

His kiss 381

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Wesley's polished demeanor cracked under her accusation, his voice rising in outrage. "You think I would stoop so low as to stage his car accident?"

"Perhaps you wouldn't." Noticing the color drain from Wesley's face, Gabriela felt a pang in her chest, yet she pressed on with unrelenting resolve. "But can you guarantee that, to save you, your family wouldn't do whatever it takes?"

"I get it now," Wesley said, nodding grimly. "Allan died in that car crash, and his heart happened to be a match for me. You think that crash was no accident? That's why you've been avoiding me — you suspect I had something to do with it."

Gabriela's throat closed up at the raw anger in his voice, and she stayed silent.

"Gabriela, even if you swore you felt nothing for me, it wouldn't sting as much as this distrust."

With that, Wesley adjusted the garments he had disheveled, carefully securing each button.

From the lowest to the highest, he fastened the final one at his neck, slowly concealing his toned physique and the place where his heart had once raced with fervor.

In a fleeting moment, the passionate man consumed by love vanished, replaced once more by the poised successor of the Moss Group empire.

“You should leave,” he said coolly.

Wesley gazed at Gabriela, his lips curling with a hint of mockery, intending to deliver sharp words. Yet, when his eyes met her lucid, unwavering stare, his resolve softened at the last second.

With a composed expression, he added, “I’ll ensure the car accident is fully investigated to clear my name.”

Gabriela responded, “That’s for the best.”

Then she walked away, leaving without a trace of hesitation.

Wesley watched her retreating silhouette, his eyes streaked with crimson veins.

What a cold-hearted woman.

How could she harbor such cruel suspicions about him?

Stepping out of the apartment building, Gabriela was greeted by a gentle drizzle, the air crisp and chilly.

Her thoughts drifted to Wesley, alone in his apartment, and she wondered if he could manage on his own.

Earlier, she had noticed the bedroom felt cold, as if the heater hadn't been turned on.

Lost in a storm of reflections, she snapped back to reality.

She had intentionally spoken harshly to Wesley, hoping to break his feelings for her.

She wanted him to see her true nature — a calculating, morally flawed woman unworthy of his affection.

Back at Rosemont Gardens, Gabriela spotted a figure standing outside the villa. Brenden, clad in an immaculate white suit, clutched a vibrant bouquet of scarlet roses.

Despite the light rain, the striking, charismatic man drew envious glances from passersby.

Two young women lingered nearby, holding umbrellas, whispering to each other.

“He is so dashing and romantic! Who could he be waiting for?” one said.

“I’m so jealous of whoever she is!” the other replied.

Brenden, overhearing their exchange, swelled with pride.

Fresh from his travels abroad, he had dressed impeccably, and the soft rain only added a poetic touch to the moment.

He pictured Gabriela, overcome with emotion, rushing into his arms upon seeing him.

As he prepared to text her, he caught sight of her stepping out of a car.

His face brightened, and he hurried forward, reaching for her hand.

“Gabriela, I haven’t even messaged you, and yet you showed up! What a coincidence!” he said with a grin.

“Brenden, what do you want from me?” Gabriela’s voice was sharp.

After her painful confrontation with Wesley, she had been holding back tears, but seeing Brenden unraveled her fragile composure.

She pushed him away, her emotions erupting. "That night at the team-building event, I walked into the wrong room, and I've already paid a heavy price for it."

Her thoughts spiraled to "NotASaunders," who relentlessly taunted her through messages, toying with her like a predator with its prey. The more she dwelled on it, the more her anger surged.

Tears streaming, she cried, "I'm sorry, alright? Can you just leave me alone and let me move on?"

Brenden blinked, stunned. "Gabriela, what are you talking about? I wasn't even at the hotel during last year's team-building event."

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Gabriela froze for a moment, then suddenly grabbed Brenden's collar with surprising force.

She demanded, "You weren't at the hotel that night? So who was in Room 1205?"

Brenden blinked, startled by the intensity in her expression. "I had something to deal with that night, so I didn't stay at the hotel."

