

His kiss 721

Chapter 721

Wesley, consumed by black rage, headed straight home.

Billy, concerned about Wesley's recent recovery and fearing he might harm himself if left alone, followed under the guise of discussing the Eventide Vale project.

They reached Wesley's mansion quickly. The courtyard buzzed with activity.

The rain had ceased, and several workers labored over a pond excavation in the garden.

Wesley observed them briefly, his scowl deepening, his mood spiraling further downward.

Billy offered an explanation. "Mr. Moss, the pond will be completed today. Tomorrow, we can fill it with fresh water."

Wesley remained silent.

Billy pressed on. "However, the temperature's too harsh for planting now. We must wait several days for milder weather before adding the water lilies."

“Fine,” Wesley muttered with complete indifference before disappearing inside.

Myah occupied the living room.

Hearing footsteps, she bolted toward him and seized his arm. “Wesley, why did you destroy all those rose bushes?”

Wesley countered with his own question. “What brings you here?”

Myah’s words rushed out in explanation. “I arrived this morning, planning to prune and tend the white roses. I never imagined you’d have them all ripped from the ground.”

Wesley’s voice carried no emotion. “The white roses couldn’t survive the cold. They required replacement.”

Myah’s face crumpled with visible disappointment. “Gabriela adores white roses. Yesterday, I watched them bloom so magnificently and imagined we’d gather some together once the weather cleared.”

Wesley offered no response and strode silently into the house.

Allan’s diary rested on the living room table.

Almost by instinct, Wesley snatched it up and began flipping through the pages.

He had devoured every word already, absorbing how Allan and Gabriela had met and how Allan had tumbled into love with her.

Now, as Wesley carelessly turned the pages, he found himself staring at the entry detailing how Allan and Gabriela had planted the white roses together—watering them side by side, anticipating their blooms with breathless excitement, then mourning as they withered.

The page overflowed with intimate moments between Allan and Gabriela. Every word pulsed with devotion, love practically bleeding through the ink.

Wesley's lips twisted into a bitter smile.

Earlier, Brenden had lamented his amnesia, but memory loss wasn't his affliction. He recalled countless details of his time with Gabriela.

Unfortunately, those memories were poisoned by Allan's presence. Too many scenes mirrored the daily life chronicled in Allan's diary with haunting precision.

His eyes burned as Wesley slammed the diary shut and hurled it aside.

Myah lunged forward to rescue it, clutching the book against her chest while fixing him with an accusing stare. "Wesley, why did you abuse Allan's diary? I already regretted lending it to you."

Wesley could never summon anger toward Myah.

His voice softened with genuine remorse. "I apologize."

Noticing his haggard appearance, Myah quickly tucked the diary into her bag and settled beside him. "Wesley, is your heart troubling you again?"

Wesley managed a weak smile. "I'm fine. I've just returned to the country, and the company demands constant attention."

"But Brenden assists you, doesn't he?" Myah pressed. "Dr. Gale warned against overexertion. What if you collapse again?"

"Understood." Wesley nodded, his hand finding her hair with brotherly affection. "Don't fret. I understand my limits."

Myah studied his expression with worried intensity before venturing carefully. "Wesley, could you stop being so harsh to Gabriela? You don't realize—she wept through the entire night after returning home yesterday."

Wesley's heart clenched painfully.

The memory of her tear-streaked face stirred genuine regret for his cold dismissal.

But Myah's words continued their assault. "Gabriela lost her mother as a child, and Marie's family has shown her nothing but contempt. Allan cherished her at every opportunity—only you would ever wound her so deeply!"

Chapter 722

Billy had just stepped inside when Myah's words reached his ears.

A ripple of unease stirred in his chest, and almost instinctively, he glanced toward Wesley.

As expected, Wesley's brows had drawn together in a frown.

Wesley rose from his seat, his expression grave. "I'll be in the study. Make yourself at home, Myah. Let me know if you need anything."

Billy hurried after him, carrying the folder of documents on Eventide Vale into the study.

After scanning through the pages, Wesley said calmly, "Get ready. I'll be going there for a site inspection tomorrow."

“Inspection?” Billy, still distracted by Myah’s earlier remark, was momentarily caught off guard. “Mr. Moss, you’ve only just recovered...”

It worried him to see Wesley plunging straight into demanding work right after returning home.

