

Crushed Affections

Chapter 9 The Thorn in His Heart

Bella immediately went to the room and closed the door. It muffled Dominic's voice as he roared, "Bella!"

She didn't want to pay him much attention. She bit back the sadness bubbling within her.

There were some things she hadn't been able to figure out. Had there been anything between Dorothy and Richard? Or were they nothing more than childhood friends? If they were just friends, how did Dorothy cause Richard's divorce?

Bella had been too young back then. She couldn't understand many things.

Was the truth what Dominic believed it was? Did Dorothy do everything she could to entrust Bella to the Millers on her deathbed? It made sense. Bella had never dared to dwell on it...

Now, three of the people in that story have passed away. Even if they had left any clues behind, Bella didn't have the chance to prove its legitimacy. This was a thorn in Dominic's heart. He wouldn't allow her to prod at it.

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In the afternoon, Bella went to Felix's home. He had stayed home, just like yesterday.

After greeting him, she began teaching Yvonne to play the piano patiently.

Felix sat beside them and observed them silently. It made Bella feel a little awkward. She could only console herself that she was reading too much into his behavior.

Felix was a capable man. Why would he fall for her? Back then, he'd been too young. He didn't know better.

During their break, Felix poured her a glass of orange juice. "I saw you drinking this back in school. You haven't changed favorites, have you? It's freshly squeezed."

It was the first time someone remembered her preferences from years ago. It moved Bella.

She placed the orange juice aside and said, "Thank you."

Felix smiled and said, "During our university days, my dad didn't give me any money to toughen me up. I survived on a scholarship and by working part-time. I thought you'd ask about that. Who knew you never grew curious?"

Bella grinned and said, "Sometimes, stilling one's curiosity is a form of respect for the other. I'll ask Yvonne to come over. We'll continue our lessons."

Then, her phone rang. It was a call from the hospital. She apologized to Felix and walked away.

"Hello," Bella said, answering the call.

Peter White, the chief physician, sounded extremely panicked. "Bella, where are you? We don't have enough hands on deck today. There's a patient from the emergency department who needs an operation. Please come over now!"

Bella felt rather troubled. She didn't expect to be summoned to the hospital on her day off. However, lives were at stake in the hospital.

After hanging up, she glanced at Felix hesitantly. Before she said anything, he said, "If you've got something to do, just go. The rest of her lessons can be shifted to when you're free. It's alright."

She sighed in relief. Thankfully, Felix was an easygoing guy. "Thank you so much. There's an operation that needs to be done at the hospital. I've got to go."

Felix gave her a once over and said, "I didn't expect you to become a doctor. I wasn't as lucky. In the end, I took the path my dad laid out for me. Let me drive you there."

Bella shook her head quickly and replied, "It's alright. I've already troubled you enough by leaving without finishing Yvonne's lessons today. I'll hail a cab there."

Felix pushed her out and insisted, "Why are you being so polite with me? We're old friends and both medical students. How could I possibly not understand the importance of lives at stake? Let's go."

The warm hand on her shoulder calmed Bella down. She went with Felix's suggestion. It was probably his charisma. Whenever she was with him, Bella felt extremely relaxed.

When they arrived at the hospital, Bella got out of the car hurriedly after thanking Felix. She only found out the emergency patient had been wheeled into the operating room. Someone had taken her place as the main surgeon.

While Bella exhaled in relief, she was confused as well. Peter wouldn't have called her if the department hadn't been swimming in patients. Why would a replacement for her appear all of a sudden?

A young nurse hurriedly knocked on her door. She begged, "Dr. Jones, please come to the operation room. Dr. Clarke has just been transferred here. He doesn't know his way around the machines we use. You've got to help him. Dr. White asked me to keep tabs on when you arrive!"

Bella agreed and followed her out. While rounding the corner, she ran into a familiar figure.

"You..."