Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 601

His smirk twisted into something vulgar and predatory. His eyes raked over her delicate figure with blatant, unapologetic lust, stripping her bare with his gaze.

Vivienne stiffened, a wave of pure disgust hitting her so hard she almost gagged.

She knew exactly what Ashton wanted.

After all these years, his greedy, sleazy nature hadn't changed a bit. He was just as revolting as ever.

But that was fine.

She had been worried about how to control him, but now she could just use his own lust against him. She would play along, trapping him into doing her dirty work until he was nothing more than a weapon in her hands.

Vivienne looked up, forcing a weak, submissive smile. "I understand. Get it done, and I'll give you whatever you want. But remember, Ashton—you have to succeed."

That night, Ashton took her to a hotel.

Hours later, the room still smelled of their heavy passion. Ashton was fully dressed, his expression icy and detached. The intense heat he had shown in bed was completely gone.

He stood by the bed, looking down at Vivienne curled up in the sheets. His voice held zero affection. "Stay here. I've already covered the room. Don't go anywhere for the next two days. Wait for my call, I'll get back to you soon."

Without another word, he walked out. The click of the locking door felt like a definitive end to their fake intimacy.

Vivienne felt a surge of irritation, but she swallowed it down, comforting herself with the thought that her grand escape was finally in motion. She truly believed she had manipulated Ashton perfectly. With her looks and her son as leverage, she was certain he would follow her orders. All she had to do was wait.

For the next two days, she paced the hotel room, giddy with anticipation. She imagined her triumphant escape over and over, feeling as if victory was practically in her grasp. But

as the hours dragged on, Ashton never returned. His phone went straight to voicemail. He had vanished.

On the third day, a sharp knock at the door made her heart leap. Thinking it was Ashton, she rushed to open it, a bright smile on her face.

Instead, she found a squad of uniformed police officers standing in the hallway.

Her smile instantly vanished. It felt as if lightning had struck her, leaving her mind completely blank. She stared in pure panic, unable to comprehend why the cops were at her door.

It wasn't until the lead officer read her rights and explained that Ashton Lockwood had contacted Silas Thorne directly—handing over all the evidence of her crimes—that reality finally crashed down on her.

She stumbled backward, hitting the wall in sheer disbelief. She couldn't process it. That night, she had seen the lust in Ashton's eyes; he had been completely under her spell. How could he just turn around and throw her to the wolves?

And what about Toby? She had been so sure the boy was her ultimate insurance policy, the one thing that would tie Ashton to her forever. Did he really not care about his own flesh and blood?

Vivienne's nails bit into her palms. She had schemed and calculated, using her body and her child to manipulate Ashton into doing her bidding. Only now, as her world burned, did she realize she had never been the one in control.

She thought she was the chess master, but Ashton had just been playing along, using her desperation for his own gain, right up until the very end.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 602

The news of Vivienne Sinclair's arrest quickly reached Julian Sinclair. However, he didn't have the mental capacity to care. His own life was currently unraveling into complete chaos.

First, the project with Merit Biotech was abruptly halted, and the partnership contracts were voided. This lifeline project—meant to sustain the Sinclair Group's cash flow for the latter half of the year and revive their failing divisions—was completely ruined.

Immediately after, Grant Whitaker, the star attorney who had been representing him in his divorce hearing with Willow Horgan and had worked with him for five years, sent a late-night message terminating their contract. He unilaterally dropped all of Julian's cases. No matter how much Julian threatened or bribed him, it was utterly useless. Grant insisted he couldn't take the case, wouldn't touch the money, and told Julian to find someone else.

Coupled with the company's senior shareholders banding together to demand answers, and Toby crying incessantly at home, Julian was on the verge of a total breakdown.

In all his years, he had never faced such a desperate dead end. The frustration made him erratic, ready to lash out at anyone who crossed his path.

To make matters worse, today was the second hearing for his divorce case with Willow. He had to appear in court. Left with no other choice, Julian swallowed his seething anger and drove to the courthouse.

Meanwhile, Willow was also heading to the courthouse, but she wasn't alone. Silas Thorne was right by her side.

The silver Maybach glided smoothly through the traffic. Inside, the atmosphere was tender and intimate, a stark contrast to the suffocating gloom of Julian's morning.

Willow wore a simple, elegant cream-colored dress, her long hair pinned up softly. Her expression was serene, radiating a relaxed and peaceful aura.

Silas had assured her that she wouldn't have to lift a finger during today's hearing; he would handle everything. He had even told Jade Yates not to bother showing up, promising he had it all under control.

When Willow mentioned this to Jade last night, her friend was initially surprised before bursting into sheer joy. Jade had happily exclaimed that Willow and Silas had finally cleared the air and gotten together.

Willow had felt a bit shy, clarifying that they weren't official yet—not until the divorce with Julian was finalized. Jade hadn't cared about the technicalities. She was just genuinely thrilled that after so many years, Willow had finally met the right man and found her happiness.

Honestly, even now, Willow still felt a lingering sense of surreal disbelief.

Silas Thorne had been in love with her all this time?

Were they really about to be together?

Yet the man beside her seemed to have already slipped perfectly into the role of her partner, attentive and entirely natural.

Inside the car, Silas draped his long arm behind her, securely pulling her close in the spacious backseat. The privacy partition was raised, blocking out the world and leaving only the warm sound of their shared breathing in the intimate space.

His strong hand gently gripped the curve of her lower back. Leaning in, his lips trailed soft, tender kisses across her radiant cheek and jawline, finally settling on her soft lips. The kiss was brief but endlessly affectionate. He moved with a patient, doting rhythm, deeply addicted to her warmth, as if he could never get enough.

His warm breath brushed against her neck. Willow melted into his touch, instinctively leaning deeper into his embrace, her long eyelashes fluttering.

Silas slowed his movements, resting his forehead against hers. His voice was a low, magnetic rumble that carried a uniquely soothing power. "Don't worry. Once we get to the courthouse, just stay quietly by my side. You don't need to say a word. Let me handle everything."

A flicker of confusion crossed Willow's eyes. "This is my divorce hearing. I'm the plaintiff. Will it really be okay if I don't speak at all? Won't that cause issues with the legal process?"

"Relax, it won't," Silas said, gently brushing a stray lock of hair from her temple, his tone gentle. "You didn't even have to come today. I could have represented you and finalized the paperwork immediately. The only reason I wanted you here was so he could see it with his own eyes. I want to shatter his delusions so he never has another excuse to harass you."

"Will that cause trouble for you?" she asked.

Silas pressed a kiss to the palm of her hand. "Not at all. Trust me."

They arrived at the courthouse shortly after. When they walked in, Julian was already there.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 603

Seeing them arrive together, Julian froze in shock before an all-consuming rage surged through him. His eyes locked onto their intertwined hands. He stormed forward, glaring dagger-like at Willow. "Willow! What is the meaning of this? We aren't divorced yet. The hearing hasn't even started, and you're openly parading around with him? Where is your respect for our marriage? For me?"

His explosive anger only made Silas and Willow appear that much calmer in comparison.

Silas stepped slightly to the side, firmly shielding Willow behind his tall frame. He murmured something to an assistant nearby, who quickly hurried off and returned moments later.

When the assistant came back, he respectfully handed Silas the finalized divorce decrees.

Silas took the documents and tossed them directly at Julian's chest. "Take a good look at what that is. You are now officially divorced."

Julian scrambled to catch the papers. As he read them, he rooted to the spot, his face twisting in disbelief. His voice cracked with hysteria. "Impossible. This is absolutely impossible! I just got to the courthouse. The hearing hasn't even begun, no procedures were followed. How could we possibly be divorced? Silas, what kind of dirty trick are you playing?"

"A trick?" Silas's lips curled into a cold, mocking smirk, his eyes utterly devoid of warmth. "I thought you were the expert on those. Crushing people with authority, using threats and bribes, playing power games... isn't that what you do best?"

He leaned forward, an overwhelming wave of dominance radiating from him. His voice dropped to an icy chill. "You aren't the only person in this world who knows how to wield power. What you're experiencing today isn't even a tenth of what Willow had to endure from you. What, you can't handle it already? How are you going to survive what comes next?"

"And let me give you one final warning. The divorce decree is legally binding. Your marriage to Willow is permanently dissolved. A clean break. No more ties. From this moment on, she has absolutely nothing to do with you. She is mine."

Julian's face turned a sickly pale, his eyes flashing with desperate, paranoid refusal. "I don't agree! You bypassed the legal process. This certificate is void. I can appeal this and have it overturned. I will never agree to this divorce."

"Suit yourself," Silas replied, his tone indifferent but laced with a destructive threat. "If you want to appeal, if you want to drag this out and make a public spectacle of it, I'll play your game. But only if you don't mind watching the Sinclair Group get delisted, and seeing your family's century-old legacy wiped entirely off the map of New York City's elite."

Those casual words instantly decimated all of Julian's resistance.

He froze, a bone-deep chill racing down his spine. He knew Silas's ruthless reputation all too well. The man always kept his word, and he absolutely had the power to destroy him.

Still, Julian's bruised ego refused to completely surrender. "We'll see about that."

Silas offered a faint, dismissive smile, clearly unbothered by the empty threat. He had one more truth to deliver. "Oh, there's one more thing you should know. Consider it a parting gift."

"What?" Julian demanded defensively.

Silas spoke flatly. "Toby Sinclair is not your biological son."

The words hit like a physical blow.

The revelation struck Julian's mind like a bolt of lightning.

His pupils constricted, his mind completely blanking out. He lost his voice, unable to even muster a roar of outrage.

Not his child? How was that possible?

Vivienne had sworn up and down that Toby was his, the sole heir to the Sinclair bloodline. How could it be a lie?

Without waiting for Julian to process the devastating news, Silas wrapped an arm around Willow and walked away.

Staring at their retreating figures, Julian was consumed by hateful resentment. He bellowed after them, "Willow! You think Silas Thorne is a good man? He has more power and money than I do, and he's a hundred times more ruthless! He's surrounded by countless temptations and secrets far darker than mine! If you stay with him, sooner or later, you'll end up worse off than you ever were with me!"

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 604

Willow didn't take Julian's desperate rant to heart, but Silas certainly did.

Ever since they left the building, his expression had remained heavy. His brows were knit together in an undeniable display of inner turmoil.

As they walked slowly down the street, Willow held his arm. Her fingertips brushed against the rigid tension in his muscles, causing her heart to skip a beat. She looked up at the tall, distinguished man beside her, her eyes laced with concern. "What's wrong? You haven't said a word since we walked out. Did I do something to upset you?"

Silas lowered his gaze, forcing back the churning anxiety in his eyes. He shed his cold exterior, replacing it with an achingly deep tenderness. Leaning down slightly, he kissed her forehead, trying to soothe her. "I'm fine. Don't overthink it."

He intended to swallow those toxic emotions on his own, refusing to let them taint her peace.

But Willow had her own stubborn streak. "I can tell you're upset. Just tell me why, please? If you don't say anything, I'm just going to keep worrying."

Hearing her plea chipped away at his resolve. The last thing he ever wanted was to cause her distress.

Sighing, he pulled her into his embrace, his palm resting softly against the small of her back. His voice was low, carrying a faint, almost imperceptible trace of fear. "I am bothered by what Julian said. He claimed that sooner or later, I'd weigh the pros and cons and discard you."

Willow rested against his warm, solid chest, listening to his steady but slightly accelerated heartbeat. Her expression softened, and she asked quietly, "Is that what you're worried about? Well, would you do that?"

"Never," Silas answered without a second of hesitation, his voice firm and grave. "I've spent almost half my life waiting for you. I fought with everything I have to keep you by my side. In this life, and the next, I will never let go. I could never abandon you."

Afraid she wouldn't believe him, he framed her beautifully natural face with his hands, his dark eyes locking onto hers. "I swear it. For the rest of my life, I will only ever love you. If I break this vow—"

"Don't say that," Willow interrupted, gently pressing her fingers against his lips. A soft, warm light bloomed in her eyes. "I believe you."

It was precisely because she had endured so much betrayal, calculation, and fake affection that she could easily recognize true sincerity. She trusted Silas. He didn't need to make grand oaths for her to know that.

With that, she rose on her tiptoes and pressed a proactive kiss to his lips. It was the first time Willow had ever initiated a kiss with him. Though brief, it was deeply reassuring, instantly melting away every ounce of his insecurity.

In that fleeting second, Silas's chest swelled with a burning mixture of raw emotion and absolute euphoria. The love surging through him was almost impossible to contain.

He slowly released his hold on her. Reaching into the inner pocket of his tailored suit, his long fingers retrieved a matte black velvet ring box.

With a soft click, he popped the lid open.

Inside rested the exquisite diamond ring, impossibly luxurious yet elegantly understated.

The band was crafted from premium matte platinum, free of any garish embellishments. The centerpiece was a staggering five-carat deep-ocean blue diamond of flawless clarity. Beneath the warm glow of the streetlights, it fractured the light into a brilliant, icy fire, bordered by a delicate halo of pear-shaped white diamonds.

The design was minimalist and magnificent. It lacked any ostentatious flash, perfectly matching his own quiet, aristocratic aura. The sapphire-like depths of the diamond mirrored the profound, tumultuous love he had kept hidden for years.

Without warning, he dropped to one knee. He stared up at the stunned Willow, his usually calm and composed voice tight with unhidden anxiety. "Darling, I know the timing isn't perfect. You just closed a deeply painful chapter with the Sinclair family, and I should have given you time to breathe. I shouldn't be rushing this."

He paused, visibly nervous. Collecting himself, he pushed forward. "But what Julian said truly triggered my fears. I want to give you the most irrefutable status in the eyes of the world. I want to give you a sense of security that no one could ever shake. And I need you to give me the reassurance... the privilege of spending the rest of my life by your side."

His Adam's apple bobbed. The raw desperation and devotion in his eyes were impossible to hide as his voice dropped to a sincere, gravelly pitch. "Willow, will you marry me?"

Willow stood frozen, her clear eyes wide with sheer astonishment. But more than shock, an immense wave of emotion washed over her. She choked up, hot tears rapidly blurring her vision as her eyes turned red.

"When did you prepare this?" she asked, her voice thick with emotion. "I had no idea."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 605

Silas looked up at her, his gaze unspeakably tender. "I've had it ready for a long time. I carry it everywhere. Originally, I wanted to pick a perfect, sunlit day and give you a grand, flawless proposal. But today, I simply couldn't wait any longer."

The apprehension in his eyes flared intensely as he mistook her silence for hesitation. He softened his tone, adding, "But please don't feel pressured. If this is too sudden, you can take your time to think about it. I will wait as long as you—"

"I will," Willow choked out through her tears, cutting him off. A tear tracked down her cheek, but a relieved, radiantly happy smile broke across her face.

Though she was surprised, it didn't feel rushed at all.

Having survived misplaced devotion, painful separations, and the toxic, calculating charade of her past marriage, she had learned a crucial lesson. True love didn't require endless testing or artificial delays. A single heartbeat of certainty was enough for a lifetime.

This time, she absolutely refused to miss out on a man whose entire world revolved around her, a man who loved her with everything he had.

She was more than willing to run into the future with him.

Hearing her answer, Silas stiffened. The anxiety in his eyes shattered, instantly replaced by an overwhelming tide of ecstasy. His long fingers actually trembled.

He carefully lifted Willow's slender left hand, handling it with sacred reverence. Slowly, he slid the blue diamond wedding ring—the physical manifestation of his absolute devotion—onto her ring finger.

It was a flawless, perfect fit.

As he stood up, Silas pulled Willow tight against him. He tipped her chin up and kissed her—a fierce, burning, passionate kiss that sealed his lifelong promise to her.

Breaking away for a brief gasp of air, he rested against her flushed lips. His voice was husky, brimming with adoration and a touch of guilt. "You deserve better than this. This was far too simple and rushed. I promise I'll give you a real, proper proposal later."

Willow wrapped her arms around his neck, her gaze melting with affection. She murmured against his mouth, "I don't need any of that. The rituals, the spectacle, the glamour... none of it matters to me. All I need is you. That's enough."

"No," Silas insisted, a rare streak of stubbornness in his voice. "I want you to have it. I must give it to you. And alongside that, everything under my name."

Silas listed his assets matter-of-factly. "Three private estates in Seattle's hillside district, seven oceanfront villas at the Mercer Island Estate, three Class-A office buildings in Downtown Seattle, and over twenty prime retail storefronts. There's also the historic West Hills manor in New York City, a penthouse in the city center, and various commercial real estate plots across the business districts. They all belong to me."

"Beyond that, I own estates and commercial properties in Zurich, London, and Singapore. I hold controlling stakes in dozens of publicly traded corporations globally, manage legacy family trusts, private equity, rare antiques, vineyards, timberlands, and overseas mining shares. There are also several inherited family trust assets that haven't been fully audited yet; my private financial team is currently liquidating and assessing them."

His tone was completely neutral, devoid of any bragging. He was merely stating facts. "A conservative estimate of my liquid assets, real estate, and trust equity puts my total net worth well over tens of billions of dollars."

Resting her head on his shoulder, Willow was left entirely speechless.

She knew Silas came from one of Seattle's oldest, most elite families and was incredibly wealthy, but she had never imagined the sheer scale of it. His fortune rivaled the GDP of a small nation.

Just as her mind struggled to process the astronomical numbers, Silas's deep, calm voice dropped a bombshell that left her completely paralyzed.

"I will not be signing a prenuptial agreement. Every piece of real estate, equity, trust, and liquid capital under my name will become our joint property the moment we marry. Going forward, my entire fortune will be yours to control."

Willow's head snapped up, her eyes wide with disbelief. "That's not right. For someone of your status, a prenup is a basic necessity to prevent legal disputes. You have to sign one. What if, down the line—"

"There is no 'what if.'"

Silas pressed a tender kiss to her forehead. His next words were weighted with absolute conviction, pouring out his entire heart. "If there ever comes a day when we part ways, it will only be because I failed you. Because I broke my promises and drove you away."

"If I can't keep you, then sitting on an empire of billions means absolutely nothing to me. I'd rather give it all to you, ensuring you live out the rest of your days comfortably, doing exactly what you want to do."

He tightened his grip, holding her securely against his chest. His gaze held a lifetime of certainty. "But I promise you, that day will never come. My money, my body, the rest of my life—from beginning to end, they all belong exclusively to you."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 606

Silas's heartfelt confession struck Willow right in the soul. Years of repressed grievances intertwined with profound gratitude, making her choke up. Tears slipped down her cheeks as her shoulders trembled, weeping in silent awe.

Seeing her cry sent a phantom ache through Silas's chest, his heart twisting with protective tenderness. Leaning in, he gently wiped away the moisture at the corners of her eyes, softly kissing the tears off her cheeks. His voice was liquid velvet. "Darling, please don't cry."

The sweet pet name only made Willow feel more emotional. She looked up at him through a veil of tears. "Why are you so good to me?"

