

Once The Foolish Wife, Now His Eternal Obsession

Chapter 381

Andrew inclined his head again.

Sophie's jaw slackened. "How has Cathryn never brought this up?"

A faint, knowing smile curved his lips. "She has no idea about my identity."

Her eyes widened. "What? She doesn't know who she married?"

"Exactly." His tone was quiet, final.

She stared at him, incredulous. "Mr. Brooks, are you saying you tricked her into marriage?"

His gaze turned sharp as glass. "Say that again."

Sophie froze, lips snapping shut.

Andrew's voice softened, but it still carried weight. "I'll tell her my identity when the time is right. Until then, keep it between us."

Sophie swallowed hard and nodded.

Andrew rose from his chair, straightening his cuffs. "If there's nothing else, I'll be going."

Sophie hurried after him. "Mr. Brooks—about what I said earlier—just... pretend you didn't hear it."

He gave a short nod. "Obviously."

He turned to leave, then paused mid-step, glancing over his shoulder. "Cathryn has been staying at your place for quite some time. It's time she came home."

Sophie caught the underlying command and nodded quickly. "I'll make sure she goes home tonight."

Andrew's brow lifted slightly, approval flickering in his eyes. Sharp girl.

Sophie stepped out of the restaurant in a daze, her thoughts swirling.

Just then, someone called out to her. "Sophie!"

She turned.

Harley's car idled at the curb, the window rolled down. Sophie opened the rear door—and froze. Cathryn was inside. She tensed and slid in.

"Hey, Sophie," Cathryn greeted her with a teasing grin. "You look stunning. I bet you had Mr. Brooks completely smitten."

Sophie's pulse spiked. Her throat went dry. The woman who had been living in her apartment and sharing a bed with her these past few days turned out to be her boss's wife. She stiffened.

"How did the date go?" Cathryn asked, not picking up on Sophie's tension. She even gave her a playful wink.

Sophie forced a smile, remembering Andrew's warning. "It was... fine."

Cathryn's eyes sparkled mischievously. "Did you confess your feelings for him?"

Sophie looked at Cathryn's beaming face and sighed inwardly. Here Cathryn was, all smiles and completely oblivious that her husband had just been hit on by another woman.

"It was all a misunderstanding," Sophie said quietly. "Mr. Brooks isn't interested in me."

Cathryn's smile faltered. "No way. Hasn't he been dropping hints?"

Sophie gave Cathryn a complicated look. Those hints had always been for Cathryn. Sophie had simply gotten the wrong idea all along.

"He thought I was someone named Kestrel—a coder or something," Sophie explained with a slow exhale.

Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

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Cathryn blinked, taken aback. Andrew was looking for her?

For a fleeting second, a wild thought crossed her mind: if she admitted she was Kestrel, maybe she could reclaim her mother's prized painting from him—and if fortune smiled on her, perhaps even the money her mother had invested in Moore Trading and Watson Tech. If Andrew were feeling generous, he might even hand both companies back to her.

But then Cathryn shook her head. That was wishful thinking. Andrew was a shrewd businessman; he would never concede that much.

"Sophie, you're daydreaming again," Harley said dryly from behind the wheel, catching her expression. "As if Mr. Brooks would ever fall for you."

Cathryn glared at him. "Harley, don't talk like that. Sophie is gorgeous and kind. Why wouldn't he like her?"

Harley let out a short laugh. "Get real, Cathryn. We're worlds apart from Mr. Brooks. Compared to him, the three of us might as well be stray dogs trying to chase a star."

"Harley, shut up," Sophie snapped.

He met her gaze in the rearview mirror. “Hey, why are you being so harsh with me?”

“Just shut the fuck up!” she shot back, fuming.

Harley only smirked. “I didn’t say anything wrong, did I? I mean, to a man like Mr. Brooks, the three of us are just nobodies.”

Sophie bit her lip, then stole a glance at Cathryn to gauge her reaction. “Don’t lump Cathryn in with us. She’s different from us.”

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Cathryn blinked, confused. “Different? How? We’re in the same class.”

Sophie swallowed hard, her voice taut with unease. “Anyway... she’s just different.”

Harley and Cathryn exchanged a puzzled look, both studying Sophie as if she’d suddenly started speaking another language.

Sophie sat unnaturally stiff beside Cathryn, her usual easy warmth gone, hands clasped in her lap as if she feared even breathing wrong.

Cathryn slipped an arm around Sophie, brows knitting. “Sophie, what’s going on with you?”

Sophie jerked away, almost as if the touch burned. “Mrs. Br—Cathryn. I mean, you can’t—” She caught herself just in time. The title “Mrs. Brooks” had nearly slipped past her lips.

Cathryn gave a playful pout, tilting her head. “What’s that supposed to mean? Now that you’re about to climb the social ladder and become Mrs. Brooks, you’re too good for me?”