“We’ll leave early tomorrow,” Wesley interrupted without looking up, his tone leaving no room for negotiation.

Billy knew better than to argue. He inclined his head. “Understood.”

The two went over the details of the trip for a while until a soft knock sounded on the door.

Myah stood there smiling. “Wesley, I made some borscht. Why don’t you and Billy come out and try it?”

Borscht?

Wesley’s mind drifted to the soup Gabriela had prepared the day before. A faint stir of emotion passed through him as he followed Billy into the dining room.

The soup was already served, each bowl steaming on the table.

Wesley lifted his spoon and tasted it.

The ingredients and color resembled Gabriela's, yet the flavor was undeniably lacking.

Billy, on the other hand, wasn't particular. A hot meal on a freezing winter day was enough for him.

Sensing Wesley's mild disappointment, Myah remarked, "Wesley, I followed Gabriela's recipe step by step, but it still doesn't taste the same."

"You're just starting out, Myah. You've done well already," Wesley replied with a polite smile before finishing the bowl without complaint.

Myah's face lit up, though moments later it dimmed. "When Allan was alive, I always thought that if my eyes could be healed, I'd learn to make this soup from Gabriela and serve it to him. But... there's no chance anymore."

Wesley felt a pang of sympathy. He reached out, giving her hand a gentle pat, and offered a few quiet words of comfort.

Myah quickly brightened again. "Well, I can make it for you now, Wesley. That's just as good."

Her words unsettled Wesley, and suddenly the once-vivid soup seemed to lose all flavor.

Billy noticed the shift in Wesley's expression and shot Myah a few cautious glances.

Myah lingered at the mansion for most of the day, occasionally checking on the workers digging the pond. She sighed more than once at the sight of the white roses being uprooted.

When evening drew near, Wesley asked Billy to drive her home.

Before leaving, she reminded him again and again. "Wesley, please call Gabriela when you get the chance. She's been really down lately."

Still preoccupied, Wesley only gave a distracted nod.

Back at the villa, Myah wasted no time complaining to Gabriela about the roses.

Chapter 723

Her voice brimmed with indignation. "Wesley has gone too far! He knows how much you love those roses, and yet he had them dug up!"

Gabriela tried to calm her. "Don't be upset. He probably just forgot for a moment."

"If he can forget something so important, it means he doesn't care about you at all," Myah said firmly, clasping Gabriela's hand. "Gabriela, you should break up with Wesley. You'll do just fine without him."

"Don't talk nonsense." Gabriela brushed her fingers lightly through her hair. "He's only acting this way because of the side effects from his treatment. We need to be patient with him."

Myah's lips pressed into a thin line. She muttered under her breath, "You're too good for him. He doesn't deserve you."

The next morning, Wesley and Billy set out for Eventide Vale.

The place was breathtaking—lush mountains, clear streams, and air so crisp it felt like medicine for the soul. It was the perfect spot for a resort, and with clever marketing, Wesley calculated the investment could be recouped within two or three years.

He stayed there three or four days, taking in the scenery and fresh air, the kind of environment that was just right for recovery.

Meanwhile, back in Okburg, Gabriela was beside herself with worry.

Brenden noticed her distress, and his heart went out to her.

Ever since realizing how harsh Wesley had been, Brenden had made it a point to visit Gabriela after work. Watching her sink deeper into sadness pushed him toward a bold decision. "Gabriela, let's go find Wesley."

Her head lifted at once, eyes wide. "Can we? Won't you get scolded?"

Brenden planted his fists on his hips with a grin. "If I get scolded, so what? I've always been a little slow, and Wesley's always chewing me out anyway. That's just how he is. Deep down he still cares about me. Even after yelling, he looks out for me."

Encouraged by his words, Gabriela began packing right away. "Then let's go."

Brenden advised her to wait. "We'll leave tomorrow. I need to finish some urgent work at the company first."

Fiona, however, caught wind of their plan and insisted on tagging along the next morning.

What was supposed to be a pair turned into three, and by afternoon they arrived at Serenity Springs.

After learning Wesley's room number, Brenden reserved two rooms on the same floor for Gabriela and Fiona.

Once they had settled in, they ran into Billy outside.

A brief conversation was enough for Brenden to discover that Wesley was staying on the hotel's top floor.

