

Chapter 23: A Confrontation (2)

It wasn't like that. I was conflicted about my feelings for you. You'd worked so hard to get into the same university as me. I... was touched, Nora. I tried convincing myself that I would be able to recover that love with you. But then you went away with Grandpa William's family, and seeing Sara became easier. But both of us suffered as well when you were away having fun! Even a moment of shared laughter brought pain that we would have to eventually separate so that I could marry you. I considered so many times breaking up with you, but Sara was adamant that I shouldn't break your heart. It was only on the wedding day that she broke down before the ceremony... she broke down Nora, and I knew then that I would be able to go through with it.

2

Nora clutched at her glass of water and wondered if she had really entered some drama. She'd always thought that those female leads in dramas who threw glasses of water at a person's face were overreacting. But now, she could happily upend an entire jug of water on Antonio's head!

And as she stared at his face, pleading for sympathy and understanding from him, she could only thank the fates, or rather Sara, for taking this selfish person away from her life. She'd definitely dodged a bullet with this one.

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Pulling upon her acting skills, she gently patted his hand and thought of the pain when she had first discovered his betrayal.

Thankfully, her tears came on time, and she started, "I never went on vacation, Antonio."

I discovered your treachery that night. I was there in your house when Sara was with you! I'd planned a surprise for you only to receive a shock."

Seeing her tears and listening to the pain in her voice, Antonio was shocked. He had never considered that Nora had discovered everything.

Leaning forward, he grabbed her hand instinctively, but the next moment, his hand was pushed away, and Nora leaned forward with fire in her eyes, "I would never have married a man who would cheat on me, Antonio. I was in so much guilt because of you. You have to understand. You were in guilt not because of me! That was all you! The so-called guilt was your justification for cheating on me."

Clicking her fingers in front of his face, Nora spoke harshly, "And do you know why you did this? Because you thought I was inferior to you. You were the top scorer and Lara the second, so, of course, she could stand by your side while I only deserved your pity. Well, guess what Antonio, I do not need the pity of a man who will judge me whether I can calculate three to the power of ten! And not by my care towards him."

"Jilting me at the altar was a jerk move no matter how you try to sugarcoat it. When you did not back out of the wedding, I knew I could not marry you. But I did not want to embarrass you in front of your family and friends. And so, I hired an actor at the last moment for a fake marriage. So that later when you finally found your courage, we could simply go our separate ways."

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"And that is the difference between you and me." Having said her piece, Nora let out a quiet breath and cocked her head at the man sitting there in stunned silence, "But I do regret it now. If I'd known that you would shamelessly change the bride at the last moment, I would have brought in a real priest. I ended up saving you from the viper you fell for."

Finally, Antonio reacted at hearing his beloved girl called a viper and bit out, "I can understand and accept your hate. I have heard all these accusations that you have directed my way without saying a word. I'd always known you were weak in studies, so why would I judge you for that? But your jealousy against Sara and any poison that you spew for her, I will not tolerate!"

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"Fair enough. Then leave. I have nothing more to say to you. And next time you see me, you can pretend that we do not know each other." Nora calmly sipped her water, not touching the tea that he had bought for her.

But of course, she knew that Antonio would not let her have the last word, "I have been trying to understand your motives and your reason for everything,

Nora, but you are being unreasonable! We both were at fault. And you can go and explain yourself to my mother! Can you not simply accept everything and move on? The university is starting, and you are going to fail your math course! I am trying to do the responsible thing here so that we can sort out everything and continue with your studies! Why do you have to be so stubborn?"

2

"And why do you insist on making me a charity case, Antonio? I can handle my own business. If I need a manager, I can hire one. Just stay away from me."

However, Antonio was unprepared to listen. Instead of standing and leaving, he walked over to her side and leaned down, encroaching on her space as she leaned back onto the seat, "Fine if you insist on taking this route, you can fail all your classes for all I care. But you have to talk to my mother! She won't listen to me!"

"I do not have to do anything, Antonio. You handle your own mother. And get. Away. From. Me."

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As Nora clutched the arms of her chair, trying not to throw the glass of water at Antonio as he tried to intimidate her, suddenly Antonio was pushed away, making him stumble backwards while a calm voice spoke, "I believe the lady asked you to stay away."

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