

## Chapter 14 Wishful Thinking

"Hey, Annabel? Annabel!" Rupert uttered, holding her in his arms and patting her face gently. "What's wrong with you? Are you hurt?"

Still shaking with her eyes closed, Annabel murmured, "It's so dark... I'm scared. Don't leave me... Don't go..."

Dark? It turned out she was scared of the dark.

Rupert's heart softened after this realization. As he looked at Annabel's face, he recalled the little girl who huddled up beside him with a pale face years ago.

A sense of pity brewed in his heart. Holding her hand, Rupert said, "Don't be scared. I'm here now. It's all right. I'll take you home."

His assuring words worked like magic. Annabel stopped shaking. She kept mumbling, but Rupert couldn't make out what she was saying. He just stood upright with her in his arms.

"I'll never leave you. You are safe now. Don't be scared, okay?" He continued to comfort her on the way out. 📍

Rupert gently put her in the passenger seat. When he tried to fasten the seatbelt for her, he saw that she was gripping his shirt with both hands.



The woman in front of him was totally different from the one who told him off yesterday. His heart ached to see her like this.

Rupert blamed himself for not coming sooner. If he had saved her number when Bruce sent it to him, he would have saved her earlier.

Anyway, it was better late than never. He couldn't even bear to think of what would happen to her if she stayed in the dark for the whole night.

Rupert drove home at a high speed and carried Annabel to her bedroom. He wiped the sweat on her forehead with a wet towel and then tucked her in. Just as he turned to leave, a hand grasped his pant.

He turned around, only to find that Annabel's eyebrows were knitted as she slept uneasily. Her face was still a little pale.

He tried to loosen her grip, but she caught his hand instead.

"Don't go... Stay with me please..."

Her voice was shaky, not indifferent like it usually was. It was like that of a child who needed to be comforted.

Suddenly, Rupert imagined Annabel's face changing into that of that little girl. He blinked severally.

From the first day he saw Annabel's face, he felt that she



had a striking resemblance to that girl. The feeling was stronger now.

After hesitating for a while, Rupert sighed and sat on the edge of the bed.

Rupert kept seeing the little girl's face when he looked at Annabel with tenderness in his eyes. It was as if they were one and the same person. If she was the little girl, he didn't mind staying with her and accompanying her in the dark for the rest of his life. However, he dismissed the thought as wishful thinking.

It was already dawn by the time Annabel work up.

A chink of sunlight fell on her face. She yawned and looked around in confusion. Before she could tell where she was, she met Rupert's weird gaze.

As soon as Annabel noticed she was holding his hand, she loosened her grip and sat up. "What are you doing here?"

The answer to her question came to her mind as soon as she blurted it out.

She suffered a panic attack yesterday. Her phone ran out of power. She was hyperventilating and her heart was beating faster than normal. Her throat was parched, so she texted Rupert a message instead of calling him.

When she saw Rupert's bloodshot eyes and overall tired look, she tried to recall what happened last night. She

scratched her head in embarrassment.

"You brought me back, didn't you? Thank you. But why did you sleep in my room?"

Annabel didn't think he needed to be here. In her opinion, he should have left once he tucked her in bed. Why did he lay beside her as if they were a real couple?

Rupert became cold again. "Weren't you the one who held my hand and begged me to stay with you? Have you forgotten?"

Annabel's face turned red immediately. "But... But... I didn't mean to say that. I wasn't in my right mind, but you were. You should have left as soon as I fell asleep."

"Oh, so I was wrong to have taken care of you for the whole night?"

"No, I... I didn't mean that." Annabel just couldn't wrap her head around why he went out of his way to look after her. She was used to him being cold and uncaring. This was what he got in return? Rupert sucked his teeth. He regretted feeling pity for her and staying by her side last night.

"Don't read any meaning to my actions. I just didn't want anything bad to happen to you. My grandpa would be mad at me if you got hurt. I did it for myself, so don't flatter yourself!"

Words like this usually hurt women. In Annabel's case, she was relieved. She thought that this was more like him.

"I didn't have any intention to flatter myself. Since you are so ruffled, it appears you gave this too much thought," she retorted, rolling her eyes at him.



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