The upper level of Serenity Springs was breathtaking—an open-air sky garden with a vast outdoor pool more than two meters deep.

When Brenden and Gabriela finally spotted Wesley, he was seated at a table in the garden, a book in one hand and a cup of coffee at his side. The silver Piaget watch gleamed on his wrist, accentuating his natural authority.

“Wesley sure knows how to live.” Fiona’s eyes sparkled with admiration. “No wonder I liked him. Just sitting there, he looks more dazzling than the flowers.”

Chapter 724

“Gabriela, go talk to him,” Brenden urged, pulling Fiona aside. “And you—keep quiet. Don’t stir up trouble, or I’ll never bring you along again.”

Fiona gave a small huff. “As if I care.” Still, she crouched down in the corner without further fuss.

Gathering her courage, Gabriela walked toward Wesley.

The moment he turned and saw her, a flicker of unexpected joy rose in him.

Her persistence carried a quiet determination.

But the feeling faded quickly as thoughts of the diary and Myah's words clouded his mind.

"What are you doing here?" His tone was flat, devoid of warmth.

Gabriela didn't want Brenden dragged into it, so she came up with an excuse. "I had a client meeting here. After it ended, I heard you were around, so I came to see you."

"Have you seen enough?" Wesley replied coolly. "If so, then leave."

"Wesley, your body's only just recovered. You shouldn't be drinking coffee," Gabriela said softly. "You should rest early. Work will always be there tomorrow."

At the mention of his heart condition, Wesley's face darkened. "I know my own body," he shot back.

Gabriela didn't flinch at his sudden change in tone. Her eyes had fallen on the bracelet circling his wrist.

He was still wearing it after all this time, and the sight stirred something deep within her.

She couldn't help but ask, "Wesley, you're still wearing this?"

Wesley's brows drew together. "What?"

Gabriela lifted her wrist, showing the bracelet that gleamed faintly in the light. "Look, I still have mine. You gave it to me back then, when you—"

"I remember," Wesley cut her off, his face unreadable.

Without hesitation, he slipped his own bracelet off and flicked it into the pool nearby. Ripples spread across the water as it sank out of sight.

"I also remember that once something no longer belongs to me, it's better to let it go."

Gabriela's breath caught. "Wesley, why would you do that?"

"It's only a bracelet. Not a big deal." His eyes dropped to her wrist, and he extended his hand. "Give me your hand."

Before she could even respond, his fingers had closed around hers.

It was the first time since Wesley's return that he had taken her hand in such an intimate way.

His palm was warm against her skin, the dry, steady touch sending a wave of emotion through her.

Gabriela's nose stung, and her eyes shimmered with the threat of tears.

With unhurried precision, Wesley unfastened the bracelet from her wrist, then slid the ring from her finger.

His voice was cool and detached. "If I'm not mistaken, I gave you this ring."

Gabriela's mind felt blank as she nodded. "Yes... two years ago, when you proposed. You told me we'd marry when you came back."

A low chuckle escaped him, though it carried a trace of chilling irony.

The very next moment, both the bracelet and the ring left his hand, arcing through the air before plunging into the pool with a splash.

His words cut like ice. “Let me make this clear—the proposal is off.”

Chapter 725

“Do you understand? From this point forward, you are forbidden from following me.” Wesley finished and turned away, refusing to look at Gabriela any longer.

At that instant, his thoughts brimmed with Allan’s journals and Myah’s relentless daily recitals of Allan’s exchanges with Gabriela.

Wesley detested the notion of serving as a mere substitute, yet he could not tolerate the sight of Gabriela’s pained, disappointed expression.

It was wiser to keep his distance and erase her from his mind.

As he turned, a resounding splash drew his attention. He whirled back at once, only to see Gabriela plunge into the pool, resolute in her quest to recover the ring.

His pulse surged with alarm, and he bellowed, “Have you lost your mind? Get out at once!”

The chill permeated the air, and the depths would challenge even an expert swimmer. How could she possibly find the ring?

Gabriela's lips had blanched from the frigid water, yet she stubbornly refused to climb out.

A tight pressure seized Wesley's chest, followed by a persistent throb.

Pain twisted through him, dull and spreading. He shouted, fury lacing his voice, "Even if you find it, I'll toss it again—over and over. Get out now, do you hear me?"