"Why do you think?" Silas brushed his thumb lightly against her flushed eyelids. His gaze was deeply romantic and unwavering. "Because you deserve it, of course."

Willow's lips parted. She wanted to say more, to pour out all the chaotic, beautiful thoughts swirling inside her mind.

Before she could utter a sound, Silas's smile faded into something far more intense and predatory. His voice dropped to a husky murmur. "Do you honestly think I have the focus to listen to you right now?"

Willow blinked in innocent confusion. "What do you mean?"

The moment the words left her mouth, Silas swooped down and captured her lips, demonstrating exactly what he meant through undeniable physical action.

The kiss was infinitely softer than before, yet laced with an unapologetic dominance.

Their breaths tangled together as Willow melted seamlessly against him.

Suddenly, she stiffened, acutely aware of the undeniable physical reaction rising against her. Heat instantly rushed to her face, painting her cheeks and the tips of her ears a furious crimson.

Willow was inherently inexperienced in this department. Outside of one brief encounter three years ago, her long marriage to Julian had been entirely devoid of true intimacy. The unfamiliar tension made her limbs lock up; her entire body grew rigid, and even her breathing hitched with nerves.

Silas immediately sensed her panic. He slowly pulled back, resting his forehead against hers to offer patient reassurance. "Don't be nervous. I won't push you. We move at your pace. No matter how long it takes, I'm willing to wait."

His gentle promise smoothed away most of her frantic panic. Lowering her gaze, Willow's heart settled, even as her face continued to burn hotter.

By the time they arrived back at his place, the electric tension between them had only intensified.

The moment the front door clicked shut, the silence of the room was filled solely with the sound of their shallow breathing.

Driven by instinct, Silas pulled her into his arms, leaning down to claim her lips once more. After harboring his secret devotion for years, finally having the woman of his dreams fully and unconditionally in his embrace made it impossible to let her go for even a second.

They stood in the entryway, lost in a long, lingering kiss as the minutes ticked by. After standing on her tiptoes for so long, a dull ache blossomed in Willow's neck, and she instinctively slumped her weight against him.

Noticing her fatigue, Silas effortlessly scooped her up into his arms. He carried her over to the living room sofa, sitting down and settling her comfortably across his lap. The intimate proximity ignited the spark between them all over again, drawing them into a deeper, more consuming kiss.

He guided her with immense patience, teaching her how to respond with feather-light coaxing.

Mimicking his rhythm, Willow surrendered completely to his embrace. Yet, amid the intoxicating haze, she felt his blatant arousal pressing against her once again. The hard reality of his desire sent a jolt of panic through her. She turned her head slightly, breaking the kiss as her chest heaved. "Are you... is it really difficult for you to hold back?"

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 607

Silas swallowed hard. The feverish heat pooling in his veins was nearly impossible to suppress, and the rigid tension gripping his entire frame was impossible to hide.

Still, he reached up to gently encircle her waist, his eyes dark with immense restraint and devotion. "It is a little torturous, but just holding you and kissing you like this is more than enough for me. I don't demand anything else. We'll take it slow."

His endless accommodation and self-control moved Willow deeply. After a brief silence, she looked up at him, her eyes shining with newfound resolve. "I want to," she whispered.

Silas went perfectly still, wondering if his fevered mind was playing tricks on him. "What did you say?"

"I said I want to. I don't want to see you suffer like this," Willow repeated, her voice steady and sure. "When two people truly love each other, getting swept up in the moment is perfectly natural. Besides, I've already accepted your proposal. It's only right that we share everything with each other."

The words felt like a miracle. Silas's pupils dilated, a look of sheer, breathless elation flooding his expression.

He cupped her face in his hands, his voice trembling slightly as he carefully probed for certainty. "Darling, are you absolutely sure? You know what this means, right? Please don't force yourself. I really don't mind waiting. I'll wait as long as it takes."

"I'm not forcing myself." Willow shook her head firmly.

A fleeting shadow of hesitation crossed her features. She took a deep breath, as if finally lifting a heavy chain off her shoulders, and said, "But there is something I need to confess. Three years ago, I... I had a brief history with someone else. I'm not a virgin."

She dropped her gaze the moment the words left her mouth, her heart pounding frantically against her ribs. She waited in agonizing suspense for his reaction, terrified that her past would tarnish his view of her.

But the cold withdrawal she anticipated never arrived. Instead, Silas instantly pulled her tighter against him. He rubbed her back in soothing circles, his voice a comforting hum against her ear. "I don't care about that at all. Please don't carry that burden."

He kissed the crown of her head and offered his own confession. "To be perfectly honest, I'm not entirely inexperienced either. My first time was also three years ago."

Willow didn't flinch at the revelation. She didn't care about his past; she had always believed that cherishing what they had in the present was what truly mattered.

She just thought it was a bit awkward to be having this conversation right on the precipice of sleeping together.

But then a thought struck her. Silas was famously guarded and deliberate. He wasn't the type to casually broadcast details of his sex life. If he specifically brought up the timeline, there had to be a reason.

A wild, impossible realization suddenly slammed into her mind. Willow's breath hitched, and she stared blankly at the handsome man just inches from her face.

Taking in her shocked expression, a tender, deeply loving smile spread across Silas's face. He spoke clearly, enunciating every single word. "That's right. The man from three years ago was me."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 608

Hearing those words, Willow's heart seized. Absolute shock crashed through her veins, leaving her fingertips numb.

That night three years ago had always been a dizzying, fragmented blur. But in her half-conscious state, she vividly remembered the man's deep, smooth Seattle accent and the crisp, masculine scent of cedarwood. Looking back now, the breadcrumbs had been there all along.

After spinning in circles for so long, it turned out that the person who had illuminated her darkest days, the man who had formed that initial, profound connection with her, had been Silas Thorne from the very beginning.

Tears sprang to her eyes. She pressed herself tightly against his solid chest, listening to the heavy, reassuring thud of his heartbeat. A complex mix of grievances for the past and overpowering joy struck her heart in rhythmic waves.

"Why didn't you tell me sooner?" she cried softly. "If you had just been honest from the start, I would have known. We wouldn't have had to take such a painful detour."

Silas tightened his arms around her, caging her securely in his embrace. He subconsciously shifted his long legs, gently rocking her—his own unique, incredibly soothing way of comforting her.

"It's my fault. It's all on me," he murmured apologetically, his breath warming her hair. "I overthought everything. I hesitated too much, overcomplicated the situation, and allowed you to suffer."

Willow stayed buried in his chest, too emotional to speak.

Silas carefully explained his reasoning. "In the beginning, when I found out who you were, I genuinely believed you were happy with Julian. I didn't dare barge into your life and wreck your peace. Later, when you left the Sinclair Group and joined Merit Biotech, I became your boss. I was terrified you only saw me as an authoritative figure, that you didn't harbor any romantic feelings for me at all. I was too afraid to cross the line, and I never wanted to pressure you. It wasn't until recently that I finally woke up. I'm done holding back. I'm done retreating. I don't care about the rules anymore. I just want to stand proudly by your side and make you mine."

A lump formed in Willow's throat. Her muffled voice drifted up from his shirt. "So... when did you start having feelings for me?"

"Love at first sight," Silas answered instantly, without a shred of hesitation. "If I had to put a timestamp on it, it was the very first second I laid eyes on you."

He slowly pulled back, reaching toward the side table to retrieve a vintage black velvet keepsake box. With a soft click, he opened it.

Inside was a thick stack of neatly organized photographs. The corners had been meticulously flattened and laminated for preservation. They were all pictures of her that he had secretly collected and cherished over the past three years.

There were distant shots of her working, tiny ID photos carefully clipped from HR files and project dossiers, and candid snaps of her hustling through the streets of Seattle, completely barefaced. Most of the pictures were grainy, yet they had been categorized and wiped impeccably clean.

The vast majority of them were from her years in Seattle. Back then, heavily manipulated by Julian and battling depression, she had gained weight. Her face had been pale, exhausted, and devoid of any glamour. It was the era she felt the most deeply insecure about—the version of herself she desperately wanted to erase.

Staring at the old photos, a heavy wave of shame and self-consciousness washed over her. "I was so ugly back then. I was overweight and looked horrible... why would you keep these?"

Silas immediately hooked a hand around her waist, refusing to let her shrink away. He cupped her cool cheek, forcing her to meet his unwavering gaze. "In my eyes, there hasn't been a single day where you looked ugly."

"The woman in these photos was resilient, fierce, and stubbornly shouldered every hardship on her own. You had this incredible, unyielding fire in your eyes. It was a different kind of beauty than the radiant woman you are today, but it was entirely unique and irreplaceable. Whether it's the old you or the current you, you are the only woman I will ever love."

His burning devotion completely enveloped Willow. Overwhelming emotion gripped her throat. She was profoundly touched; no one had ever spoken to her with such raw, unconditional adoration.

But as the reality of his timeline sank in, another piece of the puzzle clicked into place. Silas had been pulling strings for her from the shadows the entire time.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 609

"You've been helping me all along, haven't you?" she asked softly. "From the moment I arrived in Seattle and landed my very first deal. Then, when my mom got sick—the elite medical specialists and the perfectly arranged treatments. Then you specifically recruited me into Merit Biotech and personally transferred from Seattle to New York... Every single bit of that was for me, wasn't it?"

Caught red-handed, Silas looked momentarily guilty. He instantly dropped his pride, ducking his head in apology. "Yes. I orchestrated all of it. I'm sorry I kept it from you. Please believe me, I didn't want to deceive you. We were just operating in two completely different worlds back then. When you first met me, you were so guarded. You instinctively feared me and avoided me. I didn't dare push into your space, terrified that getting too close would scare you off permanently."

He paused, swallowing nervously. For the first time, the imposing billionaire sounded painfully insecure. "And... I'm much older than you. That age gap is always there. I've never cared about anyone's opinion, but when it came to you, I never felt like I was enough."

Willow couldn't help but laugh out loud, the unshed tears making her eyes sparkle brilliantly. "You? Insecure? Silas, look at you. Your background, your power, your character, your face... you are at the absolute peak of the pyramid. Anyone would fall head over heels for a man like you. Why on earth would you be insecure?"

"That's how outsiders see me," Silas replied, bringing his forehead back to rest against hers. Their breaths tangled in the small space between them. His dark eyes locked onto

hers, holding nothing but absolute devotion. "When dealing with insignificant people, I'm perfectly poised. I control the board. But when faced with the woman I love down to my marrow, even the most powerful man in the world becomes a nervous, terrified wreck, dreading the thought of losing her."

With that, he lowered his head and gently claimed her lips. It was a soft, coaxing kiss, deeply romantic and entirely devoid of his usual commanding presence.

Every last bit of tension evaporated from Willow's body. Closing her eyes, she yielded to him, wrapping her arms around his broad neck. They held each other fiercely, the silent room charged with the intoxicating weight of three years of repressed desire.

After a long, breath-stealing embrace, Silas hovered just over her swollen lips. His breathing was heavy, yet his voice was laced with an agonizing amount of restraint and reverence. "Are you absolutely sure we can do this tonight?"

He was terrified she was just getting caught up in the emotion of the moment. He feared she might still be chained to the shadows of her past, refusing to push her into something she wasn't fully ready for.

Willow slowly opened her misty eyes. Staring up at the man who had loved her from afar for three agonizing years, she gave a firm, undeniable nod.

Her confirmation shattered the final lock on his restraint. Silas bent down, sweeping an arm behind her knees and hoisting her up into a secure, effortless bridal carry.

With slow, steady steps, he carried her down the hall to the master bedroom.

Inside, the soft glow of a floor lamp bathed the room in warm, romantic amber, completely insulating them from the chaotic world outside.

Silas laid her gently onto the plush mattress. Bracing his weight on his forearms, he hovered above her, moving with agonizing patience as his eyes traced every delicate curve of her face.

Then, he lowered his head, raining soft kisses across her skin as his hands began to wander.

"Darling, I love you."

"From beginning to end, only you."

He treated her like fragile glass, slowing his rhythm to a torturous crawl to soothe her nerves, entirely stripping away his aggressive dominance. Every lingering touch was infused with three years of desperate yearning, impossibly tender and deeply intoxicating.

At first, Willow flinched against the overwhelming sensations, but under Silas's relentless, coaxing worship, she melted completely. She turned into a puddle of heat, swept away by the current of his devotion.

It was a transcendent high she had never experienced. He drove her to the absolute brink of euphoria, tossing her into the stars before grounding her with raw intensity. Her mind was a chaotic blur, fully surrendered to the mesmerizing rhythm he set for them.

But through the haze of pleasure, an overwhelming sense of joy pierced her chest. Thrashing against the sheets, she gasped out, "I love you too."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 610

Julian stormed into the house without a word, marching straight toward Toby.

His jaw was locked tight, his expression twisting into a mask of pure, unadulterated rage and bone-deep hatred. The sheer force of his fury seemed to suffocate the air around him.

He didn't bother changing his shoes, nor did he acknowledge the maids bowing in greeting. Before Toby could even register what was happening, Julian snatched the boy by the collar of his shirt, hauling him off the ground with one brutal yank.

"Waahhh!"

The sudden, terrifying sensation of being airborne and the choking pressure around his neck terrified the toddler. Toby's face drained of color as he kicked his legs wildly, erupting into a hysterical, ear-piercing wail. He trembled violently, tears and snot streaming down his little face.

Susannah, who had been sipping tea on the sofa, slammed her cup down. Frowning deeply, she stood up and scolded her son. "Julian, have you completely lost your mind? The boy was just playing quietly with his toys. What did he do to you? Why on earth are you attacking him?"

She hurried over to rescue her grandson, her tone taking on its usual bossy impatience. "And where is Vivienne? You went out to find her, didn't you? Tell her to get back here and look after Toby immediately! That girl is getting more unreasonable by the day. We only scolded her a bit, and she decides to throw a tantrum and vanish? We've spoiled her rotten. Just bring her home. It's not a big deal, it's not like we'd actually punish her."

Hearing her casually fuss over Vivienne was like tossing a lit match onto a powder keg.

Julian's head snapped toward her, his bloodshot eyes practically glowing with manic wrath. He roared, "Enough! Never utter that woman's name in my presence again! I never want to hear the name Vivienne Sinclair for the rest of my miserable life!"

Startled by his explosive outburst, Susannah stumbled backward. She stared in horrified shock at Julian's livid, terrifying expression, entirely robbed of her voice.

Suspended mid-air, Toby continued to sob, his small shoulders heaving. He clawed desperately at Julian's sleeve, choking out a plea. "Daddy... Daddy, it hurts... my neck hurts... let me down, please... I want Mommy... I want Mommy..."

Every time the boy cried 'Daddy', bile surged up Julian's throat. It was the most sickeningly ironic sound in the world.

His eyes turned to absolute ice. Jerking his wrist, he violently shook the crying child. "Shut your mouth! Who the hell is your father?"

The vicious snarl echoed like a bomb going off in the grand living room.

Toby's crying abruptly cut off. His face froze in terror, tears dangling from his lashes as he stared blankly at the monster holding him.

Susannah turned a ghastly shade of gray. She stared in horrified disbelief. "Julian... what did you just say? What is that supposed to mean? Toby is your son! Do you have any idea what kind of nonsense you're spewing?"

Julian glanced down at the terrified toddler, his eyes completely void of the love he had once shown him, leaving nothing but sheer disgust. Too enraged to explain, he hoisted the boy roughly by the waist, spun on his heel, and marched out the front door.

"Julian, stop right there! Explain yourself!" Panic flared wildly in Susannah's chest as a terrifying premonition took root. Ignoring her shock, she chased after him in her heels.

Julian strode directly into the garage and shoved Toby carelessly into the backseat of his car. Seeing this, Susannah scrambled in right after them.

The engine roared to life. Julian tore out of the driveway, speeding recklessly down the street. The death-defying velocity made Susannah's heart hammer in her throat. She gripped the handle, desperate to ask what he meant by his earlier outburst, but catching a glimpse of the murderous aura radiating from her son, she swallowed the words down. Her dread deepened with every passing second.

Barely twenty minutes later, the car slammed to a halt outside the New York Forensic Diagnostics center downtown.

Julian killed the engine and marched out. Hauling the weeping, thoroughly confused toddler under his arm without a shred of gentleness, he stormed into the lobby.

Susannah rushed after him, her heart on the verge of giving out.

As soon as they entered, the staff hurried over to assist. Julian barked his demand. "I want an expedited DNA paternity test. Me and this boy."

Recognizing him instantly, the medical staff scrambled to comply. As they prepared the kits, they explained the protocol. "Mr. Sinclair, an expedited test will take a minimum of three hours. We'll need a buccal swab from you and a pinprick blood sample from the child. The entire process is sterile and completely safe."

Julian couldn't care less about the logistics. He just wanted the truth. "Then stop talking and get it done," he snapped.

Intimidated by his terrifying mood, the staff wisely shut their mouths and performed the swabs at record speed.

The next three hours were absolute torture. Julian and Susannah refused to leave the waiting room. During the agonizing wait, Toby grew restless, trying several times to crawl into Julian's lap, only to be shoved harshly away.

Finally, a technician approached them, carrying a sealed, stamped manila envelope. His expression was painfully stiff. "Mr. Sinclair, your expedited DNA report is ready."

Julian snatched it from his hands. Ripping open the seal, his eyes darted straight to the final conclusion: [Based on the DNA analysis, biological paternity is excluded. There is zero genetic relationship between Julian Sinclair and Toby Sinclair.]

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 611

That single sentence utterly annihilated his entire world.

Julian's composure imploded completely. A monstrous wave of rage, tangled with the humiliating reality of being manipulated and played for a fool, crashed over him. His chest heaved violently, his bloodshot eyes taking on a demonic glare.

Not saying a word, he crushed the report in his fist. Suddenly, he threw a devastating punch straight into the marble wall beside him.

A sickening thud echoed through the corridor.

The skin on his knuckles instantly split open, and blood began to steadily drip down his fingers, splattering onto the pristine floor in a gruesome display of violence.

Startled out of her wits, Susannah tore the crumpled paper from his bleeding hand. One glance at the bolded text sent all the blood rushing to her head. She let out a horrifying shriek.

Her face turned ghostly pale. Staggering backward, she leaned against the wall for support, her voice quivering hysterically. "No biological relation... how... how is this possible? What on earth is going on?"

Julian let his bloody hand drop to his side, his eyes burning with lethal hatred. "What do you think is going on? Our entire family has been played like a bunch of idiots by Vivienne Sinclair! This precious little prince that we've worshiped and pampered for three years isn't my son! He's just some bastard she had with another man!"

The word "bastard" hit Susannah like a sledgehammer to the chest.

She trembled uncontrollably, shaking her head as her mind completely rejected the truth. Her eyes red with madness, she screamed, "Impossible! It's impossible! How could she? How dare she deceive the Sinclair family? Where is she?! I demand to see her! I will confront her face-to-face!"

