



66 Did he sense possessiveness?

Ryan left the hospital and headed to the company. Once he reached his office, he called Daniel to come to his cabin. He sat and waited. A few minutes later, Daniel knocked on the door and entered the room.

As Ryan looked up at him, his eyes were filled with unspoken complaints, as if Daniel has betrayed him. Since the day, Daniel left the hospital after the outburst, he had distanced himself. He continued to perform his duties as the secretary but had shut down their friendship and brotherhood.

"How long are you going to pull that face, Daniel? Haven't you had enough?" Ryan said, already losing his patience. The day Delyth had her accident, he had tried reaching out to Daniel, but Daniel had kept his phone off. And since then, he seemed to have turned off his 'friend' mode completely.

Feigning confusion, Daniel furrowed his brows



and asked, "What are you talking about? What did I do? Your meetings have been postponed as you requested. If you want them resumed, I will see which ones can be reinstated."

"Daniel, you know that's not what I am asking about," Ryan sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose in frustration.

Daniel nodded knowingly. "Oh is it? Then what are you asking about? Let me know, and I will try to help."

"Delyth had another surgery the night before last," Ryan said, watching a flicker of surprise cross Daniel's face. "Someone attacked her while she was in the hospital and damaged her legs. The doctors say she might walk again, but she will never be able to dance."

Though this surprised Daniel, he couldn't muster much sympathy. Delyth's plight reminded him of the boy who cried wolf. 1

"Oh, sorry for her loss. But I think she must be getting the best treatment, given that you are there for her. She will get better soon, don't worry," Daniel said, his tone that of detached onlooker with no interest in stranger's suffering. 1

Ryan couldn't blame him. Daniel had never hidden his contempt for Delyth, and Ryan hadn't expected concern. What he wanted was for Daniel to understand why he was still by Delyth's side —because he was obligated.

"Daniel, aren't you too biased toward Arwen? Delyth is already suffering so much and you still think she is in the wrong?" Ryan's voice held a trace of resignation.

But Daniel remained unaffected. Shrugging, he said, "Why can't I be biased, Ryan? You know, you can choose to favour someone over your fiancée, but I am different. I can't choose to support a stranger over my friend. I try to be righteous, but not at the expense of my loyalty to a friend."

His words hit Ryan like a slap, making him realize the gap between them. Gritting his teeth, Ryan said, "You are a good friend, Dan, but Arwen doesn't deserve it."

"Ryan, you don't get to decide who deserves my friendship. If you are worthy of my friendship, then so is Arwen," Daniel paused before adding, "Delyth, on the other hand, doesn't deserve it



because I don't befriend people who are evil at heart while pretending to be angels." 1

"Daniel, you are wrongly —"

"If you have called me here to discuss this, believe me, I have better things to do. Foster Ventures has a lot of pending work because, unfortunately, its CEO has been too busy playing nursemaid to his sweetheart." 2

"She is like a sister to me, Daniel. Can you please keep it clean?" Ryan said, feeling exhausted from having to explain himself repeatedly.

But Daniel only laughed. "Really, Ryan? Sister? You know we don't share a bed with our sister after a certain age. So, you better not ask me to keep it clean when it's your actions that is giving a wrong picture from every angle." 2

Daniel shook his head before continuing, "Anyway, we have already talked about this. I gave you my blessing with Delyth, and I won't mind if you two get married tomorrow. Just like I won't mind if Arwen chooses someone else now. She deserves better, and you, unfortunately, can't be the better man for her." 6

Ryan saw red. He didn't know which part of Daniel's words triggered him the most, but the overall implication —that Arwen deserved someone else, someone better —infuriated him.

"You are truly overestimate her, Dan." Not able to hold back, Ryan pulled out the envelope from his pocket and threw it on the desk for Daniel to see, "You always speak and act as if she is some innocent angel who is kindest for this world. Let's see how you explain her action now. Let me see how you will justify saying I don't deserve her or that she deserves someone else — someone better than me."

And that was for the first time, Daniel sensed something unfamiliar in his friend —a hint of possessiveness. This emotion was so rare in Ryan that Daniel wasn't entirely sure if he had read it correctly. "What is this?" he asked as he picked up the envelope.

"It's the letter that shows how 'kind' and 'innocent' Arwen is," Ryan scoffed, watching as Daniel opened the envelope and read the contents. Daniel's brows furrowed as he carefully went over the details.



"Delyth is being sued?" Daniel asked, his voice tinged with surprise.

Ryan let out a bitter chuckle. "As you can see, yes," he confirmed. "Arwen filed a lawsuit against her for defamation and false accusations." He then stood up and walked over to his friend, adding, "And that's not all. It's not just Delyth. Arwen has sued nearly all of Delyth's fans and supporters, slapping them with heavy penalties for their attacks on her."

Daniel was stunned. This wasn't the Arwen he once known. But after seeing her last time, he wasn't so sure he had ever known her at all. The way she had drawn a line between herself and Ryan was both admirable and chilling, as if she had transformed into someone entirely unrecognizable. 2

