

Chapter 491 I Want Her And I Want To Be With Her!

Mark sneered, a cold edge to his voice, "Do I always have to clean up after your mess? The Smith family has even reached Cecilia."

Edwin didn't talk back this time.

In a hushed tone, he said, "Dad, I'm sorry! Anything else, I can agree to, but marrying Vanessa is something I can't do."

Mark fought to rein in his emotions and inquired, "What's your plan? You mentioned tying the knot only after Laura does. What if she never ties the knot? Would the Evans family face a future without heirs?"

Edwin responded slowly, "There's always Olivia, right?"

"Don't even consider bringing your little sister into this. How old is she? Can she shoulder such a responsibility?"

Edwin appeared somewhat lost in contemplation.

Mark paused briefly before speaking again. "Edwin, it's not that I don't want to agree. Consider this--if Laura is with you, will she only have to confront your mother? The Evans family and the scrutiny of the entire world are in the mix. Sooner or later, what happen in the past will come to light. You're a man; at most, you'll be teased with light banTERS. But Cathy's past misdeeds will all be pinned on Laura. Can you protect her then?"

Edwin maintained his silence.

All of this had crossed his mind previously; otherwise, he wouldn't have surrendered so readily upon acknowledging his feelings for Laura.

He ignited a cigarette but abstained from smoking it, allowing it to smolder.

Mark rose, and Tina swiftly enveloped him in his coat.

In hushed tones, Mark stated, "This afternoon, I'm heading back to Czanch with your Mom. Peter's celebrating his birthday on New Year's

Eve. You should return in advance!"

Edwin gave a nod of agreement.

In an instant, Mark's anger surged once more, "Find a decent gift! To think you carry out such shameless acts, and Peter is still in the dark!"

Edwin shot him a glance.

Mark huffed, distancing himself.

Once he left, Tina returned, and Edwin carefully directed her, "Prepare a birthday gift for an elder of mine. No budget limit; just make it prestigious and grand."

Tina was well aware of what to do.

Edwin sat in contemplation for quite a while.

Unable to restrain herself, Tina spoke up her mind. "Mr. Evans, if you genuinely like her, why not take a chance?" Miss Thomas has grown up abroad from a tender age, so perhaps...

Her sentence remained unfinished, but Edwin grasped her implication.

Marry Laura overseas and keep her distant from this place.

Edwin's smile was faint as he remarked, "She might not even want me."

Tina refrained from saying more, yet her words cast a significant impact on Edwin's heart. He had pondered it as well but felt it would be unjust to Laura.

A few days before the New Year's Eve, Edwin returned to Czanch.

The Evans estate glowed with festive lights, truly capturing the spirit of the holidays. That night, Mark even extended an invitation to Peter and his wife for dinner; the entire family was lively and bustling.

At 20 years old, Olivia retained the charm of her childhood self.

She was still sweet, tender, and cute.

Edwin addressed Peter as "Uncle Peter," but Olivia insisted on calling him "Grandpa Peter," eagerly anticipating her new year's gift.

Peter adored her deeply, presenting Olivia with an exceptionally lavish one. Excited, she showed it to Edwin, "Eddie, yours isn't nearly as nice as

mine."

Edwin pinched her nose, "You're quite the grown-up, still making a fuss over gifts like kids."

Softly cuddling his neck, Olivia expressed concern, "Hey, you're 26 and still haven't found a wife. I'm worried for you!"

Edwin gazed at her, and Olivia, sticking out her tongue, refrained from teasing him further.

Edwin shifted his gaze to Peter, questioning, "Uncle Peter, why didn't you bring Laura along?"

Peter grinned and replied, "Oh, Laura didn't return solo; she's with that wannabe foreigner, Dylan Wright, I think. Yes, that's his name. He's into dining out, and Laura's always by his side!"

Lina shot a glance his way.

"Wannabe foreigner? Dylan is a purebred, you know," Peter retorted.

Disagreeing, Peter said, "All those phone calls of his, one moment in Italian, next in Spanish. If he's not pretending to be a foreigner, what is he?"

Annoyed, Lina withheld any response, refusing to speak to him.

Edwin offered a faint smile. "Being multilingual truly makes him impressive."

Peter gestured to his chest and added, "And the muscles! You should see how well-built he is—bulging muscles. If it weren't for his face, I'd think he was a young lady!"

His words grew more outrageous.

Olivia's face flushed red; she hid beside Mark, eavesdropping secretly.

Lina struck Peter, commanding, "Eat your meal; quit meddling in the kids' affairs. Is being fit a crime? Must everyone be as skinny as a stick?"

Peter sipped wine, tearing into a sizable piece of meat.

Edwin abstained from alcohol and remained silent.

Peter eventually became drunk and was quite noisy. After a while, he was too intoxicated and Lina had to assist him in leaving. Mark, expressing concern, said, "Peter's had too much to drink! Let the driver

take you home."

Lina offered no resistance.

In that moment, Edwin grabbed his car keys. "Allow me to drive you."

Lina, witnessing this, sensed a headache looming. She faked a smile and said, "Let the driver handle it. You've just returned today, Edwin; it's best you rest early."

"It's fine, really." Edwin reassured calmly.

He shifted his attention to Olivia. "Didn't you want to go out and see the lanterns for the holiday?"

Olivia promptly responded, "Yes, yes, yes!"

She embraced Edwin's arm, laying her small head on his shoulder. "Oh, Eddie, you're the best!"

Reaching into his coat pocket, she pulled out a small gift box.

Lina found herself with no option but to agree.

They set off. Olivia sat beside Edwin, chatting incessantly. After a while, she grumbled, "You're not responding! You promised to join me to see the lanterns but how can we enjoy it with this atmosphere?"

