

## Chapter 504 How Could Someone As Indifferent As...

Leonel went to open the door and saw Waylen standing there.

"Mr. Fowler."

Waylen glanced at him. He walked in at a deliberate pace, stooped over to retrieve the passport from the sofa, and commented, "You just returned a few days ago, and now you're departing again, huh?"

Leonel affirmed, "Yes, I'm planning to."

Waylen thumbed through the passport and casually probed, "Is it because of Alexis?"

To that question, Leonel had no response ready.

After a contemplative pause, he eventually confided, "No, it's my fault."

"Of course, it's your fault!"

Waylen retraced his steps to the door, closing it behind him before turning to confront Leonel. "You charted the course of your life too early. Why don't you simply explore the world more and think carefully before making big decisions? Now, look where it has led you. You're fully responsible for what had turned out between you and Alexis!"

Such matters always weighed heavily on a father.

After all, Leonel was akin to a son, a lad he had seen grow up into a man.

Waylen lit a cigarette; halfway through it, he spoke up. "At first, when I aided the Douglas family and took you in, the primary reason was indeed your rare blood type. But ponder this, Leonel. Over the years, did I not treat you as my own, or did Rena not adore you like a son? She even yearned to love you more, yet I held her back. I believed all four children in the family deserved equal treatment. You shouldn't be the exception even if we felt bad for you."

He took a drag from his cigarette. "And besides, you're the eldest. It's your duty to look after the younger ones."

He then added, "Wouldn't you agree, Leonel?"

Leonel nodded.

His heart ached even more, a dense, throbbing anguish.

Growing infuriated increasingly, Waylen continued, "You ventured abroad, explored the world, and you don't want to come back and inherit Exceed Group. No issue! I'm just delighted with your thriving career of your own! But all of this assumes you don't harbor affection for Alexis and never considered a life together with her! Yet deep down, you clearly care for her while simultaneously yearning to evade this life. Leonel, I know Alexis best. She won't easily turn back! Now, at this point, my two children are causing each other pain. How am I supposed to handle this?"

He couldn't contain himself any longer and scolded, "You darn fool, not even allowing me a peaceful holiday."

Leonel projected an imposing presence outside.

Everyone addressed him with utmost respect, but in Waylen's presence, he endured the scolding.

A prickling sensation even nagged at his nose.

Waylen once more took up the passport, assessing it thoughtfully. "You're young and ambitious, free to run wherever you wish. Rena and I can't hold you back any longer. We don't expect anything except for when the day we're both gone, you will return, bearing a bunch of chrysanthemums for us. After that, you can fly wherever your heart desires!"

"Mr. Fowler!" Leonel exclaimed.

Shame overwhelmed him.

Waylen shot him another stern look. "You darn fool!"

Having uttered those words, he departed, and Rena's voice echoed from the doorway. "What did Leonel say?"

Waylen responded, "If he dares to leave, I'll break his legs!"

Leonel remained seated, clutching the passport. After some contemplation, he placed a phone call.

"Antonia, please have the accountant assist me in organizing my assets

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in Acoiclya."

He further confirmed, "Yes, I'm planning to stay in Duefron to develop my career."

Downstairs, Edwin had just completed giving Alexis a massage and retired to his room.

Meanwhile, Laura slumbered on.

As a designer, she often operated on a reversed day-and-night schedule, making it challenging for her to rise early in the morning.

She slept soundly, and Edwin slyly slid his hand beneath the blanket, teasing her.

He gently pinched her playfully.

Laura awoke, her cheeks flushing red as she attempted to move his hand aside. Edwin seized the opportunity to slip under the covers, taking her in a warm embrace.

Resting her head on his shoulder, Laura inquired, "Did Alexis return?"

"She's back," Edwin replied.

He sighed softly. "She reeks of alcohol. They must've had a heated argument outside."

As he spoke, he cast a glance at the girl in his arms. While he deeply adored Alexis' character, admiration was one thing. If she were his girlfriend, he'd find it a tad overwhelming.

Edwin himself possessed a strong-willed nature.

Leonel on the other hand, had always been remarkably accommodating toward Alexis.

His mind drifted for a moment. While he was lost in thought, Laura attempted to go back to sleep, but Edwin promptly caught her, harboring intentions of intimacy. However, Laura firmly declined, her eyes gleaming with resolve. "We're in your Uncle Waylen's house! Not here, please!"

"Why not?"

Edwin kept teasing her.

Lying together on the bed, they delved into the topic of marriage. Laura

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was eager with a strong desire to design her own wedding gown. Edwin consented, albeit reluctantly, reluctant to see her toil so ardently.

Laura didn't find it arduous.

After all, she believed she only got married once in a lifetime, and she wanted everything to be perfect.

Meanwhile, Alexis slept through the morning and got up for lunch.

Discovering that Edwin had already taken Laura away left Alexis feeling somewhat displeased.

"It's a rarity for Laura to pay a visit, and you don't even keep her around for a few days to enjoy her company."

Waylen furrowed his brows. "All you ever think about is having fun! That young star, Calvin, is back at the top of the trending searches, and there are rumors he's with a man! Rena and I bestowed such beauty upon you, and yet you prance around looking androgynous. People now actually mistook you for a guy!"

Alexis remained unfazed. "It was dark. It was hard to see clearly!"

Waylen was left speechless.

He snorted, "Wait until Marcus and Elva return. Let them handle you!"

Alexis relented, "Please, no. I'm terrified of those two the most! One is overly serious, and the other is a clingy spirit! Dad, just let them enjoy their time, preferably somewhere far away from me. Don't worry about me. I'll be fine!"

