

## Chapter 39 Why Should I Have To Grovel To You

Jacob's gaze met Elyse's, and she quickly averted her eyes, stating firmly, "No, I don't think it's necessary."

Trying to smooth things over, Lizzie intervened, "Don't dismiss the idea so quickly. Jacob has been waiting a long time for you. You're single now, after all. Why not give him a chance?"

At this, Elyse almost laughed out loud, but from irritation, not amusement.

During their high school years, Jacob was known as the troublemaker and was eventually expelled. Later, Elyse heard he had moved to a big city, seized some business opportunities, and now ran his own small company, having carved out a decent success for himself. Yet, Elyse could never erase the memory of Jacob stealing her money and accusing her falsely.

Trying to embody the role of a successful businessman, Jacob straightened his clothes and offered affectionately, "Elyse, we make a great pair. You're beautiful, and I'm wealthy. We're perfectly matched."

Elyse responded immediately, "I'm not single. I'm married. You should find someone else, Jacob."

Her words cast a hush over the room.

"You're married? To Theo Ward? That's news to me," Lizzie blurted out.

Elyse retorted, "I didn't say it was Theo. Can't I marry someone else?"

Upon hearing her claim, one classmate burst out laughing, incredulous, "You've concocted such an absurd story just to avoid Jacob. Who would you marry otherwise? Did you really marry someone disabled to spite Theo?"

Another chimed in, "Surely, even if you were upset over being rejected, you wouldn't go to such lengths, right? What's so bad about Jacob that you'd prefer using a disabled person as a pretext rather than accept him?"

Jacob's expression darkened. Since his rise to success, he had not faced such disrespect. In a fit of anger, he hurled a wine bottle to the ground and exclaimed, "I asked you out of pity. Do you actually think I was trying to win you over?"

Lizzie, stirring the pot further, said, "Why are you so ungrateful? Jacob was out of goodwill, yet this is how you repay him."

Suddenly, Elyse found herself the target of everyone's criticism, as if it was her fault for not wanting to date Jacob.

"Are you at your class reunion? How's it going?" A message from Jayden caught her eye as she lowered her head.

She responded, "It feels awful."

"You got picked on? You really reflect poorly on me," Jayden replied.

As Elyse pondered her next message, another text from Jayden popped up. "I'm coming to pick you up."

Jayden was on his way to get her?

A wave of relief washed over Elyse, giving her a sense of support. But her moment of reassurance was cut short as Jacob, seeing she was ignoring him, marched over and knocked the phone from her hand.

"I was talking to you! How dare you ignore me!"

Elyse's anger flared as she looked at her phone lying on the floor. Standing up, she confronted him, "Jacob Duffy, have you lost your mind? That's my phone! Who do you think you are? Why should I have to grovel to you?"

Lizzie chimed in, defending Jacob, "Don't be so harsh, Elyse. You embarrassed him first."

She continued with feigned sincerity, "Besides, we all know about your family's situation. They treat you terribly. Now that you no longer have

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Theo's support, why not consider Jacob? He could really love you, maybe even marry you."

Jacob sneered and retorted, "She doesn't deserve to be my wife. Theo probably got tired of being intimate with her. I don't want to be Theo's discarded leftovers."

The room erupted in laughter, though Freddy tried to console Elyse, the mockery was overwhelming.

"My husband is Jayden Owen. I won't consider you at all," Elyse declared, mentioning Jayden for the first time.

She had previously thought to avoid causing Jayden any trouble, but since he often said she was reflecting poor on him, it seemed appropriate to use his name now.

The laughter intensified at her declaration.

"Jayden Owen? You're hilarious!"

"Are you delusional?"

Freddy interjected, "We were all classmates once. Why are you treating Elyse with such hostility?"

Elyse stood there, her expression cold, realizing that this class reunion was merely a stage for them to flaunt their fame, wealth, and status. Now labeled as someone abandoned by Theo and deemed worthless, she found herself the target of their cruelty.

Lizzie remained silent, her mind occupied with other thoughts. She had learned from her fiancé that the Owen family was extremely wealthy, even more so than the Wards. Their influence was vast, yet they maintained a low profile, elusive to the general public.