Edwin offered a faint smile. "Laura's likely at home; should I invite her to join you? You girls might have a lot to talk about."

Olivia held her breath, refraining from uttering a single word.

In their family, Laura was taboo, yet Edwin dared to extend an invitation for her to enjoy the lanterns? How bold!

Lina would never agree.

However, Peter, somewhat oblivious, chimed in with a cheerful remark, "Right on! Laura's constantly confined at home. Apart from that brawny foreigner, she scarcely has anyone to keep her company. She and Olivia could enjoy some good time together."

Lina pinched him firmly.

In response, Peter let out a yelp of pain.

Edwin's smile shifted, becoming tender and almost gentle.

"I wonder if Laura will give me a new year's gift," Olivia mumbled quietly.

At a red light, Edwin brought the car to a stop and gently patted his sister's head. "If she won't, I'll give you one on her behalf."

Peter, intoxicated, failed to grasp the deeper meaning.

Lina wasn't one to be underestimated; every word reached her ears with crystal clarity. What's the deal here? If Laura skips giving Olivia a gift, Edwin's stepping in? It's almost like they're married! She thought to herself.

Restlessness consumed Lina.

Her gaze held a mix of emotions as she observed the sophisticated young man in the rearview mirror, contemplating his intentions.

Edwin didn't avert his eyes.

He met Lina's gaze with a quiet intensity.

A half-hour later, the car came to a halt in front of the Garcia residence. Lina assisted her husband from the vehicle while Olivia bolted inside. She recognized Laura but kept interactions to a minimum.

The villa exuded warmth, with Laura comfortably seated on the sofa engrossed in a book.

Clad in a printed dark woolen dress, her black hair neatly combed over her shoulders.

She emanated elegance and beauty.

Laura felt a jolt of surprise upon spotting Olivia.

More outgoing than Laura, Olivia approached quietly, saying, "Laura, I want to see the holiday lanterns. Would you mind joining me? Edwin is so boring."

Edwin...

Laura was stunned for a moment.

Just then, the sound of dress shoes echoed from the hallway. A tall figure entered her line of sight, and there he was.

It was Edwin!

obstructed the door. "What's holding you back from going out?"

Biting her lip, Laura retorted, "Are you out of your mind? There are plenty of servants at my home; they'll all see us!"

Edwin stared into her eyes and said, "I've ended things with Vanessa Smith. The wedding's off."

Laura averted her gaze uncomfortably.

Whether a wedding occurred or not held little significance for her.

Choking up, Olivia whispered, "Edwin, are you deliberately making things difficult for me? Whatever we had ended a long time ago!"

"Just wanted to catch the lantern show," Edwin replied, shutting the car door.

Circling around to the driver's side, he shot a quick glance at Olivia, signaling her to hop in.

In a daze, Olivia tiptoed into the car and, after a while, tentatively asked, "You two were together?"

Edwin locked the doors.

Turning to Laura, who remained silent, he slowly buckled his seatbelt.

Unable to suppress a smile, he informed his sister, "Yeah, we lived together for three months."

Olivia buried her head in the seat, not emerging for a long time.

Laura hissed, "Edwin, what are you trying to do here?"

Edwin met her gaze silently, his voice a bit rough. "I get it; whisking you home out of the blue is a stretch, but there's at least someone in my family who's onto my liking for you, my yearning to be with you."

Olivia buried her head in her hands.

If their father heard this, he would explode in anger.

Laura felt a deeper flush of humiliation. What on earth was this supposed to mean?

Edwin refrained from probing further; he gently squeezed her hand. "We'll just watch the lanterns, and then I'll escort you back."

Unable to resist, he gently ran his fingers through his sister's hair, remarking, "She's just as endearing as you."

Little Olivia wrinkled her nose, asserting, "Not even close! You'd never kiss me like that!"

She wrapped her arms around Edwin's, whispering, "But what about Mom? Dad won't approve of you two either."

Edwin lit a cigarette.

He hadn't quite sorted everything out, but he was certain about wanting Laura. Taking her away wasn't on his agenda, yet he aimed to make a statement, especially in front of Lina.

His motive also involved nudging Laura to gauge if she still had feelings for him.

The news of her growing closeness with Dylan fueled jealousy within him.

Upon witnessing his silence, Olivia sighed. Regret crept in as she pondered her decision to join him in viewing the lanterns. The weight of a colossal secret burdened her, leaving her apprehensive about a good night's sleep.

Edwin affectionately ruffled her hair and remarked, "This symbolizes my trust in you."

With his chin held high, he finally entered the car.

Olivia followed suit, settling beside him, struggling to fully grasp the unfolding situation.

Meanwhile, Laura headed back to the villa.

Lina, having just settled her husband, rushed downstairs, her relief palpable upon seeing Laura's return.

"Is he gone?" queried Lina.

Laura affirmed with a nod.

Lina came over and gently embraced her shoulder, "What happened?"

Laura shook her head and uttered, "I don't know! We haven't been in contact lately."

Astute as ever, Lina understood after thinking it over. Edwin was doing this on purpose; he believed that since she was aware, he might as well elucidate things, expecting her to cover for him with her husband and his family.

Dream on!

Lina seethed, consumed by both anger and worry for her daughter. If not for her husband's birthday, she would have hastily sent her back to Duefron.

Laura now had lost all interest reading and abandoned her book.

She ascended the stairs.

Reflecting on the bizarre turn of events, Lina summoned the household servants. She sternly warned them about the incident they had witnessed; knowing her methods, no one dared to utter a word...

With this matter addressed, Lina returned to her room.

Peter lay in peaceful slumber.

At his age, he still wanted to cuddle with Lina when he got drunk.

She couldn't suppress her anger and kicked him annoyingly.

Meanwhile, Edwin drove Olivia home. Mark awaited him in the yard...

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