Gabriela's face drained of color. "Then tell me, who was that person?"

Brenden frowned. To him, it sounded like nothing more than Gabriela entering the wrong room. So why did she look so shocked?

He asked gently, "What exactly happened that night?"

But Gabriela didn't want to answer. Instead, she pressed forward, voice urgent. "Who stayed in Room 1205 that night?"

Brenden cleared his throat. "If you won't tell me what happened, I can't tell you who it was."

Gabriela hesitated, her grip loosening.

She didn't know Brenden well enough to confide in him.

At least now she was certain that it hadn't been him that night, and that gave her some relief — she no longer felt as uneasy facing the Moss family.

Slowly, she let go of his collar. "If you won't tell me, then forget it."

Turning away, she walked toward the villa.

Brenden followed, still clutching the bouquet. “Gabriela, wait, the flowers...”

“Mr. Saunders, I appreciate the gesture, but I won’t accept the flowers, and I don’t have feelings for you. You should go back.” She shot him a glance over her shoulder. “Don’t come looking for me anymore.”

It was already past one in the morning, yet Brenden was still standing there, chasing after her with flowers in hand. Whether it was devotion or just one of his tricks, it was hard to tell.

When Gabriela’s figure finally disappeared from sight, Brenden let out a heavy sigh and tossed the bouquet into a nearby trash can.

Gabriela had rejected him just like that? Unbelievable.

And more importantly — what really happened during last year’s team-building?

Why had Gabriela looked so shaken?

Before he could make sense of it, two young women who had been watching from nearby rushed over.

“Don’t be upset, handsome. Though she doesn’t want you, we do. Give us your WhatsApp number!”

Brenden stared at them and frowned. “It’s the middle of the night. Instead of sleeping, you’re out here watching me get rejected and asking for my WhatsApp number? Don’t you think it’s ridiculous?”

No sooner had he spoken than thunder rumbled across the sky, sending the two girls shrieking and running away without daring to ask again.

Gabriela heard the thunder too, yet her heart remained still, untouched.

Back in her room, she picked up her phone and scrolled through her chat history with “NotASaunders,” reading it carefully from beginning to end. The more she read, the more unsettled she became.

“NotASaunders” seemed to know her every move and constantly threw requests at her — all of which were related to Wesley.

A flicker of hope stirred inside her. If the man she had a one-night stand with had been Wesley...

She shook her head sharply, refusing to let the thought take hold.

Not possible.

If it really were Wesley, why wouldn't he have told her?

Besides, they had just had an argument because of Allan.

She didn't genuinely suspect Wesley; she was simply using the situation as an excuse to distance herself from him.

Gabriela let out a weary sigh.

As she lay back on her bed, a more pressing thought occurred to her — her belongings were still in that man's hands.

Up to now, he hadn't returned them.

Sleep eluded Gabriela because of her restlessness.

She was determined to uncover who that person was, and why he still hadn't given her things back.

The next day, with no morning meeting or urgent business at the company, Gabriela stayed home and spent time with Truett.

Even while playing with him, her mind lingered on how she could draw information out of “NotASaunders.”

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But after the message she sent last night, there had been no reply.

He hadn’t contacted her at all recently, almost as if he had vanished into thin air.

By four in the afternoon, a visitor arrived at the villa — Loretta.

The night before, Loretta had had a bizarre dream.

In it, Wesley had a son, and she was thrilled — until a woman whose face she could not see clearly took the child.

Loretta chased after them, trying to reclaim the boy but failing. Then she noticed a familiar bracelet on the woman’s wrist.

When Loretta woke up, she reminisced about the dream and realized the bracelet was exactly like Gabriela’s.

In the end, she decided to visit Gabriela with Miriam.

When Gabriela knew Loretta and Miriam were at the door, her first thought was to ask Farley to take Truett upstairs and hide him.

But then she reconsidered. This child had nothing to do with the Moss family — so what was she afraid of?

