

Chapter 39: Gabrielle's Treasures

Going around the house, Gabrielle could not hide her dismay.

Her aunt changed a lot of the interiors and sold nearly all their belongings. Some of them, those that her aunt may have thought to have no value, were placed in the basement.

It was there where Gabrielle had been going through one box after another.

Cleaning the dust off her mother's book, she sighed, "Oh, my mother loved this." She turned to Kyle and smiled, saying, "She read this to me over and over again."

Showing the book, she told, "It's a story about a girl of royalty who chose a man of no wealth over her crown." 4

Kyle frowned at the tale. It wasn't exactly a fairytale story. He asked, "How does... the story end?"

Gabrielle shrugged and answered, "She had a humble but happy family! That's what matters, right?"

She flipped through the old book, wanting to find her

favorite chapter, and to her surprise, she found writings on that specific page! It read: [Gaby, my love. Beneath my box of memories lies your treasure.]

"Box of memories. Box of memories," Gabrielle softly repeated. She looked around and saw other boxes.

Frantically, she started going through them, one by one.

"What's going on, beautiful?" Kyle asked, rubbing his finger under his nose. He was feeling all the dust around but had been trying not to show Gabrielle how he was not used to any kind of allergen. ³

"It's not here," Gabrielle muttered, ignoring Kyle's probing.

She decided to search her mother's room again, telling Kyle to follow behind her. ¹

The man could only run after her as she speedily made her way to the second floor.

Inside the room, she took a full turn, trying not to miss out on any space. She bit her lip, trying to remember exactly where her mother would keep her most prized secrets.

"Closet!" She exclaimed, just in time for Kyle to find her.

She opened her mother's closet and on one side; she started knocking against the wooden frame.

Finding what she was searching for, she used all her might, sliding open to a secret storage space. It was there where she found her mother's box of memories.

It was a large jewelry box, containing reminders of her father and of her mother's past.

"What is it, Gaby?" Kyle asked curiously, walking next to her.

Gabrielle took a deep breath and replied, "My mother left a note on the book, telling me that my treasures are under this box." 2

She opened the box and took out old letters, pictures, and news clippings. She narrated to Kyle, "I don't remember everything about this box but I knew she kept her favorite photos of Dad here."

Gabrielle then found an old picture of her parents and said, "Yep! This was them before they got married."

Taking out all the contents, she muttered, "She said it's underneath."

She tapped with her fingers on the base of the box and realized how there was still a space beneath it. Eventually, she managed to take out a wooden

divider, and there she saw two sets of folded letters.

Going over several pages of an assembled document, she sighed in relief. With a smile, she told, "She did leave a will."

Giving the papers to Kyle, she put them aside and took out the second one. It was a letter, only for her.

Somehow, her hands slightly quivered, and her heart raced, seeing her mother's handwriting. She could not deny how much she missed her mother.

Breathing heavily, she braced herself, knowing her tears would flow again.

[To my dearest Gaby,

I'm sorry that I have fallen ill. Too ill to be with you longer.

I'm sorry I did not have the strength to tell you that I was leaving your side so soon.

This was not the happy ever after I promised you, but I pray one day you'll have a family of your own and you'll grow old with your beloved, one that I never had a chance to do with your father.

I will miss you so dearly. I love you, my baby. In my eyes, you will always be my baby.

When I am gone, I will look after you and give you strength, even in spirit.

In my place, I hope your aunt Cassandra will take care of you. She promised to live in our house in order to guide you until you are old enough to stand on your own two feet. 1

Gaby, there is one other thing that I need to tell you. It's about the truth of my family.

As you know, my family is from Europe. Not familiar to anybody, but I came from the small island country of Freedonia.

Gaby, my father disowned me because I fell in love with your Dad and chose him over the man my father wanted me to marry. 3

It's because I worry about you. That you will be on your own that I wonder if you might want to connect with my family. At the same time, I fear that by revealing yourself to them, you will be stripped off of your own free will. 3

Freedom was something I never had as a Cromwell. 1

I leave that up to you to decide, Gaby. 1

In case you will choose to let yourself known to them, my maiden name is Genevieve Cromwell. My father's

name is Gerald Cromwell III.

The necklace that I gave you was a gift from my grandmother, passed down from generations of Cromwells in my home country. It is a reminder of who you really are. 2

Whatever path you choose, I will support you.

I pray you will find success and happiness, even without me by your side.

Again, Gaby. I love you. My baby and the fruit of my love, I will forever miss you.

Goodbye, Gaby.

Love,

Mom.]

After the last words of her mother, Gabrielle broke down in tears. It was as if, her mother's voice replayed in her head and she recalled the sweetness of her tone.

Embracing Kyle, she expressed with a shaking cry, "I miss you too, Mom. I - I miss you so much."

"Shhh.. It's okay, Gaby. It's okay." For minutes, Kyle remained to hold Gabrielle in his arms, caressing her back and repeatedly pecking on her head.

 +15 BONUS

It was only after her cries died down when he spoke. "Gaby, whatever pain and yearning you have for your parents... I'll fill in the void. I promise... I'll make you happy."



Lilhyz  Author

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Dear readers, the next chapter will be tomorrow. Maybe after 14-16 hours. Thank you.
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