"See her?" Julian let out a dark, deranged laugh. He was well past the point of sanity. "She's already locked up. Academic fraud, corporate espionage—she's facing multiple federal charges. She's sitting in the Metropolitan Detention Center right now, waiting for her sentencing."

Hearing that Vivienne was in prison didn't spark a single ounce of pity in Susannah. Instead, sheer terror seized her. If Vivienne was truly a criminal mastermind, then the DNA test was unequivocally real.

A violent wave of dizziness hit her, her knees buckling.

She thought back to three years ago when Toby was born. Discovering he was the eldest Sinclair heir, she had been ecstatic, throwing a lavish full-moon banquet to broadcast the news to all of New York's high society. She thought about how, for the past three years, she had bent over backward to tolerate Vivienne's vanity, arrogance, and bottomless greed—all for the sake of the Sinclair bloodline. She had turned a blind eye to the millions Vivienne squandered and the chaos she caused, simply because she had birthed the precious heir.

And now, she was being told that this golden grandchild, whom she had poured all her love into, had absolutely nothing to do with their family? He wasn't Julian's child?

So all her favoritism, her immense patience, and her endless compromises over the past three years had been a colossal, humiliating joke?

The suffocating shock was too much for her heart to bear. Susannah's vision went pitch black, and she collapsed backward, fainting dead away on the clinic floor.

"Nana!" Seeing her fall, Toby's wailing grew louder. He curled into a ball, shaking like a leaf.

He had no idea what the black-and-white paper meant. He didn't understand why Julian was breaking down in a furious rage, nor why the father who used to spoil him had suddenly turned into a monster.

Gasping for breath between sobs, the boy scrambled on his stubby little legs toward Julian. He grabbed the fabric of his tailored pants and bawled, "Daddy... Daddy, please don't be mad. Help Nana! I want Mommy! Take me to Mommy, please..."

Those tearful cries of 'Daddy' were laced with innocent affection, but to Julian's ears, they were purely demonic mockery.

Without an ounce of mercy, Julian kicked him away.

Toby lost his balance and tumbled hard onto the cold tile. His knees banged against the ground, and he screamed in pain.

Julian towered over him, his gaze ruthlessly cold and completely devoid of humanity. "I will say this one last time. Do not call me Dad. I am not your father."

"Not my daddy?" Toby sobbed from the floor, thoroughly bewildered. Huge tears cascaded down his cheeks as absolute panic set in. How could Julian not be his daddy? Then who was?

Ignoring the sting in his knees, Toby pushed himself up and clung desperately to Julian's leg. "You are my daddy! I just want my daddy. I don't want to leave!"

Though he was too young to grasp the betrayal, he knew one thing for certain: he absolutely refused to leave the Sinclair estate.

He had grown up drowning in wealth and privilege, surrounded by maids who catered to his every whim. Everyone bowed to him, gave him whatever he wanted, and ensured his life was perfectly carefree. That mansion was his only home. He claimed it as his kingdom and refused to be thrown out.

Staring down at the boy's terrified, desperate clinging, Julian felt zero sympathy. His heart was nothing but a pit of disgust over being scammed. He sneered, "That is not your

home. You are not a Sinclair. Wait quietly. I'll be having you shipped out and permanently banished from the family before the day is over."

With that final blow, he didn't spare another glance at the hysterically sobbing child on the floor. He turned his back and walked away without looking back.

In the empty corridor, the only sound left was Toby's agonizing wails echoing against the cold walls.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 612

Leaving the hospital, Julian made a single phone call. "Use every resource we have to investigate Vivienne. I want everything from her overseas life over the past ten years, her social circle, to her academic records. Leave no stone unturned."

He had never suspected her before, but now that he had a target, he was more ruthless than anyone else.

His team worked with staggering efficiency. In just a few hours, a massive dossier of investigation files, high-definition chat logs, and even witness testimonies were delivered to Julian's office. In stark black and white, the irrefutable evidence tore Vivienne's meticulously crafted perfect facade to shreds.

Julian traced his fingertips over the glaring words in the file, the last trace of warmth in his eyes extinguishing. He grabbed his keys and drove straight to the Metropolitan Detention Center on the outskirts of the city.

Upon arrival, the heavy, cold iron doors slowly opened. Instantly, a suffocating wave of disinfectant mixed with the damp stench of mold washed over him.

Through a layer of reinforced glass, Julian saw Vivienne.

She had long lost her former elegance. Her hair was dry, matted, and disheveled, and her designer clothes were torn to rags, covered in grime and dust. Bruises and purplish marks covered her arms, neck, and cheeks. It was a wretched sight.

Without a single trace of her former pride as a wealthy socialite, she looked like a dying animal trapped in the mud.

It was obvious she was living a nightmare in here.

Yet, seeing her like this evoked no sympathy in Julian. His eyes were filled with nothing but pure hatred.

When Vivienne saw him approaching, wild ecstasy erupted in her deadened eyes, as if she had grabbed her final lifeline. She threw herself at the glass, slapping the cold surface desperately with both hands as she sobbed, "Julian, you're finally here! You're here to save me, right? Please get me out of here, I can't stay another second! Everyone here targets me, they beat me... I'm being driven to the edge!"

She cried until she was gasping for air, her shoulders shaking violently. With red-rimmed eyes, she slipped right back into her usual fragile act. "I was framed. I didn't do any of those things, someone set me up. You have to believe me. As long as you get me out of here, I'll prove my innocence. All these misunderstandings can be cleared up!"

She rambled on, crying about the torment of her imprisonment. She looked at Julian through tear-filled eyes, absolutely certain that he would soften and save her for the sake of their childhood bond and for Toby.

But on the other side of the glass, Julian sat with a stiff spine and rigid posture. His dark eyes were completely frozen over, devoid of any heartache or emotion, leaving only bone-chilling indifference. "Even now, you're still lying. Did you really think I would help you?"

Hearing this, a sudden panic gripped Vivienne's chest. Her crying abruptly stopped as a strong sense of unease rose within her. Biting her lower lip, she immediately played her ultimate trump card. "Julian, you can't abandon me. I'm Toby's biological mother. He can't live without me. If I'm not there with him, he won't be able to sleep, he'll cry all night. And if I get a criminal record, it will leave a stain on him. When Toby inherits the Sinclair family business, people will use this against him. Could you really bear to ruin your child's future?"

She shouldn't have mentioned Toby. The moment she did, Julian let out a cold scoff, his voice laced with ice. "You have the nerve to mention him? You know exactly whose bastard Toby really is."

His sharp, blunt words ruthlessly pierced through Vivienne's final disguise. Her face instantly drained of all color, turning as pale as a sheet. She shook her head frantically, stubbornly forcing a denial. "Julian, what are you talking about? Of course Toby is your son! Don't let outsiders drive a wedge between us. We grew up together, how could I ever lie to you?"

Watching her refuse to repent, spewing lie after lie, the disgust surging in Julian's heart reached its absolute peak.

He couldn't be bothered to waste another breath. He directly slammed the DNA report—stamped with the official seal of a top authority, showing a zero percent match—against

the glass. "Look closely. The proof is right here in black and white. What else do you have to say?"

The moment Vivienne saw the report, the blood in her veins ran cold. Her hands and feet went numb with dread, but she still gritted her teeth, struggling in a desperate final stand with red eyes. "This is fake! It's forged! Julian, I really didn't lie to you, you have to believe me!"

"Enough." Julian closed his eyes, a dense, suffocating ache spreading through his chest.

He and Vivienne had grown up together at the Sinclair Estate. For over two decades, he had treated her with genuine care, protecting her and tolerating all her little tantrums. He had truly loved her as family. But he never imagined it would all end like this.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 613

It wasn't until today that he fully realized every ounce of warmth from their past was a meticulously woven lie.

Julian was in agony, but more than that, he was furious. He hated his own blindness, hated that he had been so foolishly ignorant to let her deceive him for years.

"How long are you going to keep up this act?" he demanded, leaving her no room to hide. "Your time abroad was nothing but a string of reckless affairs, juggling multiple men at once. I assume that's when you got pregnant with Toby. And your so-called advanced studies and scientific research skills? All faked. Add that to your recent deception of Mr. Smith and impersonating WH. I have crystal-clear evidence for every single offense."

But even with all of that, Julian could have let it go. Her most unforgivable sin was manipulating his feelings and completely destroying any possibility he had with Willow.

"If you hadn't deliberately framed Willow all these years, constantly spreading malicious rumors about her, she and I would never have ended up like this!"

By the end, he was practically manic, his deep-seated hatred palpable in every word.

Vivienne stared at him and suddenly let out a cold laugh. So that was the real issue.

She finally realized that Julian was never going to forgive her this time.

Dropping all pretenses, she decided to just burn it all down. "So what if I did? Even if I admit to everything, do you really think you're innocent?"

"Don't sit there pretending to be some deeply devoted, righteous victim, Julian. You think you're a good person? The only reason I dared to do all those things was because you enabled me! If it weren't for you, would I have been able to walk away clean every time? Would I have ever dared to treat her like that?"

Her eyes were bloodshot, boiling with spite. Since he wasn't going to give her a way out, she would drag him down with her. "Remember this, Julian. The only reason Willow's reputation was ruined, the reason she suffered so much injustice, the reason she ended up completely broken—was because of your indulgence! Every single bit of it is your fault!"

The revelation struck him like a physical blow.

Her words were like a thunderbolt that completely jolted Julian awake, tearing away his hypocritical armor.

He hadn't wanted to admit it at first, instinctively wanting to argue and deflect the blame, but now, he was cornered with nowhere left to hide.

It was him.

From beginning to end, it had been him.

He was the one who repeatedly ignored Willow's pain, always favoring Vivienne. He was the one who listened to the slander, constantly belittling and doubting Willow. And he was the one who boundlessly indulged Vivienne, giving her the unchecked power to relentlessly persecute Willow.

He was the root of all this suffering.

A crushing wave of remorse swept through every fiber of his being. Julian's throat tightened, his chest aching so violently he could barely breathe.

He refused to look at the hideous, vindictive woman in front of him anymore. Unwilling to offer a single word of defense, he pressed his lips into a thin line, turned on his heel, and walked away without a shred of hesitation.

Behind him, Vivienne's frantic screams and curses echoed down the hall. One moment she was begging him to take her with him, and the next she was screaming that he was heartless, swearing he would never be happy with Willow. Then she spiraled into hurling vile insults at Willow and Silas, completely unhinged.

But the noise was quickly cut short, drowned out by the harsh shouts of the guards and the sharp, echoing crack of a slap across the face inside the interrogation room.

Stepping out of the detention center, the sunlight poured over him, yet Julian felt absolutely freezing, a deep chill seeping straight into his bones.

Leaning against his car, he lit a cigarette with trembling hands. Uncontrollably, countless memories of the past began flooding his mind.

Back in college, Willow used to chase after him in the evening breeze, her eyes full of clumsy but genuine passion.

When he worked from dawn to dusk, Willow would quietly wait for him at home, having dinner prepared without a single word of complaint.

And when he blatantly favored Vivienne, treating Willow with cold indifference and utter disdain, she always endured it in silence, shedding her tears alone.

Even when he banished her to Seattle, completely dismissing her hard work, she simply kept her head down and thrived, never once voicing her grievances.

The memories cascaded endlessly, each one a stark reminder of his own cruelty.

She had loved him with all her heart and soul for so many years, giving him all her warmth and devotion without reservation. And what did he do?

He took her love for granted, recklessly trampling on her dignity, grinding away her affection, and pushing her into the abyss time and time again.

Well, now he was finally tasting the karma he deserved.

Julian's hand shook so badly he could barely hold the cigarette. A gust of wind blew, causing the glowing ash to drop and burn the back of his hand, but he felt absolutely nothing.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 614

That night, a torrential downpour struck the city.

Julian didn't go home. Instead, he drove straight to Willow's current apartment complex and stood outside her building in the pouring rain all night.

His tailored suit was completely soaked through, his damp hair plastered to his forehead. His eyes were heavily bloodshot, making him look completely wretched and haggard from standing out in the cold rain.

He waited until dawn broke and the storm finally eased. At last, he saw two figures walking shoulder to shoulder out of the building.

Willow was wearing a simple, elegant beige knit dress, her expression soft and serene. Beside her, Silas was dressed in a bespoke black suit, his posture tall and commanding. He casually rested his hand on the small of her back. The atmosphere between them was so intimately happy that it instantly ignited a murderous rage inside Julian.

But he forcefully swallowed it down. He knew full well that he was in the wrong here. He had come to beg for forgiveness, and he couldn't afford to ruin the mood the second he opened his mouth.

Willow, of course, spotted him. She had been in a wonderful mood. Silas had just made her wontons for breakfast, and they were so delicious that they were discussing having them again tomorrow. The moment she glanced up and saw Julian standing there, her good mood evaporated.

Beside her, Silas's expression was no better. A layer of frost immediately blanketed his eyes, radiating extreme caution and disgust. Instinctively, he stepped slightly in front, firmly shielding Willow as he looked down at the pathetic, soaking-wet Julian.

Seeing Willow's gaze, Julian was struck by a cocktail of heartbreak and resentment. In a daze, he remembered the past. Back when they were younger, Willow's eyes used to be full of him. Her gaze was always soft and passionate, hiding a heart full of joy and cautious adoration. Whenever she looked at him, it was always with a tender smile, pure and sincere.

But now, those eyes that once overflowed with love held nothing but bone-chilling apathy and utter revulsion.

His heart felt like it was being crushed by a giant fist. The pain made it hard to breathe. Exhaling a shaky breath, he finally voiced the name he hadn't earned the right to say. "Willow."

The moment the word left his lips, a violent wave of nausea churned in Willow's stomach. Her face paled slightly, and her brows furrowed in discomfort.

Noticing her reaction, Silas immediately reached out and gently rubbed her back, asking softly, "What's wrong? Are you not feeling well? Do you want to go back and rest for a bit?"

Willow shook her head slightly, suppressing the urge to gag. "I'm fine. It just made me sick to my stomach hearing him call my name."

She hadn't spared Julian a single glance the entire time. "Let's go. Ignore him."

With that, she tightened her hold on Silas's arm and prepared to walk away.

The moment they brushed past him, Julian, who had been holding it together all night, completely snapped. He lunged forward, reaching out to grab Willow's sleeve to stop her.

In the next second, Silas stepped right up, planting himself firmly in front of Willow, ruthlessly cutting off any possibility of Julian getting close to her.

Standing just inches away, yet unable to take a single step further, Julian stared with red-rimmed eyes. His voice was choked with suppressed sobs and desperation as he apologized, word by word, "I'm sorry, Willow. I was wrong."

"I was so unbelievably blind before. I listened to Vivienne's lies, accused you without proof, doubted you, and made you suffer so much. But that's all over now. I've uncovered the whole truth. I will never indulge Vivienne again, and I will never do anything to hurt you. Willow, can you please forgive me this one time?"

Hearing this pathetic, groveling apology, before Willow could even react, Silas tensed up. His fingers, resting by his side, clenched so tightly his knuckles turned white, his fingertips trembling slightly out of his control.

After all, Julian was the man she had once truly loved. Silas was terrified that Willow might remember their past and waver.

But clearly, Willow was far more resolute than he had imagined.

She immediately reached out and wrapped her hand around Silas's, her fingertips gently caressing his palm, giving him all the quiet reassurance he needed.

Then, she lifted her gaze to look at Julian. Her eyes were piercingly cold, her tone indifferent and impatient. "I don't have time to listen to this garbage. Move out of our way."

Her gaze was completely detached, as if she were looking at an annoying, irrelevant stranger on the street. There was no love, no hatred, no resentment—only absolute apathy.

This look completely shattered Julian's final psychological defense. A tearing, agonizing pain erupted in his chest.

Only at this very moment did he truly understand that he had permanently lost the girl whose heart and soul had once belonged entirely to him. And yet, only now did he realize how deeply he loved her. With tears welling in his eyes, Julian begged desperately once more. "Willow, I'm begging you, please give me one more chance to make this right. I've completely changed. From now on, I will devote my entire life to you, to make up for all the pain I caused you. Let's start over and build a good life together, please?"

"Build a good life together?" Hearing this, a chilling, mocking smirk spread across Silas's lips. His deep voice was like ice, mercilessly shattering Julian's delusions. "In what capacity do you plan on building a life with her? You'd better get this through your head, Julian. You and Willow signed the divorce papers. You have absolutely nothing to do with her anymore."

The word 'divorce' violently struck Julian's deepest nerve. He instantly lost control of his emotions, the hostility in his eyes exploding as he roared, "The divorce is all thanks to you! If you hadn't constantly plotted to drive a wedge between us and forced your way into our marriage, Willow and I would have never ended up divorced!"

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 615

After shouting, he whipped his head around, staring urgently at Willow. His eyes were full of unhinged desperation as he rushed to smear Silas's name. "Willow, don't trust him. Silas is ruthless and manipulative, far darker than you could ever imagine. You have no idea what he does behind the scenes! He's the one throwing Vivienne into prison, and he hired people to torture and punish her every single day. He is brutal and heartless. Do not be fooled by his gentle act!"

Hearing this, the aura surrounding Silas instantly plummeted to freezing.

He had originally planned to find the right moment to slowly confess to Willow about how he handled Vivienne. He hadn't wanted her to think he was overly cruel or become wary of him, and he definitely hadn't wanted to drag her into the dirt of these ugly conflicts.

Now, having it suddenly blurted out in public by Julian, Silas's heart clenched tight. A subtle trace of nervousness and anxiety hid in the depths of his eyes. He was genuinely afraid—terrified that Willow would be repulsed by his extreme methods and grow to fear him.

But in the very next second, Willow's expression remained perfectly calm. She simply stated, "Of course I know. Vivienne stole my research, forged her identity, intentionally

framed me, and committed countless crimes. Every single one is a felony. She ended up exactly where she belongs. She brought this all on herself."

Her gaze was clear and unwavering. Gripping Silas's hand tightly, her tone grew even more resolute. "As far as I'm concerned, Silas showed her mercy. Her punishment was entirely too light."

Those few simple words instantly left both men frozen in place, utterly stunned.

Silas had never expected her to defend him. In an instant, his tightly wound heart settled, and the surging anxiety completely dissipated, replaced by an overwhelming wave of deep affection and tenderness in his eyes.

All his worries, insecurities, and fears vanished into thin air. Because Willow stood by his side unconditionally, understood his decisions, and trusted all his choices.

Julian, on the other hand, was completely blindsided. He felt like he didn't even recognize the Willow standing in front of him. He had fully expected her to side with him, to condemn Silas's cruelty, but instead, she fiercely defended him.

His Adam's apple bobbed as he forced the words out of his tight throat. "You've changed, Willow. You've really changed."