Holding Truett firmly, she greeted them with composure.

Loretta froze when she saw Gabriela carrying a baby — and then noticed the bracelet on her wrist.

For a brief moment, Loretta was stunned.

The dream rushed back: the woman stealing the child... and that bracelet. It seemed the woman was none other than Gabriela.

The way Loretta's gaze fixed on the baby made Gabriela call out again, "Mrs. Larson, Miriam, what brings you here today?"

Miriam recovered first and smiled. "We have some free time, so we came to visit you."

Loretta snapped out of her daze as well.

Her eyes lingered on the baby as she asked, "Gabriela, whose child is this?"

Gabriela calmly repeated the same story she had told before.

Loretta felt a pang of disappointment when she heard the child belonged to one of Wesley's secretaries, but her spirits lifted almost immediately. "This little one is so adorable. May I hold him?"

Gabriela passed the child over without hesitation.

Loretta settled onto the sofa with the baby in her arms, and Miriam quickly joined her, fussing and playing with the little one.

Truett, unafraid of strangers, stared at them with wide, curious eyes.

As Loretta gazed at him, an odd feeling stirred in her chest. Why did this baby resemble Wesley so much when he was little?

But since the child supposedly belonged to someone else, she kept her thoughts to herself, repeating over and over, "Such a sweet child, so well taken care of!"

They played with him for what felt like ages, reluctant to let him go.

Farley and Ken now had two more people to grumble about.

Why was everyone so idle, constantly coming over just to fight for the chance to hold Truett?

Ken didn't have much time to complain, though — he had to start preparing dinner.

Even after sharing dinner at the villa, Loretta and Miriam were still unwilling to part with the child. Once night fell completely, they conveniently found an excuse to stay the night.

They had Wesley send over some clothes, insisting they would remain at the villa.

"Gabriela, since Wesley refuses to return to the manor, Miriam and I are left alone. We're feeling really lonely — would you mind if we crashed here for a bit?"

Farley's lips twitched at that remark. He honestly didn't get it — how could they claim to be lonely when they seemed so upbeat?

Well, it was obvious they just found Truett too adorable and wanted more time with him.

Gabriela couldn't refuse Loretta's request even if she wanted to.

With a trace of reluctance in her voice, she said, "Of course not."

Loretta clapped her hands in delight. "Then it's settled — we'll stay here! Gabriela, you're truly so kind to us!"

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The villa door creaked open just past nine that evening.

Wesley arrived with an armload of clothes for Loretta and Miriam. Gabriela's stomach tightened when she spotted him.

Wesley behaved as if their earlier argument had never happened. His gaze swept over her — brief, dismissive — before moving on.

He exhaled slowly, resignation creeping into his voice. "Grandma's extended stay might become... burdensome for Gabriela."

Loretta remained absorbed in cooing at Truett, barely acknowledging Wesley's presence. At those words, she finally lifted her eyes, irritation flickering across her weathered features. "Gabriela welcomes us here, so why the sudden concern? You're hardly bringing girlfriends home anyway — poor Fiona

never stood a chance with you. Since you refuse to settle down and have a child, at least allow me these precious moments with this little angel.”

Gabriela’s head dropped lower, heat creeping up her neck.

She recognized the subtle barbs in Loretta’s words — each comment felt deliberately aimed at her.

Wesley’s face remained impassive as his eyes found Gabriela once more. He offered no response.

He deposited the belongings for both elderly women, issued a few terse reminders, then vanished into the night.

Loretta and Miriam claimed their territory in Gabriela’s villa once again.

As the days crawled by, Farley’s frustration mounted.

In the past, he and Ken had shared baby duties when Gabriela worked. Now Truett lived permanently attached to the elderly women’s arms.

Securing even five minutes with the baby required elaborate negotiations and strategic bribing.

The Apex Group basked in an unusually peaceful stretch.

Tessa's world, however, churned with unease — she clutched an enormous gift bag as she exited the CEO's office.

Baby formula, diapers, and delicate wipes spilled from the bulging package.