Color rushed to Sophie’s cheeks. She waved her hands frantically. “No, no, it’s not like that at all! There’s absolutely nothing between me and Mr. Brooks. He made it very clear he’s not interested in me—ever—and I... I’m completely over him!”

Her words tumbled out too quickly, too emphatically—the kind of denial that only deepened suspicion.

Cathryn raised an eyebrow, half amused, half concerned. “Then why are you so worked up?”

“I-I just wanted to make sure you don’t get the wrong idea,” Sophie stammered, her voice shrinking. “Nothing is going on between me and Mr. Brooks. I don’t like him anymore.”

Cathryn's suspicion softened into quiet sympathy. Andrew must have turned Sophie down—and not gently.

Cathryn reached out and patted Sophie's arm, her tone gentle. "Hey, there are plenty of fish in the sea. Don't dwell on one that got away. Keep your heart open—someone better is bound to come along."

Sophie nodded weakly. It wasn't as if she had another choice. How could she possibly pine for her friend's husband?

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From the driver's seat, Harley caught Cathryn's reflection in the rearview mirror. A faint smile tugged at his lips. The words Cathryn had offered to comfort Sophie almost sounded like quiet encouragement for him to pursue her.

Cathryn needed to move on, too. If she finally left her husband behind for good, maybe he would have a chance.

He cleared his throat softly, breaking the silence. "Sophie, I'll drop you off first. I'm taking Cathryn somewhere."

"Where are you taking Cathryn?" Sophie asked, her tone cautious, eyes locked on Harley.

Cathryn glanced sideways at Harley, curious. A while back, he'd shown up downstairs out of the blue, saying they were going to pick Sophie up. She hadn't realized he had other plans.

Harley caught Sophie's gaze in the rearview mirror, irritation flashing in his eyes. "Do I need to report my schedule to you?" His brows furrowed. What was wrong with his sister today? Not long ago, she'd been trying to push him and Cathryn together at every opportunity. Now she was acting as if she were determined to sabotage every chance he and Cathryn had to be alone.

He'd wanted a date with Cathryn. Picking up Sophie had just been an excuse to get Cathryn into his car.

But Sophie seemed completely oblivious to his intentions. Her glare was sharp enough to cut glass. “I do not approve of you two going off alone.”

The words made Harley slam the brakes harder than necessary. He twisted in his seat and shot her a glare. “What’s it to you?”

Sophie folded her arms, her gaze sweeping the modest car interior. “You plan to take Cathryn out in this junk heap? Aren’t you embarrassed?”

Harley’s brows knitted together. “I bought this car with my own money. There’s nothing shameful about it.”

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Sophie gave a short, mocking laugh. “It’s not good enough for Cathryn.”

To Sophie, this modest car was far too shabby for Cathryn. After all, Cathryn was Andrew’s wife—the future matriarch of the Brooks family. A woman accustomed to Maybachs and marble floors.

Harley's face clouded over, his patience thinning fast. Before, his sister had been urging him to pursue Cathryn. Now, the moment he'd finally found his courage, Sophie was cutting his legs out from under him.

The siblings stared at each other, tension crackling like live wires.

Sensing the air turning heavy, Cathryn spoke up quickly. "This car is fine, really. I'm comfortable in it."

Harley's expression softened at once. "See? Cathryn doesn't look down on my car the way you did. My car may not be fancy, but it..."

...manages my daily transport."

Sophie rolled her eyes. "Seriously? Can't you tell Cathryn is only being kind? A lousy vehicle with antique car parts—that's what you call sufficient? And you want to take Cathryn somewhere in this piece of junk?"

Harley's temper flared. He shot Sophie a warning glare, silently telling her to stop. How could she belittle him in front of Cathryn—the woman he liked?

Sophie ignored him and seized Cathryn's hand. "Come on, Cathryn. Don't waste another minute here. Let's go home."

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Before Harley could react, she flung the car door open and dragged Cathryn out. No way was the prestigious Mrs. Brooks going to ride in this beat-up car.

Sophie waved down a taxi, ushered Cathryn inside, and slammed the door.

Harley sat frozen behind the wheel, his jaw slack with disbelief. Why had his sister just torn into him for no reason?

In the taxi, Cathryn turned to Sophie, her tone gentle but firm. “You shouldn’t have spoken to Harley like that. His car may not be the best, but he bought it himself. That’s pretty impressive. I’ve got nothing to my name.”

Sophie’s eyes flicked to Cathryn, unreadable. Nothing? Seriously? The woman sitting beside her was married to the richest man in Olekgan—half the city practically bowed to her name—and she was calling herself penniless?

Just days ago, Cathryn had borrowed five hundred from Sophie, who had immediately wired the money out of sympathy. Now Sophie realized her pity had been utterly misplaced.

What unsettled Sophie most was her earlier attempt to set Harley up with Cathryn. She dreaded Andrew’s wrath if he ever found out what she’d been doing.

