

Chapter 82

Dominic finished speaking and quietly took hold of Cynthia's arm. In an instant, Cynthia—dead for a long time—appeared once more.

The boy scrambled up from the floor, crying as he rushed to his mother and clung to her. "Mom!"

Cynthia looked dazed. After a long moment, her trembling voice broke through. "Leo... don't be afraid. Mom's here."

At those words she burst into tears, holding her son close and gently patting his back.

The man rose from the floor too. His eyes reddened as he watched them. He stepped forward and wrapped his arms around mother and child.

Dominic looked at the three before him, emotions shifting behind his calm expression. He had tested this earlier today. If he willingly offered a strand of his hair, a soul could briefly return. But Cynthia's unstable mind had worried him, so he'd held back until now.

In that rare moment of clarity, Cynthia glanced around the bare room, sorrow filling her heart. "Hubby, I... I misunderstood you..."

The man shook his head and said hoarsely, "It's over. All of it."

"Mom, I missed you so much!" Leo sobbed.

A faint smile touched Cynthia's lips. For the first time, her eyes shone with the gentle light of a mother. She looked at her son and said, "Leo, when I'm gone, you have to be brave. Don't fear anything. Don't hide from the world."

"Okay." The boy nodded through his tears.



"You'll be starting university soon. Once you're there, be independent. Study hard. Learn something useful. Don't make your dad worry, and be good to him, always..."

Her eyes reddened again. She seemed to have endless words for her son, filling each one with care and longing.

Leo clung to his mother, feeling her warmth, and for a brief, beautiful moment it felt as though she had never left.

But pain clouded the man's gaze. He knew his wife was already gone.

When Cynthia finished speaking, she turned to him, love and guilt mingling in her eyes. After a long hesitation, she whispered, "Hubby, I'm sorry. I failed you and our son."

Tears streamed down his face, yet he managed a faint smile. "Cyn, don't say that. We're family."

Cynthia trembled at his words, overwhelmed by remorse she could no longer undo. The three of them sat together, talking quietly for a long time.

Then Dominic said softly, "Time's up."

He released Cynthia's arm, and she vanished in an instant.

"Cynthia..." The man stared into the empty air. The boy couldn't bear it and ran into the next room, clutching a pillow as he wept.

Dominic sighed. "My condolences."

After a while, the man gathered himself, nodded, and said, "My name is Thomas Parker. This is my son, Leonard. May I ask how I should address you?"



"Just call me Mr. Fleming," Dominic replied calmly.

A flicker of awe crossed Thomas' face. He hesitated, then asked, "Can you tell me where Cynthia has gone?"

"She's gone where she's meant to go."

"Where she's meant to go..." he repeated quietly.

"Don't ask what you shouldn't ask."

Thomas smiled bitterly, lit a cigarette, and lowered his gaze. "I know Cynthia's still here. If she can't hear me, please tell her I don't blame her."
"

Dominic looked at the faint outline beside him and nodded. "She can hear you."

"Tell her to rest easy. I'll take care of our family. No matter how hard it gets, I'll raise Leo." His voice was steady, his promise firm.

Dominic smiled faintly, patted his shoulder, and stood. "Alright. I should go now."

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