

Chapter 21 Let Go Of Millie

Behind the wheel, Brandon drove through the night, listening to the wind rattle the trees outside his window.

Earlier that evening, the weather forecast had warned of strong gusts.

Shadows from the trees twisted beneath the faint glow of the streetlights, making the road look strange and unfamiliar.

The digital clock on the dashboard ticked from 11:59 to midnight.

All at once, Brandon slammed on the brakes.

He paused for just a second, and then spun the car around and sped back toward the hospital.

The highway was nearly deserted in the early hours, and his Aston Martin tore down the lane, the engine roaring.

Finally, he hit the brakes again, pulling to a stop right under the hospital's bright lights.

Brandon glanced up at the windows glowing against the darkness, his mouth drawn tight with worry.

Pulling out his phone, he searched for Millie's number and pressed call.

"Beep beep, beep beep..."

No one picked up.

He called again, still nothing.

Switching tactics, Brandon decided to call Alexia instead, his thumb hovering over the screen.

That was when he saw the missed call from Alexia while he was driving Vivian home—one he had ignored at the time.

With a furrowed brow, he pressed the call button for Alexia.

The phone rang, but once again, no one picked up.

He stared at the screen for a long moment, trying to put together a message to send.

But...

As he typed, Brandon faltered.

How could he find the right words?

Just then, someone tapped on the car window.

Startled, Brandon looked up to see Giffard standing there, dressed in his white lab coat.

Brandon pressed the window button, a faint frown settling on his face.

Giffard stood outside, holding up a phone. "If you really want to know how Millie is, go upstairs and see for yourself. Stop blowing up our phones."

Brandon's gaze narrowed. "I'm her husband."

A smirk played across Giffard's lips.

"So you finally remember you're her husband." He paused, and then added, "But from what Alexia told me, that won't be true for much longer."

Brandon's grip on the steering wheel tightened, his eyes fixed on Giffard's taunting expression. "That has nothing to do with you."

"It has everything to do with me now." Giffard leaned closer to the open window, his words teasing but with a sharp edge. "Alexia said since her fight led to you pushing Millie down the stairs and now she's injured, I'm supposed to make it up to Millie on the family's behalf."

He gave a short laugh. "I think that's only fair."

A vein pulsed in Brandon's clenched fist. "Giffard!"

Giffard stood there in silence, simply watching him.

After several moments, Brandon asked, "Did Millie send you here to say all this?"

Had Millie given up on Alexia and now sent Giffard to play her next hand?

Was this all part of her latest scheme?

Giffard's smile faded, and his cold stare bore into Brandon. "Does that

make you mad? You ought to know, Brandon, Crobert isn't a place where you're the only man around. I've watched Millie grow up. I know how captivating she is, probably better than you do. If you're set on being with Vivian, then stay with her. What happens to Millie is no longer your concern."

His voice stayed even and calm.

"Brandon," Giffard continued, slow and measured. "The only real choice you have now is to let her go."

Back when the crisis struck and they needed a signature for the critical care consent form, a nurse went searching for Millie's family outside the ER—but only Alexia had been waiting there.

Millie's father had passed away, and her mother had long since drifted out of her life. That meant the only person they could track down was her husband, Brandon. Yet, Brandon was the very one who had pushed Millie down the stairs and walked out with another woman.

Even knowing this, Alexia still tried calling him, but he never picked up.

In the end, Alexia explained the seriousness of the situation and, using her influence as the hospital director's daughter, signed the critical care consent form herself, planning to get the proper paperwork later.

Giffard saw the frustration tighten Brandon's features, and a hint of a sneer tugged at his lips.

He had already given Brandon a chance.

If Brandon had come into the hospital to ask about Millie, Giffard might have thought there was some decency left in him.

But Brandon stayed away.

That actually made everything simple and clear.

Giffard watched as Brandon rolled up his window and drove off without looking back, his own expression giving nothing away.

The midnight breeze tugged at the edge of Giffard's white coat as he watched the Aston Martin vanish around the corner. He shook his head and let out a quiet sigh.

...

When Millie finally opened her eyes, morning sunlight spilled into the room.

Soft rays of gold streamed through the window, bathing everything in gentle light.

"Millie, you're awake!" Alexia called out.

Still groggy, Millie saw Alexia and Charles by her bedside, both wearing anxious expressions. The ache in her body brought every painful memory rushing back.

She tried to speak, but only managed a single word. "I..."

The pain, along with the memory of all that blood before she passed out, filled her with dread.

Alexia reached out and gently helped Millie sit up, her own eyes full of sorrow. "Millie, the baby didn't make it," she said softly.

Millie parted her lips to respond, but then stopped, saying nothing at all.

After half a minute of silence, she bowed her head and finally whispered, "Okay."

Her voice was flat. No anger, no tears, not even surprise.

Just a quiet acceptance.

Alexia and Charles shared a look of concern. At last, Charles stepped closer to Millie and spoke. "Millie, you need to give yourself time to heal. It's fortunate that you didn't break any bones when you fell, but you still have soft tissue injuries, and your concussion isn't better yet—not to mention the miscarriage..."

His voice turned gentle, as though he feared speaking too sharply might cause Millie to slip away entirely.

He continued, "I'll sign you off for the show Heavenly Melody for now, and after you recover—"

Millie interrupted before he could finish. "I want to be on the show."

Under the blanket, her hands balled into fists, fingernails pressing so hard into her palms that they drew blood.

That pain was sharp, but it reminded her she was still alive.

With her back against the headboard, Millie kept her face blank and unreadable.

She lifted her eyes to Charles. "I can handle it."

Charles hesitated. "But the first live show is in just three days," he said. "Your health—"

"I can handle it," Millie remarked again, her tone as calm as ever, no sign of emotion in her voice.

Her hands shook beneath the covers from how tightly she held them.

Charles looked at Alexia, who gave a tiny nod.

After a moment's pause, he gave in. "Alright, Millie."

Those words made Millie drop her gaze and loosen her fists at last.

"Thank you," she murmured.

Charles gave a quiet shake of his head. "There's no need to thank me. Your presence at the show benefits us both."

He knew that if Millie performed anywhere near her usual level, she would be more than capable of handling everything.

Since the first live broadcast was only an introductory show, Millie's participation wouldn't cause any problems. Contestants would not be eliminated until the next round.

Charles' real concern was for her well-being.

Millie lifted her chin and tried to smile.

That smile was meant to reassure them that she was fine. But everyone in the room saw right through it.

Knowing she could not maintain that facade, Millie spoke up again. "Charles, I might not be able to get my costumes or find a makeup artist on my own right now. Could you handle that for me?"

Charles answered with a nod, "That's actually part of what the company does."

"Could you start making arrangements right away?" she asked again.

For a moment, Charles hesitated, searching for the right words.

Millie shifted her gaze to Alexia. "Alexia, I'm feeling a little hungry. Would you mind getting me something to eat?"

Alexia parted her lips as if to speak, but only managed a sad look in Millie's direction.

Millie offered them both another small smile. "Please?"

Her voice softened with a trace of longing.

Charles and Alexia exchanged another look and silently agreed.

Together, they left the room, quietly closing the door behind them.

As soon as they were gone, silence took over.

Millie's smile disappeared, the forced curve of her lips slipping away until her face was expressionless.

April's lingering chill made her shiver, and she slid beneath the covers, searching for warmth and a bit of comfort.

Millie pulled the covers over herself, craving the shelter and comfort they offered against the harshness of the world outside.

Unable to hold back any longer, she sank into quiet sobs, pressing her fists to her mouth and biting down until the pain drew blood.



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