

Chapter Thirty-One

All four cousins gazed at each other, not wanting to be the first to speak. But that only left the board members mumbling angrily to themselves.

Finally, when another few minutes had gone by in silence, one of the board members stood up and said in annoyance, “You four are not serious! I have more important things to do than this!”

“Like what? Visit a brothel. You know a man who has been married for thirty years should be careful of the places he goes.” Chloe mumbled, casually inspecting her nails.

“Wh-at! What nonsense are you talking about!”

“All I'm saying is that people may assume that you are unfaithful to the

minister of justice only daughter if you continue going to these places.”

“Stop talking nonsense!”

“Leave if it's truly a lie and bear the consequences later. Or sit down and listen to what we have to say, and you won't have to experience the minister wrath. Your choice.”

Darting his eyes around the room, he slowly took his seat, and then focused his gaze on the table.

“Good. Now! Does anyone have something on their chest that they want to express?” Chloe said, maintaining eye contact with the faces around the table.

No one spoke because neither of them had the guts to do so, knowing the kind of person she was.

“Great. Charles go ahead.” Chloe said, giving her cousin a cold stare.

‘What a sly woman. Putting me on the spot!’ Charles thought in annoyance. ①

Then he stared at Jeff and Richard, but the moment their gazes met his, their eyes quickly shifted to the other end of the room.

“Fine. I will do it myself.” Charles mumbled, focusing on the board members' faces.

After a brief moment of hesitation, he stood up and rested his palm flat against the table with an aloof expression on his face.

“As we all know, my sister is married to a no-good man who tricked his way into our family for our money,” Charles said, pausing as he eyed his cousins to see if anyone of them wanted to help him. ②

But their faces remained mutual as they avoided meeting his gaze.

Knowing that he was on his own for the time being, he gazed back at the board members and coldly intoned, “What you all don't know is that he's on Mr. Ford's hate list because of a debt that he owes him.”

“But I was at the party Mr. Ford held, and he didn't seem hostile to Miss Catherine or her husband. In fact, I caught a glimpse of him laughing with them.” A board member said with a frown.

“Are you calling me a liar, Barry? Because the last time I checked you were the one lying about how much money you spend from the company cupboard.”

“Charles, don't be like that.”

“No. I don't mind us revisiting the records that I intentionally overlooked last month.”

“Your hands are not clean when it comes to that money.”

“How about we tell that to my grandfather and see who gets fired at the end of today?”

“There's no need. You are not a liar and neither am I.”

“It's good that we are on the same page.”

Silence followed Charles' remark as he kept quiet for a second to read their faces.

Then he tapped his fist on the table twice and said, “We can't have someone who is connected to the enemy of Mr. Ford, working as the executive vice president of this company.”

Everyone held in their words as they doubtfully stared back at him.

Noticing the hesitation in their eyes, Charles stood up straight and said, “Who has heard the saying that the friend of my enemy is also my enemy?”

“Shouldn't it be that the enemy of my enemy is my friend?” A lady from among the board members asked.

“No, Susan. In this case, it's not! Now, Mr. Ford would hold a grudge against this company because! Because the executive vice president's husband is someone he hates!”

“I see,”

After maintaining her silence for a while, Chloe let out a soft breath and said, “My cousin is right. The night of Catherine's wedding, Rome came home bruised up after Mr. Orlando took him away from the ceremony.”

Faint echoes of mumbling circulated the room as the board members stared a

t each other.

“Mr. Ford wouldn't beat up someone for no reason. This shows how much he despises my cousin's husband.” Chloe roughly said.

The mumbling in the room became loud, and in a fit of anger, she slapped her palms on the table and shouted, “If we don't vote Catherine out, we will suffer along with this company.”

“They want to kick Miss Catherine out of the company?” Morton mumbled, letting go of the doorknob.

Then he turned around and started walking, heading straight for Catherine's office.

The moment he arrived inside the room and she lifted her head to gaze at him, Morton faked a bright smile and said, “Can I please use your phone.”

“Uh,” Catherine mumbled, lowering

her brows.

“I hope this is not weird. I need to text my wife urgently, like now, but my phone is off. It will take a while before it comes on and I can't wait for another minute.”

“Well, sure.”

With a soft smile on her lips, she picked up the phone and handed it over to Morton.

Not wasting a second, he scanned through her call log and stopped at the number saved as “Husband.”

Then he copied Rome's number, pasted it in her message box, and sent it to his number before deleting the text.

“Thank you,” Morton said, giving the phone back to Catherine.

Afterward, he hurried out of the room, hurried into his office, and made a call.

“Why did you have to put the meeting on the highest floor? I feel like this elevator has been going on forever.” Rome mumbled, throwing his father a dirty look.

At that moment, he felt a vibration in his pocket, so he reached his hand into it and took out his phone.

At first, Rome felt a bit skeptical, seeing the words, “unknown number,” blinking on his screen. But then he answered the call anyway and listened.

“Is this Rome? This is Morton from ‘DreamTeam.’” Morton's voice echoed into his ear.

“Well, this is him,” Rome said, noticing his father eyeing him.

“Miss Catherine is about to be illegally voted out of the company. I could tell Mr. Barlow. But he will end up firing me and overlooking the situation, so I

called you instead.”

“Smart choice. Thanks for the heads u p.”

After ending the call, Rome stared back at his father and said, “I need you to visit ‘DreamTeam’ for me. I will handle things here.”

“Is this about my daughter-in-law?” Mr. Ford asked, feeling a sense of anger rising in him.

“Yes.”

“Tell me what I need to do.”

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K)



Chapter Thirty-Two

The moment the elevator hit the top floor and its door opened, Rome walked into the corridor along with Mr. Orlando and K.

Then he faced his father and said, “You know what to do, right?”

“Yeah. But can you handle this end?” Mr. Ford asked with worry in his expression.

“Father, I...”

“Rome, inside that conference hall, are the top beasts in the business industry, and if you can't tame them, you wouldn't earn their submission.”

“Have a little faith in me. I'm your son after all.”

As his expression relaxed, Mr. Ford rested his palm on Rome's cheek,

patted it, and said, "You have my full trust, son. I'm proud of you."

Afterward, he drew his hand to his side and the bodyguard pressed button one. Then the elevator door closed.

"Let's go," Rome mumbled, glancing at Mr. Orlando.

The conference room was quiet as everyone anxiously waited, expecting Mr. Ford to walk into the room at any minute.

But when the doors opened and Rome stepped inside, it grew awfully silent with everyone staring in disbelief as he marched to the front of the room, and then stopped before facing them.

"Good day. I'm Rome Ford, the new head over the 2.5 billion dollars resort project." Rome said, keeping a straight face.

Shock took over the guest's faces as

they focused their eyes solely on him without uttering a word.

Then after a few minutes had gone by quietly, a commotion arose with everyone throwing their thoughts in the open and speaking out whatever came to mind.

Some of their statements were offensive, applauding, and stupid. But with all of them speaking at once, Rome barely had the chance to utter a word. ①

Even when he did try to say something, his words would get overshadowed by the noise in the room.

“Mr. Orlando, shut these people up,” Rome mumbled, rubbing his forehead.