Willow stared at him coldly. "People have to move forward. No one is going to stand still forever, just waiting to be hurt and never changing."

As she spoke, she kept a firm grip on Silas's hand, and it was this exact movement that finally drew Julian's attention to the diamond ring on her finger.

The breathtaking, massive blue diamond ring caught the morning light, refracting a dazzling, icy brilliance that practically stung his eyes.

Julian's gaze turned frantic, his voice trembling as he began to stammer incoherently. "That ring on your hand... you and him... are you two..."

In his unfinished words lay the sheer panic and disbelief of a man on the verge of a total breakdown.

A very faint, detached smile curved onto Willow's lips. She deliberately raised her left hand, bluntly displaying the diamond ring that symbolized her future right in front of Julian's eyes, and declared clearly, "That's right. We're engaged. And we'll be getting married very soon."

Hearing this, Silas pulled her into an even tighter embrace.

As for Julian, all the strength drained from his body. He stumbled half a step backward, the very last glimmer of light in his eyes extinguishing completely.

He had been so obsessively certain that Willow still had feelings for him. He believed that as long as he lowered his head and apologized, she would eventually soften and come back to him. He was so sure he could win her back.

But in this moment, those two words—engaged, married—thoroughly pulverized his every last delusion.

His entire world collapsed.

Julian completely broke down, shedding every last ounce of his pride and dignity. Tears rolled down his face uncontrollably as he stood there looking thoroughly pathetic, sobbing and begging, "No... Willow, please don't marry him. Please, just look back at me. I know I was wrong. I swear I'll do everything in my power to treat you right, to make up for all the pain I caused you. Please, just give me one last chance..."

Willow looked down at his wretched, sobbing state, her eyes holding nothing but biting mockery. "So what? Just because you suddenly realized your mistakes and feel sorry, I'm supposed to drop all the trauma you put me through, forgive you, and run right back into your arms?"

"Julian, no one in this world is going to wait around forever for you to suddenly see the light and play the repentant prodigal. My life is stable now, and I am incredibly happy. From now on, please disappear from my life and never bother me again."

With those absolute, final words, Willow didn't spare him another glance. She linked her arm tightly with Silas's and turned to walk away.

"I won't allow it!" Julian, his eyes bloodshot, tried to lunge forward like a madman, only to be blocked by Silas.

Silas turned around, staring down from his commanding height at the pathetic, wailing man on the ground. His voice was bone-chillingly cold, every word carrying a lethal warning. "Listen to me very carefully, Julian. From this day forward, Willow is the woman I am spending the rest of my life with. She is my future wife. If you ever dare to harass her again, I will absolutely not hold back."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 616

On the drive to Merit Biotech, Silas Thorne’s pulse hummed with an unfamiliar thrill. He couldn't shake Willow’s earlier words from his mind. She had said they would get married soon. Unable to contain himself, he glanced over at her. "Did you mean what you said back there?"

Willow had spoken so much that morning, her mind was a blur. "Which part?" she asked, turning to him.

Silas’s Adam’s apple bobbed. The man who ruthlessly controlled a vast corporate empire, who never second-guessed a single decision, suddenly looked like a nervous teenager. His long fingers gently wrapped around her slender wrist, his thumb brushing against the dazzling diamond ring he had placed there. "When you said we were getting married soon," he said, his voice thick with a mix of gravity and apprehension.

He felt entirely out of his depth. Even though she had accepted his proposal, the papers weren't signed yet. With Julian Sinclair still lurking like a dark shadow, Silas couldn't fully let his guard down.

Seeing the raw vulnerability in his dark eyes, Willow’s heart melted. She let out a soft laugh. "Of course I meant it. I accepted your ring and your proposal. Do you really think I'd back out now?"

"Or are you the one getting cold feet?" she added, tilting her head with a teasing glint in her eyes.

The moment the words left her mouth, Silas’s entire body tensed. His arm snaked around her waist, pulling her flush against his chest. The composed, icy billionaire vanished, replaced by a man utterly undone by the thought of losing her. "Never," he said fiercely, his dark eyes wide with panic. "I've never had that thought. I want to marry you. The sooner, the better."

Seeing his desperate sincerity, a warm wave of affection washed over Willow. She smiled, her eyes crinkling at the corners, and reached up to smooth the deep crease between his brows. "I was just teasing you, Silas. Relax."

He buried his face in the crook of her neck, his jaw nuzzling the soft skin there. His voice was muffled, laced with a stubborn, almost needy dependency. "Don't joke about that. You know I can't handle even a second of doubt when it comes to you."

He lifted his head, his hands cradling her face, and captured her lips in a deep, lingering kiss.

The kiss grew heavy, filling the luxurious car with a thick, intoxicating heat. Eventually, Silas pulled back, though he kept his forehead rested against hers. His breathing was ragged. "Are you still sore?" he murmured, his gaze dropping. "Are you in pain?"

He had lost control last night, entirely consumed by his hunger for her.

Willow’s ears burned red, a flush spreading rapidly across her cheeks. She looked away, her voice dropping to a whisper. "I'm fine. It doesn't hurt anymore."

Silas wasn't convinced. His eyes drifted down to her slightly reddened knees. She had been on them for far too long last night.

He reached down, intending to lift the hem of her skirt. "Let me see."

"Don't," Willow gasped, swatting his hand away, her face practically on fire. "Seriously, it's fine. You don't need to look. I'm not in pain."

Seeing her intense embarrassment, Silas relented, slowly withdrawing his hand. "Alright. But I'm giving you a thorough inspection when we get home tonight."

He seamlessly steered the conversation back. "So, about the wedding. Do you have a timeline in mind? When do you want to do this?"

Willow thought for a moment. "We shouldn't rush it too much. Your parents and grandparents don't even know we're together yet. We need to visit them and get their blessing before we move forward."

A shadow crossed her face as a lingering insecurity surfaced. "Besides... I've been married before. I have baggage. I don't know if your family will accept a divorced woman."

In the circles of the elite, pedigree and reputation were everything. She had no idea if the Thorne family would welcome her.

Silas immediately grabbed her hand, intertwining their fingers and enveloping her in his solid, comforting warmth. "You don't need to worry about any of that. Let me handle it. I promise you, my family will welcome you with open arms."

Willow looked at him in surprise. "You haven't even told them yet. How can you be so sure?"

Silas pulled her closer, his thumb tracing the back of her hand. "Do you remember when you came with me to Seattle? When we had dinner at my family's house? They had already accepted you as my future wife back then."

Willow froze, completely stunned. She hadn't had the slightest clue. But thinking back to the breathtaking heirloom gift they had sent her, it suddenly made perfect sense.

"But how did they know?" she asked, bewildered. "Even I didn't know you had feelings for me then."

"Uh..." Silas faltered, rubbing the back of his neck. He hadn't explicitly told his family anything at the time, but they had immediately connected the dots. "Probably because you were the first and only woman I've ever brought home."

"Really?" Willow's eyes widened. She knew he had harbored feelings for her for three years, but surely he had dated before?

"Really," Silas affirmed, leaning in to kiss her again. "You are my first, my only, from beginning to end. I love you, Willow. I will always love you."

A sudden lump formed in her throat, the sheer weight of his devotion leaving her breathless. "Why are you suddenly getting so romantic?" she whispered, trying to blink away the moisture in her eyes.

"I can't help it. Every time I look at you, it's all I want to say."

A single tear escaped, tracing down her cheek. "I survived a toxic, broken marriage," she murmured softly. "I went through so much pain and humiliation. I honestly thought my life was just going to be a series of struggles. I never imagined... I could meet someone like you. That I could be loved this much."

Silas gently wiped the tear away with his thumb, pressing a soft kiss to the corner of her eye. "You deserve every bit of it, darling. You are kind, pure, and so incredibly good. You deserve all the love and happiness this world has to offer."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 617

The sleek car descended into the underground parking garage of Merit Biotech. Despite the overwhelming warmth in her chest, Willow forced herself to pull her emotions together. No one at the office knew about their relationship yet.

They had agreed to keep it under wraps to avoid office gossip interfering with their work. Though Silas hated the idea of hiding her, he had compromised for her sake. He gave her fingers a reluctant squeeze. "Alright. We play by your rules. But make sure you come to my office at noon. I ordered your favorite truffle pasta for lunch."

"Okay," Willow nodded softly. Checking to make sure the garage was empty, she leaned in, pressed a fleeting kiss to his lips, grabbed her bag, and slipped out of the car.

The moment she was out of sight, the tender devotion on Silas's face vanished, replaced by the chilling, ruthless demeanor of the corporate predator he was. Gentleness was a privilege reserved solely for Willow.

He pulled out his phone and dialed Arthur Vance. "Is Julian Sinclair still lurking outside her apartment?"

Arthur was quick and efficient. "Yes, Mr. Thorne. I've been monitoring the situation. He hasn't left. It looks like he's determined to ambush Ms. Horgan."

"He just doesn't know when to quit, does he?" Silas's lips curled into a glacial, mocking smirk, though his dark eyes burned with lethal intent.

Julian had crossed the line too many times—harassing Willow, hurting her, refusing to let go. If the man wanted to play with fire, Silas was going to burn his entire world to the ground.

He issued a cold, bloodless command. "Dig up everything on Julian Sinclair. His connections, his offshore accounts, the blackmail material. Every dirty secret his family has ever buried. I want it all."

This time, he was going to rip the Sinclair family out by the roots.

Within minutes, Arthur sent over a heavily encrypted file. Silas scrolled through the evidence. He saw the proof of Julian and Vivienne Sinclair conspiring to drug Willow. He read the transcripts of Julian's elite friends publicly humiliating and bullying her. He saw the detailed accounts of the psychological abuse and cold neglect the Sinclair family had subjected her to throughout her marriage. Every single detail shattered the last remnants of Silas's restraint.

Originally, he had planned to just send Julian to prison and let him rot.

Now, he changed his mind.

Prison was too easy. It was far too merciful.

Silas's eyes darkened into endless abysses. "I want the Sinclair Group destroyed," he ordered. "And take down the Sterling Group with them for enabling it. Liquidate everything. Strip them of their wealth, their status, their network, and their dignity. Drag them from their penthouses and throw them into the gutter. And ensure that for the rest of their miserable lives, they never step foot within a fifty-mile radius of Willow."

Within days, a catastrophic financial earthquake shook New York City's elite circles.

The Sinclair Group’s supply chains abruptly collapsed. Partners severed ties overnight, banks froze their assets, and their stock prices plummeted into oblivion. The century-old Sinclair empire filed for bankruptcy in a matter of hours.

The Sterling Group, which had blindly hitched its wagon to the Sinclairs, met the exact same fate. Their shares tanked, their debt skyrocketed, and they were wiped off the map.

The city's elite whispered in hushed, terrified tones, guessing the families had offended a true titan. But for Julian and his family, the reality was a waking nightmare.

They were evicted from their sprawling riverfront mansion in the dead of night, hounded by violent debt collectors, and forced to take refuge in a rotting, drafty shack on the outskirts of New York.

The walls were covered in black mold. There was no air conditioning, barely any furniture, and the smell of raw sewage seeped through the floorboards. It was a hellish contrast to the opulent luxury they had known.

Julian and his family were trapped in this squalor.

Susannah Sinclair, who had lived her entire life as a pampered socialite, finally snapped. Standing in the middle of the filth, she screamed like a lunatic, pointing a trembling finger at Julian, who was slumped on the floor. "Look at what you've done! A century of Sinclair legacy, completely destroyed by you! If you hadn't provoked Silas Thorne, we wouldn't be living in this squalor! You ruined this family! You ruined me!"

Julian didn't even have the energy to argue. His spirit was completely broken.

Wearing a wrinkled, cheap shirt, his face covered in a ragged beard, he stared blankly at the peeling wallpaper. He clutched a bottle of cheap liquor to his chest, taking a swig and muttering to himself, "Gone... it's all gone... She's never coming back..."

In the corner, Toby Sinclair, dirty and abandoned, whimpered from hunger. Desperate, the boy crawled toward a pile of garbage, digging out moldy scraps and shoving them into his mouth.

Susannah turned, her eyes flashing with pure rage. She marched over and slapped Toby hard across the face. "Eating out of the trash? You're a disgrace!"

She had absolutely zero affection left for the child. "What is the point of you? I'm sending you to an orphanage tomorrow. Let them deal with you!"

Seth Sterling was suffering a similar hell.

Once a cocky, untouchable heir, he now looked like a walking corpse, his eyes hollow with despair.

Upon learning their destruction was an act of vengeance by Silas Thorne, Seth's mother had suffered a fatal heart attack, unable to cope with the shame.

His father had beaten him mercilessly before officially disowning him.

But even that wasn't enough for Silas. He ordered Arthur Vance to execute the final phase of his plan.

Every single job application the Sinclairs and Sterlings submitted was immediately rejected. Their lives were designed to grow more agonizing with every passing day.

Furthermore, they were permanently banned from using any form of public or private transport into the city center, completely exiled from Willow's world forever.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 618

After that, Julian Sinclair vanished from Willow's life entirely.

The dark clouds that had suffocated her for so long finally dissipated, leaving her world bathed in a warm, steady light. Everything she had ever hoped for was falling perfectly into place.

Following the proposal, Willow had officially moved into Silas's penthouse.

Even though their apartments were practically next door to each other, Silas was incredibly traditional when it came to milestones. He insisted that the proposal marked a new chapter, and they needed to actually live together to truly belong to one another.

Willow agreed, deciding to let her mother, Martha Mercer, stay in her old apartment while she continued her recovery.

Martha was thriving post-surgery. Knowing her daughter had finally found true happiness erased the last of her heavy burdens. She was radiant, spending her days exploring the city, joining social clubs, and having afternoon tea with new friends. Ironically, Martha's social calendar was far more vibrant than Willow's.

That evening, Martha was out at a gala, leaving Willow and Silas alone in the expansive penthouse.

Soft, amber lighting bathed the living room as a romantic drama played quietly on the massive screen. Willow was curled up on the plush sofa, pressed snugly against Silas, wrapped in his warmth.

She was watching the TV. Silas was exclusively watching her.

The soft light cast a golden glow over her delicate profile. Her long lashes fluttered gently, looking so serene and beautiful that Silas felt a powerful surge of affection tightening his chest. Without a second thought, he leaned in, his signature scent of crisp snow and cedar washing over her as he claimed her lips in a slow, intoxicating kiss.

He wrapped his strong arms around her waist, pulling her flush against his chest, refusing to leave even an inch of space between them.

At first, Willow tried to keep one eye on the show, resting her hand lightly on his forearm and letting him kiss her.

But Silas’s kisses were never passive. They were deeply possessive, fiercely tender, and incredibly distracting. Before long, her mind went completely blank, the dialogue on the screen fading into white noise.

Her cheeks burned hot. She turned her head slightly to catch her breath, her voice soft and pleading. "Silas, stop for a second. Let me finish this episode, it's almost over."

Silas didn't budge. His fingers began a slow, agonizingly gentle caress along the sensitive curve of her waist. He pressed open-mouthed kisses along her jawline, his voice a low, gravelly hum of pure indulgence. "You watch your show, I'll kiss my fiancé. We're not interrupting each other."

Before she could argue, his mouth covered hers again, commanding and deeply sensual, leaving her no room to escape.

Willow couldn't take the blistering heat. Her limbs felt like jelly as she weakly pressed her hands against his chest, trying to put some distance between them.

Ever since she moved in, the ruthless, emotionally detached billionaire the world feared had completely evaporated. In private, Silas was impossibly clingy. He was addicted to her touch, demanding her attention constantly, and his stamina was something out of a romance novel.

Sometimes, Willow couldn't help but marvel at the stark contrast. The Silas Thorne she had first met was an untouchable king of the corporate world—cold, restrained, and seemingly devoid of any mortal desires. She had genuinely assumed he approached physical intimacy with the same clinical, icy detachment.

She couldn't have been more wrong.

The man might have iron-clad self-control in the boardroom, but in the bedroom, he was fiercely passionate, greedy, and possessed a terrifying lack of restraint. Tonight was clearly no exception.

Willow pushed lightly against his solid chest, her eyes glossy and heavy with a shy reluctance. "Not tonight, Silas. I'm really tired."

Silas looked down at her flushed face, the soft, inviting pout of her lips, and his hunger only spiked. He lowered his voice to a dark, seductive murmur. "Darling, I'll be gentle. I won't keep you up late. Just once. Please?"

Willow let out a breathy sigh, unable to resist his coaxing. She shot him a weak glare. "Are you seriously this addicted to... this?"

Silas nuzzled his nose against her burning cheek, his touch impossibly tender. "I'm not addicted to this. I'm just addicted to you."

It was the absolute truth.

For over thirty years, he had lived in total isolation, leading an ascetic life devoid of romantic entanglements or physical desires. He simply hadn't cared.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 619

He had always assumed he was naturally cold-blooded, destined to live a quiet, solitary life.

That was until Willow crashed into his desolate world.

She had brought color, warmth, and blinding light into his life, completely rewriting his reality.

Only because of her did he realize how breathtaking intimacy could be. Only with her did he understand that the physical connection between two people in love was the most incredible feeling in the world.

As his thoughts raced, his hands didn't stop. He smoothly shifted his weight, pinning Willow against the soft cushions of the sofa. His hot breath fanned across her face, effectively trapping her.

Seeing the dark, overwhelming devotion swirling in his eyes, Willow knew she had lost this battle. Surrendering with a soft sigh, she looped her arms around his neck. "Okay," she whispered, setting the boundary. "Just once tonight. And no tricks."

"Deal," Silas agreed immediately, a victorious, wicked gleam in his eyes. "Whatever my darling wants."

He captured her lips again, his kiss deep and all-consuming.

After a long, breathless moment, he pulled back just an inch. His voice was a raw, husky rasp. "Let's try something different tonight."

Willow’s mind was hazy, her eyelashes fluttering as she looked up at him in confusion. "Different how?"

Silas turned his head slowly, his dark gaze locking onto the massive, pristine floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the glittering skyline.

One look was all it took. Willow’s face turned crimson, heat radiating all the way down her neck. "No."

She was naturally shy, and the mere thought of such a brazen display was too much. "Not there. It's too... exposed. I can't."

Silas understood her hesitation. He didn't force her; he merely continued his slow, drugging kisses, coaxing her with devastating patience. "No one can see us, sweetheart. It's just you and me."

"I don't..." Willow clutched at his shirt, her voice trembling with vulnerability. "It won't be comfortable there. Let's just go to the bedroom, please?"

Silas silenced her protests by kissing the corner of her mouth, his tone thick with absolute confidence. "Trust me. I promise you'll love it."

He didn't give her another chance to say no. His seduction was a slow, deliberate burn, melting away her defenses until her rationality shattered completely.

The cool night breeze slipped through a crack in the glass, doing nothing to cool the blistering heat inside the room.