"Wesley, that ring is mine now. You gave it to me." Gabriela's eyes, red and brimming, locked onto his. "You can throw it away, but you can't stop me from searching for it."

With that, she dove beneath the surface again, relentless.

A soft drizzle began to fall, chilling the air even further.

This endless winter, with its constant rain, seemed to grow colder by the day.

The heavy scent of nearby flowers only deepened Wesley's frustration.

He paced along the edge, agitation mounting until he could take no more. Ripping off his jacket, he moved as if to dive in and drag Gabriela out himself.

As she broke the surface, she caught sight of him and called out urgently, “Wesley, don’t you dare jump! You’re barely recovered—this could make you sick again.”

“It’s my choice,” Wesley shot back, throwing her words back at her. “You don’t get to dictate what I do.”

“You discarded the bracelet yourself; you didn’t want the ring either.” Gabriela’s voice cracked, hoarse with emotion. “If you jump in to help me, does that mean you regret it? Are you ready to honor your promise to marry me?”

Wesley froze, a spark of anger flaring in his eyes.

He knew his health was fragile, that he had barely escaped death’s grasp. Every action was calculated, every consequence weighed. Yet since returning home, anything involving Gabriela unraveled his control, emotions spiraling beyond his grasp.

The audacity of it—this woman who saw him as Allan’s shadow, daring to demand marriage.

Ridiculous.

Without a word, he turned from Gabriela in the water and stormed off.

Back in his room, Wesley summoned Billy. “Find the hotel manager and have them drain the rooftop pool immediately.”

Billy blinked, confused. His boss had been brooding up there, and now the pool was somehow the problem?

Wesley pictured Gabriela's pale, determined face. Anxiety clashed with impatience as Billy hesitated. "Did you not hear me?"

"Yes, sir. I'm on it."

"Move quickly!"

Billy hurried off to carry out the order.

On the rooftop, Brenden and Fiona watched as Gabriela dove again and again.

Fiona's unease grew with every fearless plunge. In this biting cold, she doubted she could do the same without hesitation.

She glanced at Brenden beside her.

His eyes, red with empathy, glistened like a sorrowful rabbit's as he clutched Fiona's hand and murmured, "Poor Gabriela."

The words deepened Fiona's discomfort.

If she were the one diving, would Brenden watch her with such tender concern?

Irritated, she snapped, "If you feel so sorry for her, why don't you help her find the ring?"

Chapter 726

"You're right—I'll help!" Brenden sprang up, shedding his jacket and rushing to the pool's edge.

With a splash, he dove in. His swift action left Fiona no time to stop him.

Gabriela had already retrieved the bracelet, clutching it tightly as she continued her underwater search.

Brenden dove down and hauled her to the surface, gripping her firmly as he dragged her toward the edge. He draped a nearby jacket around her.

"Gabriela, let me find the ring for you. Go take a bath and warm up, all right?"

On the edge, Gabriela trembled uncontrollably, her teeth chattering so hard she could barely form words. “No, I need to find the ring myself!”

To her, the ring embodied their solemn vows; losing it felt like an ill omen.

“Don’t worry—stay out of the water. I’ll locate it for you.” With that, Brenden plunged back in.

The pool’s depth made the search daunting, and the ring’s small size only compounded the challenge.

After several minutes, he surfaced empty-handed. Brenden wasn’t a strong swimmer, and as the indulged son of wealth, the winter chill sapped his strength quickly.

After two dives, he was drained. A sharp cramp seized his leg, and he thrashed beneath the surface.

Fiona, pacing anxiously at the edge, cried out, “Brenden, what’s happening? Why are you going under? Hold still—I’ll come get you!”

Brenden’s expression soured as memories flooded in of the mishaps that had plagued his time with Fiona over the last two years. “Keep your distance, Fiona!” he shouted.

But the warning came too late. Fiona had already slipped off her shoes and jumped in.

She couldn't swim at all. The instant the water enveloped her, her legs buckled like limp noodles. After gulping down several mouthfuls, she latched onto Brenden's neck in desperation, clinging for dear life.

Brenden, sputtering and fighting for breath, rasped, "Fiona... are you trying to drown me..."

They twisted and splashed in a chaotic tangle, unable to break free, gradually sinking toward the depths.

