

The Mans Decree Chapter 457

Chapter 457 Wedding Gift

The car actually belonged to Josephine. Jared did not buy a car as there were plenty to borrow from between the garages of Josephine and Tommy. As a result, Jared always had an arsenal of vehicles at his disposal.

Ingrid nodded impatiently. "There was also talk that you came with a very pretty girl. Is she your girlfriend?"

Jared nodded with a helpless smile. The gossip of village women travels faster than scandals on the Internet!

"Where is she?" Ingrid demanded as she dragged him indoors. "Bring me to her!"

Upon pushing open the front door, they found Hannah and Josephine on the other end ready to receive them.

"Aunt Hannah!" Ingrid called cheerily.

"You're about to get married in a couple of days, Ingrid. Why are you still out and about?"

"It's too crowded and noisy at home! I had to come out for a breather."

Ingrid's gaze fell onto Josephine, who was standing beside Hannah. "You must be Jared's girlfriend," she gasped. "Oh, my. You're so pretty!"

Despite blushing deeply, Josephine's heart swelled with warmth at the sincere compliment.

"My name's Josephine, nice to meet you." She extended her hand to the younger woman.

"Ingrid." She offered hers as she took Josephine's hand. "Nice to meet you, Josephine!"

"Step out of the sun, you kids. Take this conversation indoors," Hannah said as she stepped through the door. "I'm going over to Ingrid's."

The group marched back into the house as Ingrid stared at Josephine with such intent that it made the latter feel uncomfortable.

"Why are you staring at her like that for, Ingrid?" Jared asked, nonplussed.

"Josephine is dressed in luxury brands from head to toe," Ingrid whispered admiringly. "Those are Cartier earrings! Do you know how expensive they are?"

Turning to the subject of her scrutiny, she asked, "What does your family do, Josephine?"

Josephine was impressed by Ingrid's sharp observation skills.

"Oh, we just run a small business," she responded modestly before taking off her earrings. "We didn't get to bring you a wedding gift, Ingrid. I would like you to have these earrings if you like them!"

Ingrid staggered backward in horror. "I can't accept them, Josephine," she cried, waving her hands frantically. "They're too expensive!"

"Not at all," said Josephine earnestly. "Think of it as a gift from us!" As she spoke, she forced Ingrid around to put the earrings on for her. "They look so pretty on you! Imagine how they'll complement your wedding dress."

At the mention of her wedding, the joy in Ingrid's face seemed to fade a little as if something weighed heavily on her.

"You're only nineteen, Ingrid," Jared added, failing to notice the change in her expression. "Why are you in a rush to get married instead of completing your education first? It'll be increasingly difficult to establish yourself in the modern society without a university education."

Jared had struck a chord. In an instant, tears welled up in Ingrid's eyes as she began to weep.

He gaped in horror, not expecting a passing remark to make her cry.

Josephine hastened to comfort the girl. "Jared didn't mean it, Ingrid. Ignore him."

Ingrid's sobs intensified at that. She threw herself onto Josephine's shoulder and howled.

Eventually, her sobs subsided before she drew a great shuddering breath to calm herself. "I know Jared didn't mean it, Josephine," she said with a snuffle. "I don't actually want to get married. I do want to go to university, but I... I can't get out of this!"

Ingrid's wide and fearful eyes reminded Jared forcefully of the days when they were children. It made his heart twinged with guilt to see her as helpless as she was.

The couple exchanged startled glances. How are there still forced marriages in the world?

"What is going on, Ingrid?" Jared asked with a frown.

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Chapter 458 Dog

"Forget it, Jared." Ingrid waved her hand before wiping her tears and forcing a smile. "It's no use talking about it. Besides, I've already accepted my fate."

"Tell me, Ingrid," he insisted. "I will help you."

"Yes, Ingrid," added Josephine. "We'll both do."

Ingrid gazed at Josephine for several moments before deciding to trust them. "Jared, do you remember Dog?"

Jared nodded. "Of course I do. He's the dropout who used to collect protection fees from his victims outside the school gates, isn't he? He even gave me a kick that I haven't forgotten."

"That's the man I'm marrying," Ingrid murmured in a small voice. her head hung dejectedly.

"What?" Jared shouted, his eyes widening with rage. "He's a degenerate who did not even graduate middle school! How did Aunt Sarah allow you to marry him?"

Though Josephine did not know Dog, she already had a negative impression of him painted in her mind's eye from the way the others were talking about him. This girl is beautiful and vivacious. She deserves to marry somebody better than that unsavory-sounding fellow.

Ingrid began crying again as she recounted to Jared her tale of woe.

When she was done, Jared turned blue with rage and slammed a fist down on the table, crushing it instantly into powder.

"How dare he!" Josephine shouted.

As it turned out, Dog did not explore different career opportunities after his expulsion. As the rate of industrialization in Horington exploded in recent years, inhabitants of the numerous villages around the area had required a nudge to cooperate given the large investments dumped into Avenport for property development. Due to a combination of high stakes, impatient investors. and tight project deadlines, Dog, who had secured a contracting apprenticeship and worked his way to make a name for himself in Avenport, had put his bullying skills to good use in a secondary aspect of his job.

Aside from his actual contracting engagements, Dog had negotiated agreements with the developers who were anxious to expedite the demolition. As soon as construction for the day ended, Dog would bring the very same men to the occasional stubborn residents who rebelled against the developers' terms and beat them into submission, often succeeding in coercing them into agreeing to a lower rate than what was originally offered. As his reputation spread, residents of Avenport began to steer clear of Dog.

Taking a fancy to his schoolmate, Ingrid, he came to the school one day and blackmailed the principal to expel her. Then, he threatened Ingrid with her parents in exchange for her promise to marry him, albeit out of fear.

Dog was also in charge of recommending the valuation of properties for approval. In an attempt to curry favor with his future in-laws, he valued Ingrid's family's house for a million, and their entire village to be slightly higher than the market rate. As a result, their village viewed Dog with an impression of benevolence that would have stood starkly at odds with any allegations Ingrid might make. As a result, Ingrid could only suffer in silence.

"D*mn it!" Jared muttered through gritted teeth, his eyes flashing dangerously.

He would not have cared if Dog was going to marry any other girl, as incidents of local thugs collaborating with developers occurred wherever urbanization occurred. I can't intervene every time that happens. I'm not a missionary! But when it comes to Ingrid, there is no way in hell I'll allow Dog to do as he pleases with her!

"Please don't act rashly, Jared!" begged Ingrid. "I've already made my peace with it. Dog has a group of men under his command, you know. I'd heard that he even has ties to the underground king of Horington. Those people commit murders without batting an eye! I can't let you bear that kind of risk for me."

"Are you referring to Tommy Lewis?" Jared asked.

Ingrid thought hard for a moment. "That sounds about right. I just heard Dog mention that name once in passing."

"Leave it to me, Ingrid. I'll get you out of this marriage and sign you up for university in Horington. You need a diploma, at the very least."

"Jared, I-" Ingrid began.