The sensation was entirely foreign, thrilling and terrifying all at once. But despite her initial panic, Willow had to admit that tonight was an unforgettable blur of exquisite tension and absolute surrender.

Afterward, all the strength had been drained from her body. She melted against Silas’s chest, feeling as though she were floating on a cloud. Every muscle was delightfully loose, her mind beautifully blank.

Silas hadn't lied. It was incredible.

Silas felt exactly the same. He held her sweat-slicked body tightly against him, his fingers gently detangling her damp hair. "You were amazing, darling," he murmured, pressing a kiss to her temple. "I don't think I could survive a day without you."

Willow didn't have the energy to respond. Exhaustion pulled heavily at her eyelids.

Seeing her drifting off, Silas scooped her up effortlessly and carried her into the master bathroom. He handled her with the utmost care, drawing a warm bath and washing her with a tenderness that bordered on reverence.

Willow leaned lazily against his solid chest, her eyes closed, completely letting him take care of her. She felt incredibly safe.

Once she was clean and dry, Silas carried her to bed, pulling the soft duvet over her shoulders. He brushed a stray lock of hair behind her ear. "Darling," he whispered. "Have you thought about when you want to meet my parents and grandparents?"

Willow was already half-asleep, her brain refusing to process the logistics. "You decide," she mumbled, snuggling deeper into his warmth. "Whatever you want to do. Just tell me when."

She curled up against his side, practically purring. "I'm so tired. I just want to sleep."

Looking at her defenseless, trusting form, Silas felt his heart swell with an unbearable amount of love. He kissed her forehead. "Alright, my love. Go to sleep. I'll take care of everything."

The night was quiet, the moonlight soft.

Holding the love of his life in his arms, Silas felt an overwhelming sense of peace. He finally had everything he ever wanted.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 620

Silas was a man of action, especially when it came to marrying Willow. By the next morning, he had ironed out all the details. However, instead of them flying to Seattle, he arranged for Jocelyn and the rest of the family to fly out to New York.

When Willow heard the plan, she hesitated. "Is that really appropriate? Conventionally, we should be the ones traveling to Seattle to pay our respects. Having your elders fly all the way here... won't they think I'm being disrespectful?"

Silas wrapped his arms around her, his steady presence instantly calming her nerves. "You don't need to worry about that. The Thorne family doesn't care about outdated rules. We do whatever is most comfortable."

He leaned down, resting his forehead against hers. "When I told them I proposed, they were ecstatic. They've been dying to see you. When I suggested the visit, they were the ones who insisted on coming to New York. I've already prepped the private jet and handled all the logistics. You just need to relax."

Hearing that he had taken care of everything eased her anxiety. She trusted Silas completely; if he said it was fine, it was fine. But there was still one heavy stone sitting in the pit of her stomach.

After a long moment of hesitation, Willow finally voiced her deepest insecurity, her tone frail and laced with self-doubt. "But, Silas... I've been married before."

It was her Achilles' heel, the one flaw she couldn't erase.

"I know your parents and grandparents are wonderful people, but marriage is a massive deal. Families like yours value pristine backgrounds and flawless reputations. I come with baggage. A failed marriage. I'm terrified they'll hold it against me, or that they'll feel let down."

Her disastrous past was a permanent scar. Even though she had moved on, standing next to a man as flawless and radiant as Silas made her feel terribly inadequate.

Even if he didn't care about her past, she couldn't guarantee his powerful family would feel the same.

Silas tightened his grip on her, locking her securely in his embrace. His voice was firm, resonant, and entirely serious. "Darling, that didn't even cross my mind, and it certainly won't cross theirs."

He wasn't a man of many words, preferring action over empty promises, but he knew she needed the verbal reassurance. "Listen to me carefully. I fell in love with you. Your kindness, your resilience, your pure heart. Your past doesn't define you. That miserable marriage wasn't your fault, and it certainly isn't a stain on your worth. My family won't care in the slightest. Promise me you'll stop overthinking this."

His unwavering certainty acted as a balm to her frayed nerves. Willow finally let out a long breath. "I trust you. But if they're coming, I need to get the house professionally cleaned. I don't want them thinking I'm messy."

Silas nodded. "Already handled. The cleaning crew is on their way."

Willow looked up at him, feeling slightly lost. "Then what do I do? Should I buy gifts? Bake something? I need to look up a city guide so I can take them sightseeing. Wait, what do they even like? You have to tell me, I don't want to be a terrible hostess!"

Watching her ramble, her eyes wide with frantic panic, Silas let out a low, rumbling laugh. He pulled her flush against him, securing her waist with one hand, and teased, "Is someone feeling a little nervous?"

Caught in her spiral, Willow’s ears turned pink. She nodded meekly. "Just a little."

"You met them back in Seattle, didn't you? Weren't they wonderful to you then?" Silas coaxed gently.

"They were," Willow admitted, her voice soft and shy. "They were incredibly kind. But back then, I was just your friend. The stakes were completely different. Now, we're engaged. It changes everything."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 621

She bit her lower lip, a delicate blush spreading across her cheeks as she confessed her fears. "It's like they say, meeting the in-laws for the first time is always terrifying. I just desperately want them to like me. I don't want to mess this up."

Silas chuckled, the sound deep and rich. He pressed a tender kiss to the corner of her mouth, his eyes overflowing with adoration. "You're being ridiculous. You are stunning, brilliant, and the kindest woman I know. You're the best thing that's ever happened to me."

"You don't need to try so hard, and you definitely don't need to stress. Just be yourself. I'll take care of the rest."

His words were a heavy anchor, grounding her spiraling thoughts.

Leaning against his chest, listening to the strong, steady rhythm of his heartbeat, Willow felt her panic melt away. As long as he was by her side, she felt invincible.

The very next day, the Thorne family arrived.

Silas had initially scheduled the flight for later in the week, but the family was too thrilled to wait. If they hadn't needed a day to assemble an extravagant array of betrothal gifts, Jocelyn would have dragged the entire family to New York the moment she heard the news.

The following afternoon, the weather over the private runway in New York was crisp and clear.

Willow and Silas waited by the tarmac. Soon, The Gulfstream G650ER touched down smoothly.

The cabin doors opened, and Jocelyn Thorne stepped out first. Dressed in a flawless, elegant silk suit, she exuded the grace of a matriarch, but her eyes were shining with unfiltered joy. The second she spotted Willow, she practically sprinted down the stairs.

Before Willow could even offer a formal greeting, Jocelyn grabbed both of her hands, squeezing them tightly. "My sweet girl! I knew you and Silas were meant to be. I've been waiting for this day for so long! Hearing that you two finally figured it out and got engaged... you have no idea how happy this makes me!"

By the end of her sentence, Jocelyn’s eyes were glistening with tears. Willow froze, utterly overwhelmed by the raw emotion.

She knew Jocelyn liked her from their previous encounter, but she never expected the dignified matriarch to be moved to tears of pure joy over the engagement.

Willow quickly reached out, gently rubbing Jocelyn’s back to soothe her. "Please don't cry. You'll upset yourself."

Jocelyn wiped her eyes, her gaze locked onto Willow with deep, maternal affection. "You used to call me Ms. Thorne. It's time to call me Mom."

Willow blinked in shock, instinctively glancing up at Silas. It wasn't that she didn't want to, she was just terrified of overstepping.

Silas caught her deer-in-the-headlights look and smiled warmly. He wrapped a supportive arm around her shoulders. "It's alright. She means it. We're all family now."

Empowered by his nod of approval, Willow took a deep breath, swallowed her shyness, and offered a radiant smile. "Mom," she said, her voice clear and sweet.

The single word struck a chord deep in Jocelyn’s heart. She beamed, nodding enthusiastically. "Yes! Oh, what a wonderful girl!"

Taking the cue, Willow turned to the others, warmly greeting Silas's father, and then Arthur and Beatrice Thorne as "Grandpa" and "Grandma".

With every title she spoke, the Thorne family's smiles grew wider, their faces glowing with absolute approval and delight.

Beatrice stepped forward, taking Willow’s hand in hers. "We've been waiting for you to officially join our family, my dear. From now on, you are the Thorne family's most precious treasure."

The joyous atmosphere carried all the way to the car. On the ride back, Jocelyn refused to let go of Willow’s hand, chatting animatedly and showering her with genuine praise.

"You know, Willow, the very first time I met you, I saw how grounded, intelligent, and kind you were. Honestly? I was already looking at you as Silas's future wife back then."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 622

"Your mother raised an incredibly smart, resilient woman. Silas is the luckiest man in the world to have found you."

Willow blushed under the heavy praise. "You're too kind. I'm the lucky one. Silas is incredible, and your family has been so wonderful to me."

Jocelyn smiled warmly. "He's the lucky one."

They soon pulled up to the penthouse.

Inside, Martha Mercer and Jade Yates were waiting. The moment the door opened, Martha stepped forward with a bright, welcoming smile. "Welcome! You must be exhausted from the flight!"

Jocelyn hurried over, taking Martha's hands with immense enthusiasm. "Not at all! Seeing the kids makes the trip more than worth it. You must be so proud to have raised such an exceptional daughter. Willow is an absolute gem."

"You're far too generous," Martha replied, beaming with pride. "Silas is such a brilliant, dependable young man. He takes such wonderful care of Willow. We are the blessed ones."

The two mothers instantly clicked, exchanging compliments and bonding over their shared joy for their children. Introductions flowed seamlessly around the room, the atmosphere brimming with warmth and laughter.

After the initial greetings settled, Jocelyn turned to her assistant and gave a subtle nod.

The assistant immediately stepped forward, carefully placing several exquisite, heavy sandalwood boxes onto the marble coffee table.

As the boxes were opened, the room was instantly bathed in the glow of unimaginable wealth. The betrothal gifts were a staggering display of a top-tier billionaire family's sincerity.

In the center sat an antique, flawless imperial green jade jewelry set—a necklace and matching bangles, boasting the kind of vibrant, translucent quality only seen in museum archives.

Next to it were velvet displays holding a complete set of pigeon-blood rubies and a stunning blue diamond suite, each gem precision-cut and blindingly bright.

Beside the jewels lay a stack of limitless black Amex cards, a binder containing transfer documents for shares in Merit Biotech, the deed to a massive riverside mansion in New York, and the titles to a fleet of luxury cars.

Finally, resting on top, was a custom red envelope with gold foil lettering. Inside was a multi-million dollar check, specifically drawn for $88.88 million, symbolizing eternal luck and prosperity.

Jocelyn looked at Willow, her expression turning deeply sincere. "Willow, these are our family's betrothal gifts to you. It represents our deep respect and approval. But money and jewelry are just objects; what matters is our promise to you. From this day forward, you are officially the daughter-in-law of the Thorne family. Silas will protect you, and our entire family will love and cherish you."

The living room fell completely silent. Every eye turned to Silas, who stood tall and resolute.

In front of both their families, Silas reached out and took Willow’s hand, lacing his fingers through hers. His grip was warm and grounding, his gaze intensely focused on her.

"Today, in front of our families, I make this vow," Silas said, his voice echoing with absolute authority and raw devotion. "For the rest of my life, I will do everything in my

power to keep Willow safe and happy. I will never let her suffer a single grievance or shed another tear of sorrow. I will respect her, spoil her, and put her above all else. In good times and bad, in sickness and health, I will love only her. I will honor our families, build a beautiful life with her, and cherish her until my last breath."

It wasn't a scripted speech filled with poetic fluff; it was a heavy, iron-clad oath from a man who commanded the world.

Standing beside him, hearing his earth-shattering promise, a lump formed in Willow's throat. Hot tears spilled over her lashes, tracing down her cheeks.

She had spent years adrift, beaten down by life and treated as an afterthought. Never in her wildest dreams did she imagine a man like this would stand before the world and vow to be her ultimate protector.

Watching her daughter finally receive the earth-shattering love she deserved, Martha's eyes filled with tears. She discreetly wiped them away, her heart swelling with an overwhelming sense of peace. Her daughter had finally found her happily ever after.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 623

The room was filled with immense joy and overwhelming warmth.

Surrounded by the tearful, smiling faces of their loved ones, Willow wrapped her arms tightly around Silas's neck, pulling him into a deeply emotional embrace.

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For the next few days, Jocelyn and the rest of the Thorne family stayed in New York, spending quality time with the couple.

Time flew by, and soon it was the evening before their departure.

The night air was calm, bathed in soft moonlight.

Willow sat on a bench in the private courtyard with Jocelyn, the evening breeze gently rustling the leaves. She had been quiet for a long time, her heart heavy with the one secret she had been too terrified to voice.

It was her final hurdle, her deepest fear—that she would somehow ruin the Thorne family's legacy. She couldn't keep it hidden anymore.

Her hands were clenched in her lap, her knuckles white. Taking a deep, ragged breath, she looked at the kind woman beside her. "Mom," she started, her voice barely a whisper, heavy with anxiety. "There's something I need to tell you. Something I've been hiding."

Jocelyn saw the panic in her eyes and immediately covered Willow's trembling hands with her own. "Take your time, sweetheart. Whatever it is, I'm listening. There's no need to be frightened."

The moonlight reflected the absolute terror in Willow's eyes as she bit her lip and forced the words out. "I... I have a medical condition. It's highly unlikely I will ever be able to have children. I can't give Silas a baby."

This was the devastating lie Julian had fed her years ago, the very lie that had convinced her to adopt Toby.

"I know how important legacy and bloodlines are to a family like yours. If this changes how you view me... if you want to call off the wedding, I completely understand. I won't hold any grudges. I just... I can't selfishly tie Silas down and leave your family with that kind of regret."

Having finally confessed, a strange sense of relief washed over Willow. She had laid her darkest truth bare; whatever the consequences were, she would accept them.

To her absolute shock, Jocelyn didn't look angry, disappointed, or even surprised. Instead, her eyes filled with profound sorrow for the terrified young woman in front of her.

She reached up, gently tucking a stray lock of hair behind Willow's ear. Her voice was incredibly soft, yet anchored with unbreakable certainty. "Oh, you foolish, sweet girl. Why would you ever think that?"

Jocelyn sighed softly. "I have lived a long time, Willow. I've seen the ugly side of wealth, the obsession with legacy, and the coldness of high society. I know you've suffered through so much darkness, carrying all these burdens on your own."

She patted Willow's hand affectionately. "In this life, finding someone who truly understands you, someone who matches your soul and is willing to stand by your side forever—that is a miracle. That is the ultimate blessing. A child is not the price of admission to a marriage. True love and companionship are the only things that matter. The Thorne family doesn't care about archaic rules of succession. All we have ever wanted is for Silas to be happy, healthy, and loved by someone who truly cares for him."

"You are kind, pure, and you love my son fiercely. He is entirely devoted to you. You saved each other. That is more than enough."

Jocelyn pulled the stunned girl into a warm, maternal embrace, rubbing her back soothingly. "I forbid you from ever stressing over this again. It doesn't matter. As long as you and Silas love each other and live happily, nothing else matters. And as long as I am breathing, no one in this family will ever make you feel inadequate for this. You just focus on loving your husband."

Collapsing into Jocelyn's warm embrace, the fortress of insecurity, shame, and fear Willow had built up over the years completely shattered. She sobbed, the hot tears soaking Jocelyn's silk blouse.

She couldn't believe a family this unconditionally loving actually existed—a family that didn't care about her background, her past, or her ability to provide an heir. They just wanted her to be happy.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 624

The date to sign their marriage papers was set shortly after. They decided to get their marriage license in Seattle, and given Silas's immense influence in the city, the entire bureaucratic process was handled flawlessly and in record time.

As they walked out of the courthouse, Silas’s long fingers gently covered Willow’s hand, which was gripping their marriage certificate. "Darling," he said, his voice a low, magnetic hum. "Give me your copy."

Willow blinked, looking up at him in confusion. "Why? We each get one. Don't you have yours?"

She traced her thumb over the crisp, official document, a bright, beautiful smile lighting up her face. Silas was utterly captivated by her.

Unable to resist, he leaned down and stole a quick kiss. He looked her in the eyes, his expression completely unguarded. "I want to keep it with me. It makes me feel secure. I've waited for this day for so long, and I finally made you mine. For the rest of my life, I want to guard this with everything I have. I'm never letting you go."

The world saw him as a ruthless, untouchable corporate predator, a billionaire who orchestrated global markets without breaking a sweat. But no one knew that when it came to Willow, he harbored a quiet, fragile insecurity.

He was terrified that this hard-won happiness was just a dream, that the most precious person in his world could slip through his fingers. Holding both certificates was the only way he felt truly anchored.

Recognizing the raw vulnerability in his eyes, Willow’s heart melted. A profound wave of love washed over her. Without another second of hesitation, she handed him the paper, smiling softly. "Okay. You can keep them safe."

Silas exhaled a quiet breath of relief. He carefully folded both certificates and tucked them into the inner breast pocket of his tailored suit, pressing them directly against his heart, guarding them like priceless artifacts.

In the next second, he wrapped his arm around Willow’s waist, hauling her flush against his chest.

The cool Seattle breeze played with their hair as he dipped his head, pressing a string of soft, lingering kisses across her eyelids and the corner of her mouth. Instinctively, a single word slipped past his lips. "Wife."

The word was so tender, yet so incredibly heavy with meaning, it made Willow’s heart skip a beat.

She froze, a fierce blush exploding across her ears and painting her cheeks a vibrant crimson. She buried her face into his chest, entirely too flustered to look him in the eye, her breathing turning shallow.

Seeing her violently red ears, Silas felt a surge of overwhelming affection. His new bride was maddeningly cute. "Wife," he murmured again, his voice dropping an octave, rougher this time.

Willow pressed her face deeper into his shirt, her fingers blindly gripping his lapels as she tried to hide from his intense gaze.

Silas nuzzled the shell of her ear, his tone dropping into a seductive, coaxing whisper. "Wife, shouldn't you call me something too?"

Willow knew exactly what he was asking for, but they had literally just signed the papers. The title felt so incredibly intimate, she couldn't wrap her mind around it yet.

Silas never forced her, but his patience when it came to seduction was legendary. He continued to pepper soft, drugging kisses across her forehead, relentlessly chipping away at her defenses. "Say it for me. Please? Just once. I really want to hear it."

The onslaught of warmth and affection made Willow’s knees weak. Her heart was hammering violently against her ribs.

Finally, unable to withstand his gentle pressure any longer, a tiny, impossibly soft whisper escaped her lips. "Husband."

The word was sweet and breathless, floating lightly into the air, but the impact it had on Silas was catastrophic.

He froze completely. The dark intensity in his eyes flared into a raging inferno as he stared down at the woman in his arms, entirely paralyzed by the sheer force of his own emotions.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 625

When Silas didn't say a word, a spike of anxiety hit Willow. Thinking she had done something wrong, she peeked up at him nervously. "Did I... did I say it wrong?"