Wesley had instructed Billy to present the items and then said casually, "Tessa, I should have congratulated you on your new arrival sooner. Consider these company gifts for your child."

His expression remained frozen, professional to the point of cruelty.

Yet something unnamed flickered behind his eyes.

Tessa accepted the bag, confusion clouding her features.

Billy's face betrayed his own bewilderment, though his voice carried genuine warmth. "Congratulations, Tessa."

"Thank you."

Tessa returned to her office, immediately surrounded by curious colleagues.

“What’s that enormous bag, Tessa? A gift from Mr. Moss himself?”

“Oh, no,” Tessa stammered, heat flooding her cheeks. “A friend asked me to pick these up...”

Her explanations multiplied, each lie spawning three more. Finally, her colleagues’ interest waned. Tessa slumped in her chair, exhaustion weighing on her shoulders.

How much longer could she sustain this elaborate deception?

After work, Tessa contacted Aubrey to accompany her to Gabriela’s — the bag proved too heavy for one person to manage.

Gabriela had just dragged herself home from work, collapsing onto the couch in defeat.

Truett caught Gabriela’s familiar scent and began squirming toward her with such determination that Loretta nearly lost her grip.

Loretta frowned, perplexed.

Was Truett hungry? Why did he seem drawn to Gabriela for milk when she wasn't his mother?

"Truett needs changing!" Gabriela announced, sweeping the baby upstairs.

Loretta moved to follow, but Farley intercepted her path. "Loretta, that soup recipe you shared yesterday — I've forgotten a crucial step. Could you walk me through it again?"

Loretta reluctantly trailed Farley into the kitchen.

While Gabriela nursed Truett upstairs, Tessa and Aubrey arrived with their heavy bag. They froze upon discovering Loretta and Miriam.

Farley rushed through introductions.

Learning these were Wesley's relatives, Tessa and Aubrey transformed into nervous shadows, offering stilted greetings.

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Loretta's face brightened with genuine warmth. "You must be Tessa? Your baby is so cute."

Tessa forced a smile. "Thank you, Loretta."

Loretta launched into an interrogation — was Tessa struggling with difficulties that forced her to leave the child with Gabriela? If problems existed, she should definitely approach Wesley, who would surely assist employees in need.

Loretta pressed further about Tessa's family situation.

Sweat beaded on Tessa's forehead as she scrambled for answers. Finally, she fabricated a story about a sick family member who refused hospitalization — she couldn't risk exposing the baby to illness, which explained Gabriela's temporary guardianship.

Only then did Loretta's maternal inquisition cease.

Tessa and Aubrey declined dinner invitations, deposited the bag, and fled into the evening.

Outside the villa, Aubrey leaned close to whisper, "Tessa, why are Mr. Moss's grandmother and housekeeper living at Gabriela's place?"

Tessa harbored her own theories, but her position as chief assistant had taught her discretion.

She lowered her voice to barely a whisper. "The boss's personal life isn't our territory."

Aubrey's shoulders sagged. "I'm not trying to pry — I'm worried about Gabriela. She never breathes a word about the father, and you can't shield her indefinitely. That child is growing older every day, and honestly? I'm terrified for her future."

Wesley's expression when he'd handed over the gift bag flashed through Tessa's mind. Now, his family was comfortably settled in Gabriela's home... The pieces clicked together with startling clarity — she felt the weight of a monumental secret settling in her chest.

Tessa steadied her trembling hands. "Right now, we just play along with Gabriela's cover story. How things turn out in the future is not our concern."

Aubrey's head bobbed slowly. "You're absolutely right."

After Tessa and Aubrey disappeared into the night, Loretta's confusion deepened.

Truett seemed utterly indifferent to Tessa's presence.

When Gabriela returned from work each evening, he transformed into a magnet — reaching, grasping, demanding her constant attention.

The desperate clinging reminded Loretta of Wesley's childhood attachment to his own mother.