Nodding slightly, Mr. Orlando approached the mic, tapped on it, and instantly the room fell silent.

Then he frowned at the sudden change in their behavior and said, “My young

master has something to say.”

No one uttered a word as Mr. Orlando stepped aside and allowed Rome to take over the mic.

Maintaining eye contact with the people staring attentively at him, Rome hardened his face and said, “My father must have overestimated you all a lot.”

Faint sounds of some of the guests clearing their throats echoed in the hall.

“Top business tycoons? All I see are grown men and women behaving like kindergartens.” Rome boldly said, darkening his expression.

At this point, every noise in the room suddenly ceased, and the faces of the guests had grown a bit serious.

“I don't see myself wasting 2.5 billion dollars on people who can't show me the tiniest bit of respect,” Rome said, screwing up his face into a frown.

Then he held back his words for a few minutes, listening to the silence with a sense of satisfaction, and after seeing the look of submissions in their eyes, Rome sighed and said, "This meeting is adjourned."

None of the guests reacted for a moment, but when they saw Rome heading for the door, a noise aroused, filled with their pleading cries.

Within a split second, they were chasing after him into the corridor while calling out his name.

The sound of their desperate voices felt like music of victory in Rome's ears as he casually marched down the hallway, being shield by numerous guards.

When he reached the elevator, he stared at the group being shoved back by the bodyguards. Then he stepped into the elevator with Mr. Orlando and K by his side.

Afterward, he took out his phone from his pocket and dialed his father's number.

For a moment, Mr. Ford stared at the DreamTeam building. Then he answered the call, and asked, "How's the meeting?"

"It's over," Rome mumbled, placing his right hand into his pocket.

"Why?"

"I'm taming the beasts. They have to know that they need me, and it's not the other way around."

Smiling to himself, Mr. Ford pushed the car door open and said, "Well, I couldn't be more proud to call you my son."

"Have you arrived?"

"I'm here."

When the elevator hit the first floor and Rome stepped out, he was immediately surrounded by a few groups of businessmen and women.

“Father, I will call you back,” Rome mumbled before ending the call.

The moment he drew the phone away from his ears, the lobby grew noisy with all of them trying to speak at once.

“Silence,” Rome commanded with a frown.

It took a second for the noise to die down and for them to give him their undivided attention.

“Good! Now raise your hand one at a time, and I have to recognize you before you speak. Is that clear?” Rome calmly said, meeting their faces.

As they all nodded silently, a lady raised her hand and Rome fixed his gaze on

her and said, “Go ahead.”

“I'm Adama Mach, CEO of RightWay Inc. Firstly, I would like to apologize for our actions. We were all shocked, knowing the status that you hold in the Barlow family.” Adama boldly said.

Then she eyed the other shaking their heads slightly in agreement with her statement before saying, “But we clearly see you now for who you are. The only heir to Mr. Ford, and we humble ourselves in your presence.”

Seeing nothing but respect in their expression, Rome faintly smiled and said, “This meeting may be over, but I can make time for another. Mr. Orlando will inform you guys of the date.”

Then he walked past them, stopped in his tracks, turned around, and said, “I hope you all can be on your best behavior the next time.”

Afterward, he walked away as they all

stared in disbelief at him.

When Ford arrived into the building of DreamTeam along with his bodyguards, and everyone saw him, it grew silent on the first floor.

But he paid no mind to all the attention he was getting and continued walking with only one thought on his mind, and that is to follow Rome's plan to the letter.

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K)



Chapter Thirty-Three

“Ding”

The elevator door opened on the eighth floor, and Mr. Ford stepped into the corridor with his bodyguards.

‘Is it the eighth or the ninth floor that Rome said Jeff works at?’ Mr. Ford thought as he walked down the hallway, feeling a bit confused.

After walking a bit further, he spotted a lady seated at the end of the hall, and he marched straight to the desk, stopped, and gave her a half-smile.

“Mr. Ford,” She mumbled, hastily standing to her feet.

“No need for formality.” Mr. Ford said, gently tapping his fingers on the desk.

Giving a nervous smile, she sat back down and asked, “How can I help you?”

“Is your boss here?” Mr. Ford asked with a relaxed expression.

“No, sir Jeff is in a board meeting. But I can give him a call to inform him of your presence.”

A feeling of ease took over Mr. Ford as he thought, ‘I got the number right.’

Then he focused his gaze on her name tag and said, “There’s no need.”

“Oh, okay. But can you please give me the specifics of your visit?” She asked, staring at the pen holder.

“That’s also not needed. All I want you to do is give the exact details of the board meeting to Mr. Barlow when he calls you. Can you do that for me, Roselle?”

“You want me to inform the chairman about the meeting?”

“Yes,”

Taking his sight off her name tag, he fixed his gaze on her nervous eyes, and said, “Do you like shopping at Trendy boutique?”

“I wish, but that place is crazy expensive and only for the wealthy,” Roselle mumbled, hiding her excitement behind the calmness in her eyes.

“How about this? Do me this favor and get rewarded with a trip to ‘Trendy.’ All expenses on me.”

“Well... you are, Mr. Ford. How could I refuse a request from you.”

“Good. Let's keep this between us, okay? I don't like gossip. You are not a gossiper, are you?”

With a touch of fear in her eyes, she hastily bowed and said, “Of course not, sir. I will take this information about our meeting with me to my grave!”

“For your sake, I hope so.”

Withdrawing his hand from the desk, Mr. Ford turned around and walked away.

For quite a while, Mr. Barlow remained relaxed in his seat, listening to a classic Opera.

But then his office phone disturbed his peaceful moment, causing him to turn off the song and sit up straight.

Afterward, he picked up the phone, rested it against his ear, and asked, “What is it, Molly?”

“Chairman, Mr. Ford is here to see you,” Molly said, staring at Mr. Ford's calm expression as he stood in front of her desk.

“Really! Let him in.”

“Yes, sir.”

After waiting impatiently for a few

seconds, the door opened and Mr. Ford walked in, keeping his gaze on Mr. Barlow's anxious expression.

"Mr. Ford, it's my pleasure that you grace me with your presence. Please, please sit down." Mr. Barlow said, standing to his feet.

With a deadpan expression on his face, Mr. Ford sat down on the chair, crossing his leg over the other.

"So, what can I do for you?" Mr. Barlow asked with a humble approach.

"I'm here to see your elder grandson, Jeff." Mr. Ford said without losing the coldness in his eyes.

"Oh, really. I will call his secretary."

"Okay,"

In a hurry, Mr. Barlow picked up his phone and rang Roselle.

When she answered the call, he took his

gaze off Mr. Ford and asked, “Where's your boss?”

“He's at a board meeting.” Roselle's voice echoed into his ear.

“What board meeting?”

“The one concerning Miss Catherine getting voted out of the company.”

“What nonsense! Which conference room?”

“The fifth floor.”

With anger swelling in him, Mr. Barlow ended the call. Then he stood to his feet and said, “Excuse me, Mr. Ford. I got something to take care of.”

Without waiting for a response to his remark, Mr. Barlow walked out of the office.

“Why do you all keep dragging this meeting! Do we all agree that Catherine getting voted out would be best for this

company?” Chloe shouted, losing the last patience she had left.