"No. No, not at all. It was perfect," Silas finally choked out, snapping back to reality. He pressed his forehead aggressively against hers, his breathing ragged and his voice dangerously hoarse. "I was just... so incredibly happy, my brain stopped working."

He was overwhelmed with a joy so violent it bordered on madness. He wanted to rip the stars from the sky and hand them to her.

Silas immediately turned to his driver. "Take us straight home."

Willow blinked, tugging lightly at his tie. "Wait, aren't we going to the office? Don't you have that massive cross-border conference call in an hour?"

Silas leaned in, his lips brushing against her flushed ear. "Cancel the call. I have much more pressing business to attend to right now."

Willow instantly understood the dark promise in his voice. Her face burned fiercely, and she buried her head back into his solid chest, refusing to look up for the rest of the ride. She stayed perfectly still, letting him hold her tightly the entire way back to the penthouse.

The drive was a blur. The moment they stepped through the front door, Silas’s iron-clad restraint shattered.

He kicked the door shut, his arms wrapping around Willow like a vice as he pinned her against the wall, crashing his lips down on hers. Unlike his gentle coaxing outside the courthouse, this kiss was a blistering inferno of possessive heat and frantic devotion.

The warm hallway lights cast long, intertwined shadows against the wall.

When he finally pulled back to breathe, he rested his lips against the corner of her mouth, his chest heaving as he demanded, "Say it again. Call me your husband."

Willow’s head was spinning, her legs practically giving out. Her mind went entirely blank under the crushing weight of his passion. Dazed and trembling, she surrendered to him, her voice a soft, melting whisper. "Husband."

The word was a match thrown into gasoline. In an instant, Silas’s eyes darkened to pitch black, his breathing turning feral. He scooped her up effortlessly, carrying her through the penthouse. She clung to him desperately as he took her again and again.

Lost in the haze of passion, Silas shifted, reaching blindly for the bedside drawer.

Willow immediately wrapped her arms around his neck, her eyes glassy with desire. "You don't need that," she whispered against his lips. "I can't get pregnant. You don't have to hold back."

That quiet reassurance shattered the absolute last thread of Silas’s sanity.

From the entryway, to the massive king-sized bed, to the plush sofa, and finally against the fogged-up glass of the shower, there wasn't a single inch of the penthouse left untouched by their passion.

When the storm finally passed, Willow was utterly depleted. She lay boneless against his chest, completely stripped of the energy to even lift a finger. Her eyelids were so heavy she could barely keep them open.

Silas, on the other hand, looked like he had just gone for a light jog. He effortlessly carried her back into the bathroom, filled the massive tub with warm water, and gently bathed her. Every movement was excruciatingly tender as he cleaned away the remnants of their passion.

The warm water and the thick steam made Willow even sleepier. As she drifted off, Silas gently combed his fingers through her damp hair. "Darling," he murmured softly. "About the wedding... what kind of ceremony do you want?"

Willow was on the brink of unconsciousness, but the question sparked a tiny flicker of life in her. She had thought about her dream wedding before, but she never believed she'd actually get to have one.

Now, with Silas, she knew she could have anything she wanted.

Resting her head against his chest, she mumbled her sleepy fantasy. "I want an outdoor ceremony... on the beach. White roses everywhere... catching the sunset. I don't want anything overly extravagant or flashy. Just beautiful and romantic. And... I want all my friends and family there."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 626

"No problem." Silas Thorne lowered his head, pressing a gentle kiss to her forehead. "Don't worry, leave it all to me."

He was determined to give her a grand wedding that belonged only to her, pouring all his devotion and tenderness into every detail.

Silas was a man of his word.

The wedding was set for a month later, and the venue was Aurelia Island, his private island.

He had purchased the island for a fortune years ago. It was maintained year-round by a dedicated staff, boasting blooming flowers through all four seasons, azure waters, and white sandy beaches. The breathtaking scenery had never been opened to the public, making it the perfect fit for Willow's requests.

The big day soon arrived, exuding top-tier luxury in every aspect. All invited guests were shuttled back and forth by Merit Group's exclusive private helicopters. Silas covered every single expense; everyone simply had to show up.

Naturally, the guest list consisted entirely of their closest friends and family.

On Willow's side, Martha Mercer and Jade Yates were definite attendees. Silas, of course, had his own relatives and close circle.

Martha wore an elegant haute couture gown, her makeup flawless as she sat in the front row of the family section, waiting with a heart full of joy. Jade was also dressed to the nines in a tasteful, understated dress. Looking at the overwhelmingly romantic setup, her eyes were already welling with tears of profound emotion.

But the biggest surprise for Willow was that Silas had secretly invited Ethan Walker.

Her eyes lit up the moment she saw him. She rushed over, throwing her arms wide to pull him into a tight hug. "Ethan, what are you doing here? I'm so surprised!"

Ethan hugged her back gently, his smile bright and pure, carrying the sweet innocence of youth. "Willow, Silas brought me here. Congratulations on your wedding."

With that, he carefully pulled a handmade gift from a delicate box he had brought with him. It was a handcrafted ornament of a star and moon, inlaid with sparkling stones—a radiant and tender depiction of two celestial bodies leaning on one another.

"I made this myself for you and Silas. I wish you both years of endless love, devotion, and happiness."

Holding such a thoughtful and exquisite gift, a wave of warmth washed over Willow's heart as she smiled brightly. "It's beautiful. Thank you so much, Ethan!"

Just then, Silas, who had been quietly standing by her side, reached out and gently took the gift, handing it to his executive assistant to store safely. He then wrapped an arm around Willow's waist. "I'm glad you like it. I knew you missed Ethan, so I made sure to bring him here."

"I love it! I really do!" Willow didn't hide her joy.

"Good." Silas pressed an affectionate kiss to her forehead.

The scheduled time approached, and the wedding ceremony soon began.

Silas had overseen the entire production, tailoring every detail to Willow's preferences.

On the island's pristine white beach, a massive, immersive floral aisle had been constructed. The path was lined on both sides with premium white roses, lisianthus, and delicate baby's breath. The layered floral arrangements were staggered beautifully, adorned with tiny pearls and warm string lights. As the ocean breeze blew, the flowers swayed in a romantic dance.

At the end of the floral aisle stood a giant, arched ceremonial altar. It was wrapped in fresh white blooms and silver vines, from which crystal beaded curtains hung. The sea breeze made the crystals chime softly, refracting a dazzling, shattered light that felt utterly magical.

The surrounding lighting design also radiated a soft, pure ambiance. Warm golden light cascaded gently from minimalist, artistic lampposts, blending flawlessly with the evening's sunset hues. The blue sea, white sand, lush flowers, and painted sky created the most breathtakingly romantic scene on earth.

Amidst the sea of flowers and the balmy evening breeze, the carved wooden doors slowly parted. Dressed in her custom haute couture gown, Willow stepped into everyone's view.

The gown was a stunning, pure white. The bodice featured intricate, heavy lace embroidery detailing delicate star and moon patterns, accented with microscopic diamonds for a look of understated, radiant luxury. The voluminous, airy skirt cascaded in layers, extending into a train over ten feet long, dusted with tiny pearls. With every step she took, the light shifted, making her glow.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 627

A delicate veil draped over her shoulders, adding a soft, ethereal quality that framed her stunning features. Her luminous skin and radiant expression were captivatingly beautiful.

The evening breeze lifted the edges of her skirt and veil. Bathed in the soft glow of the sunset, she looked as if she were outlined in gold—a breathtaking vision that left the entire crowd in awe.

At the end of the aisle, Silas stood tall and broad-shouldered in a bespoke black suit. He radiated aristocratic poise and calm authority, anchored amidst the endless blossoms.

This was a man known for his icy composure, someone who hid his emotions effortlessly and had weathered countless storms without blinking. Yet, the moment he saw Willow walking toward him, all of his stoic defenses completely crumbled.

Everyone clearly saw a single, warm tear suddenly slip from his dark eyes and fall against the lapel of his expensive suit.

Silas Thorne was crying.

It was the very first time his friends, subordinates, business partners, and even his own family had ever seen him shed a tear.

Willow was no exception. Her steps faltered, her clear eyes wide with surprise. Looking at the crying man just a short distance away, a lump formed in her throat as an overwhelming, burning wave of love washed over her.

Stepping through the soft light and petals, Silas slowly closed the distance between them.

Willow immediately reached out, gripping his hand firmly. From that moment on, they never let go.

The officiant stood at the center of the floral arch, his expression solemn as he began the vows. "Mr. Silas Thorne, do you take Ms. Willow Horgan to be your lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do you part?"

Under the gaze of the crowd, Silas kept his burning gaze fixed solely on the woman before him. His voice was strong, carrying unwavering devotion. "I do."

The officiant nodded and turned to her. "Ms. Willow Horgan, do you take Mr. Silas Thorne to be your lawfully wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do you part?"

Willow looked into the tear-filled eyes of the man who saw no one else in the world but her. With a tender smile, she answered with absolute certainty. "I do."

She would always, forever, do.

Following the vows, they exchanged their custom wedding bands.

Silas had designed the rings himself. His was a minimalist platinum band engraved with her name on the inside. Hers featured a stunning solitaire diamond surrounded by a halo of smaller stones, bearing his name engraved on the inner band.

It was a symbol of their eternal bond, tying them together for life.

The moment the rings were in place, Silas pulled Willow into his arms, dipping his head to capture her lips in a deep, passionate kiss.

The sunset melted into gold, the balmy wind swept over the blooming flowers, and the mountains and sea bore witness to their union.

Instantly, thunderous applause erupted from the crowd, echoing endlessly. Countless guests had red rims around their eyes, moved to tears by the display of pure love.

Jade, especially, was already weeping freely in the audience as she watched the couple embrace on stage.

Others only saw the glamorous luxury and the high-profile spectacle of the wedding. But Jade knew exactly how much darkness and heartbreak Willow had endured to finally grasp this beautiful, hard-won happiness.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 628

Julian Sinclair found out about Willow and Silas's marriage from the news.

Inside a cramped, dim room, heavy curtains blocked out every ounce of daylight, creating a suffocatingly stagnant atmosphere.

An outdated LCD television hung on the peeling wall. The glaring screen played a looping broadcast of the grand wedding between the head of Merit Group, Silas Thorne, and the renowned biologist, Ms. Willow Horgan—a perfect match made in heaven.

On the screen, Willow looked radiant, a sweet, gentle smile playing on her lips. She was completely enveloped in love, glowing so brightly it was impossible to look away. Beside her, Silas stood tall and aristocratic in his tailored suit. His usually cold, indifferent eyes were overflowing with a tenderness reserved exclusively for her.

Their fingers were tightly intertwined, an unbreakable and intimate bond. The picture of absolute bliss was undeniable.

Seeing this, a violent surge of rage instantly obliterated all of Julian's reason.

He had been living in an alcoholic haze for days, but the sight before him sobered him up like a splash of ice water.

Sitting on the freezing floor with a liquor bottle gripped in his hand, his bloodshot eyes locked onto the agonizing broadcast.

Suddenly, a sharp crash shattered the silence!

He hurled the half-empty bottle of whiskey at the wall with vicious force. The glass shattered on impact, sending liquor and shards flying across the room as the sharp stench of alcohol quickly filled the dilapidated space.

"A perfect match? Together forever?" Julian scoffed darkly, repeating the words from the news anchor. His voice was laced with bone-deep despair and lunacy. He laughed until his eyes turned red, his chest heaving violently.

Lately, he had been trapped here, unable to move a single inch forward in life.

He had tried countless times to contact Willow—asking people to pass on messages, sending texts, using every conceivable method to track her down. But Silas had set up an impenetrable wall, leaving him without the slightest chance of getting anywhere near her.

He was entirely locked out of her world.

He never expected that the next time he heard news of her, it would be about her marrying Silas.

Extreme jealousy and resentment swallowed Julian whole. Pushing himself up against the wall, a reckless madness flashed in his eyes as he stormed toward the door.

"Open the door! Let me out!"

The heavy steel door didn't budge. Two plainclothes guards stood outside with impassive expressions, blocking his path completely.

Red-eyed, Julian shoved at them violently. "Get the hell out of my way! I need to go find Willow!"

He was already broken, his movements frantic and erratic. But the guards were highly trained professionals who had zero tolerance for his outbursts. Without a word, they swiftly neutralized the threat, pinning him down and delivering merciless blows to subdue him.

Julian staggered and fell, sharp bursts of pain radiating through his back, ribs, and legs. A metallic taste flooded his mouth as he coughed up a terrifying splatter of blood onto the concrete.

Propping himself up, he glared at them looking utterly pathetic, roaring, "You dare hit me? Do you know this is illegal imprisonment? It's a crime!"

"I'm telling you, the second I get out of here, I'll sue all of you! I'll make Silas pay!"

The two guards stared down at him with icy disdain, a mocking smirk tugging at their lips. "Let's see if you can even make it out of here first."

The chilling words pierced right through Julian's chest like jagged ice.

His body was drained of strength, his bruises burning. All his struggles and defiance felt ridiculously futile.

Ultimately, he was dragged ruthlessly back into the rundown room. The steel door slammed shut with a heavy thud. The click of the lock sealed away the outside light, locking down the very last shreds of his hope.

The room returned to its filthy, chaotic, pitch-black state.

Toby was no longer here; he had been sent to an orphanage. Susannah was still around to keep him company, but after the devastating blow of their ruined family and total bankruptcy, her mind had fractured, leaving her entirely insane.

Right now, she was curled up on the battered sofa, clutching a disconnected, obsolete cellphone in her hands. Her fingers frantically punched the keypad as she muttered the same phrase over and over, "Mr. Jennings, Mrs. Lockwood, Mr. West... please come help the Sinclair family, help my son..."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 629

This delusion had become her sole obsession.

But the phone service had been cut off ages ago. She couldn't make a single call. Her endless dialing and pleading were nothing more than a pathetic, one-woman show playing to an empty audience.

At that moment, she caught sight of Willow on the television screen. Her cloudy, vacant eyes suddenly lit up as if she had grabbed hold of a final lifeline. Susannah jolted up from the couch, rushing over to Julian in a manic frenzy. "Julian, look! It's Willow! I know her, she's my daughter-in-law! The Sinclair family's daughter-in-law! She's so kind, she'll definitely help us!"

She aggressively yanked at Julian's sleeve, shaking him violently, her eyes burning with a deranged hope. "Hurry, call her! Talk to her nicely and beg her to save us. If she just says the word, we're saved!"

Julian didn't move an inch. She kept pushing him like a lunatic. "Contact her! She used to love you so much, she definitely still has feelings for you!"

Already drowning in agony and suffocating resentment, Julian's sanity snapped at her hysterical screeching. The hatred, regret, and bitterness he had suppressed for days finally erupted.

He jerked his head up, his eyes filled with absolute ice and disgust, and shoved Susannah backward. Losing her balance, she stumbled back several steps, slamming hard into the concrete wall before collapsing onto the floor.

Julian glared at her, his voice hoarse and venomous, every word dripping with bone-chilling hatred. "Contact her? What right do I have to contact her? Now you want to beg her for help? If you hadn't schemed and brainwashed me into being with Vivienne, if you hadn't torn us apart, do you think I'd be in this living hell right now?"

His chest heaved wildly as his buried rage poured out. Once the floodgates opened, there was no going back. "This is all because of you! You single-handedly destroyed my entire life, forcing me into that twisted mess with Vivienne until it broke me. And in the end? The Sinclair family is gone, our power is gone, everything is gone! I spent years raising another man's bastard child for nothing! Are you happy now? Is this what you wanted?"

His brutal words drove like a stake through Susannah's heart. A sudden, violent migraine pierced her skull, feeling as though thousands of needles were stabbing her brain.

Her clouded eyes darted around erratically, and her crazy mumbling came to an abrupt halt. Her chaotic thoughts seemed to violently snap back to a moment of tragic clarity.

All her past manipulations, threats, snobbery, and paranoia flashed before her eyes.

She was wrong.

She had personally destroyed her son's future and ruined everything the Sinclair family had built. She was the one who pushed away Willow, the kind, gentle woman who was supposed to be their salvation.

An unfathomable wave of regret and despair swallowed Susannah whole. She stood frozen for a few seconds before throwing her head back and releasing a gut-wrenching, agonizing wail. She screamed and sobbed wildly, completely losing whatever was left of her mind.

Julian couldn't be bothered with her anymore. Watching her writhe in agony on the floor, his face remained entirely devoid of emotion.

In stark contrast to that dark, rotting hellscape, the private island across the ocean was a picture of pure tranquility.

After the grand wedding concluded, Silas brought Willow to this hidden island gem for their honeymoon.

The island was isolated from the chaotic world and completely untouched by commercial development, preserving its pure, breathtaking natural beauty.

Lush greenery covered the land, complete with groves of tropical palm trees. When the evening breeze swept through, the palm fronds rustled softly, carrying the sweet scent of flora and the ocean.

A minimalist white oceanfront villa sat perfectly along the shore. Floor-to-ceiling windows framed the vast expanse of blue water and sky, pulling nature straight into the living room. The massive terrace faced the endless ocean, offering unobstructed views of sunrises, sunsets, and the rolling tides. A simple glance upward revealed a blanket of stars—peaceful and deeply romantic.

Willow and Silas spent their days in this idyllic paradise.

Every morning, Willow was gently awakened by the soft morning sunlight and the rhythmic crash of the waves.

She would open her eyes to the warm sun pouring through the glass and Silas sleeping peacefully by her side.

After waking, they would stroll barefoot along the beach, sinking their toes into the soft sand as the cool ocean breeze washed away all their fatigue.

During the day, Willow would lounge in a wicker chair on the terrace, reading, soaking up the sun, and simply enjoying the lazy, breezy hours.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 630

Silas stayed right by her side. He occasionally handled light work, but mostly, he just kept her company, pressing soft kisses to the top of her head and chatting with her about everything and nothing.

When the mood struck, they would take the private yacht out for some deep-sea fishing, sitting side by side to watch the horizon blur where the sky met the sea, indulging in this leisurely time reserved just for them.

There was no overwhelming workload, no messy social obligations. Just the two of them together from dawn till dusk, surrounded by peace and sweet romance.

That evening, they were enjoying yet another cozy candlelight dinner. The table was set with fresh seafood and exquisite dishes, the atmosphere incredibly romantic.

Willow and Silas were chatting in hushed tones, taking their time with the meal, talking about the island's scenery and their future together.

Suddenly, a fierce wave of nausea hit her stomach, fast and aggressive. Willow's face went pale. Without a word, she shot up from her chair and dashed toward the bathroom.

Silas's heart lurched. He immediately dropped his fork and hurried after her. "What's wrong? Are you sick?"

Gripping the edge of the sink, it took Willow a long moment before the intense nausea finally subsided. She was breathing slightly heavy, her complexion still quite pale. She glanced back at Silas's tense face and forced a reassuring smile. "I'm okay. I probably just ate too much seafood and it didn't agree with me. I'm just a little nauseous. It'll pass, don't worry."

