Limits 232

Chapter 232

When Jack walked into the radio station and saw Phoebe already there, his mood lifted slightly.

She was wearing a soft beige dress paired with low heels, her long, flawless legs glowing under the afternoon sun. A gentle breeze lifted strands of her silky hair, and her bright, expressive eyes shimmered with warmth. Just seeing her like this made the weight in Jack's chest feel a little lighter.

Today's program was based on listener requests. Many had written in, asking for another live duet of "Timeless Years", the same piece that had left a lasting impression on everyone the last time they had played it.

Most listeners still believed that Phoebe's duet partner had been a computer. It was a testament to just how skilled Jack was with the guitar.

Now, after more practice and time working together, their performance had reached another level of perfection. Their timing was seamless, and their chemistry was undeniable.

When the final note faded, the response was instant. Messages flooded in, praising how much more polished and moving the performance sounded compared to the last time.

Time and practice had only strengthened their rhythm, making their music more fluid and more connected.

Phoebe remained calm and composed, as she always did, but there was a faint flush of satisfaction on her cheeks.

As always, the best moments slipped by too quickly. The half-hour broadcast ended before Jack even realized it.

Watching her pack up, preparing to leave, he felt a sudden hesitation, a flicker of reluctance. Without thinking, he spoke up. "Phoebe, do you have time? Do you want to grab dinner together?"

She glanced up, a small, amused smile tugging at her lips.

"Is there something you need?"

Jack hesitated. There wasn't anything specific. He just wanted to spend more time with her.

Phoebe seemed to understand immediately. She smiled, her tone light as she said, "How about next time? My treat. I have something I need to take care of today."

She slung her bag over her shoulder, gave him a soft goodbye, and walked out. Jack stood there for a moment, watching her go.

From her perspective, it had been a simple, polite answer. She really did have something important to do.

But from his perspective, it was a rejection. Not harsh, not cruel, but a rejection all the same. Out of habit, he walked over to the window, watching as she disappeared down the steps.

Then, something caught his eye. A man stood waiting for her.

Tall, sharply dressed in all black, carrying an air of effortless confidence. Even from a distance, Jack could sense the presence he carried-self-assured, powerful, striking. There was something magnetic about him, a quiet dominance that made it impossible to ignore him.

The moment Phoebe spotted him, her face lit up. Jack had never seen her smile like that before. Not even around Leslie.

They exchanged a few words, and then, to Jack's surprise, the man reached out and gently ruffled Phoebe's hair. She flinched slightly but didn't pull away. Instead, she let him do it.

Then, she laughed a light, musical sound-and walked off with him, her steps easy and her posture relaxed.

Jack didn't move. A hollow feeling settled in his chest.

For so long, he had told himself that if he just worked hard enough, if he just got close enough, one day, he might have a chance with her. But the casual way she had turned him down today, along with the way she had looked at that man and the way she had let him touch her so naturally, made it all painfully clear.

Phoebe wasn't just out of reach. She had never even been on the same path as him. No matter how much he tried, he was chasing something that was never meant to be his.