“Yes, but...” Barry mumbled with a look of hesitation on his face.

“There's no but! You either agree or disagree.”

“How about the chairman? Does he know about this?”

Watching the board members gazed at each other as they mumbled beneath their breath, Chloe rolled her eyes and said, “My grandfather can not change this decision if we all vote on it together.”

Suddenly the door opened, and Mr. Barlow walked into the room, angrily stared at everyone's faces, and said, “Is that so?”

The room fell silent as they all gazed back at him with fear in their expression.

“Jeff, go to my office. Mr. Ford is waiting for you.” Mr. Barlow said, staring at his grandson.

Then he swayed his gaze at the board members and said, “This meeting is dismissed. Also, Catherine will not leave this company unless the order is given from me!”

Keeping their silence, the board members stood to their feet and started leaving the room one after the other.

With a hint of fear in her eyes, Chloe gazed at Mr. Barlow and cried, “Grandfather, I...”

“A discussion concerning this matter will be held at home. For now, you all should return to your offices.” Mr. Barlow coldly said before turning his back and walking out of the room.

The moment he arrived at his office door, it opened, and Mr. Ford walked

out with Jeff two steps behind him.

“You are leaving?” Mr. Barlow asked, feeling a bit uneasy.

“Yes. I have said what needed to be said to your grandson.” Mr. Ford replied with a stiff expression.

At that moment, Jeff slightly bowed and humbly intoned, “I'm grateful for this opportunity. I swear to not let you down.”

Not giving a response, Mr. Ford walked away with his securities following closely behind him.

A few minutes later, when he got into his car, he dialed his son's number.

Taking his gaze off the V-mirror, Rome picked up his phone, answered the call, and asked, “Has it been done?”

“Yes, it has. But do you think giving Jeff an escape route is a wise idea?” Mr.

Ford uttered, keeping his eyes on the windshield.


“It's not an escape route, but a road to his downfall. The others are not going to let him succeed even if he tries, and that is exactly what I want, making them tear each other down.”

“An apple tree truly bears only apples.”



Rever  Author

“*Sorry for not updating yesterday. I'm writing a new chapter now and will update it today to makeup for yesterday. Have a nice read.*”

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 Comments

 Vote (15.3K) 

Chapter Thirty-Four

When Catherine got home by seven o'clock, she walked into the living room and froze as she stared at the faces of everyone in the room.

Then her gaze rested on Rome, sitting alone on one of the couches, and when their eyes met, he faintly smiled at her.

Without any hesitation, she walked politely to the chair and sat down beside him.

“What is this about? Did you do something wrong?” Catherine whispered with worry in her eyes.

“This is not about me. I have been at the construction site all day and when I got home, everyone was seated here, so I did the same.” Rome mumbled, resting his palm over the back of her hand.

“Oh. Then why are we having a meeting?”

“I'm afraid that if I asked, I might get you and me in trouble. So I have kept my silence since I arrived.”

“Smart.”

Both of them shared a brief smile before focusing on the others.

Finally, after waiting for a while, Chloe, Charles, Jeff, and Richard entered the living room, and suddenly, the entire atmosphere changed.

“Good afternoon, grandmother and Grandfather.” The four of them said almost at the same time, but they got silent as a reply.

Swaying his mad eyes away from his four grandchildren, Mr. Barlow stared at his three sons and angrily intoned, “You three should be ashamed to be

parents of those four fools.”

Although William, Elijah, and Andrew didn't have the slightest idea of what their father meant, none of them dared utter a word, seeing how furious he seemed.

“These four failures I call grandkids had the guts to defile my authority and try to get Catherine voted out of the company.” Mr. Barlow said, throwing his four grandchildren a hard look.

A look of disbelief crossed Catherine's face as she stared at Rome, but he widened his eyes and slightly opened his mouth while he gazed back at her.

“Is that true, Chloe?” Elijah asked, sounding infuriated. ①

“How dare you question my words by asking your spoiled brat to verify my statement!” Mr. Barlow shouted, glaring at his son.

“Father, that was not my intent...”

“Shut up. I now see where your daughter learned such disgraceful behavior from!”

The room fell silent as Mr. Barlow kept his icy gaze on his sons. Then he took a deep breath and said, “I couldn't be more ashamed of myself as their grandfather.”

“Honey,” Madam Rosey mumbled, pitifully staring at her husband.

“Did you know that Mr. Ford visited the company today?”

“Mr. Ford!”

“I was so infuriated that I left him alone to disjoint what these four fools were carrying on, and when I came back, he was already heading out.”

A frown flickered across Madam Rosey's forehead as she gazed away

from her husband and stared at her grandchildren.

Then she scowled as she gazed at their faces one after the other and shouted, “How could you work out your grandfather in such a manner!”

“Grandmother, I...” Jeff mumbled, pausing when he noticed that Madam Rosey looked angrier.

“Shut up, you four have proving yourself to be incompetent fools who have brought shame to this family. How could you all four undermine your grandfather!”

“I'm sorr...”

“Keep quiet! He's not dead yet, and the four of you want to treat him like he is!”

Immediately, Jeff, Chloe, Charles, and Richard dropped to their knees, hanging their heads low.

‘Well, this is more interesting than I anticipated.’ Rome thought, relaxing back in his seat.

“Mom, isn't that too harsh? The kids were wrong, but those words would paint them ugly.” Andrew mumbled with a humble tone.

Having a soft spot for her third son, Madam Rosey's expression softened a bit, and she held back her tongue from uttering another word.

“I know that you cousins are trying to prove yourself to us, but this is not the right way to do it! So I'm suspending the four of you for three months.” Mr. Barlow said, hardening his face.

“Grandfather!” The four of them shouted in unison.

With cold eyes, Mr. Barlow gazed at Chloe, Jeff, Richard, and Charles and firmly said, “This is my final decision.”

“But father,” William cried, tightening his fingers into a fist.

However, he quickly unclenched his hand and sealed his lips when his father glared at him.

After a moment had gone by in silence, Jeff eyed his cousins and then said, “Charles and Chloe should be the ones taking the fall for this since they were the genius behind this idea.”

“You backstabbing bast...” Charles lashed out, pausing when his grandmother looked his way.

Ignoring his cousin's bloodthirsty gaze, Jeff stared at his grandfather and said, “Also, I can't be suspended from work, especially since Mr. Ford had given me a project in the 2.5 billion resort he's about to built.”

The room fell silent, and Rome's lips curved into a faint smirk as he stared at

the hate in the other three cousins' eyes and thought, 'It has begin.'

"What? Really?" Mr. Barlow said, looking a bit lost.

"Yes, grandfather. That's what I have been trying to tell you the entire day, but you kept dismissing me out of anger." Jeff said, smiling to himself.

"If that's the case. Your suspension has been lifted. The other three are still suspended."

"Thank you, grandfather."

"Don't thank me. Do exceptional on this project, and do not embarrass this family in Mr. Ford's eyes."

"Yes, grandfather."

Frowning, Mr. Barlow stood his feet, and Madame Rosey got up too. Then both of them walked out of the living room.

The moment their footsteps faded down the hallway, the atmosphere got more hostile as Andrew got cold stares from William and Elijah, and Jeff received icy gazes from Chloe, his brother, and Charles.