But her words did little to ease his anxiety. He walked up to her, gently resting a hand on her waist to support her.

He knew her health too well. She had always eaten sensibly and rarely suffered from such severe, sudden sickness.

"I don't think it's food poisoning," Silas said firmly, his eyes dark with worry. "We can't risk it. I'm having a doctor take a look."

They were on a remote island, far from proper medical facilities. Willow smiled helplessly, giving him a gentle nudge. "I'm really fine, don't worry. I'm not that fragile."

But when it came to her, Silas never took any chances.

He leaned down and pressed a kiss to her forehead, his tone tender yet unyielding. "Your health is everything. I'm not taking a single risk."

Pulling out his phone, he immediately dialed his private doctor, barking out orders. "Dispatch the medical helicopter now. I want you in the air in five minutes, headed for the island. Bring a full suite of diagnostic equipment."

In less than thirty minutes, the exclusive medical chopper touched down on the island's helipad. A senior physician, accompanied by a professional medical team and advanced equipment, rushed into the villa.

The doctor immediately ran a comprehensive battery of tests on Willow, meticulously checking and cross-referencing all her vitals.

Throughout the entire process, Silas never left her side. He held her hand the whole time, his intense gaze never wavering as he silently anchored her and soothed her nerves.

A short while later, the test results were finalized.

Reviewing the chart in his hand, a warm smile broke across the doctor's face. He looked up at the couple and spoke with absolute certainty. "Mr. Thorne, Mrs. Thorne, congratulations. This isn't a stomach bug. Mrs. Thorne is pregnant. You're very early in the first trimester, which is why the symptoms came on so suddenly, but she's perfectly fine. All her health markers are excellent."

The air in the room instantly went dead silent.

Willow froze, her pupils dilating as her mind went entirely blank. She was completely stunned.

Pregnant?

She was pregnant?

She stared blankly at the doctor, shaking her head in disbelief. Her voice cracked with shock. "Doctor, are you sure there wasn't a mistake? That's impossible. I had extensive medical exams done in the past, and my doctors explicitly told me I had a uterine condition that made me infertile. They said the chances of me ever conceiving were virtually zero."

That was exactly why she had told Silas and Jocelyn she couldn't have kids.

The doctor chuckled, double-checking the readouts before giving her an incredibly confident reply. "Mrs. Thorne, rest assured, our equipment is the most advanced in the world. The results are flawlessly accurate. Your body is in peak condition, your uterus is perfectly healthy, and you have absolutely conceived. You are, without a doubt, pregnant."

At that, Willow's brain completely short-circuited. The sheer scale of shock, confusion, and disbelief tangled together, leaving her at a total loss for words.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 631

Beside her, Silas was frozen for only a few seconds before a blazing, earth-shattering euphoria erupted in his chest.

After Willow had told him she couldn't get pregnant, they had stopped using protection. He had originally planned to have her re-examined after the honeymoon, but he never expected they would conceive a child this quickly.

It truly was a miracle sent straight from heaven!

For the first time in a very long time, Silas's hands were actually trembling.

Forcing down the wild adrenaline, he reached out, pulling Willow into his arms with the utmost care. "This is amazing. We're having a baby."

After the initial high, his sharp executive mindset kicked back in. He began issuing rapid, methodical orders for their next steps. "I'll arrange our return flight immediately. The second we land in Seattle, I'm taking you straight to the hospital for a full prenatal workup. We'll set up a dedicated medical file and have a specialist on standby 24/7."

The doctor provided a rundown of first-trimester precautions, outlining dietary restrictions and rest requirements before tactfully excusing himself, leaving the couple alone.

The sprawling villa plunged back into silence.

Leaning against Silas's chest, Willow was still caught in a daze. She rested a hand over her flat stomach, her eyes clouded with pure confusion. "How is this possible? My past test results explicitly stated that I'd never get pregnant..."

Looking down at her furrowed brow, Silas caught the crucial detail. His gaze darkened slightly. "Which hospital did the doctor who gave you that diagnosis work for?"

Willow remembered the event vividly, and the answer slipped out easily. "It was a doctor arranged by the Sinclair family."

The second the words left her mouth, a jolt shot through Willow's body. The fog instantly lifted, and every single puzzle piece snapped violently into place.

It was Julian.

Him again!

He must have bribed the doctor to forge the test results, manipulating her into believing she was barren.

Back then, she had been so lost and vulnerable. The diagnosis had absolutely shattered her, leaving her crippled by insecurity and oversensitivity. Because of that lie, she had spent years wallowing in self-hatred and guilt toward him.

So, from the very beginning, the whole thing was an elaborate scam he engineered!

A sickening wave of fury and dread coursed through her veins, her eyes hardening into icy daggers.

Sensing the sudden cold rage radiating from her body, Silas immediately tightened his grip, holding her securely against him. He rubbed gentle circles into her back, his voice low and soothing. "Darling, don't be angry. He's not worth it. He has absolutely nothing left. He's trapped in his own hell and paying the price for his sins. Karma caught up to him. His own vile schemes and malice ended up destroying him."

"Let the past stay in the past. We don't need to let a ruined monster sour our happiness, or stress our baby."

Silas's calm, steady voice acted like a balm, slowly smoothing out the violent spikes of anger in Willow's heart.

He was right. Julian was completely destroyed. The Sinclair family was dead, his reputation was in tatters, he was imprisoned, and every single person he knew had abandoned him. He would spend the rest of his pathetic life drowning in regret and torment. It was the ultimate retribution.

And she had long since crawled out of the mud. She had married a man who loved her deeply, found her fairytale ending, and was now carrying her very own miracle.

In a flash, that overwhelming surge of joy and pure bliss completely surrounded Willow once again.

She placed her hand gently over her stomach, a trace of nervous excitement flashing in her eyes. "This is our baby."

"Yes, our baby," Silas affirmed, sensing her anxiety. He reassured her softly, "Don't be scared, darling. I'm right here with you."

"From this second forward, I'll be by your side for the entire pregnancy. I'll go to every appointment, take care of you while you rest, and wait for our child to arrive with you. I'll handle absolutely everything. All you have to do is eat well, get plenty of sleep, and happily wait to meet our baby."

With that, he pulled Willow tighter against his chest and murmured, "Thank you."

Thank you for giving me the greatest gift of all. I'll spend the rest of my life making it up to you.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 632

They handled Willow's comprehensive medical exams in Seattle. Silas had a top-tier private medical team waiting, and the moment they returned, they ran a full spectrum of tests to ensure she was in perfect health.

When the lengthy exams finally concluded, the lead doctor approached them with a thick stack of reports. "Mr. Thorne, Ms. Horgan, the results are in. Ms. Horgan is in excellent physical condition. All her vitals are perfect, her body is handling the pregnancy beautifully, and the fetus is developing perfectly. There are no underlying concerns. All she needs now is plenty of rest and regular check-ups."

Hearing those words, the crushing weight that had been suffocating Silas finally vanished.

The rigid tension in his jaw melted away, and the heavy anxiety in his gaze was replaced by an overwhelming wave of tenderness and relief.

He looked down at Willow, wrapping his long arms around her and pulling her into a careful embrace, treating her as if she were made of spun glass. "You did amazing, darling."

Willow rested her head against his warm chest, listening to the steady, powerful thumping of his heart. She wrapped her arms around his waist and murmured softly, "I told you I was fine. You were just stressing yourself out."

"I know," Silas replied, though deep down, he felt his paranoia had been entirely justified.

They spent the next couple of weeks in Seattle. Silas took her to visit friends and family, and the moment everyone heard the news of her pregnancy, they showered the couple with genuine joy and blessings—especially Jocelyn.

The second Jocelyn saw Willow, she rushed over and grabbed her hands. "This is wonderful! Absolutely wonderful!" She had secretly worried the couple might have friction over the topic of children, but clearly, those fears were unfounded.

In her excitement, Jocelyn squeezed and shook Willow's arm a little too enthusiastically.

Instantly, Silas's expression shifted. Operating on pure instinct, he stepped between them, pulling Willow flush against his chest in a protective, possessive hold, shielding her from any sudden movements.

"Mom, take it easy," he said, his tone gentle but laced with an undeniable warning. "She's in a delicate state right now. She can't be bumped around."

Jocelyn blinked, startled by his intense reaction, before bursting into laughter. "Alright, alright, that's my fault. I'll be more careful."

Tucked safely against Silas's chest, Willow blushed and shook her head. "I'm fine, Jocelyn. I'm really not that fragile."

"Yes, you are," Silas interjected, his tone uncharacteristically stern with her. "This is a critical period. We are taking every precaution."

Watching him hover over her, prioritizing her safety above all else, Jocelyn smiled warmly. "Willow, this man is hopelessly in love with you."

Willow's cheeks burned hotter, but she tightened her grip on Silas's arm, leaning into his warmth.

After half a month in Seattle, Silas and Willow flew back to New York City.

Martha and Jade had received the news early and spent the entire morning prepping the house for their arrival.

The moment they walked through the door, Martha rushed forward, gently supporting Willow's arm and scanning her from head to toe. "You're finally back! How do you feel? Was the flight exhausting? Come sit down."

"I'm not tired at all," Willow said with a soft laugh. Silas had arranged a private jet, and she had practically slept the entire way. There was no way she could be exhausted.

But Martha and Jade weren't taking any chances. They flanked her on the sofa, showering her with advice. "Willow, you have to be careful now. No more eating whatever you want. Cut out the cold drinks and spicy food. Stick to warm, nutritious meals to build up your strength."

"Take your time walking, especially on the stairs. Put your work on hold for now. Your only job is to eat well, sleep deeply, and stay happy."

Willow nodded obediently, her heart swelling with warmth at their endless fussing.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 633

After dinner, Willow and Silas headed back to their own place. As night fell and the city quieted down, the bedroom was enveloped in a peaceful intimacy.

Willow curled up against his chest, her fingers idly tracing the hem of his shirt. She hesitated for a long time before looking up, her eyes wide and pleading. "Silas? Can I run something by you?"

He was lying on his back, one arm resting behind his head while his other hand gently stroked her flat stomach. At her soft tone, he looked down, his gaze melting into pure affection. "Anything. What is it?"

"I want to go back to work at the office. Is that okay?" She blinked up at him, testing the waters carefully. Given how overprotective he had been lately, she wasn't entirely sure he'd agree.

Sure enough, Silas's hand paused on her stomach, a flicker of hesitation crossing his sharp features.

Even before the pregnancy, he had spoiled her rotten, refusing to let her suffer even the slightest hardship. Now that she was carrying their child, she was the absolute center of his universe. He wanted to keep her under lock and key, guarding her twenty-four-seven. The thought of her commuting and dealing with corporate stress made his chest tighten.

But he couldn't bear to be harsh with her. "Wouldn't it be nice to just rest at home?" he murmured softly. "Take this time to actually relax for once."

Willow knew exactly what he was thinking. He was terrified she'd overwork herself or get hurt.

She shifted slightly, swinging a slender leg over his hips to straddle him. Wrapping her arms loosely around his neck, she melted against his chest, her voice dropping into a sweet, persuasive whisper. "But sitting around the house all day is driving me crazy. I promise I'll be so careful. I won't run around, I won't take on heavy projects, and I'll stay at my desk. I'll make sure the baby and I are perfectly safe. Please?"

She looked down at him, her eyes bright and the corners slightly flushed, pouring on the charm in a way he found impossible to resist.

Silas had never been a dictator, and he respected her ambitions. With her soft curves pressed against him and her sweet voice begging him, his rigid boundaries began to crumble. The hesitation in his eyes faded into helpless indulgence.

His Adam's apple bobbed. "Darling, stop moving."

"I'm not moving, I'm just asking," she insisted playfully, leaning down to brush her nose against his jaw. "Just let me go, okay? I need to feel productive. It'll keep me sane."

She tried to lean closer, but suddenly, she felt a distinct, hard shift beneath her. Silas's hands clamped down on her hips like iron vises. His voice dropped an octave, ragged and tight with restraint. "Darling, I mean it. Shift your weight up."

Startled, she immediately complied. "What's wrong?"

The moment the words left her mouth, she felt exactly what was wrong. The searing heat and solid pressure pressing against her thighs were impossible to ignore.

Realization hit her like a freight train. A furious blush exploded across her cheeks, rushing down her neck and chest. She froze, completely paralyzed, terrified to move a single muscle.

They hadn't been intimate in weeks.

Before the pregnancy, their physical connection had been explosive and insatiable—a daily occurrence, often multiple times a day. But ever since the positive test, Silas had locked away his desires, terrified that losing control might harm her.

The air in the bedroom suddenly thickened with heavy, suffocating tension. The scent of their lingering passion hovered between them.

Her heart hammered frantically against her ribs. She looked down into his darkening gaze, feeling a sudden rush of daring courage. "Are you... do you want to?"

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 634

Silas stared at her flushed face, his eyes swirling with a predatory, scorching hunger that he was desperately trying to leash.

Of course he wanted to.

The woman he loved more than life itself was straddling him, soft and warm, and he was already hard to the point of aching.

But his iron-clad self-control clamped down on his desires. He knew the first trimester was delicate, and he refused to take even a fraction of a percent of a risk when it came to her safety.

Through sheer, agonizing willpower, he lifted a hand to stroke her hair, pulling her down just enough to press a chaste, lingering kiss to her forehead. "Be good. We can't. I won't risk it."

With careful, deliberate movements, he lifted her off his hips, settled her gently against the pillows, and pulled the duvet up to her chin. Without another word, he turned on his heel and strode into the master bathroom.

A second later, the sound of the icy shower hitting the tiles echoed through the room.

The next morning, after relentless sweet-talking, Silas finally caved and agreed to let her return to work. But he came with strict conditions: she had to remain in his line of sight at the office, and she had to commute with him every single day.

With that arrangement, their relationship was officially public. There was no hiding it anymore.

Silas didn't care. He wanted the whole world to know she was his.

Willow handled the attention with her usual grace. She didn't act like a VIP or demand special treatment. She remained the same grounded, hardworking professional she had always been.

The only difference was that any task requiring travel, networking, or the slightest bit of physical strain was ruthlessly intercepted by Silas and dumped onto Leo Yardley's desk.

Time slipped by smoothly, and Willow transitioned into her second trimester.

Her tastes shifted wildly. Foods she used to crave made her nauseous, while bland dishes she had previously ignored became her absolute favorites.

Her emotions were equally volatile. The calm, logical scientist found herself crying over the smallest inconveniences, swept away by sudden waves of melancholy or frustration.

Through it all, Silas was an unshakable pillar of patience. No matter how irrational her mood swings got, he was always there to soothe her with gentle words and endless affection, never once showing a hint of annoyance.

One night, they fell asleep wrapped in each other's arms as usual.

Around 2 AM, Willow jolted awake, her mind racing. She couldn't get back to sleep.

Before she could even whisper his name, Silas was already awake. He was a light sleeper these days, constantly waking up to check her breathing and temperature.

Seeing her eyes open, he propped himself up on one elbow, brushing a stray lock of hair from her forehead. "What's wrong? Can't sleep? Does something hurt?"

She turned to look at him, her eyes wide with that specific, demanding haze of a pregnancy craving. "I want a slice of hot cherry pie from that 24-hour diner all the way across town. I need it."

Pregnancy cravings were notoriously sudden and entirely unforgiving.

Without a second of hesitation, Silas threw off the covers and grabbed his jacket. "Alright. Stay in bed, keep warm. I'll go get it."

"But it's so late..." she murmured, a flicker of guilt surfacing.

"It's fine. I'll be back before you know it." He leaned down, pressing a firm kiss to her temple, and moved with swift, efficient grace.

He slipped out into the freezing night, driving his sports car through the empty New York streets, crossing half the city just to secure a fresh, steaming slice of cherry pie from the late-night diner.

An hour later, he walked back into the bedroom, carrying a thermal bag.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 635

Silas moved quietly, shutting the bedroom door tight to keep the draft out. He pulled the warm container from the bag and handed it to her, his voice a low, comforting hum. "I got it. Eat it while it's hot."

But the agonizing craving that had kept Willow tossing and turning an hour ago had completely vanished.

She stared down at the steaming cherry pie, her stomach churning slightly. She bit her lip, a heavy wave of guilt crushing her chest. "...I don't think I want it anymore."

Any other man would have snapped. Driving across the city at 2 AM only to be rejected would spark rage in almost anyone. But Silas didn't even flinch. His expression remained incredibly soft.

He didn't demand an explanation. He simply took the container from her hands, set it on the nightstand, and sat back on the edge of the bed. He stroked her hair gently. "That's fine. You don't have to eat it. What else sounds good? Is there anything you want to drink? Tell me, and I'll go get it. Even if it's in another state, I'll find it."

The warm glow of the bedside lamp cast soft shadows across his face, stripping away the ruthless billionaire persona and leaving only a deeply devoted husband.

Willow looked up at him, catching the faint shadows of exhaustion beneath his eyes. Her throat tightened, and tears welled up instantly. "I don't want anything. I just want you to hold me."

She threw her arms around his waist and buried her face against his stomach.

She had been doing this constantly lately—throwing tantrums, demanding impossible things, changing her mind at the last second. And yet, no matter how tired he was, Silas never complained. He absorbed every ounce of her chaos with unwavering devotion.

The guilt swallowed her whole. A choked sob escaped her throat. "Am I being awful? I'm constantly acting crazy, waking you up in the middle of the night, demanding food and then throwing it away... Are you getting sick of me?"

Hearing the heartbreak in her voice, Silas melted. He leaned down, scooping her into his arms and rubbing soothing circles into her back. "Don't be ridiculous. Of course I'm not sick of you. It's not a burden, Willow. Your body is going through hell right now. You're allowed to be emotional, you're allowed to be demanding, and you're allowed to make me work for it. If I can't handle a few late-night pie runs, how am I supposed to protect you and our baby?"

He gently pinched her cheek, a deep, affectionate smile playing on his lips. "Honestly? I love it. You used to be so independent, keeping everything bottled up. You never asked for help, and you never let me take care of you. Seeing you actually rely on me, seeing you act a little selfish... it's a gift. I want you to be like this forever. I want you to demand things from me."

Wrapped in his warm, solid embrace, the lingering anxiety evaporated, leaving only a profound sense of security.

She squeezed her arms tighter around his waist, pressing her face against his chest to soak in his scent. "I love you, Silas."

"I love you too."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 636

Willow's entire pregnancy was paved with Silas's exhaustive devotion.

While other women suffered through relentless morning sickness, swollen joints, and sleepless nights, Willow bypassed nearly all of it.

Silas was borderline obsessive in his care. If she so much as frowned in the morning, a glass of warm water, stomach-settling crackers, and an anti-nausea meal were instantly presented to her. If she tossed and turned at night, he would stay awake for hours, rubbing her back, adjusting the thermostat, dimming the lights, and whispering sweet nothings until she drifted off.

