

## Chapter 9 The Attentive Brother

Kristine had woven her life intricately with that of the Johns family and Andrew, feeling deeply embedded within their circle.

She viewed Madisyn as a mere country girl, her rustic upbringing a stark contrast to the polished elegance that she and her companions embodied.

Kristine was convinced that her sophisticated brothers would find Madisyn's manners jarring.

"Waylon, Andre, enjoy the coffee." Kristine had displayed her coffee-making skills before she poured the dark brew for both men.

Waylon, sipping the coffee, complimented warmly. "Kristine, this is exceptional coffee. The man lucky enough to marry you will be blessed beyond measure!"

"You flatter me again, Waylon," Kristine responded, a playful smile touching her lips despite a blush. "Ideally, I'd like to stay with you, Mom, and Dad forever."

"That's not practical. You're of marrying age. Expect more admirers soon!" Waylon said, his eyes twinkling with mischief.

Kristine glanced towards Andrew, her blush intensifying slightly. "Andre is a few years older than I am, yet he is still single. I see no reason to hurry myself."

Andrew, with his coffee untouched, spoke with a cool reserve. "You can just call me Andrew."

The indifference in his voice chilled the air slightly.

Despite all the time they'd spent together, Andrew remained enigmatic and distant.

"Why hasn't Madisyn returned yet?" Waylon inquired, his gaze drifting toward the door, hinting at his anticipation.

Catching his look, Kristine pursed her lips momentarily before she offered a smile. "Madisyn's out shopping with Mom. It's her first venture into a luxury mall, so she's probably captivated by everything, which might explain the delay."

"Are you serious? Her first time?" Waylon's surprise was evident.

Kristine murmured, "Yes, she grew up in the countryside, so try not to judge her too harshly, Waylon."

"No way!" Waylon responded, his voice thick with emotion. "Madisyn's life was that rough?"

At that moment, Elaine and Madisyn entered.

Waylon, excited, hurried towards them. His eyes brimmed with tears as he took in Madisyn's appearance.

Yes, this girl was surely his sister!

While he and his brothers had enjoyed a comfortable upbringing, she had endured hardships.

"I'm sorry, Madisyn!"

Waylon's usual lightheartedness was gone as he embraced Madisyn tightly, his voice cracking, eyes wet.

Madisyn, caught off guard by the intensity of the moment, felt an instinctive urge to retreat. Yet sensing his genuine remorse, she stilled, her fists clenched in an effort to hold back her own emotions.

"Waylon?" she said softly, her voice a soothing melody amidst the turbulent emotions swirling around them.

Waylon's eyes sparkled with an unmistakable excitement. "Say it again!"

Did he really have to be this thrilled?

Madisyn could only sigh at his childlike enthusiasm, yet she humored him.

"Waylon."

"Yes!" Waylon exclaimed, his face lighting up as he lifted Madisyn off the floor and spun her around in a joyous whirl.

Elaine watched the scene unfold with amusement. "Put your sister down, you rascal! What if she gets hurt?"

"Don't worry, I will never let her get hurt!" Waylon declared, his grin wide and infectious.

However, Elaine's laughter was cut short as she noticed Madisyn's legs swinging dangerously close to the door frame. Just as she was about to intervene, a figure moved with swift grace, catching Madisyn's legs before they could collide with the frame.

All eyes turned to the newcomer.

Madisyn followed their gaze, and her breath caught slightly.

The man who had just intervened was the same one she had seen on the video call this noon. In person, he was even more striking—his features sharp and elegant, though his eyes carried a cool, detached air.

Elaine quickly snapped at Waylon, her tone sharp with concern, "Look at what you've done! If it weren't for Andrew, your sister could have been hurt!"

Andrew, without a word, gently released Madisyn's legs, his actions efficient, yet his expression remained unreadably calm.

Waylon quickly set Madisyn down, his enthusiasm replaced by remorse. "I'm sorry, Madisyn. I'm just really excited to see you!"

Feeling the firmness of the floor again, Madisyn reassured him, "It's fine."

Turning to Andrew, she offered her gratitude. "Thank you."

"Don't mention it," Andrew responded, his tone as cool and deep as before. "I'm Waylon's friend, Andrew Klein."

"Hello, Andrew," Madison acknowledged him.

Elaine, with a warm smile, said, "Everyone, have a rest. Andrew, Madisyn, let me know if you have any specific dishes you'd like to eat for dinner, and I'll have them prepared."

"Anything is fine!" Madisyn and Andrew responded simultaneously, their voices unexpectedly harmonizing.

The moment lingered as Madisyn and Andrew looked at each other.

Andrew, dressed sharply in a black suit, exuded a poised confidence, his long fingers resting casually in his pockets, his deep gaze meeting Madisyn's.

Feeling an unfamiliar flutter, Madisyn quickly diverted her eyes.

Observing this subtle interaction, Elaine chuckled softly.

"Alright then," she said and headed towards the kitchen.

Madisyn settled onto the sofa, a touch overwhelmed as Waylon continued to offer her an assortment of fruits.

Kristine observed the scene, her surprise evident.

Waylon had always been kind to her, but his attentiveness to Madisyn was unlike anything she had seen before.

Was he really unbothered by the fact that Madisyn was from the countryside?

Turning to Madisyn with a smile, Kristine inquired, "Madisyn, how many clothes did you and Mom end up buying?"

"I didn't keep track," Madisyn replied, her tone casual.

"Really?" Kristine asked, her eyes wide with a mix of curiosity and envy. "I saw the butler carrying in dozens of pieces. I'm so envious of you, Madisyn. I usually only manage to buy one or two pieces a month. But since it was your first time experiencing high-end brands, you must have been thrilled. It's not every day you get such a chance, right?" Kristine's face softened into an expression of understanding and empathy.