“I think we should leave,” Catherine mumbled, staring at Rome.

Nodding slightly, he stood along with her, and the two of them walked out of the living room.

When they got into the bedroom, Catherine softly chuckled and shook her head. Then she stretched her hand to reach her dress zip.

But at that moment, she felt manly hands around her waist, hugging her tightly.

“Are you not mad that your cousin got a part in such a huge project?” Rome mumbled into her ear.

“Why would I? I'm happy for him. It just feels a bit funny and weird that I'm not the one being yelled at for once.” Catherine said, turning around to face him.

Gently pushing her hair behind her ear, he softly smiled and thought, ‘That's why I've already chosen you to handle that project. We just need to wait for your cousin's failure.’

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K)



Chapter Thirty-Five

The first golden light of dawn sneaked into the room, beaming on Rome's face.

Refusing to open his eyes, he gently rubbed his eyelid and laid still for a while before slowly raising them, and for about five minutes, he didn't blink as he stared at the ceiling.

Then he swayed his focus on Catherine's face and softly smiled.

After a few minutes had gone by, he threw the blanket off him, got out of bed, and headed for the shower.

The morning felt peaceful when Rome stepped out of the room minutes later.

Then he strolled down the hallway, heading for the living room.

However, the moment he entered the living room and his gaze rested on

Chloe, she rolled her eyes, and he knew his morning was about to get ruined.

“Good morning, sister-in-law,” Rome mumbled, forcing a smile on his lips.

“Don't talk to me!” Chloe rudely said with a frown.

Without uttering another word, Rome turned around to leave, but he stopped when he heard her ask, “Where do you think you are going?”

Scowling for a moment, Rome turned to face her with a fake smile on his face and said, “To work.”

“No, you are not.”

“May I ask, ‘why?’”

“Because I need someone at home to serve me, and that person is you.”

It took every last bit of Rome's willpower for him to keep a calm expression and said, “But we have

maids here for that.”

“And you are one of them.” Chloe firmly intoned, narrowing her eyes at him.

At that moment, she noticed a hint of anger in Rome’s eyes, and a frown flickered across her face as she stood from the couch and asked, “Why? Don't you want to?”

“It's not that. It's just that my boss is expecting me at work.” Rome said, swallowing his pride.

“So! What is your useless job contributing to this family?”

“But...”

“Remember, grandmother, said that you should be useful, so serving the granddaughter of the family should be your first priority than some stupid job.”

Everything about what Chloe had said had Rome on the edge, but he maintained a calm expression and said, “ Ask one of the maids to serve you. I have work to do.”

With mad eyes, Chloe walked up to Rome and raised her hand, and swung it at him.

Although he wanted so desperately to grab onto her wrist, the sound of footsteps approaching them caused Rome to allow her slap to hit across his cheek.

“Chloe!” Catherine shouted with rage burning in her eyes.

Swaying her gaze away from Rome, Chloe stared at her cousin and said, “ What!”

“Who gives you the right to lay a finger on him!”

“Is it wrong to teach a servant his place when he's behaving rudely?”

“Firstly, he's my husband, not a servant! And lastly, you have no right to slap him!”

At that moment, Madam Rosey walked into the living room, frowning at Catherine when their eyes met. ①

“It's seven o'clock in the morning. Why are you shouting? Is that any way a lady of this family should behave?” Madam Rosey lashed out, walking further into the room.

“Sorry, grandmother. I didn't mean to lose my temper. It's just that I'm mad at Chloe for hitting Rome.” Catherine mumbled, striving to master her anger as she eyed her cousin.

“I'm sure my daughter had a reason for hitting your so-called husband.” Elijah coldly said, entering the living room

with a frown plastered on his face.

Forcing her eyes to become watery, Chloe rushed over to her father, gazed pitifully at him, and said, “I simply asked him to run a few errands for me since grandmother said he should be useful.”

Then she swayed her teary eyes towards her grandmother and said, “But he claimed that his construction job was more important than doing something for a member of the Barlow family.”

With anger burning in her eyes, Madam Rosey gazed at Rome and said, “A pleasant like you dare to look down on the hands that feed you and keep a roof over your head!”

“I..” Rome mumbled, pausing when he realized that his words were only going to add fuel to the fire.

“Glaring at him coldly, Madam Rosey harshly intoned, “You will stay home

and help Chloe out with whatever she needs.”

“Except Chloe needs him to assist her with millions of dollars project, Rome is coming with me to the office because that's what I need him for.” Catherine boldly said without the slightest bit of hesitation.

The room fell silent as Madam Rosey coldly gazed at her granddaughter.

Then she stared at Chloe and asked, “What do you need him for?”

“Well... umm... It's fine, grandmother, since it is clear that Catherine wants her husband to be useless, she can have him.” Chloe said, patting the single teardrop on her cheek with her blouse sleeve.

“I'm hardly disappointed in you, Catherine! Turning on your cousin for a maggot.” Madam Rosey harshly intoned.

‘When were you ever proud of me.’
Catherine thought, holding back her tears.

“You can take him with you, but keep him on a leash. We don't need another problem. This family has suffered enough humiliation as it is!”

“Thank you, grandmother.”

Taking her eyes off Madam Rosey's aloof expression, Catherine gazed at Rome, took his hand in hers, and escorted him out of the living room.

A few minutes later, they came out of the mansion, got in her car, and Catherine drove off.

After a few seconds had gone by, Rome heard her softly sniffing, and he gazed at her.

When she noticed him staring at her, Catherine sniffed aggressively and

mumbled, “I'm sorry.”

‘It’s not your place to apologize. The one who should be doing it hasn't. So I'm going to make her feel self-pity as a payback.’ Rome thought, faintly smiling at Catherine.

Two minutes into the drive, Catherine finally felt a bit better. Then she let out a soft breath and asked, “Tell me which construction site you work at, so I can drop you there.”

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K)



Chapter Thirty-Six

It suddenly became quiet in the car as Rome glanced at Catherine, then at his phone.

For a moment, she waited patiently on him before asking, “Did you hear me?”

“Umm, hold that thought for a second. I got to reply to this text quickly. It's from my dad.” Rome mumbled, gazing at the browser on his phone.

Then he hastily typed in the search box, “The nearest construction site,” and clicked the search icon.

After gazing at the screen for a while, he stared back at Catherine and asked, “What were you saying?”

“I was asking about the location of your job site,” Catherine mumbled, keeping her eyes fixed on the road.

“It's on the Bell Route.”

“Oh, okay.”

When a few minutes had gone by, Catherine sighed heavily and said, “I'm such a terrible wife.”

“Why would you say that?” Rome gently asked, fixing his eyes on her.

“Well, what kind of wife doesn't know her husband's workplace?”

“Well, I didn't tell you, so how were you supposed to know?”

With a soft smile on her lips, Catherine glanced into his gentle eyes before focusing back on the road.

It took a few more minutes for them to arrive at the construction site on Bell Route.

When Catherine brought the car to a stop in front of the unfinished building,

Rome smiled at her and said, “See you later, wife.”

Without waiting for her reply, Rome rushed out of the car and hurried towards the building.

