

Chapter 1549 A Cousin He Never Knew

Brandon, already heavily burdened by the turmoil in public opinion, was further agitated by the sudden appearance of an unknown woman in his home. His face darkened, and he squinted at the butler, demanding, "What's going on here?"

Observing Brandon's displeasure, the butler explained hastily, "This lady appeared at the gate of the mansion today, claiming to be your aunt's daughter. She said she had something important to discuss with you." ²

Frowning, Brandon looked at the unfamiliar woman, his tone sharp and unwelcoming. "You allowed her in just on her say-so? Do you think anyone can waltz into my mansion?" ³

Brandon's intimidating manner sent a chill through the room, and a bead of sweat rolled down the butler's forehead. He lowered his eyes, replying fearfully, "I didn't believe her at first, sir, but she bears a resemblance to your mother. And with reporters outside, I feared they might

exploit her appearance for their stories, creating further problems. So, I took the liberty of inviting her in."

The butler's explanation seemed reasonable, and Brandon chose not to pursue the matter further. His frown deepening, he asked, "Did you notice anything unusual about her?"

The butler considered the woman's behavior since she had entered the mansion. Shaking his head, he said, "I've kept a close eye on her, sir. The lady has been well-behaved, not wandering about or prying into matters she shouldn't. She's been quietly sitting on the sofa, behaving appropriately."

Brandon nodded but continued to frown.

His aunt's daughter?

Why did he have no recollection of her?

As far as he could remember, his mother had few ties with her maternal relatives. He was unaware if his mother even had any siblings, let alone an aunt with a daughter. Even if the girl were indeed his cousin, she was a stranger to him.

Moreover, with his current trouble, he could ill afford to lower his guard. This girl might even be a spy sent to entrap him.

Once satisfied that neither he nor his family knew this person, Brandon's expression grew colder. He fixed his eyes on the girl, who wore a white dress and bore a refined, elegant countenance. His gaze was filled with suspicion and impatience.

The young woman on the sofa sensed Brandon's scrutiny. She rose gracefully, her eyes calm. Far from appearing intimidated, she smiled warmly. "Are you Cousin Brandon?"

At her words, Brandon's impatience intensified. He responded curtly, "I don't recall having a cousin. I'd advise you not to make such claims lightly."

The girl's gentle and beautiful smile gave way to a look of hurt. "Brandon, you haven't even asked me who my parents are. How can you be so sure that I'm not your cousin?"

Her pretty face wore an expression of pitiful innocence that might have inspired a protective instinct in others.

But she was dealing with Brandon, a man known for his cold heart. No one could elicit warmth from him except for Janet.

Without even looking at the girl, Brandon's voice was icy as he ordered, "Ma'am, if you

have no further business here, please leave. Butler, see the guest out." 2

The girl had not anticipated such an indifferent dismissal.

As she saw herself about to be escorted out by the butler, panic replaced her earlier poise, and she cried out, "I have evidence."

"Evidence?" Brandon stopped the butler with a wave of his hand. His eyes glinted with a subtle menace. "If you're attempting to deceive me, you'll find Barnes a difficult place to reside."

The threat was unmistakable, causing the girl to flinch. She swallowed hard but nodded her head with determination. "I truly have evidence."


Brandon looked at her without expression, silently instructing her to reveal her proof.

"I... My name is Audrey Larson," she stammered, "and my mother's name is Alina Larson. She's your mother's sister."

As she spoke, Audrey extracted an old photograph, handling it with care as she presented it to Brandon.

Brandon took the photograph, his expression unchanging. But as he studied the image, a flicker of astonishment crossed his eyes.

It was an old black-and-white photograph. In it, two young girls smiled radiantly at the camera, and the girl on the left was unmistakably his mother.

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