From the edge, Gabriela watched in wide-eyed alarm. She dove in without a second thought, seized Fiona, and towed her to safety, yanking her by the hair until they reached solid ground.

Then, with determined effort, she pulled Brenden out as well, though he was still cramped and floundering.

Brenden collapsed on the ground, shuddering from the cold, his face a mask of lingering shock and acute humiliation. He murmured, "Thanks for pulling me out, Gabriela."

"Stay put and don't go near the water again." Gabriela gave the order, and despite her limbs gone numb from the cold, she readied herself to dive once more in pursuit of the ring.

At that moment, the pool's water level began to sink.

The manager had initiated the drain for routine maintenance. As the water ebbed away, Gabriela spotted the ring glinting in a far corner of the empty basin.

The three of them retreated indoors, soaking in steaming baths and slipping into fresh, dry clothes, the warmth gradually restoring their strength.

Knowing Gabriela had returned to her room, Wesley finally let his tension ease.

Noting the subtle shift in his boss's demeanor, Billy ventured softly, "Miss Hayes was freezing when she came out—she could hardly walk on her own."

Wesley's face hardened, and Billy faltered, then pressed on cautiously, "Mr. Moss, should I go see how she's doing?"

"No." Wesley's response was sharp and curt. "As my assistant, you ought to mind your own business and steer clear of unrelated matters."

"Got it, sir."

Pitying Gabriela in his thoughts, Billy let out a quiet sigh and turned to leave—only for Wesley to call him back.

“Have the hotel staff send some hot milk up to Gabriela’s room,” Wesley said.

Chapter 727

Billy rushed to respond. “I’ll handle it immediately, sir.”

Though his boss appeared indifferent toward Gabriela, Billy knew the truth—his boss cared for Gabriela more than he let on.

Wesley shot his assistant a frown at the sudden cheerfulness, then dismissed it.

In the adjacent room, Gabriela perched on the sofa, enveloped in a heavy coat, her gaze fixed on the ring cradled in her palm.

Brenden, who typically excelled at lifting women’s spirits, found himself utterly stumped.

He tried to console her. “Don’t let it weigh on you too much, Gabriela. That pool attendant must have been Wesley’s doing. It’s clear he still has feelings for you.”

Gabriela nodded. “I realize that.”

The awareness that he cared only deepened her sorrow. Wesley hadn’t fully erased her from his thoughts, yet now he harbored dislike—perhaps even resentment—toward her.

An unseen barrier had risen between them, dividing their worlds and stifling any real connection.

Brenden opened his mouth to say more, but Gabriela cut him off. "I need some time alone right now."

"Understood. Just reach out if you need me," Brenden said.

Brenden and Fiona slipped out.

Moments after they left, Billy arrived with a steaming mug of milk. "Miss Hayes, Mr. Moss instructed me to deliver this to you."

Gabriela's shadowed expression brightened instantly, a hopeful smile breaking through. "He did?" she asked, her tone laced with optimism.

Billy nodded. "Mr. Moss does care about you, truly. But the lingering effects of his treatment, and then there's..." He paused, discomfort creeping in at the thought of gossiping about a young woman in her absence.

"And what?" Gabriela pressed, urgency plain. "Billy, if you know anything, please tell me."

She remained utterly bewildered, grappling with Wesley's abrupt aversion to her.

Even without love, he could at least regard her as a friend.

Billy lowered his voice to a near whisper. "The tangle in Mr. Moss's mind seems tied to Allan."

He chose not to mention Myah's odd fixation. After all, she and Allan had been inseparable since their youth, and even after all these years, her endless reminiscences about him made a certain sense.

Gabriela's eyes widened in surprise.

"But Wesley has known for ages that Allan and I were only ever friends."

They had clashed intensely over the heart transplant matter, but once they had mended things, it became buried history, off-limits for discussion.

Why, then, had it resurfaced in his thoughts after the amnesia?

Billy could empathize with Wesley's perspective.

Gabriela had shared a close bond with Allan, and despite ample other career paths, she had chosen to join Apex Group. Wesley had once placed unwavering faith in her, bolstered by his unshakable confidence in himself.

But with his memories wiped away, he could overlook her unwavering loyalty to him, all while Myah's words echoed incessantly in his ears.

Myah insisted Allan was the one Gabriela had always truly loved. Myah praised how perfectly Gabriela and Allan suited each other.