But Catherine got down and followed him, and when he saw her, he rushed towards one of the workers and said, “Play along and get five thousand in return.”

With not a flick of hesitation, he hastily nodded and smiled as Catherine approached them.

“Is something wrong, wife?” Rome asked, fixing his eyes on hers.

“No. Well, I want to greet your boss.” Catherine said, smiling at the fellow standing by him.

Chuckling faintly, Rome gazed at the worker and said, “Yes, this is Pablo. He’s always like, ‘Rome, you have to

put your back into the work.”

Even though his name was “Morrison,” he smiled widely and said, “I tend to put pressure on my best workers, and Rome just happened to be one of them.”

“That's good, but can you please not be hard on him, and if he makes a mistake, please don't be too harsh in criticizing him.” Catherine humbly said.

“Wife,” Rome mumbled, staring adorably at her.

As Catherine glanced at him, her lip curved into a soft smile. Then she focused on Morrison and said, “Forgive me if I sound like a nagging wife. My only intent is that he doesn't have it hard at work too.”

The word “too,” left a dull ache in Rome's heart, knowing that she felt bad about how he was being treated at home.

“Of course, ma’am. Your husband is not a difficult worker, so I don't have any problem with him.” Morrison hastily said, widening his grin.

“That's good. I'm going to leave you two to your work.” Catherine mumbled, returning a smile.

Then she turned around to leave, but she stopped in her tracks, gazed at Rome, and asked, “Do you want me to pick you up after work?”

“How about I come to you after my shift ends, and we can go home together?” Rome gently asked.

“Okay,”

“Bye, wife!”

Staring at the excitement in his eyes as he waved at her, Catherine brightly smiled as she waved before walking away.

Once he had watched her get into her car and drove off, Rome pulled out his phone and dialed Mr. Orlando.

The moment his call got answered, he heard, “Good morning, young master.”

“Come pick me up from Bell Route. Also, find out who Chloe's biggest client is and schedule a meeting with him for this morning.” Rome said before ending the call.

Then he gazed at Morrison and said, “Give me your bank account.”

“Uh?” Morrison mumbled, raising his brow.

“Your bank account number.”

“Oh, right.”

After calling his account number, Morrison doubtfully stared at Rome, judging him from the clothes he wore until he heard his phone buzzing.

‘He actually sent it?’ Morrison mumbled, pulling his phone from his pocket.

Then his eyes widened as he gazed at the message on his phone screen before staring blankly at Rome.

At that moment, a car stopped and a dashing fellow stepped down from the car and walked over to them.

But when he was only two steps away from Rome, his jaw dropped for a second before he could pull himself together.

Then he took a step towards Rome, humbly bowed, and said, “Good morning, sir. And may I ask why you are here?”

“It wasn't an intentional visit,” Rome said with a stiff expression.

“You remember me?”

“How could I forget someone who couldn't keep his lips sealed in a meeting even though he had nothing sensible to say.”

A nervous laugh escaped his lips as he stared up at Rome. Then he hung his head low and said, “I didn't know better then, but now I do. I plead with you not to hold it against me.”

At that moment, a grey Mercedes stopped a few distances away from them and K stepped out of the car. Then he opened the back door.

“My ride's here,” Rome said without losing his cold expression.

Without gazing at them, he walked away and approached the vehicle.

“Good morning, boss,” K said, bowing slightly as Rome got into the car.

Afterward, he shut the door, got back

into the front seat, and Mr. Orlando drove off.

“Who is he, boss?” Morrison asked, staring behind the car.

‘The heir to the wealthiest man in this country and beyond it. He's Mr. Ford's only son, but his identity is forbidden to be spoken about. So I dare not tell you.’ His boss thought with fear in his eyes.

The car was silent for a while as Rome stared out the window. Then he gazed into the V-mirror and said, “Have you done what I asked of you?”

“Sorry, young master, for delaying the information. I didn't want to disturb you.” Mr. Orlando said, avoiding gazing into the V-mirror.

“Did you do it?”

“Yes, young master. Miss Barlow's biggest client, Mr. Hanson, is expecting you this morning at nine.”

“What's the time?”

“It's eight twenty.”

“Stop me at the Costar restaurant. I'm starving.”

“Yes, young master.”

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K)



Chapter Thirty-Seven

When his office door opened, Hanson took his gaze off the paper before him and placed it on Mr. Orlando as he walked into the room.

Then he stared at the wall clock, frowning as he focused on the shorthand pointed at eleven and the longhand resting on twelve.

For a moment, he didn't react, but the moment Rome stepped inside the room and took off his cap along with his shade, Hanson hastily stood to his feet.

“Why do I keep meeting you people?” Rome mumbled, feeling a bit annoyed.

“Good morning, young Ford. Please! Please, have a seat.” Hanson said, walking from behind his desk.

As he watched Rome sit down on the couch, he grinned at him and said, “I

was shocked to get a call from Mr. Orlando.”

When he got only silence from Rome, he widened his smile and stated, “At first, I thought he was calling to give details about the next meeting, but when I heard that you wanted to see me, I was more shocked.”

“My coming here is not about the 2.5 billion dollar resort.” Rome finally said as he narrowed his eyes.

“I hope there are no hard feelings about the garbage that I said during the meeting. Those words were nothing but nonsense.” Hanson said, feeling his palms becoming sweaty.

When Rome threw him a hard look, he let out a nervous laugh and said, “I was a fool to say that you were just a useless punk from the Barlow family, and you couldn't be Mr. Ford's lost son.”

Noticing the anger on Mr. Orlando and

K's faces, Hanson wiped the sweat off his forehead, gazed into Rome's cold eyes, and stuttered, "I... I'm so-rry... I'm sorry for repeating such rubbish!"

The silence he was getting from Rome only made him sweat more, and feeling a sense of desperation, he bent his back, rested his palm against his knees, and shouted, "I hope you can forgive this talkative old fool!"

"I'm glad that you know that you are talkative." Rome coldly said.

Then a frown crossed his face as he watched Hanson continue to bow.

After staring for a while, he sighed heavily and asked, "How long do you plan to stay that way?"

"Uh?" Hanson mumbled, lifting his head to meet Rome's icy gaze.

"Can you sit?"

“Yes! Yes, I can.”

Letting out another awkward laugh, Hanson straightened his back and walked back to his desk.

Then he picked up his phone, made a call to his secretary, and said, “Fix a cup of my finest tea and bring it to my office with a plate of biscuits.”

At this point, Rome felt too annoyed to utter a word, so he kept his silence and continued staring at Hanson.

After ending the call with his secretary, he gazed at Rome and asked, “If your visit isn't about the meeting date, then what's is it about?”

“Give me a paper and pen,” Rome said, rubbing his index finger against his brow as he let out a sigh. ①

Without wasting a second, Hanson grabbed the pen off his desk and pulled

a clean sheet out of a folder. Then he left his seat, approached Rome, and rested the item on the table.

“What now?” Hanson anxiously mumbled.

“You can go back to your desk.” Rome absentmindedly said as he pulled the sheet and pen closer towards him.

Then he started writing, and when he finally got done, a knock on the door drew his attention away from the paper.

“Oh, that's should be my secretary with the tea and biscuit,” Hanson said in excitement.

