

The Last Train

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She looked longingly, through the ceiling to floor windows that replaced an entire wall face in her bedroom, waiting for something to happen... She had all the comfort she could ever ask for but no comfort in the world could keep her from feeling lonely. She was always sheltered since her childhood, she had private tutors, had the best tailors to craft any piece of clothing she desired, had her butler provide her with whatever she wished for under the sky, so she never really had any opportunity to interact with girls of her age, let alone boys! So, she had this void in her life that often had her thinking about how unlucky she was, despite having anything that she could ask for. Her name was Alicia Wahlberg, and she was the only daughter of the business tycoon, Axelson Wahlberg who owned the conglomerate Wahlberg Corp. She had a fair complexion, was petite and had well defined features that would catch the eye of almost anyone who gazed upon her.

In another part of the city of Istana, in an underground pub that was closed off to the normal public, sat down on a stool at the bar table was Sean Polari. He was a tall, well-built man with a tan that would make most people jealous. While he was having his regular martini on the rocks, he heard some rumours about the daughter of the Wahlberg Corp owner travelling across the city for an important family function. He thought it would be a good opportunity to make some quick money and gain favour with his boss if he delivered her to him, head of one of the most notorious gangs in the region; Garreticus, which controlled most of the region's drug distribution, protection, and anything for the right price. Sean knew there was probably going to be a bodyguard hired to escort her, so he got his friend with connections to check out the most elite escort services offered in the city and search up for the Wahlberg name, to get a date and a time and the bodyguard's identity.

Meanwhile, in an apartment complex in an isolated part of the city, Roe Wilton was just sipping on his evening coffee when he got a call from his agent about his latest target. Roe was one of the finest bounty hunters the city had to offer and this time the target was Alicia Wahlberg. It was an assassination request from one of Wahlberg's competitors. He was hoping that losing his daughter would throw him off his game because it was a well-known fact that he valued his daughter more than anything else he ever owned. He saw the picture of Alicia and muttered under his breath 'what a waste to kill this beautiful girl'.

The day of the function was fast approaching, and Sean knew he had to make his move quickly. He decided to make his move three days before Alicia departed. He had to replace the bodyguard so he could accompany Alicia on her trip instead and eventually deliver her to his boss. While her assigned bodyguard was going back home in the middle of the night after his day at the office, Sean was waiting in an alley that he would usually pass at a specific time, which he had noticed after the last week of observation. As soon as Sean saw him, he put him in a headlock and dragged him into the alley. He slit his throat before he could make too much noise. There was blood spurting out rapidly from the gash in his throat and before long, he died from blood loss. Sean quickly collected the bodyguard's identity card, weapon and the ring that was used by his escort agency. He then removed the uniform from his body and dumped it into a dumpster in the alley. Istana was such a city where most people would turn a blind eye to a dead body in a dark alley. He got the uniform cleaned and altered to fit him, modified the identity card with his own picture and details.

On a bright Saturday morning, three days after he had sent the bodyguard to the afterlife, he approached the Wahlberg mansion. It was one of the grandest mansions in the city with a modern finish and a massive garden in the front that was well-maintained. He walked up the driveway, which felt like it was a mile long and rang the doorbell. The door was answered by the Alicia's butler, who checked his I.D. after which he was brought into a

waiting room where he was told to wait for Alicia to arrive. When she came into the room, Sean was speechless. She was breathtakingly gorgeous, and the photo didn't come close to capturing her beauty. He introduced himself to her as her escort for the train ride to the other side of the city. Alicia was shy in the beginning because she had not met many men in her life besides her butler, her dad and vendors, and definitely not any that looked like Sean. she immediately felt self-conscious in his presence but somehow managed to introduce herself and how she would be looking forward to being in his care for the duration of the trip.

They both made their way to the train station in a Fortuner, and they were both silent for the duration of the ride, but Alicia kept glancing in Sean's direction to admire his driving proficiency and how cool he looked doing it. Sean noticed these glances, but he didn't say anything. Once they reached the station, they got into the train and sat down in their cabin and were waiting for the train to depart. When the train began to move, Alicia stared through the window with awe and Sean asked her why she was behaving like she was on a train for the first time. Her face got flushed immediately and she responded, 'Because it is my first time on a train!', which caused Sean to burst out laughing. Sean took a newfound interest in Alicia and began asking her about her life and he shared his experiences up till then as she was curious how a normal person lived. Little did she know that he was a member of Garreticus and his life was far from normal. They were chatting away, and the time was passing by without Alicia's knowledge. She was happy that she could have this conversation with a handsome guy around her age while also enjoying the scenery through the window since she was barely let outside the house. She was having the time of her life. Sean was thoroughly enjoying himself when he certainly wasn't expecting to because he thought she would just be a spoilt girl with no personality.

While they were lost in each other's stories, Roe had gotten on the train and was going through each cabin looking for his target. When he entered Alicia's cabin Sean

immediately caught sight of him through the corner of his eye and realized he was drawing a weapon while he was focusing on Alicia. He sprung to his feet and closed the gap between them in a split second and tried to dislodge the pistol from Roe's hand, but he got a shot off and the bullet pierced Sean's body right between his shoulder blade and chest. He winced in pain but didn't waste a moment in striking Roe's weapon arm hard enough to make him drop the gun. He then drew his knife with his left hand from his breast pocket and drove it through Roe's heart. There was a look of terror in Alicia's eyes as she just watched all of this happen helplessly with her mouth open in a silent scream but not quite voicing anything out. Sean turned around and gave her a sheepish smile and said, 'This is what I was hired for ha-ha.' The look of terror was soon gone, and it was replaced with uncontrollable tears flowing down her face. She hugged him tightly and cried on his shoulders and was really concerned for his bullet wound. Sean reassured her that he has been through much worse and the bullet had not gone through any of his vital organs, and he was going to be fine. He then proceeded to take out the bullet with his knife and plastered himself with gauze and adhesives from the first aid kit that was in the cabin.

Sean had almost forgotten about his original purpose for getting on the train; to deliver her to his boss at the station in the end of the line so his boss could use her to collect ransom from Axelson Wahlberg. He had almost forgotten because of how much he had got drawn to Alicia's cheerful and innocent personality. There was no way he could hand her over to his boss, he thought to himself. But the last station was the next station the train would stop at and he had no other option to save her... He told Alicia the truth about himself and how he had initially planned to use her, but he had fallen for her truly over the few hours that they had spent together and wished to save her. Alicia couldn't believe what she was hearing but she knew she had to listen to him, or her life could be in danger. Sean told her that he would face the boss and his lackeys alone and that she should use the chance to escape

quietly while in disguise and get help as soon as possible. He also told her that he would come find her later, but he left one important detail out. The most important rule of Garreticus; fail a mission and you will lose your life.

The last station arrived and as promised, Sean exited the train alone and approached his boss and his men while Alicia, under disguise quietly went to the last carriage and used a cloth to cover her head, merged with the crowd and left the station. Sean knew that his life was over at that moment so he thought, he might as well go out guns blazing. He opened fire on his men and took down several them. The boss realized that Sean had gone rogue and ordered him to be taken out. There were too many men for Sean to fight alone... He was soon filled with bullets. As he hit the ground with a thud, he uttered 'It was nice meeting you Alicia, I wish I had met you under different circumstances.'