Myah would say Allan loved Gabriela deeply...

Yet Billy held back those details. "At its core, Mr. Moss's heart once belonged to Allan."

It was a bitter truth no man could easily swallow.

"Mr. Moss holds his pride dear; he'd never tolerate being seen as a mere replacement for another," Billy added.

Gabriela stared at him in disbelief. "Allan and I share nothing but friendship. How could Wesley even conceive of the notion of a 'replacement'? It's absurd!"

Billy replied evenly, "Yet Allan's death grieved you so deeply that you lost a portion of your memories."

With that, he returned to Wesley.

“The milk has been delivered to Miss Hayes, and I’ve also arranged for separate servings to be sent to Mr. Saunders and Ms. Dewitt.”

Wesley acknowledged him with cool detachment, offering no follow-up questions, as though the matter held no interest for him whatsoever.

Sensing the mood, Billy continued without prompting. “Miss Hayes seemed genuinely moved and drank it down immediately.”

Wesley’s features remained impassive, but the faint upturn at the corners of his mouth betrayed a subtle lift in his spirits.

Chapter 728

Emboldened, Billy ventured, “Mr. Moss, Miss Hayes appeared quite pale earlier. Do you think the cold from the pool might have made her ill? Perhaps you should go see her.”

A flicker of tension crossed Wesley’s face. “If she’s unwell, she can consult a doctor.”

He retreated to the master bedroom, cutting off any further exchange with Billy.

Gabriela, however, showed no signs of illness.

Her health had always been robust, balancing the demands of running a company, raising a child, and maintaining a rigorous daily exercise routine.

She preserved her vitality precisely to nurture her child—and, one day, Wesley as well.

It was Brenden, unexpectedly, who spiked a high fever in the dead of night, requiring a rushed visit to the nearest hospital.

His cheeks burned red, his lips cracked and parched, and his usually striking features took on a vulnerable, pitiable cast as he lay feebly on the hospital bed.

Fiona perched at his bedside, frustration mounting.

“What on earth were you thinking? You went and got yourself sick over Gabriela’s ring, and now you refuse to let me call her.”

Brenden replied at once, “Please don’t tell her. She’s got enough on her plate with Wesley.”

Fiona, unaccustomed to seeing Brenden so resolute, wrestled with mixed emotions.

“But you care about her so intensely. This could be your moment to draw her closer—she might actually warm to you.” After a beat, she continued, “With Wesley’s amnesia, it’s the ideal opening. Seize it!”

“I’m not as shameless as you.” Brenden shot her a sharp look. “You’d do anything to claim Wesley for yourself.”

Fiona’s chest tightened, and she fired back, “What’s so wrong with that? Love is inherently self-serving. If you won’t fight for her now, no matter your dramatic efforts, it isn’t real love.”

“I’ve dated plenty of women, chased them with everything I had when the spark was there,” Brenden admitted with a sigh. “But once I had them, the thrill faded fast—that’s not true affection. I genuinely like Gabriela, but I won’t pull her away from what she wants. She wouldn’t find joy with me. Her heart belongs to Wesley; only he can make her truly happy.”

A surge of both hurt and irritation washed over Fiona. “You, the ultimate charmer, playing the role of the faithful suitor—who are you fooling? Are you seriously prepared to pine after Gabriela indefinitely?”

“Yes, I will be there for her,” Brenden affirmed, sincerity unwavering. “While my feelings for her endure, I’ll be there for her.”

Fiona fell into abrupt silence, unwilling to say another word to him. The conversation felt utterly futile.

Unable to bear the hush, Brenden soon launched into complaints about Wesley. “Wesley’s gone too far. Amnesia doesn’t equate to insanity, but he’s treating his own fiancée abominably.”

Fiona countered at once, “They’re not engaged yet—how is she his fiancée?”

“Wesley proposed to her himself. Does he intend to renege?” Brenden insisted. “When I take a wife, I’ll treasure her like royalty, cherishing every instant together.”

A faint blush warmed Fiona’s cheeks at the notion, and she quickly thrust a glass of water toward him. “Why do you ramble on so? Even feverish, you’ve got endless stamina?”

“Haven’t I endured enough setbacks these last two years?” Brenden gazed at her with feigned woe. “A mere fever is trivial by comparison.”