As soon as she finished speaking, a cup of sobering tea was handed to her.

Alexis glanced up and saw Leonel.

She grinned. "Well, well! Our Mr. Douglas playing the role to serve people? Did you pick that up in Acoiclya?"

Her words held a sharp edge, but Leonel took them in stride.

His tone remained gentle. "You didn't eat much last night, and you were drinking. Here. Just drink this."

Alexis pondered for a moment.

That was when Waylen chimed in, "Your Mom and I don't object to you spending time with that young star. The real question is, do you genuinely take him seriously? Sneaking around like this, what's the purpose?"

Beneath the table, Leonel's hand clenched into a fist.

Alexis took a delicate sip of her tea and mustered a forced smile. "Too young, too fragile; I won't be the one to cause harm to such a delicate flower!"

Waylen pointed toward her, addressing Rena.

"Who does she remind you of?"

Rena nonchalantly twirled her hair. "Everyone says she's just like you!"

Waylen paused, lost in thought.

Alexis nestled her head on Waylen's arm, batting her eyelashes just as she did when she was a child. "Isn't it wonderful to be like you?"

Waylen tenderly caressed her head.

His daughter was brilliant, outstanding, and shrewd.

He couldn't help but feel a surge of pride in him.

In the end, he could only advise, "Don't overindulge. I believe he's rather innocent."

Alexis winked at her dad, silently mouthing two words.

"So delicate."

Waylen experienced a whirlwind of emotions. In his youth, though he sought thrills occasionally, he'd always stop and reflect himself when Rena grew angry.

But with Leonel right there, Alexis was so unabashed.

Could it be that she had truly lost interest in Leonel?

Waylen abandoned his attempts to mend their relationship.

After the meal, Alexis, still nursing a headache, opted to stay home and rest. She sprawled on the sofa.

Her legs propped up on the back as she was engrossed in a handheld



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Leonel descended the stairs, having changed into fresh clothes.

Leonel was on the verge of heading out for a meeting when he noticed Alexis lounging around. He stopped in his tracks. "Aren't you planning to go to the law firm?"

Alexis didn't even look at him.

"Skipping it. I secretly hope it shuts down soon so I can comfortably bask in my family's wealth, just like Elva. You can't imagine how much I envy her!"

Leonel pursed his lips. "You don't have to work if you don't want to!"

Money was the least of the Fowler family's concerns.

Alexis cast a fleeting smile in his direction but remained silent.

Leonel's appointment was with a prominent real estate mogul. In his pursuit of establishing a financial foothold back home, he needed to acquire a building to bolster his image and make a lasting impression in business circles.

He had his sights set on one and had even arranged a dinner meeting for that evening.

Though Leonel was affluent, he had recently returned to the country and his roots weren't deeply established, so most people were unaware of his connection to the Fowler family.

He imbibed rather liberally during the dinner.

Yet, being youthful, his alcohol tolerance held firm, and he swiftly regained composure after a brief restroom visit.

Emerging from the restroom, his stride faltered.

Alexis?

Wasn't she supposed to be at home? What was she doing at a social gathering?

She sported her usual professional attire, though it appeared more refined than usual, accentuated by a delicate diamond necklace gracing her slender neck. It was undeniably captivating.

Leonel found himself staring at her for an extended moment.

Leaning casually against the wall, Alexis met his gaze. She regarded him in a flirty manner he hadn't previously witnessed. "Mr. Douglas!"

Leonel wasn't particularly fond of that facet of her personality.

He approached her, peering down. "Weren't you supposed to be at home? As a lawyer, why are you out here, mingling and getting so intoxicated?"

Alexis had, indeed, indulged quite a bit.

While not yet reaching the point of complete inebriation, she was more talkative than her usual self.

She nonchalantly waved her hand. "That's none of your concern!"

Leonel's expression hardened. "Then whose concern is it? That boy from last night? Why isn't he here looking after you?"

Alexis' eyes narrowed slightly.

She emitted a soft, knowing chuckle. "Why should he look after me? It's usually me who takes care of him!"

She straightened up, dismissively swaying her hand in Leonel's direction. "You wouldn't get it! You can't possibly comprehend what I share with Calvin! Someone as indifferent as you, how could you ever grasp it?"

Leonel's complexion turned pallid.

He genuinely wished for a civilized conversation with Alexis, an effort to maintain peaceful relations since they were still family, even though they were no longer a couple.

But it was abundantly clear that Alexis held no fondness for him.

She had no intention of letting him meddle in her affairs.

Just as Leonel was about to depart, someone approached, engaging Alexis in lively conversation. "Miss Fowler, we've finally found you! Come, let's enjoy a few more drinks. Those two gentlemen inside mentioned that if they have a good time drinking, they'll directly award a two-hundred-billion deal to Exceed Group without considering any other firms."

Alexis, who had previously resembled a drunken cat, suddenly spoke with clarity and briskness.

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"Is that so, Mr. Watson?"

She added, "In that case, I must head over and outdrink them!"

With those words, Alexis made her exit.

Leonel remained rooted to the spot, his heart once again heavy.

Exceed Group.

It was Waylen's gift to Alexis, and Leonel was supposed to help her manage it. But he never returned from abroad and Waylen was advancing in age.

Not only had Alexis become a lawyer, but she had also assumed control of Exceed Group.

No wonder Waylen mentioned she was always drinking.

No wonder she had yet to find a suitable partner to that day.



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