

The Enchanted Night by LEIGH COBBETT Chapter 13

The man's voice was laced with amusement. Maybe, it was the amusement at Cassandra's startled reaction. When she heard something and raised her head, a sex tape was playing on the big screen in the room. A man and a woman were passionately making love. The man was thrusting himself hard, making the woman moan loudly, filling the room with sounds of love making.

Still sitting on the bed, Cassandra was too shocked to say a word.

Even more insulting was that Rufus played the clip at full volume, assaulting her ears with the irksome noise. 'What the hell is he up to, by showing me the video?' she wondered. But then, suddenly, the angle of the camera changed, clearly showing the face of the man in the video. It was a familiar face to Cassandra.

Holy crap! The man on the screen was none other than her husband, Lionel.

"What's your reason for showing me this?" she asked now feeling both insulted and confused.

Though there was no love in Cassandra and Lionel's marriage at all, it was still not a pleasant feeling seeing her husband cheat on her. It was a humiliating slap in face to watch the two on the screen making love. She was aware of Lionel's hatred towards her and has suspected his philandering. Lionel wasn't a faithful man by any standards, and to be honest, she didn't give a damn. He could do whatever he wanted to do as long as he left her alone. But seeing the evidence of her husband cheating was another thing. And the whole ordeal felt much worse being shown to her by Rufus — a third party.

In an instant, Cassandra's pretty little face became pale, her lips trembled. She couldn't stand watching the video for another second. She turned her head to glare at Rufus, who was sitting aside watching her with a smirk.

"I was very confused at first. Why were you a lonely woman, when it's barely four years of your marriage to him? But now I finally realize just how unfaithful Lionel has been to you,"

In a casual, carefree tone, Rufus spoke as if he didn't know how hurtful his words were. But as much as Cassandra was angry and humiliated by his words, he was only being honest. What he said was true. The only problem was his gleeful manner of going about it.

"What joy could you derive from gloating over my heartache and pain? Are you so twisted as to celebrate the falling apart of your own brother's marriage?"

Cassandra's hands tightened on the bed sheets. Beads of sweat forming the brow, her jaw tightened and her lips thinned into a grim line. Seething with anger now, she raised her head and with a threatening glare confronted the voyeur.

"Whatever weird and unpredictable games you're up to, I'm not interested," she blurted out honestly. "It's been barely two days of your return to this city, and here you're, kicking up a storm. Do you think I'll be naive to trust you any more?" But looking at his face, smug like he didn't give a damn about anything, Cassandra suspected Rufus was hiding something. Usually, this kind of attitude would throw Cassandra off, but she chose to play along just in case he could be tricked into giving away whatever he was being cryptic about.

‘Why is he doing this? What does he want from me? To begin with, there must be a reason he’s showing me this video,’ Cassandra quietly mulled.

Clearing his voice, Rufus replied, “Well, you know, I am only interested in you.”

Like a predator watching its prey, his fixed, stony gaze gave Cassandra the creeps. It dawned on her, he was not kidding. At that very moment, he read her incredulous look for a signal to his sinister motives, he moved closer to Cassandra. Then he spread his hands, caging her between him and the bed. The corners of his lips curled into an enticing smirk.

But there was a threatening look on his face. Like a fierce beast, he seemed to give the subtle message that he was in control and he’d get whatever he wanted, even if it meant doing so was against Cassandra’s will. The coldness in his gaze made her heart sink.

In her gut, she had a feeling that Rufus was a devil in disguise and not as simple as she had assumed. ‘This is a dangerous man from whom I should keep distance,’ she thought to herself.

“Anyway, now that I’ve seen the video, and it is late, I have to go,” Cassandra began. “If I don’t get back home on time, they will get concerned, and I don’t want anyone to start worrying about me. Am I free to leave?” Cassandra added, tryin

g to remain as calm and watchful as possible.

At heart, she was deeply anxious and didn’t want to stay here trying to guess what was on Rufus’ mind anymore. As soon as possible, she just wanted to get away from this creepy man.

“I just want to tell you that you don’t need to kick yourself for what you have done. What I’ve just shown you is only but one example of Lionel’s unfaithfulness, and you have every reason to get even with him,” Rufus said in a surprisingly gentle voice.

Though Cassandra didn’t want to admit it, she agreed with him. For the pain of putting up with an unfaithful husband, she even felt vindicated in her tryst. When she first slept with Rufus, she had felt so guilty that she wanted to crawl back into Lionel’s arms and make their marriage work. But now, after watching the video and listening to Rufus, she wished Lionel would just disappear from her life and leave her alone.

The only worry on her mind was that she couldn’t tell what Rufus was up to. She wished for superpowers to see through this man in front of her, read his motives and understand a whole bunch of stuff about him. Wasn’t Rufus only trying to take advantage of her failing marriage? Did he have any sincere care for her?

Cassandra knew she was not quite herself ever since the incident with Rufus. She just couldn’t help herself. She felt anxious and afraid of being found out, especially when she knew that Rufus was her brother-in-law. But why did Rufus comfort her in a quite unusual way? Cassandra didn’t want to spend more time dwelling on this.

“Thank you for your concern. Can I go back now?”

To be honest, Cassandra’s head was in a mess. But she still pretended to be calm and collected in front of Rufus, trying to hide her nervous heart from him.

“Yes, you can. Let me drive you back,”

Rufus said, leaning towards her again, bringing his face way too close. He tried to put on a charming smile, but Cassandra just didn't have the time appreciating it.

All that she wanted was to get out of here as quickly as possible. Hearing Rufus' permission, she immediately got up from the big bed, and started straightening her clothes.

"Thank you, but I can go back by myself. I just hope that you can keep your promise and also keep my secret,"

Flatly, she refused Rufus' kind gesture to drive her home. Whenever he was around, there was a way she always felt nervous, and on this particular night, after the fact that he had disappointed and terribly unnerved her, she wanted to be away from him at the first opportunity.

"If you really want to keep your secrets, you'll have to stop looking so nervous around me. If you keep acting like this, you may fool a few people, but soon, someone in the Tang family, or close enough will surely sniff out something irregular. So, for your own good, I'd advice you to pull yourself together."

Putting on a contemplative look, Rufus lazily folded his arms across the chest and just stood there motionless.

In a way, he was right. Lately, Cassandra knew pretty well she had been acting somewhat fidgety, as she struggled to hide her guilt, especially from Lionel's family. Maybe Rufus was not planning to blackmail her, as she had suspected in the first place. But that did not necessarily mean he was going to help her. However, she decided she wasn't going to get bogged down with either of the two brothers or the whole Tang family.

After a moment of reflection, she calmly answered, “I see.” Then she took a deep breath and added, “Don’t worry. I will be careful of my actions from now on. Good-bye.”

Then she turned to walk towards the door. But Rufus immediately walked up, following her all the way to the door.

“I’ll go with you. We are heading the same way, aren’t we?”

His deep, raspy voice sounded so relaxed, almost alluring. “Actually, I’m also staying in the Tang family house for now,”

Rufus added, taking quick strides. Cassandra thought he only wanted to catch up with her, but he walked past her without so much as looking back. Helplessly, Cassandra stared at his back for a few seconds with an incredulous look clouding her face. She let out a silent sigh, quickened her steps and tried to follow him as closely as she possibly could.

On the big screen in the room, the video was still playing though there was no one watching. The strange sounds of Lionel and his fling making love echoed across the big room.