“Get it,” Rome mumbled, staring at K before focusing back on the sheet.

Gazing away from his boss, K approached the door and walked out.

Then he stared at Hanson's secretary and said, “I will take this.”

Before she could utter a word, he took the tray out of hand and headed back inside, slamming the door in her face. 1

Afterward, he approached the table and set the tray down. But Rome ignored it and stood from the couch, holding the sheet in his hand.

Then he walked over to Hanson's desk, rested the sheet on it, and said, "I need you to call my father-in-law and tell him exactly what's on this sheet."

"Just these words?" Hanson asked, scanning the paper.

"Yes. Do not go off the script on this paper."

"Okay, I understand."

After taking in a deep breath, Hanson picked up his phone and made a call to Mr. Barlow.

It took a while for his call to get

answered, and once it did, Mr. Barlow's voice echoed into his ear, "Good morning, Mr. Richmond."

"It's neither a good or pleasant morning." Hanson coldly said with his eyes glued to the sheet.

"What? Why?"

"Rumors are echoing around that you suspended Chloe from work for three months. Do you expect my project to get delay for such a length of time?"

"No! Of course not, Mr. Richmond. I will have her back at work tomorrow."

Glancing at Rome for a second, Hanson felt a shiver run down his spine, wondering about how accordingly the conversation was going along with the words on the sheet.

Then he focused his eyes back on the sheet, cleared his throat, and said, "There's no need. If you suspended her,

then it must be for a good cause. We can just use another means.”

The line was silent for a while. Then Mr. Barlow's voice flowed out of the phone speaker, “Okay, what means?”

“I heard that Catherine and Jeff are still going to work, and I would like for my project to get transferred from Chloe to Jeff. I want him to be the one to handle it from now onward.”

“Sure, Mr. Richmond. You are the client, so count it done.”

After ending the call, he placed the phone on his desk and said, “I did as you requested.”

Without replying, Rome took the paper, folded it, and placed it into his pocket.

Then he established eye contact with Hanson and said, “You did great. But this meeting never happened.”

“What meeting?” Hanson hastily said with a touch of fear in his eyes.

“For a man that doesn't have a grip on his tongue, you just said the exact words that I needed to hear.”

“Haha. Thank you for the compliment.”

With a faint smirk on his lip, Rome took one last look at Hanson. Then he turned away, wore his cap along with his shade, and left the office with Mr. Orlando and K, following closely behind him.

“He didn't touch the food,” Hanson mumbled as he stared at the table.

Then he stared at the shut door and thought, ‘What a dominant aroma he has. Exactly like his father. No, he is a bit stronger and scared.’ ②

Chapter Thirty-Eight

The daylight faded naturally, and after having a ten-course meal made by the famous chef, 'Ramsey' from a prestigious five-star restaurant, Rome got on a bus and stopped at the bus stop in front of DreamTeam company by six o'clock.

When he got to Catherine's office, she took one look at him, smiled, and said, "You are here."

Then she grabbed her bag, walked over to Rome, and held onto his arm.

"Shall we?" Catherine mumbled, lifting her head to meet his gaze.

"We shall," Rome replied with his eyes focused on hers.

Then they shared a brief laugh before heading out of her office.

A moment later, they were seated in Catherine's vehicle, and after putting the car in gear, she gazed at Rome and asked, "Should we stop at a restaurant and grab a bite?"

"But then you would be full when you get home, and Madam Rosey will scold you if you refuse dinner with the family." Rome gently said with genuine worry in his eyes.

"True, but."

"If you are worried about me, then don't be, wife. I ate before coming. So let's go home, okay?"

Taking a long look at Rome's calm face, Catherine let out a hasty breath and mumbled, "Okay."

Afterward, she stepped on the accelerator and drove out of the parking lot and onto the main room. ①

It was seven-forty when Catherine rode the car into the Barlow's yard and parked it in the garage.

Then she sat silently behind the steering wheel, closed her eyes, and took in a deep breath before pushing the car door open.

After waiting for Rome to get out of the vehicle, she and he walked into the mansion, heading straight for the dining hall.

When they entered, everyone was already there and seated around the table.

“Good evening to all,” Catherine said, clutched onto the bag handle.

But none of her family replied as they busy themselves with getting a hold of the plates and silverware.

After a minute had gone by, Madam

Rosey gazed at her and said, “Catherine, what are you waiting for? Go wash your hands and come join the family.”

With a look of hesitation in her eyes, she gazed at Rome. But then he smiled at her to assure her that he was fine, and even though she wasn't okay, she left the room.

After a few minutes had gone by, she returned and took her place at the table.

It was quiet for a few seconds as everyone filled the plates with food.

Then Mr. Barlow gazed at Jeff, then at Chloe, and said, “Turn every document concern Mr. Richmond’s project over to Jeff. He would be the one handling the project from now onward.”

At first, Chloe said nothing as she stared blankly at her grandfather. Then she slowly turned her head towards Jeff and gave him an icy stare.

“Grandfather, what's going on?” Chloe asked, striving to maintain the rage roaming in her.

“Apparently, Mr. Richmond found out about your suspension, even though I tried to keep it on the wrap.” Mr. Barlow said with less patience in his tone.

“What?”

“He wants Jeff to take full control over the project.”

“But, grandfather, I can't lose Hanson. He's my biggest client!”

“I know that. That's why I offered to send you back to work so you can continue working on the project.”

“And?”

“He still wants Jeff instead of you.”

By now, Chloe was setting about what

she had assumed all along, and with her eyes clouded with hate, she stared at Jeff and said, “What do you think you are doing?”

Instantly, his face screwed into a frown as he gazed at her and coldly intoned, “Don't put this on me. I wasn't the one who told Hanson about your suspension.”

“Is that so? Well, then you won't mind declining his offer, would you?”

“You heard grandfather. He doesn't want you on the project anymore, so why should I pass up such an awesome opportunity?”

The atmosphere grew tense pretty quick, and Chloe's face was now red from rage.

The only person calm at the table was Catherine since she deemed the situation as something that didn't concern her.

“Do you expect me to believe that I lose my biggest client base on pale coincidence!” Chloe shouted, looking at her cousin died in his eyes.

“Yes! But I don't give a damn if you don't!” Jeff harshly said, feeling annoyed that he was getting blamed for something he knew nothing about.

In a fit of rage, Madam Rosey hit the spoon against her wine glass and angrily intoned, “This is absurd, and I wouldn't accept such an ill-mannered attitude for you two!”

Suppressing their rage towards each other, Jeff and Chloe forced a calm expression on their faces and mumbled together, “Sorry, grandmother.”

“Keep your apologies to yourself and fix your attitudes! Behavior like that wouldn't go unpunished the next time! So let it not happen again!”

“Yes, grandmother.”

Although the room became peaceful, it had a deadly atmosphere as everyone ate in silence.

After a few minutes had gone by, Catherine gently rested her fork on the table and said, “I would like to be excused.”

“You may.” Madam Rosey said without looking at her granddaughter.

After folding her napkin and setting it on the table, Catherine left her seat and walked up to Rome.

“Let's get out of here,” She whispered, walking past him.

Without uttering a word, Rome hurried after her, staying close by her side.

