



Chapter 54

Autumn clung to Clarita, tears streaming down her face.

Clarita's wrinkled cheeks were wet with tears, yet she still managed a gentle smile as she patted her granddaughter's shoulder to comfort her. "Sweetie, that's enough. Don't cry! Grandma's right here."

Dominic turned away, unable to keep watching.

Autumn had been crying for so long, but she finally managed to calm down a little. She wiped her face and asked, "Grandma, how did you get here from the countryside today? What happened?"

Clarita sighed. "It's your birthday today. I wanted to see you, so I left early this morning and rode my bike from the village.

"When I got here, I stopped to take a look at your place, but I didn't notice there was a slope nearby. The wheel slipped, and I rolled down. I couldn't catch my breath after that... Well, I'm old now, not much use anymore."

Her words made it clear that it was an accident.

Autumn's heart twisted in pain. She knew Clarita's appearance here was only possible because of the man standing beside her.

"Why didn't you call me, Grandma?" she asked bitterly. "I could've sent someone to pick you up."

Clarita shook her head, smiling softly. "You all have so much going on. I didn't want to trouble you."

"That's not true! Nothing's more important than you!" Autumn's voice broke, and fresh tears spilled down her cheeks. "If I'd known earlier and hired someone to help you, none of this would've happened. It's all my



fault."

She could hardly breathe through the guilt.

Clarita patted her shoulder again. "How could it be your fault? I've never gone hungry or wanted for anything. What do I need caretakers for?"

Her son had once offered to hire someone to look after her, but she'd refused every time. She also didn't want to move to the city, preferring her quiet, simple life in the countryside.

"Actually, what I worry about most is you," Clarita said, trying to lighten the mood. "You're already 21 and still don't have a boyfriend. Didn't you meet anyone you liked at university?"

Autumn shook her head. "No one suitable."

"You're too picky," Clarita said with a smile.

Not seeing her granddaughter married was her greatest regret.

"It's not that," Autumn murmured. "I just haven't met the right person."

"Sweetie, our family's been through hard times. When you choose someone, don't get hung up on background or money. What matters most is character and kindness. Even if he's poor or a bit older, that's fine," Clarita said gently.

Dominic stayed silent, but he soon noticed her eyes flicking toward him again and again. He froze, uncertain how to respond.

Autumn noticed too, glancing at him quietly without speaking.

Finally, Clarita stopped pretending and asked Dominic directly, "Young man, how old are you?"



"Thirty..."

"Well, that's a little older, but that just means you know how to take care of someone! Sweetie, what do you think of him? I've never seen such a handsome young man." Her tone brightened as she spoke, earnest and hopeful.

'If I can see the two of them together, I can rest easy,' she thought.

She hadn't known Dominic long, but age brought intuition. You could tell a person's heart from their smallest actions, and she trusted her instincts.

Autumn looked at Dominic again. This time, she studied him carefully, and a faint trace of wonder flickered in her eyes.