Yet when Tessa appeared, Truett contentedly entertained himself by tugging Gabriela's hair, never once acknowledging the woman supposedly his mother.

Had he spent so much time with Gabriela that he'd forgotten his own parent?

Loretta wrestled with this puzzle when Miriam's startled gasp cut through her thoughts. "Wait — isn't this Mr. Moss's WhatsApp account?"

Loretta scrambled closer to look.

Gabriela's phone displayed a fresh message from "NotASaunders": "Can't sleep. Read to me."

Months of manipulation had finally shattered Gabriela's patience. Ignoring her audience completely, she fired back the question that had been burning inside her. "Who exactly are you?"

Miriam caught sight of Gabriela's thunderous expression, then saw the username on the screen. Recognition dawned immediately.

Gabriela spun around, disbelief written across her features. "Miriam, you're telling me this WhatsApp account belongs to Mr. Moss?"

“Absolutely. When he switched the username to ‘NotASaunders,’ Mrs. Larson and I spent weeks scratching our heads over it. His contact list seemed limited to just us two. I never imagined you’d be connected as well.”

Miriam reached for Gabriela’s phone, scanning the confrontational message she’d just sent. “You typically message his secondary WhatsApp account — the one he uses for business contacts and staff — is that right? That would explain the confusion.”

Then Miriam’s brow furrowed as realization struck. “Hold on — if you didn’t know this was his account, how did you manage to connect with him here?”

The revelation left Gabriela stunned and speechless.

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Gabriela now realized that the man she had a one-night stand with was Wesley.

Every memory from the past months — refusing Wesley, running from him — now felt incredibly foolish.

If she’d known it was him, she wouldn’t have waited for him to make a move; she would have taken that step herself.

By now, they might have been building a life together.

Perhaps even more than that. They already had a child.

Gabriela's thoughts collided like a storm, her mind a tangled, breathless mess.

"Gabriela, is something wrong? You look quite surprised." Miriam's voice sliced through the haze, sharp with curiosity. "Trust me, I'm just as surprised as you are. Mr. Moss doesn't even add Brenden on that account. But you? He added you without telling you his identity. That's strange."

"Yeah, now that you mention it." Gabriela blinked, trying to steady her voice. "Maybe he assumed I knew it was him?"

Miriam and Loretta exchanged a knowing glance, then let the subject go, their laughter softening the tension as they turned their attention back to entertaining Truett.

Gabriela drifted through the day, her thoughts scattered, her focus slipping like sand through her fingers.

Each time her gaze landed on Loretta cradling Truett with that quiet, tender adoration, it left her disoriented.

Truett was her great-grandson. No wonder her every look, every touch, brimmed with such fierce affection.

At dinner, Loretta hardly ate, her plate barely touched as she kept the child nestled in her arms.

"Mrs. Larson," Gabriela said gently, unable to stay quiet, "you should eat. Holding him nonstop will wear you out."

"I'm not tired. Not one bit." Loretta's smile softened as she looked down at Truett, her voice laced with quiet devotion. "Just seeing him like this... it fills my heart with joy."

The words struck Gabriela hard, a sharp ache blooming in her chest, heavy with guilt.

That night, her sleep turned restless, haunted.

In her dream, she was in a morgue, and Myah stood across from her, fingers tracing Allan's cold, lifeless face.

"How could Allan die?"

Her voice cracked, rising to a near-hysterical pitch. "He was good, Gabriela. He cared about you, loved you. What part of him wasn't enough? He was devastated because you rejected him. He wasn't paying attention when he crossed the street and now he's dead. It's your fault!"

Gabriela jolted awake, her skin clammy with sweat.

Allan's final words echoed in her ears, colliding with Myah's heart-piercing accusations until her pulse raced in panic.

She knew with certainty that Allan had never once spoken of love to her; their bond had been nothing more than the closeness of siblings.

So why did Myah insist that Gabriela's rejection of Allan's supposed love confession had driven him to his death?

With a weary exhale, Gabriela reached for her phone.

