

Chapter 821 Overwhelmed

Before Rita could decide how to respond to Arthur, Milton had already moved. He rushed forward and pulled her into a tight embrace. "Mom! I finally found you!"

Milton had been only six when Rita had been compelled to leave him. More than twenty years had passed since then. But his longing for her had only grown deeper with time.

From the day she disappeared, he had been forced to shoulder a burden far too heavy for a child. Overnight, he had practically stepped from boyhood into adulthood. There was no real childhood. No slow journey into adolescence. He had simply grown up because life demanded it.

He had kept Rita's final instructions close to his heart—take care of Arthur, never forget her, and once he was grown and able, bring his sister home.

And he had fulfilled every word. He had stayed by his father's side, worked tirelessly, built himself into a dependable man, and never stopped carrying the family's load. He had never once forgot his mother. And just as she had told him, he had found his sister back. Now, after decades of struggle, the family was whole again.

As memories of that long, lonely journey rushed through him, Milton's eyes filled with tears. "Mom..."

He called out to her again and again, tightening his hold as if she might slip away. He could not bear the thought of losing her again.

Rita's memories of her own past were gone, but seeing Milton cling to her with such desperation left her unable to push him away. She didn't resist. His embrace was warm. Steady. Comforting. So this was what it felt like to be held by her son.

After a moment, Rita lifted her arms and slowly hugged him back. She had no memory of raising a child. No memory of hugging her child. Holding a grown man as her son felt unfamiliar, yet the feeling easing into

her heart was gentle and strangely sweet.

Milton sensed her awkwardness. He understood. She didn't remember him. But she hadn't rejected him. She had even returned the hug. That alone was a gift he didn't dare hope for.

Wanting to ease her discomfort, Milton eventually released her. He pulled out his phone and brought up an old photo. "Mom, this was me when I was little."

Aside from that first emotional rush, Milton was calm and considerate. Every movement now was soft, careful not to overwhelm Rita.

Rita felt the tenderness in his actions, and her heart warmed further. She lowered her gaze to the screen.

Yesterday, Eliana had shown Rita only one picture—a young Rita holding the little Milton. Today, Milton showed Rita a gallery of memories.

Milton's phone was filled with countless photos. They captured moments from his birth up until the age of six. Every image carried warmth, closeness, and the unmistakable bond between mother and son.

Through the images, Rita caught glimpses of her past self. The memories still didn't return, but the emotions inside the photos stirred something deep. She could feel her heart leaning toward her son.

Milton murmured, pointing gently, "Mom, look here. You knitted this hat for me. That keyboard was your gift for my third birthday. And this painting... We made it together."

In every picture, Milton found a trace of the love Rita had given him.

Rita examined each image while listening to Milton's soft voice. Before she even noticed, tears were rolling down her cheeks. She still couldn't recall the moments, but the joy in those photos touched her deeply. This was the happiness she once had. This was the bond she shared with her son.

"Milton..." Rita whispered, her voice trembling with emotion. "I left you when you were so young. I even forgot you. And you spent all these years searching for me. I'm so sorry... You have every right to blame me."

Hearing her speak his name filled Milton with bittersweet warmth.



"Please don't apologize. None of this was your fault. The people who took you were responsible. And they've already been dealt with. No one will ever tear us apart again."


"That's right! We won't let anyone separate us again!" Arthur chimed in quickly. He had been watching quietly, waiting for the right time to approach. Seeing Rita soften toward Milton filled him with hope, and he stepped in without hesitation.

At the sound of his voice, Rita lifted her gaze.

The moment their eyes met, Arthur's composure shattered. He stepped forward and grabbed her hand. "Rita..."

Rita flinched. She pulled her hand away instantly and took several steps back. She might have accepted the truth—that he was her husband—but to her, he was still a stranger. She wasn't ready for that kind of closeness, not from a man she didn't remember.



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