstand, and a glass of honey water waited beside it.



Rubbing her aching temples, she washed up and stepped out when she heard noise from the other room.

“Dr. Wright?”

Leon was setting out utensils.

He glanced at her, then quickly looked away. “I bought you breakfast. Come eat.”

“Thank you. But Dr. Wright... why are you here?”

“You don't remember?”

Angela shook her head honestly.

Leon's eyes dimmed a little, his Adam's apple shifting as he spoke quietly. “I happened to see you drinking at Secret Haven, so I brought you back.”

“You knew I was staying at this hotel?”

“You told me yourself.”

“My clothes, then?”

“Housekeeping changed them.”

Angela let out a long breath of relief.

Leon paused. “So, you were worried I took advantage of you?”

Angela flushed, blurting, “I—I was afraid you'd be the one losing out.”

“Yeah, I lost out completely,” Leon thought.



Angela sat across from him and noticed the spread on the table—her favorite breakfast.

There were pumpkin and sweet-corn soup, steamed veggie bites, shrimp ravioli, and sautéed soy-greens.

She invited Leon to eat with her, but he said he already had breakfast.

Angela nodded, her gaze landing on his slightly swollen lips.

“Dr. Wright, are you allergic to shrimp?”

“Why do you ask?”

“Your lips look a little puffy.”

Leon was speechless.

Puffy was an understatement; they still tingled.

Leon studied her, his dark eyes steady, his lips parting as if he meant to say something, only for the words to die before they could leave him.

Last night had started as an accident.

The sudden kiss catching him completely off guard, and even now he was holding himself together by sheer restraint. 1

Angela couldn't read his thoughts, but she noticed the tips of his ears turning red.

...

After finishing breakfast, she stepped forward to clear the dishes.

Both reached for the small dish at the same time.



Angela's fingers closed around it and Leon's hand closed over hers.

It was the middle of June, yet her skin felt cold to touch.

With so little muscle on her hands, and no real strength behind them, her bones felt almost soft.

She felt the heat of his palm against her skin—warm, callused along the center and fingertips, the roughness brushing a faint itch against her.

Those weren't the kind of calluses a scalpel could make.

The thought flickered through her mind in an instant.

She lifted her head and met Leon's gaze.

Silence stretched for several seconds before they both released each other as if nothing had happened.

Leon moved quickly and caught the falling dish. "I'll take care of it."

Angela looked a little flustered. "Thank you."

Everything had been takeaway anyway; cleaning up really just meant tossing it into the trash and carrying it out.

Angela insisted on paying him back for last night's drinks and this morning's breakfast.

Leon accepted it.

Before leaving, he asked, "Are you planning to stay in the hotel long?"

Angela replied, "No. I'm going out to look for a place today."

Leon nodded. "I think Crestwood Heights is pretty good."



Pretty good was an understatement—it was the most luxurious residential area in Northhaven.

Developed by Hightide Group, fully smart-integrated, with property fees close to twenty dollars per square meter.


And she knew because Crestwood Heights had been outfitted with HeartLogic's smart-home system when the units were handed over.

Angela forced a smile. "I'll think about it."

"If money becomes a problem, you can talk to me."

"Mm, thanks."

Angela answered lightly.

She didn't mention to Leon that a certain Mr. W had been spending money on her. 

They weren't close enough to share everything yet.

Leon picked up the trash bag and turned away. After two steps, he paused and looked back.

"Dr. Wright, something else?"

Leon's gaze lingered on her face for a moment. "Nothing."

His steps were steady and unhurried as he walked toward the door. Then he stopped again and looked back at her.

Angela wasn't naïve enough to think he couldn't bear to leave her.

She remembered Sunny once saying that Leon was hopeless with directions, that he couldn't even follow GPS properly. Maybe he couldn't



find his way to the hospital.

No one was perfect.

"I'll send you."

Leon seemed to have been waiting for those words.

He smiled. "Thank you."

Angela's version of sending him off was walking him to a taxi.

She repeated to the driver several times, "Gracewell International Hospital. Gracewell International Hospital. The one on Conning Road."

The driver gave a joking salute. "Don't worry, miss. I don't traffic decent young men."

Angela was speechless.

That was absolutely not what she meant.

Leon lowered his head with a quiet laugh.

His thumb and forefinger nudging his glasses up the bridge of his nose, giving him the look of a gentle, dependable man any family would approve of.

Angela didn't know what to say. As she closed the taxi door, she heard his phone ring.

She didn't say goodbye, just headed upstairs alone, her mind wandering all over the place.

The moment she reached her floor and lifted her head, she froze.



A tall, composed figure stood at her door, dressed in a crisp shirt and tailored trousers.

He had broad shoulders, a narrow waist, and a refined, controlled presence that filled the hallway.

“Dr. Wright?”

Angela stared, stunned. Why was he back?

Leon heard her voice and walked toward her, stopping only a few inches away.

At his height, she had to tilt her head up slightly to meet his eyes.

“There’s something I think you should know. Better to be prepared.”

Angela’s expression tightened. “Go ahead.”

“Nina’s fever isn’t breaking. Donald just sent her to Gracewell International Hospital.”

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