

THE EX-WIFE'S BURNING ELEGANCE

Chapter 6

Haynes had always thought Stella was threatening him with the divorce, and deep down, it left a bitter taste in his mouth. When hearing Rachel's words, his

expression turned even colder.

"No need," he said, his voice crisp and clear. "Once I give you something, it's always yours."

"But..." Rachel started to protest, only to be cut off by Haynes.

"If it's a gift, there's no sense in taking it back," he added with a distant look in his eyes.

Rachel couldn't hide the gratitude that washed over her.

Stella instinctively clenched her fists. Then, a faint smile played on her lips. "Ms. Pearce, didn't you want me to lend you the violin? That's fine. As long as Mr. O'Brien is willing to ask me for it, I might consider."

Rachel's eyes widened in disbelief. Haynes' face turned a shade darker, his temper barely in check.

"Stella, enough," he said icily.

Stella sneered, "Oh, I thought Mr. O'Brien would do anything for Ms. Pearce. It seems like I've overestimated."

Once, Stella believed Haynes would sacrifice anything for Rachel. At that moment, she realized the things he was willing to sacrifice were trivial, like her.

Having seen things, Stella felt a calm indifference settle over her. She turned to the store manager, standing awkwardly nearby. "If I'm not mistaken, the lease on this violin ends today. Please arrange for me to take it home."

The manager glanced nervously at Haynes' expression.

Stella raised her eyebrows and asked coldly, "What? Do I not have the right to take my violin?"

"Sure," the manager laughed nervously. "I'll arrange the paperwork for you, Ms. Cameron."

After finishing the paperwork, Stella took the violin and left without glancing at Haynes or Rachel.

Haynes watched her departure, and his brows furrowed tightly.

Rachel lowered her head slightly, a guilty look on her face.

"Haynie, it must be because you forgot about Ms. Cameron's birthday yesterday. It's my fault for being such a burden on you."

"It's not your fault," Haynes replied calmly. "Go ahead and prepare for the concert. I'll have someone send you that violin, Nocturne Stella, later."

Rachel's face lit up with joy. "Okay."

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That evening, Haynes surprisingly returned home on time. However, Stella wasn't there to greet him with a dinner spread as usual.

When it was time for dinner, Keen came downstairs, expecting to eat. Seeing the empty dining room, Keen was puzzled. "Dad, did Mom not make dinner tonight?"

Stella was a perfect wife and mother, always calm and dutiful. Though Haynes felt no deep affection for her, he was generally satisfied with her.

With Keen being a picky eater with a sensitive stomach, Stella always prepared meals herself, never leaving it to the staff.

Recalling the day's events, Haynes pressed his lips together, a hint of irritation crossing his features. She was sorely mistaken If she thought she could use this tactic to pressure him.

"Don't worry about her," Haynes said coolly. "We'll go out to eat."

Keen clapped his hands in delight. "Yay! Can we invite Rachel, too? I can have some yummy ice cream again!"

"Ice cream?" Haynes paused, confused. "Didn't your mom say you couldn't have it because of your weak stomach?"