



Chapter 25

Catherine's face flushed crimson, aggrieved tears swirling in her eyes. Vance took her hand, and they left.

Lauren shot Pascal a glare, blaming him for the drama. Then she turned to Rebecca. "What do you think about this collaboration? We'll go with whatever you say!"

"Don't worry about me," Rebecca replied with a playful wink. "You guys can decide on your own. I may not be able to run again, but I can fly like a swallow." 3

Lauren breathed a sigh of relief. "Good. We watched that melodramatic performance mainly out of consideration for you. We didn't want to hurt your feelings. Now I'm at ease."

The others, who didn't know Rebecca or Vance well, had been hesitant to join in the discussion. Lauren's words eased the tension, and the atmosphere lightened. 1

"Alright, let's continue," Lauren said with a smile, signaling everyone to move on.

Rebecca spent a pleasant evening with Lauren's group. Everyone was friendly, and they exchanged contact information.

That female dancer, Helia Adams, was warm and radiant, as her name suggested.

When the party ended, Desmond insisted on escorting Rebecca home.



Standing under the sycamore tree downstairs from the house, Desmond seemed nervous. "Rebecca..." 1

"Hm?" Rebecca smiled. "Thank you for seeing me home."

Desmond lowered his head like a child who had done wrong. "I'm sorry for exposing your privacy today without your consent. I didn't mean to be disrespectful." 2

But he had truly been indignant at the time, standing up for her out of a sense of injustice.

Rebecca shook her head because that hardly counted as an offense. The people who truly offended her never even realized it.

"It's nothing. The truth will come out sooner or later," she said.

Separating from Vance was inevitable. If not for his persistent refusal, they would have divorced already.

Only then did light reignite in Desmond's eyes. "Swallow, I believe you'll spread your wings and soar high, even with broken feathers!" 1

In college, her nickname had been Swallow because her flips and leaps were always light, high, and effortless. 1

Hearing it repeatedly that night made her blood bubble with excitement, as if she had returned to those days of sweating it out in the practice room.

After saying goodbye, Desmond suddenly turned back. "It's not shameful to have a broken leg or scars. The shame lies with those who mock you. They're the ugly ones. Kind people will only cheer for



you. Bye, Rebecca." 4

He ran off, his arms swinging under the moonlight as if verifying his words. Kind people would cheer for her.

Rebecca stood in place, gazing long after his departing figure, unable to find calm. 1

This was the first time someone had told her that her imperfections were not shameful. The ones who laughed at her were.

She had never shared the pain of being ridiculed with anyone, not even with her beloved grandmother. Yet, somehow, Desmond seemed to understand.

A voice suddenly came from the darkness. "He's gone. Still reluctant to head back?"

She turned around, and Vance emerged from the shadows. "No wonder you've been mentioning divorce to me time and again."

Under the lamplight, he no longer possessed his earlier grace from the banquet hall; exhaustion was plain on his face. 1

"You've misunderstood," she said. 1

She and Desmond hadn't known each other for a long time, but Vance didn't seem to hear her explanation.

"Were the flowers at home from him?" he pressed, oblivious to her explanation. 5