

# A Ruling Passion – Chapter 31

The elevator stopped on the seventh floor. An overwhelming intimidation urged Simon Donn to look up at the man who entered the elevator, while he instinctively moved towards the corner.

The elevator door closed briefly. The man suddenly launched a kick at Simon Donn's lower abdomen. His tone was gentle but undoubtedly threatening.

“Don't think of laying a finger on those you shouldn't!”

The harsh kick caused Simon Donn to bend down, hugging his stomach feeling bewildered. “Who are you?”

“Arianne Wynn's husband!”

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When Arianne returned and stepped into the hall of the Tremont Estate, her immediate reaction was to check if Mark Tremont was back.

Mary was amused by her cautious manner as she chuckled. "Sir's not back yet!"

Arianne breathed out in relief. "He said that he's coming back for dinner tonight..."

Logically, he should have returned home earlier than she had.

Coming out of the shower, Arianne saw that Mark Tremont was already seated at the dining hall. His hair was damp and changed into his lounge clothes, evidently having just showered as well. This was his habit after arriving home.

Arianne sat opposite to him and started to eat quietly. Just as she sent a scoop of food into her mouth, Mark Tremont's phone rang jarringly.

The owner of the device took a look at his mobile and switched it off casually without answering the call. This surprised Arianne as he rarely did anything like this.

After the meal, she asked carefully, "Let me dry your hair for you?"

Mark Tremont did not reject her, standing up to go upstairs first.

Relatively reassured, Arianne followed him swiftly. When he sat down before the French window, she stood behind him with the hair dryer she had taken from the bathroom.

As Arianne's fingers swept through his hair, she was surprised to discover that a man's hair could be so soft. This was the first time she was close to him without standing on the tips of her toes.

"Tiffany Lane will be able to come back next week, but not Will Sivan. You don't have to be so obsequious."

Arianne's movement froze. He thought that she was sucking up to him. She learned from Mary, who told her since she was young, that damp hair should be blown dry as soon as possible, especially during the winter.

Otherwise, one would catch a cold easily and get headaches. So she was purely concerned for Mark.

"Oh," she hummed and continued blow drying his hair, swallowing the weight that pressed down on her heart.

After the brief silence, Mark Tremont suddenly slapped the hair dryer out of her hand as he stood up and stared at her coldly.

“Did you not hear what I said! No matter what you do and its extent, Will Sivan won’t be able to come back! He can forget thinking about coming back here in this lifetime!”

Arianne bent down to pick the hair dryer up and bit her lips. “When are we divorcing? The incident three years ago has already passed...”

Mark Tremont’s gaze seemed like violent ocean waves crashing against each other.

“Divorce? Do you think that I’ve married you to conceal what happened three years ago? Hah... I’ve said that you don’t have to ever think about escaping from me this lifetime. The retribution of your sins has just begun!”

There was a slight jolt that went through Arianne before she said softly with a lowered gaze, “This is your revenge? Tying yourself to me for your entire life and waking up to see your enemy’s daughter every day... Are you taking revenge on me or yourself? Why are you cutting off your nose to spite your face? I’ll accept any vengeance of yours, but you don’t have to drag yourself into this. I’ll make up for it with all I have... alright?”

Mark Tremont sneered. “Hah, what do you mean all you have? What do you have? You have nothing. More like... it’s of no value to me!”

# A Ruling Passion – Chapter 32

Arianne Wynn held her breath, suddenly realizing that her wish to end her current predicament was nothing but a dream. He was already being merciful by sparing her a lifetime to make up for her sin, she had no right to choose...

“I’ll go to sleep in the guest room.” This was her last form of resistance.

“Try take another step!”

Mark Tremont’s threat was bitterly cold, feeling like the freezing wind outside had gushed right into her heart.

She halted her stride and kept quiet, waiting for him to continue.

After a period of dead silence, his thin lips parted to speak again.

“You want to leave so badly? Okay, I’ll fulfill your wish! On the premise that... you bear me a child!”

A child? He wanted her to give birth to a child? A child that belonged to them?

Arianne Wynn was suddenly reminded of the past when her mother left for another man without reservations or consideration for her. The taunting and insults that she faced since she was a child were still vivid in her mind.

Having a child was especially a taboo to her. In her mind, it required responsibility. It was not something as simple as a promise.

Nonetheless, Arianne yearned for freedom. She yearned to escape this life that was shackled by sin. Caught in a dilemma, the scales of morality ultimately fell out of balance.

“Okay...”