Whenever Brenden and Fiona found themselves in close proximity, misfortune seemed to follow him, with injuries of every scale piling up beyond reckoning.

This fever, too, carried some blame on Fiona’s account.

Her eyes drifted to the bruises marring Brenden’s neck, and guilt prompted her to look away, silencing any retort.

Out of nowhere, Brenden asked with genuine curiosity, "Fiona, did you travel to Eventide Vale this time to chase after Wesley? You've pursued him so relentlessly for years, fixated solely on him. In that persistence, I admire you."

"Don't even start!" Fiona muttered irritably, shoving him lightly.

"You're the real idiot, destined to pine after someone who'll never reciprocate!"

Chapter 729

Fiona accidentally hit the spot where Brenden had gotten the shot, and he cried out.

Fiona felt a flicker of nerves, but held firm, refusing to apologize as she pouted. "That's what you get for running your mouth!"

"I was paying you a compliment," Brenden said, utterly perplexed. "Even if you can't win over Wesley, there's no reason to take it out on me."

Fiona shot him a fierce glare.

She hadn't come here for Wesley at all.

She simply wanted time with Brenden. For reasons she couldn't quite explain, his presence brought her an unexpected joy. Yet Brenden's mind, filled with Gabriela, remained completely clueless about Fiona's intentions.

Realizing his attempts to placate Fiona were only fueling the fire, Brenden opted for silence and scrolled through his phone instead.

At the sight, Fiona's anger intensified.

Brenden possessed endless patience for other women, but with her, he offered nothing but indifference.

She was done putting up with him.

She rose abruptly, her footsteps heavy and deliberate as she stormed out of the hospital room.

But the moment she crossed the threshold, a woman seized her arm. "It's really you, Ms. Dewitt."

The woman wore her hair short. She looked young and attractive, radiating a fresh, vibrant energy that made her seem like a college student.

Fiona drew a blank on her identity and scowled, wrenching her arm free. "Let go. Who are you?"

"I'm Daisy," the woman replied with a radiant smile. "Ms. Dewitt, what brings you to this hospital? Is Mr. Saunders here with you? Is he ill again?"

Fiona stiffened at once. "What's it to you?"

Brenden had a long trail of ex-girlfriends. For all she knew, this could be a recent conquest, or yet another lingering flame.

"Relax," Daisy said with a light laugh. "I wouldn't dream of stealing your boyfriend or playing the role of a homewrecker. That's against my bottom line."

The memory clicked for Fiona then.

This was Daisy Scott—the girl Brenden had rescued at a bar two years earlier, sustaining a head injury in the process.

Two full years had passed, and Daisy still hadn't moved on from him?

"Glad to hear that," Fiona replied coolly, flipping her hair. "I need to get some water for Brenden. Excuse me."

But Daisy blocked her path. “Ms. Dewitt, may I see Mr. Saunders?”

Before Fiona could refuse, Daisy brushed past her and entered the room.

Seething, Fiona nearly spun on her heel and walked away, but some unnameable pull compelled her to follow. She trailed after Daisy, her features contorted with irritation.

Daisy greeted Brenden with easy familiarity, an intimate air.

Brenden recognized her at once. “Daisy? What are you doing here?”

He had a remarkable knack for remembering striking faces and details.

Daisy explained, “I’m here with my cousin for a visit, but he got sick from the local cuisine and ended up needing an IV drip.”

Brenden nodded in understanding. The environment here differed markedly from Okburg’s.

Daisy pressed on. “Mr. Saunders, are you unwell again?”

In the aftermath of her rescue, she had kept tabs on him and knew about his frequent hospital visits.

Brenden couldn't very well admit he'd jumped into a pool and flailed around with Fiona latched to his neck, so he made up an excuse. "I'm not acclimated to the weather here either... I've developed a fever."

"Oh, then you really should look after yourself," Daisy replied.

Their conversation flowed with lively ease, while Fiona lingered on the sidelines, her expression darkening by the moment.

She thrust a glass of water toward Brenden, cutting in with a neutral tone. "Have some water."

Brenden blinked in confusion. "But I just had some."

"The doctor advised drinking plenty of water to help reduce the fever." Fiona forced a serene smile through clenched teeth.

Brenden sensed the tension and accepted the water without protest.