Back at the apartment, Sophie moved briskly, avoiding eye contact.

She packed Cathryn’s clothes into a small bag and pushed it toward her. “You’ve stayed long enough. It’s time to go home.”

Cathryn blinked. “You’re kicking me out?”

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Sophie faltered, scrambling for a reason. “My mother is coming to stay for a few days. I don’t have enough space.”

Cathryn hesitated, then sighed softly. “Alright.” She wasn’t ready to leave yet. Her eyes dimmed, though she tried to hide it.

As soon as the door closed, Sophie typed a quick message to Andrew. “Mr. Brooks, your wife is gone.”

Cathryn had barely reached the front gate when a sleek black car pulled up. Damien stepped out, his gaze steady, his presence commanding.

“Why are you here?” she asked, surprised. How did he know to come pick her up so quickly after Sophie sent her away?

Andrew reached for her hand, his voice low as he sidestepped her question. “Finally ready to come home with me?”

Cathryn exhaled softly. “Sophie said I couldn’t stay at her place any longer. Where else could I go, if not to your place?”

It struck her then that she needed a place that was truly her own. If only she could reclaim the Moore Estate.

Andrew studied her in silence, his expression unreadable. The stack of documents he'd handed her still sat untouched in her possession. If she'd opened even one of them, she would have known the truth—that Azure Vista, the Moore Estate, and even Watson Tech and Moore Trading all belonged to her.

Once Cathryn left, Sophie wasted no time. She snatched up her phone and dialed Harley. “Harley,” she said curtly, “stay away from Cathryn from now on.”

Harley's voice turned sharp with irritation. “Sophie, I haven't even settled the score with you. You made a fool of me in front of Cathryn today. What is your problem?”

Sophie's patience snapped. “Embarrassing you is the least of your worries. Get near Cathryn again, and you're finished.”

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A low laugh echoed through the line. “Your words don’t rattle me. You chase after Mr. Brooks, so why can’t I pursue Cathryn?” And with that, he hung up.

With Watson Tech being acquired, layoffs were inevitable, and he planned to apply to Brooks Group the next morning. Arguing with Sophie was the last thing on his mind.

Back in her apartment, Sophie sat frozen, the glow of the screen dim against her face. Both she and Harley had been flirting with fire by accident—one chasing Andrew, the other chasing his wife.

She flopped onto the bed, her texts—calling Andrew a two-timing scumbag—replaying in her mind. Damn it. Her situation was hardly better than Harley’s.

With a low groan, she buried her face in the pillow, wishing she could vanish from the world for a while.

Meanwhile, Andrew drove Cathryn home.

Azure Vista lay nestled in the heart of Olekgan—quiet, refined, and startlingly serene amid the city’s chaos. Its stillness felt like a secret sanctuary.

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Even better, it bordered the Moore Estate, as if fate were quietly folding the past and present together.

The moment Cathryn stepped inside, warmth spread through her chest. The space was bright and inviting, far cozier than their old residence at Crownspire Villa. This place felt like a home.

Andrew watched her reaction, a faint smile softening his features. “Do you like it?”

She turned, her eyes gleaming softly. “I love it.”

His smile deepened. “Then this will be our home now—just for the two of us. And when my grandmother returns, I’ll give you the grandest wedding anyone has ever seen.”

At the mention of Amanda, Cathryn’s breath caught. “Do you think she’ll accept me?”

Cathryn squirmed at the prospect of meeting Amanda. Not only had she been divorced once, but she had also taken the place of Amanda's carefully chosen granddaughter-in-law, Elaine. When Elaine eventually returned, no one could guess what kind of storm she might stir in the gossip circles.

Andrew reached over and tousled Kathryn's hair lightly. "Don't worry. I'll take care of everything."

Cathryn forced a small smile, but doubt lingered in her eyes. Mending the potential rivalry between her and Amanda would surely be a struggle. She exhaled softly. She would deal with Amanda when the time came.

When Margaret saw Kathryn, her eyes immediately brimmed with tears. "Mrs. Brooks! You've lost weight!"

Cathryn clasped her hand warmly. "Margaret, how have you been?"

Margaret wiped her cheeks with her apron and nodded fervently. "I'm fine. I'm glad you're back. You aren't leaving again, are you?"

Cathryn smiled gently. "Not this time."

Andrew watched Cathryn's graceful figure with quiet admiration. Warmth gathered in his chest. He knew he needed to tell her soon—no more secrets.

After dinner, Andrew disappeared into the shower.

Cathryn wandered into the bedroom and noticed the collection of masterpiece paintings back on the walls. She stepped closer, examining them one by one, her brows slowly knitting together. Something about them felt... too perfect.

She reached for a magazine resting on the nightstand. Damien had scribbled a note on it. Her breath caught. She'd seen Andrew's signature before—this handwriting looked just like his. Could brothers really write so similarly? Her pulse quickened.

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