On the screen glowed the last message from "NotASaunders": "Can't sleep. Read to me."

The words tugged her backward into memory: she had once sung into the dark for Wesley, or read to him.

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Each detail of the past year with him rushed back in vivid clarity.

Wesley was a decent man — he would never have stooped so low as to murder Allan.

It was her own selfishness that had painted Wesley guilty, a desperate shield against the unbearable weight of blaming herself for Allan's death.

The truth struck her with finality: she wasn't worthy of Wesley. And it had nothing to do with wealth or social standing.

The next morning, Gabriela stepped into the office, only to be stopped by the receptionist, who held out a parcel. "Miss Haynes, this was delivered early today. The sender insisted you open it yourself."

"Thank you."

Gabriela carried the parcel into her office, unease prickling at her skin. Inside lay a stack of documents and a small USB drive.

Her eyes skimmed the papers first. It was reported that the driver who had struck Allan had been dangerously fatigued from long hours on the road.

She plugged in the USB, and grainy footage flickered onto the screen.

As Allan rushed through the intersection against a red light, a truck thundered toward him and hit him head-on.

The footage was blurry, but the urgency in his stride was unmistakable. It seemed as though he had been chasing something and was too distracted to see the red light.

Even after all these years, watching that moment made Gabriela's chest twist with unbearable ache.

She replayed it again and again, as if the repetition might change the ending. But instead, her thoughts drifted back to their first meeting.

She had been in her final year of high school, slogging through winter break shifts at a restaurant, often working over ten hours a day. On payday, the manager deducted two hundred dollars from her wages over a single mistake of delivering the wrong dish. When Gabriela stood her ground, the manager threatened to fire her.

That was when Allan appeared. He had seen everything from the doorway and, without hesitation, pulled out his phone to record.

"Hey! If I post this online, whose side do you think people will take?" he said to the manager.

Allan's tall figure carried a quiet authority, and his eyes were soft yet unyielding. Before long, the manager's arrogance faltered. Face pale, he grabbed two hundred dollars from the till and tossed it onto the floor in frustration.

Allan bent down, picked up the crumpled bills, and pressed them gently into Gabriela's hand. "Here, take this," he said in a low, reassuring voice.

Almost in an instant, Gabriela broke down in tears.

Since losing her mother, no one had ever defended her like that until Allan. The walls inside her broke, and she wept helplessly.

Allan only smiled faintly and reached out to pat her head, his voice soft as velvet. "Please, don't cry. Come on, let me treat you to something good to eat, alright?"

From that day forward, Allan became a steady presence in her life. He would drop by often, take her to his university library, and patiently guide her through model sketches and designs, even teaching her how to craft them with her own hands.

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Inspired, Gabriela pushed herself to the limit, working hard until she finally earned admission into his university and became his schoolmate, just as she had dreamed.

Allan was gentle and meticulous, always obeying the rules. So why would someone like him run a red light? What had really happened that day?

Every memory of him was like a blade lodged in her throat, slicing her anew each time she recalled it.

The sudden buzz of her phone jolted her out of the spiral.

Wesley's name lit up the screen.

"Did you see the documents and the footage?" he asked.

"Yes," Gabriela hesitated, her voice dropping to a whisper. "Mr. Moss... I'm sorry."

"There's no need to apologize." A short, cold laugh crackled through the line. "I didn't do all this just to hear your apology."

Her throat tightened. Words lodged there, unspoken.

Wesley's voice came again, stripped of warmth. "If there's nothing else..."

"There is!" Gabriela blurted, her heart racing. "Could we meet tomorrow?"

She had to tell him she knew he was the father of her son — the man from that one-night stand.

There was a pause, long enough to make her chest ache. Finally, he answered, "Alright."

But before the call ended, a woman's voice drifted faintly from his side. "Wesley, who are you talking to..."

Gabriela froze.

The casual intimacy in that woman's tone sent unease spiraling through her.

The line then went dead.

Left with only the monotonous beeping, Gabriela sat in silence, her mind tangled in a thousand anxious thoughts.

