

314: She Can't Resist His Tenderness

"Do you want to kiss me?"

Caitlin couldn't help but laugh inwardly at the sudden surprise. This guy always managed to throw her off guard, playing romance whenever and wherever he pleased. He really knew how to stir a woman's heart!

Her heart was thumping in her chest, caught up in the warmth of his attention.

Caitlin met his gaze, the distance between them so close, his eyes filled with an intense heat. If it wasn't a kiss, then what else could it be?

"No!"

Sebastian suddenly adopted a serious expression, "Don't think of me so shallowly! Is it only about the sweet nothings? Can't we think about anything else?"

"..."

Caitlin was momentarily stunned by his unexpected response. What was he really up to?

The next move from the man proved that, indeed, Caitlin had been overthinking it. He shifted the romantic atmosphere and turned on the projector. Then, he started explaining what he had uncovered regarding the mysterious codex.

"Caitlin, take a look at this. These are some things I've discovered while investigating the 'Yun's Aromatic Codex.' Right now, we know that several factions are actively searching for the codex. Apart from the Silent Order, represented by Harrison, there's also an influence from Ximena."



He paused, allowing the information to settle in.

"I suspect there's a bigger force behind Ximena, because when she first came to New York, she had no connections or background. But she was able to summon powerful forces, build up XEG, and develop it into what it is now. Doesn't that suggest she has powerful backing?"

"Yeah, I agree," Caitlin said thoughtfully. "But what's your next theory?"

"Also! I have a very bold guess!"

Sebastian moved closer, wrapping his arm around Caitlin's shoulders, and with a laser pointer in his hand, he turned to the next page in his evidence.

"Look at the network I've built. If we treat Sienna and Teresa as an entry point, analyzing them might give us the answers we need. At first, we assumed that they were Ximena's people, her undercover agents. This would explain the kidnapping of Patricia and Freya's death."

Caitlin's brows furrowed as she watched him speak, her eyes catching his sharp profile. "Wait, you think they are all connected?"

"Yes, that's my second theory. I think Ximena is also part of Shadow Moon Pavilion. Her behind-the-scenes supporters might actually be your teacher, Zorro."

Sebastian's words hit Caitlin like a ton of bricks. On the outside, she stayed composed, but inside, waves of turmoil crashed within her.

If Sebastian's theory was right, she had been living inside a web of lies and manipulation this entire time.

"Let me think carefully," Caitlin began, reflecting on what Sebastian had just said. "Five years ago, during The Lewis Family fire, Dominic saved



me. I fled, and in my despair, Sienna and Teresa appeared out of nowhere. They took me away, helped me safely give birth to the four kids, but Teresa told me that the youngest one had passed away. She kindly took the baby and said she would help me handle things."

She paused, her mind reeling back to that time. "Then, I gave Howard to you and left with the other two kids to S country. While I was there, I met Zorro, my 'mentor.' Through their introduction, I joined Shadow Moon Pavilion. They raised my two children, and I received training that made me strong. I respected my teacher like a father, and I came to think of Shadow Moon Pavilion as my family."

Caitlin's mind flooded with memories of the years she spent in Shadow Moon Pavilion, her second life. To think they were the masterminds behind everything was almost impossible to believe.

"When I said I wanted to come back to the US for revenge, my teacher supported me. Zeke also promised to help. The first time I began to doubt everything was when Patricia was revealed to have been raised by Ximena."

Caitlin swallowed hard, a bitter knot in her throat. "According to your second theory, the rescue five years ago was all a carefully planned ruse. They saved me, then lied about the child's death, but who knows what they did to the baby... They probably drugged her to make sure she wouldn't cry out."

Her eyes were hard, filled with the pain of realizing how deep the conspiracy ran.

"They handed the baby over to Ximena, and five years later, as I was looking for the codex, Ximena tried to use my daughter as leverage, to get me to hand over the codex in exchange for her life. But she didn't expect us to turn the tables, and Freya became her weakness. Ximena



wanted to eliminate her, so Sienna and Teresa helped behind the scenes.”

“Do you think Zeke was involved too?”

Caitlin's voice faltered, the weight of her question bearing down on her. She never wanted to think of Zeke in this light.

“If Zeke is part of this conspiracy, then we'll find out tonight,” Sebastian said, gently cupping her face. “But what if he's involved? What will you do, Caitlin?”

Caitlin hesitated. She didn't answer immediately, just looked at him silently.

Sebastian seemed to sense her turmoil and leaned closer. “Forget about it. For now, just think of me, okay? What do you feel for me, Caitlin?”

Before Caitlin could react, Sebastian kissed her gently. She didn't pull away, and his courage grew as he deepened the kiss, slowly, tenderly, melting any resistance she had left.

He didn't know it, but it was his gentleness and patience, his unwavering care, that had gradually melted her cold heart.

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That quiet night.

At the DanCa Estate, several guards were playing cards in the duty room.

They weren't slacking off, though—they'd been ordered to spend the night playing cards.

Suddenly, the surveillance screen flickered and went dark.



"Did something just pass by?"

"No, no, just keep playing, who lost has to buy the next round!"

In the shadows, Sienna, dressed in black, crept toward the estate gates. While the guards were distracted, she disabled the cameras and snuck into the estate.

Caitlin didn't live there, so the main villa was dark. Sienna crept into the villa, flashlight in hand, and made her way upstairs to search for the study.

She found it easily and began searching the desk. The surveillance footage had to be stored somewhere. However, after searching the desk, she found nothing resembling a storage device.

Undeterred, she continued searching and pulled open the drawer. There, she spotted the storage device, her flashlight casting a glow on it.

Just as she reached for it, the alarm blared loudly, echoing through the villa.

"Beep... beep... beep..."

Sienna's heart raced. She quickly tried to escape, but the lights throughout the villa suddenly flashed on, illuminating everything like daylight.

The study door slammed open, and the bodyguards stepped aside.

Then, a cold, sharp figure appeared.

Caitlin stood in front of Sienna, her gaze icy with lethal intent.

Sienna froze, her eyes widening in shock. How could Caitlin have

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appeared here?

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