Barely noticeable, surprise sparked deep within Mark Tremont’s eyes as rage took over his mind. He clenched his jaw.

“You’ll have to be capable of making me lay a finger on you then! Don’t even think about leaving without a child!”

Arianne Wynn took in a deep breath and walked to him, unbuttoning his shirt with her trembling hands. Her thick eyelashes shook like a butterfly's fluttering wings. Unable to conceal the nerves in her gaze, she did not dare look up at him.

She had never been clear on the place Mark Tremont held in her heart. A person who had taken her in and took care of her for so many years had now become her husband.

With much reluctance, Arianne could not even undo one button due to her nervous state. Heaving from the man's chest was evident that he was already annoyed.

Overwrought, she stood on the tip of her toes and took the initiative to kiss him.

Warm lips pressed on the corner of Mark Tremont's mouth.

Arianne did not notice the man's darkening eyes.

Was she so eager to leave?

"Enough!" Mark Tremont pushed her away and swept the tea set on the coffee table seethingly to the floor. The glass shards smashed and flew out cutting Arianne's uncovered ankle. Blood dripped from her snow white skin.

The piercing pain put a frown between Arianne's brows as she staggered to stabilize herself. She stared at him in surprise and innocence.

Mark Tremont's hand raised subconsciously when he saw the wound on her ankle before he put it down rigidly. Turning away slightly, his expression was icy.

"Do you think I'll touch a woman another man has put his hands on?"

He went into the walk-in closet afterward. Leaving as he slammed the door after getting changed.

The absurd outrage lingered, representative of the mess that stayed on the floor. When Arianne Wynn broke out of her trance after some time, the bleeding from her ankle had already made a blood stained patch on the floor.

Mary came in opening the door and treated her wound with a worried look

"Ari, have you gotten into an argument with sir again? This is how his temper is, you've got to cooperate with him a bit more, sigh..."

Arianne let out a humorless chuckle. "I've been compliant... I do whatever he asks me to..."



Why would he still get mad?

Mary was quiet for a moment before realizing, “The incident three years ago... has broken sir’s heart. Ari, men are like that. You’ve gotta warm his heart up if he can’t get over what’s bugging him. That’s life. I can see that sir likes you.”

Arianne did not say anything back. Could she warm up Mark Tremont’s heart? No, anyone could but not her.

Mark Tremont did not return for the night.

Arianne had only fallen asleep much later into the night.

## **A Ruling Passion – Chapter 33**

Waking up the next day, Arianne Wynn went straight to the office without having breakfast. A huge stack of documents had appeared mysteriously on her desk, causing Arianne to frown.

“Whose are these?”

Someone spoke in a whisper from the side, “Mr. Donn assigned them to you. Have you offended him? He’s tossed almost everything in the department to you. You most probably have to work overtime today...”

Arianne said nothing, having already guessed this was his spiteful revenge for yesterday’s rejection and embarrassment, and sat down to work accordingly.

She received a text message during lunch that read, “I’m Aery Kinsey’s mother. Let’s meet. I’ll wait for you at Mocha café.”

Rummaging through her memory, Arianne did not remember the name Aery Kinsey, so she replied, “I don’t know an Aery Kinsey.”

She received another text briefly. “It suffices that I know you. See you there.”

For no particular reason, the face of the woman whom Mark Tremont brought along to the airport popped out in Arianne’s mind suddenly. It was as if this force enticed her curiosity.

When lunchtime arrived, Arianne left the office to the café called Mocha. Its patrons were a middle to high class crowd, so the ambiance was quiet.

Entering the door, she received another text. "I'm at table no.1, by the window."

Arianne looked over to see a middle aged woman in an elegant black fur coat seated there. She was unable to make out her face since the woman's head was dipped to look at her phone.

"Aery Kinsey's mother?" Arianne went over and sat down.

When the woman looked up, Arianne was flummoxed, feeling like her blood ran cold that split second.

"Yes. I'm Helen Cameran. How do I address you?" The woman wore a pretty smile that belonged to the mannerism of an affluent mistress.

Arianne felt like her throat constricting as she stared at the familiar yet foreign face before her, unable to produce a syllable.

Helen Cameran frowned. "You don't have to be nervous. I have something to talk to you about, but it's not serious. How about you order a drink?"

Arianne's hands were balled into fists with her fingernails unknowingly stabbed deeply into her palms. Some time had passed when she found her voice back.

“No need, Mrs. Cameran. What is the matter? We can skip the small talk, I’m busy.”

