



The Last Haven

Senvo Nova



An elderly couple lived in the apartment above Alexei, both nearly ninety years old. They were like two shadows bound by an invisible thread, treating every single day as a fragile and precious gift.



No visitors ever came to their door—no children, no grandchildren, and no friends. They moved through the world in a tight cocoon of loneliness, always together, as if afraid of being lost in the indifferent crowd.



One evening, a knock sounded at Alexei's door, and he found the couple standing there with a look of strange resolve. The grandfather spoke softly, asking if Alexei would be willing to purchase their apartment.



Alexei was momentarily confused, as he already had a home and saw no need for another. Sensing his hesitation, the old man lowered his voice even further, offering the entire place for just thirty-three million won.



The price was incredibly low, far below the market value of eighty-seven million for a flat of that size. Alexei's mind immediately turned to cynical thoughts of hidden debts or legal complications.



Then the grandfather handed him a handwritten contract, written in a beautiful, steady calligraphy that defied his trembling hands. The elegant script seemed to hold all the dignity the man had gathered over his long life.



The deal had only three conditions: pay the money upfront, let them stay until they passed, and inherit everything they left behind. It was a simple arrangement that carried a heavy, unspoken burden.



Alexei invited them inside, where a thick, heavy silence filled the room as they sat down. The grandmother carefully pulled a small metal box from her coat, treating it like a sacred treasure.



Inside were the property deeds and three death certificates that held the entirety of their suffering. They had lost a son to cancer, a daughter to a car accident, and a young grandson to leukemia.



The edges of the certificates were worn transparent from years of being held and wept over. The old couple sat in the quiet room, the last survivors of a family line that had been cruelly cut short.