He anticipated every discomfort and neutralized it before she even felt it.

Thanks to his meticulous care, Willow absolutely glowed. The sharp angles of her face softened, replaced by a radiant, luminous beauty. She carried the pregnancy with effortless grace, completely enveloped in love.

The months flew by, and the due date arrived.

The VIP delivery suite looked more like a five-star hotel room than a hospital, stripped of any clinical coldness.

Willow lay in the bed, looking surprisingly calm. Silas, on the other hand, had completely lost his signature cool.

His broad shoulders were drawn tight, his knuckles white, and a sheen of cold sweat coated his palms. His eyes were wild with barely suppressed panic as he interrogated the medical team.

"Is everything prepped? Have you triple-checked the vitals? What are the emergency protocols if her blood pressure drops? Are the crash carts fully stocked?"

The lead obstetrician didn't dare waste a second. "Mr. Thorne, I assure you, we are completely ready. Ms. Horgan is doing wonderfully, the baby is in the perfect position, and this will be a smooth delivery."

Silas opened his mouth to demand more answers, but Willow reached out and tugged his sleeve. "Silas, breathe. I'm fine. The doctor said it's going perfectly."

Silas clamped his mouth shut and gripped her hand like a lifeline.

Minutes later, the heavy contractions hit. A sharp, suffocating wave of pressure radiated through her abdomen.

Willow went rigid, her face contorting in pain.

The medical team sprang into action, wheeling her into the sterile delivery room.

Silas didn't leave her side for a single second.

He had ditched his suit jacket, wearing only a sterile white scrub shirt over his dress pants. He stayed planted by her side, gripping her hand with steady, anchoring strength. With his free hand, he used a soft cloth to constantly wipe the sweat from her brow and cheeks.

The room was filled with Willow's ragged, heavy breathing.

With every brutal contraction, she squeezed his hand hard enough to leave bruising indentations in his skin. Silas didn't even flinch. He leaned in, his lips brushing against her ear, murmuring a constant stream of devotion. "I'm right here, darling. You're doing incredible."

"Just a little longer. I've got you. I'm not going anywhere."

"You're so strong. Just breathe. We're going to meet our baby so soon."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 637

His low, steady voice cut through the blinding haze of pain, anchoring her to reality and absorbing all her fear.

After hours of grueling labor, a sharp, piercing cry shattered the tension in the room.

The absolute exhaustion hit Willow like a tidal wave. She collapsed back against the pillows, gasping for air, completely drained. Beside her, Silas's iron composure finally cracked.

The ruthless, untouchable billionaire—a man who had never shown a shred of vulnerability to the world—suddenly had tears in his eyes. A single, scalding tear slipped down his cheek and landed on her sweat-drenched skin.

He leaned down, pressing a fervent, trembling kiss to her forehead. "One is enough," he rasped, his voice raw. "I am never letting you go through this again."

Breathing heavily, Willow managed a weak smile. She reached up, her trembling fingers brushing his cheek. "I'm okay. Go look at the baby. Go see our child."

Silas shook his head, pressing his face against her palm, refusing to look away from her. "No. The doctors have her. My parents are out there. I'm staying right here with you."

To him, Willow would always come first. She was his beginning, his end, and his entire universe. The baby only mattered because she was half Willow.

Her heart swelled, but maternal instinct won out. "Go on," she urged softly. "I want to see her. Bring her to me."

Unable to deny her anything, Silas finally stood up and walked over to the nurses.

A moment later, a nurse carefully handed him a small, swaddled bundle. "Congratulations, Mr. Thorne, Ms. Horgan. She's a gorgeous little girl. And so well-behaved."

The newborn, wrapped in a soft white blanket, was breathtaking.

She had a flawless, luminous complexion, free of the usual newborn redness. Her long, dark lashes fluttered against her cheeks, and when she opened her eyes, they were wide, clear, and intensely curious. She didn't cry, she just stared up at the bright lights, taking in the world.

Silas carried her over and gently placed her on the pillow next to Willow. His voice was thick with awe. "She looks exactly like you. She's perfect."

Willow turned her head, her gaze locking onto the tiny, fragile life beside her. She smiled softly, knowing Silas was just flattering her.

The baby's bright eyes and delicate nose were definitely hers, but the sharp, elegant curve of her jawline and the shape of her lips were pure Silas. Even as a newborn, she possessed a hint of his aristocratic grace.

But he was right about one thing: Sienna Thorne was stunning.

Willow reached out a trembling finger, gently stroking the baby's impossibly soft cheek. She leaned in, pressing a feather light kiss to the baby's forehead. "Hi, sweetheart," she whispered. "I'm your mom."

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 638

Silas looked down at the two most important people in his life, his chest tight with a love so profound it physically ached. He leaned over, wrapping his arms carefully around them both. "And I'm your dad."

Meanwhile, miles away in a dilapidated, crumbling apartment, Julian Sinclair was sprawled on the filthy floor, blackout drunk. He looked like a corpse, completely devoid of life or purpose.

The flickering TV in the corner was playing the local news. Julian wasn't paying attention until a specific name cut through the alcoholic haze.

Breaking News: Merit Group CEO Silas Thorne and his wife, Willow Horgan, welcomed a baby girl today. Both mother and daughter are healthy. The corporate world is flooding the couple with congratulations...

The broadcast showed the pristine official announcement from Merit Group, dripping with perfection and joy.

Julian froze. The blood drained from his face, leaving him a sickly, ashen gray.

Impossible...

How was that possible?!

Years ago, he had personally taken Willow to a specialist. The diagnosis had been absolute: severe reproductive issues, making it practically impossible for her to ever conceive. That was the entire reason he had grown so emotionally attached to Toby, the adopted heir.

He had believed that medical report for years. He had used it to justify his emotional distance, his affairs, and his cruelty toward her.

And now, she had effortlessly gotten pregnant and delivered a healthy baby?

A sickening realization struck him like a physical blow. He slammed a hand against the floor.

The pieces of the puzzle violently snapped together. Vivienne Sinclair.

Vivienne had arranged the clinic. Vivienne had selected the doctor. Vivienne had orchestrated the entire narrative. She had fabricated the infertility report to destroy his marriage.

A suffocating wave of despair crashed over him. His chest convulsed with sheer agony.

What had he done? He had held absolute perfection in his hands—a devoted, brilliant wife—and he had let a sociopath manipulate him into destroying it. He had ruined his own life.

A feral, agonizing scream ripped from his throat. His eyes turned bloodshot as explosive regret and venomous hatred consumed him.

He hated Vivienne for her venomous deceit, but he hated himself even more for being so blindingly stupid: Driver entirely mad by the revelation, He began slapping himself across the face, the sound echoing sharply in the empty room.

"Why?! Why?!"

"She was mine! Willow was mine! That life was supposed to be mine!"

He completely lost his mind, thrashing around the room, smashing bottles, kicking the rotting furniture, screaming until his vocal cords tore.

But the destruction changed nothing. The reality was absolute: Willow had moved on, and she was, thriving in a world of wealth, love, and success. And Julian was rotting in a gutter, completely alone.

Suffocating on his own misery, he grabbed a half-empty bottle of cheap vodka and chugged it until he choked. The alcohol burned its way down finally dragging him into the dark oblivion of unconsciousness.

As his eyes rolled back, his final, desperate thought was a prayer that he would never wake up.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 639

On the outskirts of New York, inside the bleak walls of the Metropolitan Women's Correctional Facility.

The midday lunch hour in the cafeteria was unusually chaotic.

Instead of the standard, tasteless slop, the trays were loaded with fresh meat dishes and sweet fruit. The inmates were thrilled, whispering excitedly among themselves.

"What's with the premium food today?"

"I know, right? Real meat, and an apple! Is it a holiday?"

The chatter died down as the head warden stepped up to the microphone. "Listen up. Today, Merit Group's CEO, Silas Thorne, and his wife welcomed a baby girl. To celebrate the occasion, Mr. Thorne has funded a premium meal service for the entire facility. Enjoy."

Cheers erupted across the cafeteria.

But sitting in a dim corner, Vivienne Sinclair went entirely rigid. The blood froze in her veins, and her face turned the color of chalk.

Silas Thorne and Willow Horgan... had a baby?

They actually had a child.

Surrounded by cheering women, Vivienne felt like she was submerged in an ice bath. Her hands trembled violently as a toxic, corrosive wave of jealousy and hatred clawed at her throat.

She had spent her entire life scheming, lying, and clawing her way to the top. And what did she have to show for it? She had destroyed her family, bankrupted the Sinclair Group, and landed herself in a concrete cage with a ruined reputation.

And Willow?

That pathetic, boring nobody she had bullied for years was now sitting on top of the world, married to a billionaire, a celebrated scientist, and a mother.

It was unacceptable.

Why?!

She just got lucky. That was it.

Vivienne was prettier, smarter, and had a better pedigree! Willow just happened to sleep with the right man at the right time.

If I can just get out of here, Vivienne thought feverishly. If I can just get back out there, I can crush her. I can take it all back.

Staring at the celebratory food on her tray, Vivienne felt violently nauseous. She shoved the tray away, refusing to take a single bite.

The inmates sitting across from her, who already despised her arrogant, entitled attitude, noticed the gesture.

"What's your problem, princess? Too good for a free meal?" a heavy-set woman sneered.

"Look at her rolling her eyes. The warden gave us a feast, and she's throwing a tantrum."

The women exchanged a dark look, stood up, and shoved Vivienne hard against the wall. "Who the hell do you think you are? you are? You think you're still some high-society socialite? You're trash, just like the rest of us. Eat the damn food!"

A fist slammed into Vivienne's ribs.

Exhausted, malnourished, and outnumbered, Vivienne didn't stand a chance. She collapsed onto the filthy floor, curling into a tight ball as the women viciously kicked and stomped on her.

Even as the pain flared through her body, her eyes burned with toxic defiance. She refused to admit defeat.

She would wait. She would serve her time, get out, and tear Willow's perfect life to shreds.

But her delusions were cut short as a heavy boot slammed into her temple, knocking her completely unconscious.

It took ten minutes for the guards to casually stroll over. They didn't bother investigating. They just barked a warning and dragged Vivienne's limp body away The inmates exchanged smirks, knowing exactly what was going to happen to her tomorrow. .....

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 640

One year later.

The pinnacle of the global genetic engineering community—The Lifetime Achievement Award in Regenerative Medicine and Genomic Sciences—was being held at the grand International Conference Centre in Geneva.

This was the absolute highest honor in the life sciences, a legendary accolade reserved for pioneers who had fundamentally altered the course of human history through genetic breakthroughs and the eradication of rare diseases.

For decades, the award had exclusively gone to elderly, seasoned veterans of the scientific community. Tonight, Willow Horgan shattered that ceiling, becoming the youngest female laureate in history.

The conference center was bathed in brilliant light, the glass ceiling revealing the crisp, starry Geneva night sky. The auditorium was packed with the world's most elite scholars, government officials, and international press.

Willow stood in the wings, wearing a flawlessly tailored ivory suit that accentuated her stunning curves and graceful posture. Her hair was swept up into an elegant twist, exposing her slender neck. Gone was the quiet, introverted lab rat. Tonight, she radiated absolute confidence, brilliance, and a quiet, untouchable power.

The host's voice echoed in perfect, bilingual clarity: "The Lifetime Achievement Award in Regenerative Medicine and Genomic Sciences goes to... Willow Horgan! For her revolutionary work in eradicating the genetic mutation causing EB, and for pioneering a flawless, non-invasive gene-editing technique, she has brought hope to millions. Ladies and gentlemen, Willow Horgan!"

Deafening applause thundered through the massive hall.

Willow walked gracefully up the steps, her head held high.

Standing at the podium was the President of the International Association of Genomic Sciences, the legendary Mr. Smith. It had been a year since their dramatic encounter in New York, and his eyes were filled with nothing but profound respect.

He handed her the heavy gold trophy and the medal of honor. "Your research shattered the boundaries of modern science and healed broken families across the globe. Your brilliance and your compassion are a gift to humanity. Congratulations, Ms. Horgan. This is incredibly well-deserved."

Willow gripped the heavy trophy, feeling the weight of years of struggle and triumph.

She smiled, her voice echoing through the microphone in flawless, unaccented English. "Thank you, Mr. Smith. This honor is not just validation; it is the fuel for the next chapter of my work."

The crowd quieted, hanging on her every word as her speech was broadcast live to millions around the world. "Standing here tonight, I must first thank my roots and the global scientific community The resources, the open exchange of ideas, and the unwavering support provided me with the foundation to take massive risks and dive into the unknown without fear."

"Next, I owe everything to my incredible team. This award belongs to the countless nights we spent staring at failed data, the thousands of hours of trial and error. Every breakthrough, every stabilized sequence was built on your relentless dedication. We did this together."

She paused. The formal, academic tone melted away, replaced by a deep, radiant warmth that lit up her entire face. A beautiful smile curved her lips.

"Finally, there is one person I must thank above all else," she said, her eyes scanning the front row until they locked onto a specific target. "My husband, Silas Thorne."

"The path of a researcher is brutal and isolating. There were countless nights where I was pushed to the brink of collapse, shattered by failed. trials and endless travel. He was the one who stood by me. He never once asked me to compromise my ambitions, but he caught me every time I feft. He doesn't do grand romantic speeches. Instead he absorbed all my stress, tolerated my obsessive work habits, and gave me his unconditional support. It was his love that anchored me in the darkest moments of this journey, giving me the courage to keep going. I am standing on this stage because of him."

The crowd erupted into thunderous cheers, the audience beaming at the beautiful dedication.

Instantly, the camera operators pivoted, flashing Silas's face across the massive screens.

Dressed in a razor-sharp, bespoke black tuxedo, Silas looked like royalty. His aura was as cold, intimidating, and ruthlessly elegant as ever.

But the visual was completely disrupted by what he was holding.

Wrapped safely in his powerful arms was a one-year-old toddler—Sienna Thorne.

The little girl was wearing a fluffy white tulle dress, looking like a living doll. She had Willow's big, luminous eyes, currently wide and sparkling with curiosity. Her delicate jaw and perfect lips were a miniature copy of her father.

Completely unfazed by the thousands of people staring at her, Sienna babbled happily, her tiny hands reaching up to tug at Silas's expensive silk lapel.

The sheer, adorable innocence of his daughter completely shattered Silas's icy exterior, melting his sharp features into a look of profound, helpless devotion.

Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?

Chapter 641

The press went absolutely feral, cameras flashing frantically. The contrast was legendary: the brilliant, history-making scientist on stage, and the notoriously ruthless billionaire in the front row, reduced to a doting father holding a baby in a tulle dress. The image went viral instantly, breaking the internet.

As the ceremony concluded, Willow took a final bow and stepped off the stage.

Before Silas could even stand up, Willow rushed over, leaning down to scoop her daughter out of his arms. "My sweet girl."

She nuzzled Sienna's warm, soft cheek, breathing in the sweet baby scent, and pressed a loud kiss to her face.

Sienna immediately recognized her mother and giggled wildly, wrapping her chubby little arms around Willow's neck and babbling happily.

Watching them, Silas felt his chest tighten with an overwhelming surge of love. The sight of Willow glowing with success, holding their child, was everything he had ever wanted.

He leaned in, pressing a soft kiss to Willow's temple. "You're my darling too."

Later that evening, after making a brief appearance at the VIP gala, Silas and Willow slipped away, returning to their private lakeside villa.

The house sat right on the edge of Lake Geneva, the cool, crisp breeze flowing through the open windows, carrying the scent of pine and fresh water.

The nanny took Sienna to the living room to play. After washing her hands, Willow smiled. "I'm going to go play with her for a bit. She's been dragged around all day, she must be exhausted."

She turned to walk away, but a strong, warm hand clamped down on her wrist.

Silas tugged, spinning her around and pulling her flush against his solid chest. His tall frame completely caged her in.

"Don't go yet," he murmured, his voice dropping to a low, gravelly hum.

Willow looked up, confused but smiling. "Why? She needs to go to sleep soon."

"Let the nanny handle it." Silas didn't let go of her wrist. His dark eyes locked onto hers, holding a flicker of undeniable jealousy. "I need to talk to you."

Thinking it was a serious corporate matter or an issue with the trip, Willow nodded obediently. "Okay. What's wrong? I'm listening."

He led her into the master bedroom. The heavy oak door clicked shut behind them, sealing them in absolute silence, save for their breathing.

Before Willow could say a word, Silas's arm snaked around her waist. In one fluid motion, he swept her off her feet, tossing her gently onto the plush mattress and immediately caging her beneath his body.

His mouth crashed down on hers—hungry, demanding, and intensely possessive.

Willow gasped into his mouth, her hands flying up to press against his chest. "Wait—I thought you had something important to say!"

Silas ignored the question, deepening the kiss, devouring her protests. His large hand slid down the curve of her waist, his touch scorching through the fabric of her dress.

He kissed her until her head spun and she was breathless, drowning in his clean, masculine scent. Finally, he pulled back just an inch, resting his forehead against hers.

His usually cold, authoritative voice was thick with pure, unadulterated sulking. "What I have to say is... you haven't paid any attention to me lately."

Willow's heart melted instantly.

Between finishing her clinical trials, prepping for the award ceremony, flying across the world, and obsessing over their daughter she had barely had a minute to breathe, let alone romance him.

And yet, Silas hadn't complained once. He had handled the logistics, managed the baby, and supported her from the shadows.

A wave of intense affection and guilt washed over her.

She reached up, tangling her fingers in his dark hair, her eyes incredibly soft. "I'm so sorry. I've been neglecting you, haven't I? Are you feeling left out, Mr. Thorne?"

Silas buried his face in the crook of her neck, his arms tightening around her like a vice. "Yes. Extremely."

The hard, heavy heat of his body pressed against hers, making his desire glaringly obvious.

Willow's cheeks flushed, her breath catching in her throat as a familiar thrill shot through her veins. She tilted her head, brushing her lips. against his jaw, her voice dropping into a sultry, yielding whisper. "Then let me make it up to you. Tonight... I'll do whatever you want."

The second the words left her mouth, Silas's eyes went dark and predatory.

He didn't waste another second. He captured her lips again, this time entirely uninhibited. The kiss was a tidal wave of suppressed passion and obsessive devotion, pulling her under.

The warm amber light from the bedside lamp cast long shadows across the tangled sheets, shutting out the rest of the world. The cook breeze from the lake dufted through the window, mingling with the heat and the scent of their passion.

He took her to the peak again and again, their bodies moving in perfect, desperate sync.

As another blinding wave of release crashed through her, Willow clung to him, a single thought echoing in her mind.

She was the luckiest woman alive.

Her glory belonged to the world, but her heart, her body, and her future belonged entirely to the man holding her.

You're all caught up with Three Years Forgotten, Why Go Crazy When I Say Goodbye?.