Helen Cameran was rather displeased with the girl’s stoic tone though she did not show it, picking up her coffee gracefully and taking a sip.

“My daughter is dating Mark Tremont. I hope that you can stay away from him. Judging by the way you dress, you aren’t a match for someone like Mark Tremont anyway. No need to embarrass yourself. You won’t reap much benefit when he gets bored and dumps you. Instead, name me a price.”

A hostile chuckle escaped Arianne. “I’d just like to know how you’ve gotten my contact.”

Helen Cameran toyed with the enormous diamond ring on her finger. “You don’t have to know. Let’s talk if you are open to negotiation. If not, then assume we didn’t meet here today.”

Arianne’s voice had a barely noticeable quiver. “I’m only curious why you didn’t make a proper investigation of my background when looking for my contact. Come find me after you check for yourself who I am!”

Watching as Arianne’s retreating back faded in the distance, Helen Cameran was quite perplexed. She called Aery Kinsey.

“Darling, you’ve only given me the woman’s number. Did you look into who she is? I’ve met her today, somehow she was indifferent when I mentioned money. She’s not easy to get rid of...”

Aery Kinsey’s voice was filled with contempt on the other end of the line.

“Look at her pathetic self. Does it matter who she is? I don’t care. Mom, you must make her disappear from being around Mark. I hate her! I get irritated whenever I see that face of hers!”

Helen Cameran had always been docile against Aery Kinsey’s spoilt behavior. She chuckled and left her a promise, then dialed another set of numbers.

“Investigate someone for me.”

## **A Ruling Passion – Chapter 34**

Returning to the office, Arianne ignored the churning coming from within her stomach. Her mind was preoccupied with the sight of Helen Cameran’s face.

Never would she have thought that her long lost mother would appear in her life like this. She did not know whether she was enraged or disgusted, but she experienced a tidal wave of emotions within her.

Since it had been so many years, Arianne looked different. Helen Cameran was unable to recognize her, however, she could distinguish her! Her face had long etched itself deep in her memory.

There was something she did not understand.

Helen Cameran had left when she was six years old. Even if she had immediately remarried, Aery Kinsey would have to be seven years younger than her regardless. It did not look like Aery Kinsey was underage...

If she were not her biological daughter, yet Helen Cameran could care for her so devotedly as a stepmother, then what was Arianne to her... Was Aery Kinsey her biological daughter?!

"Arianne Wynn, do you plan to stay here the whole night to work overtime?" Simon Donn did not sound kind when he came around to supervise, having nothing to do as he saw Arianne resting herself on the table.

Arianne straightened herself up and continued finishing up her chores without giving Simon Donn a single glance, upsetting the latter.

"Your husband is amazing huh, making an appearance at the office to kick me. Arianne Wynn, you'll have to do whatever I make you do as long as you're still here. I'm telling you now that you'll suffer the consequences of what you've done!"

“What did you say?” Arianne jolted.

Simon Donn seethed once he recalled the incident.

“You didn’t know? Stop pretending. It’s an eye for an eye. Just you wait!”

Arianne’s mind blanked. Mark Tremont came to her office and beat up Simon Donn? Was this a joke? It felt like the shock from a meteor smashing into earth’s crust!

Taking in Arianne’s reaction, Simon Donn thought that she was afraid and felt his anger subside a little.

“Hah... it’s not too late if you apologize now. Maybe I’ll forgive you.”

Arianne took a glance at him and replied faintly, “Mr. Donn, I’m very busy. Please don’t disturb me.”

Chuckling out of his indignation, Simon Donn said, “You’re really... Okay, great. Take your time with your work then. Don’t leave the office until you finish them today!”

As the office hours passed, Arianne's colleagues left the company one after another.

As if she was intentionally persecuted, she was the only one working overtime. Other than a small lamp at her workspace, the rest of the office was pitch black, making the wide space appear a little eerie. The heater was turned off as well, further adding to the atmosphere.

Arianne left the office at midnight rubbing her hands that were frozen red. Once she reached the entrance, she saw Helen Cameran who stood stiffly in the snow.

Her pompous air from earlier today was long gone.

There was no ripple of emotion in Arianne's heart. She was about to turn and leave when Helen Cameran rushed forward to tug her arm.

"Ari..."

Disgust rose within her.

"Tell Mark Tremont yourself if you want me to leave him. I'm not the one who doesn't want to leave, he's the one who won't let me go! I only have one question for you. Is Aery Kinsey your biological daughter?"



Helen Cameran looked troubled. The glimmer of tears shone from the bottom of her eyes.