Fiona then addressed Daisy directly. "Your cousin is receiving his IV—shouldn't you stay with him?"

“He dozed off, so I stepped out for a breather.” Noting Fiona’s increasingly stormy demeanor, Daisy chose to leave. “Mr. Saunders, rest well. I’ll go see if my cousin’s awake.”

Chapter 730

She harbored genuine affection for Brenden’s type and would gladly wait for him to become available, but she refused to meddle while he was involved with another.

With Daisy gone, Fiona refilled the glass and handed it back to Brenden. “Have more.”

At last, Brenden understood he had irritated Fiona. It was only to combat the fever, so he complied and drank.

That day, Brenden downed multiple glasses of water and made several trips to the restroom. Astonishingly, his fever began to break.

Upon discharge, he couldn’t help but marvel. “It turns out drinking water really works wonders for a fever.”

Back at the hotel, Fiona gathered her luggage. “We’re leaving for Okburg right away.”

Brenden blinked, confused. “But Gabriela...”

“That’s their issue to resolve. Why are you meddling?” Fiona’s displeasure was obvious. “Are you coming or not?”

“Fine, fine, I’ll go with you.” Under his breath, Brenden grumbled, “I’ve heard women go through menopause as they get older. You’ve been in such a rotten mood lately—is that what’s flaring up?”

Brenden made no effort to lower his voice, and Fiona heard every syllable.

Furious, she grabbed her suitcase and hurled it at him.

Brenden yelped and dodged, convinced anew that dealing with a spoiled heiress was no easy task.

In contrast, Gabriela’s composure never wavered. Even when Wesley treated her harshly, she stayed level-headed.

Once the packing was complete, Brenden went to bid Gabriela farewell. “Gabriela, you’re here by yourself. If you need anything, call me right away.”

Gabriela thanked him again. “Don’t worry—I used to travel for work all the time.”

After escorting Brenden and Fiona out, Gabriela mulled over how to contrive a reason to run into Wesley when Billy appeared at her door.

Billy explained his errand with evident awkwardness. "Mr. Moss hasn't had much appetite lately, and the hotel cuisine doesn't agree with him. Miss Hayes, if it's not too much trouble, could you prepare lunch for him?"

Gabriela agreed without hesitation. "Of course."

Given Billy's position, the hotel owner deferred to him and readily granted access to the kitchen. Gabriela tied on an apron and swiftly finished cooking.

When Billy had a server deliver the food to Wesley's suite, Wesley was immersed in reviewing the Eventide Vale development.

Two years prior, this property had fallen into Moss Group's hands.

Acquired amid a shattered engagement, Roger had assigned it to Wesley, allowing him to fold the resort initiative into Apex Group.

Yet for a venture of this magnitude, Brenden the novice had shown no drive, letting it languish untouched for two years.

The deadline loomed; the blueprint needed swift finalization.

“Mr. Moss, it’s time to eat,” Billy said.

Wesley felt no hunger. “Just set it down.”

“You barely ate anything—you need to eat something to keep your energy up.” Billy insisted, positioning the plates directly in front of him.

The enticing aroma tugged at Wesley’s senses. He pushed the files aside and sampled a few bites.

The familiar flavor sparked a vague suspicion, prompting him to ask offhandedly, “Has the hotel switched chefs?”

Uncertain whether naming Gabriela would make Wesley stop eating, Billy played along. “Yes, they have.”

Wesley didn’t pursue it further and ate in silence. He finished most of the food.

Billy relayed the result to Gabriela, who beamed with joy. She suggested, “Billy, I’ll handle all his meals from here on out.”

“Thank you, Miss Hayes,” Billy replied.

Over the next few days, Gabriela devoted herself to preparing Wesley’s daily meals, and his appetite steadily improved.

One afternoon, a call came through from Myah. “Wesley, Gabriela hasn’t been back home recently. Has she gone to visit you?”

Wesley replied curtly, “Yes.”

“She must be anxious about your heart condition.” Myah let out a sigh. “When Allan fell ill, Gabriela stayed by his side without fail, tending to him devotedly.”

Wesley’s grip on the phone tightened at once.

Just then, Billy arrived with dinner.

Wesley eyed the dishes, a glint of intensity sharpening his gaze. “Bring Gabriela to me,” he ordered.