When they got into their room, Catherine hastily shut the door and rested her back against its wood frame.

“What is it, wife?” Rome asked, noticing the fear in her eyes.

“Things were terrible before among us cousins, but now, it's getting even worse and scarier.”

“Are you frightened?”

“Who wouldn't be? Knowing my cousins, Chloe isn't going to let Jeff get away with this, and she's going to do anything to take him down. I mean, anything!”

Smiling faintly at her, Rome laced his fingers with hers and pulled her into his arm, hugging her tightly.

Then he lost the smile on his face and his expression grew colder as he thought, “That’s exactly what I want.”

Burying her face into his chest, Catherine wrapped her hands around his broad back, and Rome mumbled, “

Don't worry. You would be fine.”

“Thanks,” Catherine whispered, feeling a sense of calmness wash over her.

As Chloe walked towards her room, her eyes rested on Charles, leaning against the wall.

“How the mighty have fallen.” He mumbled as he withdrew from the wall.

“Save your mockery for Jeff because those would be the exact words to describe him after I'm done with him,” Chloe said, unlocking the door.

Then she pushed it open, walked into her room, and banged it shut.

‘Does this mean every man for themselves?’ Charles thought with a frown.

Then he shoved his hands into his pocket and mumbled beneath his

breath, “If that's the case. Then it's time to strive to get to the top on my own, by any means necessary.”

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K)



Chapter Thirty-Nine

Tracing her fingers down Rome's chest, Catherine slowly opened her eyes. Then her lips curved into a smile as she stared up at his face.

Suddenly, he raised his eyelids and warmly smiled while focusing his gaze solely on her.

Both of them didn't utter a word for a while as they stared into each other's eyes.

“Morning, wife.” Rome finally whispered, blinking slowly as he tried to wake up fully.

When Catherine was about to reply, his ringtone interrupted her, and she withdrew from Rome's arm and sat up, resting her feet on the cold tiles.

For a moment, he gazed at her back. Then he reached for his phone and

answered the call.

“It's seven,” Rome mumbled, rubbing his eyes as he sat up.

“And it's also the weekend.” Mr. Ford's voice echoed into his ear.

“I know. Alright, I'm on my way.”

“Good, Orlando is waiting on you.”

After ending the call, he stared at Cathrine. Then drew towards her and hugged her from the back.

“You look extremely beautiful as always,” Rome whispered into her ear.

Instantly, Catherine's cheeks grew red and her face felt hot as she flickered her lashes uncontrollably.

“Don't you have somewhere to be this morning?” Catherine mumbled as she pinched the edge of her nightgown.

“Yes,” Rome said, resting his chin on

her shoulder.

“You should get going then.”

“Umm...later. Let stay this way for a moment.”

“Okay...”

A while later, Catherine's and Rome came downstairs, and as they walked past the living room, Madam Rosey caught a glimpse of them and commanded, “You two, stop!”

Subconsciously, Rome and Catherine both stood still. Then they pulled themselves together and walked into the living room.

“Good morning, grandmother and grandfather.” Catherine humbly said without meeting their gazes.

“Morning, granddaughter.” Mr. Barlow mumbled, shifting to another page in his newspaper.

“Good morning,” Madam Rosey half-heartedly intoned.

Following his wife's lead, Rome took a step forward and gently uttered, “Good morning, Madam Rosey and Mr. Barlow.”

However, he didn't get a reply from the old man and his wife as they pretended like they did not hear him which left them all in awkward silence.

After the quietness had become a bit uncomfortable, Catherine looked at Madam Rosey and said, “We beg to take our leave.”

“Not just yet. Tony is sick, so he wouldn't have the chance to trim the trees and mold the grass.” Madam Rosey said, meeting her granddaughter's eyes.

“So you want me to hire someone to do it?”

“Why waste money on someone else when your husband is here. Today is Saturday, let him put those muscles to use and stop being a sole loser.”

Noticing a trace angry in Catherine's eyes as she was about to speak, Rome hastily interrupted her and said, “I will do it.”

“Good. The equipment is in the garage, and make sure you don't ruin my yard by doing a poor job!” Madam Rosey lashed out with a hint of anger in her tone.

Without losing his calm expression, Rome faintly smiled and said, “Yes, Ma'am.”

But Madam Rosey didn't utter a word, and he continued standing, waiting for a go-ahead from her so he could leave.

“Why are you still here? You are wasting daylight!” Madam Rosey said i

n annoyance.

As Rome turned to leave, he noticed that Catherine remained standing while intensely staring at her grandparents.

“Is there a problem?” Madam Rosey asked, glaring at her granddaughter with less patience in her eyes.

At that moment, Rome grabbed her hand and whispered, “Let's go.”

At first, Catherine wanted to give in so badly to her stubbornness and stand up for Rome. But she had a change of mind, knowing that he would only get into more trouble because of that.

“Catherine, your grandmother is speaking to you!” Mr. Barlow said, resting the newspaper on his lap.

“No, there's no problem,” Catherine said, solely staring at her grandmother.

Then she obediently followed Rome as h

e led her out of the living room.

When they had walked further into the hallway, Catherine pulled her hand out of Rome's grip and angrily intoned, “You know that you have the right to stand up for yourself! You can keep letting yourself get pushed around by them.”

‘If I stand up for myself, your family would suffer immensely, and if I stop letting myself get pushed around, you will have to bear the weight from them.’ Rome thought, staring calmly at her angry expression.

After frowning at him in silence, Catherine sighed out her frustration and mumbled, “Don't you have somewhere to be this morning?”

Instantly, Rome's face became blank as he pulled his phone out of his pocket. Then he gazed at Catherine and said, “Excuse me for a second.”

Without waiting on her reply, Rome walked a few distances down the hallway. Then he stopped and dialed Mr. Ford number.

“Hey, father,” Rome mumbled.

“Where are you?” Mr. Ford's voice echoed from the phone speakers, sounding annoyed.

“Can we swipe breakfast for lunch?”

“Why?”

“Something came up.”

The line was quiet for a while. Then Mr. Ford's harsh voice echoed into Rome's ear, “Something like what!”

“Let's just meet up by two, okay?”

“By two, if you are not here, I'm going to pick you up from the Barlows myself, and that's a promise that I plan to keep, so don't be late.”

After his father abruptly ended the call, Rome shoved his phone back into his pocket and was about to walk back to Catherine when he saw Chloe approaching him.

“I heard that we got a new gardener. You know, judging from your shabby look, the job kinda suits you well.”
Chloe mockingly intoned as she drew closer towards Rome.

When he uttered no words to her, she frowned and coldly said, “You should be thanking me for getting grandmother to make you useful around this place. At least they would see you as less of the waste that you are!”

Not speaking a word, Rome gave smug smile as he stared at her. Then he turned around and walked away.

“You! Did you just smirk! Hey! For a broke loser, you have a lot of attitude and ego!” Chloe screamed as she

watched Rome continue walking.

When he reached Catherine, she frowned at her cousin's words, stared at him, and asked, "What was all that about?"

"Nothing, wife," Rome said, giggling faintly.

Frowning, Catherine stared at the smile on his face and asked, "The things Chloe said are not funny."