“Yes...”

It was as if Arianne had been electrocuted when she jolted and flung Helen Cameran’s hand away. “You gave birth to Aery Kinsey before you left my dad? You’re appalling. You disgust me!”

From Arianne’s memory, Helen Cameran had lived separate from her father for a long time. To think she had actually done such filth behind their backs!

Helen Cameran’s voice was tinged with a sob.

“Ari, I’m sorry. It’s mommy’s fault. You can hit me or condemn me... it comforts me that at least you’ve lived well these years. Mark Tremont is a good guy. You mustn’t have suffered with him. I find relief in knowing this...”

“Mommy? You don’t deserve to be called mommy! Didn’t you ask me to leave Mark Tremont and give him to Aery Kinsey in the afternoon? What? Changed your mind now?” Arianne found dark humor in this situation.

Helen Cameran's gaze was evasive.

"Ari... Mark Tremont's taken care of you for many years, that said I don't think you two make a good couple. To be honest, the Kinsey's aren't doing too well now. We have to depend on Mark Tremont to stand up on our feet again. Your younger sister finally acquainted herself with Mark Tremont after a lot of effort. I'm caught in between too. I have my problems. Consider it my plea. Ari, leave Mark Tremont!"

Arianne bit her lips for a long time. It felt like Helen Cameran was calling Aery when she called her by her nickname 'Ari'. Arianne Wynn and Aery Kinsey... the similar pronunciation of their names revolted her even more.

## **A Ruling Passion – Chapter 35**

"I've already told you. Look for Mark Tremont if you want me to leave. I have no say in this. Also, I'm telling you explicitly right now. I won't leave! Mark Tremont is my husband, we're married!"

After her outcry, Arianne ran into the snow. Two trails of tears ran down her cheeks. To meet her mother like this, they may as well not have met at all.

She did not know how far she had walked when a car honk rang behind her.

Thinking that it was Helen Cameran, she ignored it. When the car drove by her, Brian Pearce's head popped out from the window.

"Madam, hop in."

Arianne subconsciously wiped the tears that had long dried on her face and looked over to the back seat, vaguely catching sight of Mark Tremont's well formed outline.

She felt her frozen self gradually regaining warmth after getting into the car. Upon a moment of hesitation, she asked, "You knew that Aery Kinsey is my younger half sister right? Is this also your revenge?"

"You can assume so if you want," Mark Tremont replied.

Dead silence was all that remained in the car.

After a while, Arianne chortled.

"Haha... Mark Tremont, I suddenly feel like, I really hate you..."

Hate him, this was the first time she dared to say it out loud.

Mark Tremont's long fingers moved, his expression invisible in the dark. "That's good."

Returning to the Tremont Estate, Arianne laid herself down in bed after showering in the bathroom downstairs.

Soon, Mark Tremont exited the bathroom in their room that was only for his use and sat down before the French window as he usually did. With his hair still damp, it appeared that he was not going out again.

Arianne was restless once the thought of them both going to sleep in the same bed crossed her mind. In addition to what happened during the day, she was incredibly on edge, unable to calm herself down.

The crisp sound of a lighter sounded but the room did not smell of cigarettes. When Arianne cast her gaze on Mark Tremont, the latter was putting down the cigarette between his fingers. From his side profile, it looked like he was pondering.

All of a sudden, his mobile phone rang. Each note was shrill and intrusive to such a quiet night like this.

“Hello...” He picked up the call.

Aery Kinsey’s cutesy voice came from the phone. It was quiet but Arianne could still hear it.

“Mark dear, are you not coming to see me tonight? I miss you...”

“Mark Tremont! Are you not sleeping yet?” Arianne sat up and announced.

Her voice was not the softest, certainly Aery Kinsey could hear her as well.

She did not know what she was thinking, but there was a rush of impulse that propelled her to make herself heard.

Mark Tremont slightly raised his brow and side eyed her before telling Aery Kinsey, “I’m not free tonight.”

After that, he hung up immediately and looked at Arianne with a tug of his lips that resembled a smile.

Even when he said nothing, Arianne felt her conscience frightened under his gaze. She quickly lay down and covered herself in the blanket.

“I... I’m sleeping first...”

Swiftly, Arianne felt the spot behind her sink slightly. She shut her eyes tight, not knowing if he would be angered by what she had done just now.

Strong arms then brushed past her waist, Mark Tremont’s clear voice sounded straight to Arianne’s heart.

“I’ll give you a chance tonight.”