A knock sounded before the secretary stepped in. "Miss Haynes, Miss Espinoza is here."

Myah had visited before, and Gabriela had already instructed that Myah never needed an appointment.

Setting her phone aside, Gabriela rose and guided Myah to the sofa.

She didn't pry about the reason for the visit, instead asking the secretary to bring in a cup of coffee.

The moment the door closed, Myah's voice cut through the silence. "Gabriela, did Loretta and Miriam move into your villa?"

Gabriela nodded calmly. "Yes."

"How come?" Myah's brows knit tightly. "Isn't the Moss Manor big enough for them? Why would they choose your place?"

"Do you remember Truett?" Gabriela explained gently. "Loretta adores the baby. She just wanted to spend a few days with him at my place."

"No way!" Myah's voice cracked with agitation. "I think I know what's going on. She's not there for the child; she wants you to marry her grandson."

Gabriela blinked, momentarily speechless, before forcing herself to speak soothingly. "Please, don't be upset..."

But Myah shot to her feet. Though her eyes were clouded with blindness, the icy fury on her face made her seem almost spectral. "Gabriela, Mr. Williams already told me about Allan's organ donation. He was murdered by the Mosses!"

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"Myah!" Gabriela's voice was firm. "You can't just listen to one-sided stories."

She lifted the documents from the table, her fingers tracing the pages as she began to read the contents aloud.

“Allan never filed a body donation application, and the car accident all those years ago was confirmed to be nothing more than a tragic accident.”

Myah remained on the sofa, a statue of silence, not uttering a single response.

“No one ever wished for Allan’s death. It’s truly unfair to lay the blame at Wesley’s feet.”

Gabriela knew her words were harsh, but she held firm. Myah was still young, and the last thing Gabriela wanted was for her to be consumed by hatred.

“But was it fair to Allan?” Myah’s angry shout echoed through the room.

She lashed out, knocking the papers from Gabriela’s hand and sending them scattering across the floor. “Gabriela, have you completely forgotten about him? Now you’re even defending Wesley. You want to marry him, don’t you?”

Gabriela froze.

Did she want to marry Wesley?

Of course, she did. Even before she knew the man she had a one-night stand with was Wesley, the thought had crossed her mind countless times. But back then, she thought the man that night was Brenden, so her feelings remained a secret, a quiet yearning.

Now, she could finally act on them, but she wasn't sure if she still had a chance.

"Why aren't you saying anything?" Myah pressed, her face inches from Gabriela's. "Gabriela, do you remember who rushed you to the hospital when you had a fever during your college entrance exams? Who stayed with you all night when you were sick? Who taught you to take pictures as evidence when your family was abusive? It was Allan! You owe him your life; you can't forget him, and you can't love anyone else!"

Her voice gradually calmed as she spoke, but this only made the situation more unsettling.

Gabriela gently held her hand, trying to comfort her. "Myah, Allan didn't love me. To him, I was just a sister, just like you. Don't you see?"

"I have nothing else to say." Myah clearly didn't want to hear any explanations.

She pushed herself up, using her white cane to hobble out of the office.

Worried, Gabriela went to support her.

When they got downstairs, Stewart's car was waiting.

Gabriela helped Myah into the passenger seat and then motioned for Stewart to talk with her.

She frowned as she asked, "Mr. Williams, why did you tell Myah about Allan's body donation?"

Stewart responded, "She's his sister; she has the right to know the truth."

"The truth?" Gabriela's laugh was as cold as a winter wind. "Can you attest under oath that the Body Donation Consent Form is the real deal?"

Stewart's brow twitched. "You don't believe me? Why?"

"Don't pretend you don't know why," Gabriela shot back, then turned on her heel and walked away.

It all made sense now — why Wesley had always warned her to keep her distance from Stewart. The man's character was as shady as a back alley.

Stewart stood there, watching Gabriela disappear into the building, a smirk playing on his lips.