'I know. But it's hilarious to see her exercise a power that she thinks she has over me when I could easily crush her within a matter of minutes.' Rome thought, still smiling.

Then he noticed Catherine scowling at him, and his smile slowly faded until his expression looked serious again.

"It wasn't funny," Rome mumbled, slightly shaking his head.

But Catherine angrily turned away from him and started walking ahead.

Smiling to himself, Rome chased after her, placed his hand on her hip, and pulled her closer to him.

“I'm sorry for laughing at your cousin's mean words. Actually, it wasn't funny. Not a single bit.” Rome pitifully mumbled.

“I don't want you to feel sorry. I want you to not be okay with what they are doing to you.” Catherine mumbled, lifting her head to meet his eyes.

With a yearning expression, he stroked her cheek and thought, ‘I'm not okay with it. Yet I need to because of you. But that doesn't mean their behaviors will go unpunished. None of it would.’

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K) 

Chapter Forty

Without even realizing it, the morning had become noon, and Rome was still stuck on trimming the brushes to perfection.

The afternoon sun was hot, and his body was drained with his sweat. But he kept going, and every now and then he would gaze at Catherine, standing a few steps away from him with a water bottle and towel in her hand.

“I can't believe she is actually in that blazing heat with him.” Richard said, taking a sip of his tropical juice.

Gazing away from the umbrella covering her, Chloe pulled down her shade off her face, stared at the pool before glaring at Rome and Catherine a few distances away from the pool yard.

Then she rolled her eyes and said, “

That right there is the definition of ‘stupidity.’ It's not a surprise though. She took it from her weak father.”

“True! Edward is always at the heel of our fathers because he's such a goodie-two-shoes.” Charles said, rubbing sun cream on his arm.

For a moment, none of them spoke. Then Charles set the bottle on the table and asked, “Where's Jeff?”

“Working after a project that doesn't belong to him.” Chloe mumbled, wearing her shade as she laid back on the chair.

Hearing the coldness in her voice, Richard let out a nervous laugh and mumbled, “I'm not excusing his behavior, but I know my brother, and he didn't rat you out to Hanson.”

“As his younger brother, you are always kissing up to him. Doesn't that get tiring?” Chloe mumbled, shutting her

eyelids.

“I wouldn't be talking on his behalf if I did believe that he was the one who did it. But Jeff doesn't leave bread crumbs that lead back to him when he does something.”

“So, let me get this straight, you want me to believe that Mr. Richmond got the information about my suspension out of the wind, and magically decided to give it to your brother?”

“Well, when you put it that way, it does sound fishy.”

“Good, I'm glad you finally cure your stupidity and see the truth that no one else has the motive to do this except your brother.”

It grew silent for a while. Then Richard scratched the back of his head and nervously mumbled, “What do you intend to do to him?”

“What I plan for your brother doesn't concern you. But you can try to warn him to step back, or else, no one should blame my ruthlessness.” Chloe mumbled with not a hint of remorse in her tone.

Swaying his gaze from her, Richard stared at Charles and said, “Come on, guys. We are all blood. Can't we just let this one slide.”

“Don't get me involved in this. I'm only here to see the outcome of this fight and not get myself entangle in a battle that doesn't concern me.” Charles mumbled, relaxing on his seat as he crossed his one leg over the other.

With a hint of fear in his eyes, Richard rested his back on the pillow and thought, ‘Well, you are on your own bro. I hope you have a defense mechanism in place for Chloe's attacks.’

After a while, Rome finally trimmed the

last leaf of the brushes. Then he smiled at Catherine and cheerfully said, “Done.”

Keeping his eyes on hers, he walked towards Catherine, and then stopped a foot away from her, breathing heavily.

“You did well.” Catherine whispered, drying his face with the towel.

“Did I?”

“Of course. Not even Tony could do what you just did.”

In a split second, Rome pulled her into his arms and mumbled, “My wife is so sweet.”

“And sweaty. Let me go.” Catherine cried, trying to break free from him.

“So am I. Should we wash up together?”

“Uh?”

With her ears red, she pushed Rome off

her, put his phone into his hand, and said, “Go wash up by yourself.”

When he stared at his phone screen, the words in his head got stuck in his throat as fear beams in his eyes.

“One-fifty? That old man is going to kill me.” Rome mumbled beneath his breath.

“What?” Catherine mumbled.

Without replying to her, Rome rushed into the house, heading straight for their room.

When he arrived inside, he hurried into the bathroom, came out a few minutes later, and got dressed.

Then he picked his phone off the bed and his jaw dropped as he stared wide-eyed at the number, “two-fifteen” on his screen.

“I'm dead.” Rome mumbled, strolling

through his call log.

Then he called Mr. Ford's number and rested the phone against his ear as he rushed out of the room.

“Come on. Pick up.” Rome mumbled, walking quickly down the hallway.

“Who should pick up?” Catherine asked as she stood in his way.

After canceling the call. He placed his phone into his trouser pocket, gazed at her, and mumbled, “My dad.”

“You are going to meet with him?” Catherine asked with excitement in her eyes.

“Yes. I have to go now.”

Feeling a bit nervous, Rome took in a breath and thought, ‘Or he's coming here.’

“Can I tag along?” Catherine mumbled.

“I'm sorry. He's expecting me now, and well, you're coming with me...”

“Will make you late. I understand. Just extend my greetings to him, please.”

Even though she tried to hide her disappointment, Rome could hear it in her voice, and without a second thought, pressed his lips against hers and kissed her.

“See you later, wife.” Rome mumbled, gazing at her shock expression.

“Umm... okay. Bye.” Catherine mumbled with a red cheek and a soft smile.

Then she slowly stepped aside and allowed Rome to walk past her.

After Rome arrived outside the fence a few minutes later, he started walking down the road with his phone pressed against his ear.

Finally, when a few more seconds had gone by, his call got answered, and Rome was about to ask for the uber driver to pick him up, but then he paused as he watched a black car, driving towards him.

“Dad?” Rome mumbled when the vehicle came closer.

“Sorry, I'm not your father. I'm just a twenty-five years old cab driver. But I hope you find your father.” The uber driver's nervous voice echoed from the speakers.

Before Rome could clarify things with him, the call got canceled, and he pulled the phone from his ear.

“Honk!!”

“Honk!!”

“I'm coming!” Rome angrily mumbled, hurrying towards the vehicle.

Then he got into the backseat and slammed the door shut.

“What do you think you are doing!” Rome mumbled, glaring at his father.

“Keeping a promise, unlike someone who doesn't know how to do that.” Mr. Ford said, scowling at his son.

“I was busy.”

“Yeah, busy being the gardener to the Barlow's family. Is that what my heir has become? A mere gardener!”

“Dad, please...”

“What! Do you want me to sit back and allow them to continue humiliating you! You are ‘Rome Ford,’ my only child.”

Frowning at his father, Rome clenched his fist and said, “I know who I am.”

“Do you!” Mr. Ford asked, sounding

disappointed.

“Yes! Can you let this be.”

“Forgive me if I'm not leaping for joy about you being looked down upon by people who should be beneath you!”

“Dad, I hold all the cards in my hands, and no one, I mean, no one is above me in that house, so can you let me handle this my way.”

 Comments

 Vote (15.3K)

