

MIDNIGHT BRIDE THE CEO'S TEMPTATION

Chapter 14 - 14: She Achieve Nothing

"Sister, do you know him?" Asked the child, Tony, curiously.

Savannah nodded.

More than "know," she thought to herself. She'd grown up with him in the orphanage, in the aftermath of her father's death. She cried, daily, sometimes in throat rattling sobs, other times a weak whimper, but always a sense of earth-shattering change taking place around her. Like she could not trust the walls around her, that they might fall away and reveal another, stranger reality she knew nothing of. For the first time in her life, she was alone, in every sense of the word, and she didn't know what to do.

At first, she'd stayed in bed until the uncanniness of her own life, spinning in circles around her head, drove her up and out, if only to get away from the repeating dreams that haunted her. It was then that she met Kevin. A tall, willowy boy with a mop of blonde hair. He sat next to her on a bench in the courtyard and showed her a picture he'd drawn. "Do you like it?" He held it up. It was her, smiling in a one-piece dress, hair fanned over her face. He'd drawn her much more pretty than she really was. She blushed and, for the first time in a long while, smiled. "You should do that more, it suits you," he said. And while he was around, she did.freewebnovel.com

Kevin was 16, one year older than her. She soon discovered he had been here for as long as he could remember. He'd grown up along its halls, and that had made him different than a lot of boys she'd met before. He didn't know his family and had no interest in doing so. In his mind, they abandoned him, and that was that. He was somehow harder, coarser, like a rough stone. She liked that about him. He was her stone.

They started to follow each other around during the daytime and, occasionally, they would slip off to talk at night. Those were the most exciting meetings. It was like striking stones each time they grazed a touch, sparks shimmering up her fingertips. They only ever talked, but it was the possibility of doing so much more.

She started to think that he had changed, become less a roughhewn block of stone but more a pebble from a stream. That the cracks and bladed edges he'd had were worn smooth by their time together, but she was wrong.

One day, a tall boy, a bully, grabbed her father's necklace from around her neck, pulling her to the floor and walking away with it. Despite not wanting to cry, she couldn't help it. She felt the tears welling up in her eyes and her face going red, and it was then that she saw a figure pounce on her bully, sending him tumbling to the ground. Then the figure pummeled him, slamming his fists into his face and flank repeatedly. The bully let out screams that made everyone freeze instantly and turn to see what was happening. It was Kevin. Willowy Kevin straddled over the boy's top and beat blood out of his face, covering his knuckles. And then, as quickly as it had begun, it was finished. A nurse came out and dragged the bully to the nurse's room and Kevin off and away, into the old Guard House where he spent the next week.

After that, no one had said so much as a bad word to her.

Soon after, her uncle had finally signed all the paperwork and had arrived to take her to her new home. She cried miserably, and Kevin soothed her, rubbing her head gently. "We will still be able to see each other. You're not leaving town, and I'll always be here. I promise."

When she returned one year later, he was nowhere to be found. She asked the headmaster if he knew where he'd gone. He shrugged. "He sends money occasionally. No contact details, I'm afraid."

Secretly, she knew that she'd kept returning to the orphanage in the hope of seeing him. And every time she'd arrived, she'd feel a pang of disappointment when he wasn't there. But now he was, and he wasn't the skinny boy she remembered, and he'd changed so much, and she didn't know what to do. And she suddenly doubted that the fantasy that she'd built up in her head over the years could live up to the reality. How could it? She'd built him up so tall and so high.

A half-hour passed.

Kevin finished the pictures for those children and walked out of the studio with Savannah to the courtyard bench.

"Kevin, why did you leave without telling me?" Savannah could not hide her heart, which pulled on its strings.

"Didn't the director tell you? I was moved soon after the fight. It all happened so quickly that I didn't have time to call you. I moved across the state to a place out in the sticks for a year before I turned 18, and then I went out and got work." Kevin's tone was mild and passive.

"But why didn't you call me over all this time? You had my number."

"I must've lost it. I thought about calling you, I did! But there was no way. And once I was across the state... well, how could I contact you then? And then after, too much time had passed, and-

"It's fine." She said, not thinking, swatting aside his excuses as tears welled in her eyes.

"Don't cry! The children will laugh at you just like when you first came here." Kevin said, wiping her cheek with his thumb. His touch shocked her. "And I will have to fight them again, but this time I think I'll be sent to prison. Beating up a kid and all."

She laughed. "So, what are you doing now for work?"

"JK's game development."

"Wow! That's really good," she applauded. "They're really big, right? And, what, are you a programmer?"

"I am." He smiled. "Also, I help with the art, but yeah, programming is my bread and butter. And you? How are you?"

She shrugged, suddenly embarrassed that she had achieved nothing with her life thus far, despite all the opportunities afforded to her, while Kevin excelled with none. She shifted the subject. "So, have you found your biological parents?"

A knot of pain -or was it anger?- fluttered over Kevin's face. He sighed and looked at her, smiled weakly. "No."