Gabriela's sharp intellect allowed her to see right through his manipulative tactics.

He slid back into the car and drove Myah home in a thick silence.

"What did you two talk about?" Myah finally asked.

"Gabriela's a tough nut to crack; she's got blind faith in Wesley. Your brother's sway with her is clearly no match for his," Stewart said, his frustration over Gabriela bubbling up as sarcasm.

Myah's fingers tightened into a fist, and she fell silent, her face a storm cloud.

Stewart shot a quick glance at her, a knot of frustration twisting in his stomach. Using a blind girl's grief over her brother as a pawn was a new low, even for him. No wonder Gabriela had looked at him like he was a cockroach earlier.

Back at home, Myah went back to her roses, tending to them.

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She stayed hunched over the bushes for what felt like forever, even missing lunch, which had Delia, who was watching over her, pacing like a caged tiger.

After a long while, Myah broke the silence. "What time is it?"

"It's six o'clock," Delia answered.

With winter at the door, the day had already given way to a pitch-black night.

Myah gave a slow nod. "Wesley should be getting off work now. Could you give him a—"

"Ring? I'd love to have him over for dinner tonight."

Delia called Wesley, and he arrived a short time later.

Myah had Delia prepare a simple meal. She sat across from Wesley at the table. Since she was blind, she ate slowly and carefully; not a single piece of food was spilled.

It was a skill her brother had taught her from a young age.

After she finished, Myah gently placed her utensils down and smiled. "Wesley, are you full?"

Wesley let out a soft sigh and reached out to touch her head. "Myah, do you have something you want to tell me?"

Ever since Gabriela told Wesley about her connection to Allan, he knew this day would come.

He had a feeling that what Myah was about to say wouldn't be good news.

His warm, dry hand rested on her head, reminding her of his constant care over the years. Myah's heart softened, and for a moment, she wanted to let go of her hatred and let him be with Gabriela.

But she quickly pushed the thought away.

Gabriela could only belong to her brother; no one else could have her, not even Wesley.

"Do you like Gabriela?" she asked.

After pausing, Wesley grinned. "Why ask that so suddenly?"

Myah's voice was low. "Wesley, you're a good person, and Gabriela is too. But I have to be honest with you. I hope you won't be deceived by her."

Wesley frowned. "What do you mean?"

"First, let me tell you how my brother met Gabriela."

Wesley remembered how Myah had refused to talk about Allan when he first took her in.

He hadn't expected her to bring it up today.

Myah began, "Gabriela met my brother when she was going through the toughest time in her life."

She went on at length, recounting every detail she knew.

"The day before her college entrance exam, she had a fever, and Allan took her to the hospital, staying with her all night. She ended up attending the same university as him. He taught her how to build models. Later, Gabriela grew to like me a lot. She even worked with Allan on a model, all just to get Mr. Williams to help develop software for the visually impaired."

Myah paused now and then, trying to gauge Wesley's reaction. But his breathing remained steady, and she couldn't tell if he was angry.

“Later, when Allan died, Gabriela was in deep pain. She couldn’t sleep night after night and had to take a lot of sleeping pills. Then, while she was crossing the street, she was so distracted that she got hit by a car. I believe she wanted to die and be with Allan.”

The room fell into a chilling silence.

After a moment, Myah asked, “Wesley, do you know why Gabriela dated Dustin?”

“Why?” Wesley’s voice was deep.

“Because Dustin looked so much like Allan,” Myah answered, her voice soft. “But it didn’t matter in the end. He wasn’t Allan, so Gabriela broke up with him.”

Wesley’s expression remained neutral, his tone calm. “I see.”

So that was it.

He had always found it strange that Gabriela, who wouldn’t even give him the time of day, would fall for someone like Dustin.

It all made sense now.

Reaching out, Myah took his hand. She hesitated for a moment before continuing, “Gabriela got close to you because Allan’s heart beats in your chest. She never meant to deceive you; she just couldn’t get over Allan. Please, Wesley, don’t be mad at her.”