



74 Let me own a world of my own.

Emyr watched as Arwen and Aiden made their way toward the noodle stall, utterly baffled. No matter how much he tried, he couldn't grasp the reason for this change in plans. Weren't they supposed to dine at Demeter —the most exclusive Michelin-starred restaurant, well-known in Cralens? 1

His thoughts raced. How had things shifted so drastically in favor of this humble, old stall? If word got out that someone had cancelled a reservation at Demeter for this, it would stir a wave of shock across the country. Demeter might not be able to take the things it would do to its hard-earned reputation.

Emyr shook his head, frustration creeping into his voice as he glanced at the driver. "Neil, what do you think of this place?"

At first, Neil seemed confused, but then, noticing Emyr looking outside, he followed his gaze and replied, "It seems decent. They have decorated it



nicely, and with so many people here, the food must be pretty good."

Emyr felt his patience thinning. He shot Neil a sharp look before rephrasing his question, "Is this where you would bring your wife for a date? Would your wife agree to come to such a nice place for a date, Neil?"

The driver swallowed nervously and shook his head. *'Bingo! You understand me, brother'* —just as Emyr felt triumphant, thinking Neil finally understood his point, the man hesitantly admitted, "I wouldn't know. I never had a girlfriend or a wife." 1

Emyr opened his mouth, then closed it again, at loss of words. It was as if the universe was deliberately cornering him. Nodding, he sighed, "I hope you find a girlfriend soon, Neil —one who marries you and fills your life with the same snarky comments you have just given me." Then shaking his head, he turned away, no longer in the mood to discuss anything. 2

Back at the stall, Arwen walked in wrapped in Aiden's jacket. Since a few customers had just left just as they entered, they were able to get



one of the now-empty tables.

"There," Arwen said, pulling Aiden with her. "That table is free. Let's take it."

People glanced at them, momentarily getting awestruck by their perfect looks, while Aiden couldn't help but be amused by her actions. Finally, the real Arwen was starting to resurface. The Arwen he remembered from his past — the one who was full of life, full of fire — totally unrestrained, uncontrollable.

But over the years she had become something she wasn't. Docile, even. That had never been her nature. She was born to be wild and untamed, yet the people had tried to tame her and had almost gotten successful in it.

"We need to place our order before we sit," Aiden reminded her softly, noticing that Arwen was pulling him past the corner.

Arwen paused and turned, asking, "They won't take our order at the table?" Aiden shook his head, and she nodded, glancing towards the counter "Then let's order first." With that, she brought him to the desk, where an old man was taking orders. All the while, she hadn't even



realized how naturally she was holding Aiden's hand.

The realization only hit her when she overheard a murmur from behind.

"See, I told you, holding hands can be cute and so much more. That older sister is holding her boyfriend's hand, and look how happy he is. It's like he owns a world of his own. I want that too! If you want to make me happy next time, hold my hand like that. Otherwise, I won't help you with your math problem."

Arwen turned to see who it was speaking, and when their gaze landed on her, she realized she was the subject of their envy. Wait ... her eyes trailed down to her hand —she had been holding Aiden's hand this whole time.

She was about to pull away when Aiden's grip tightened, refusing to let her go. Startled, she looked up at him, scrunching her brows, only to see him smile.

"Let me own a world of my own," he said. 5

And Arwen's cheeks flushed red and she didn't know what else to say. He had heard everything



—and he knew they were talking about them. Before she could respond, the man at the counter spoke up.

"Yes, what would you like to order?"

The question felt like a much-needed escape for Arwen. She quickly looked at the digital menu, avoiding Aiden's gaze, which she could feel lingering on her.

"Umm ...I think two bowls of spicy noodles will do," she mumbled, glancing at Aiden to see if he had any preferences. "What do you say?"

He nodded and turned to the counter to confirm their order. "Two bowls of spicy noodles. Avoid putting coriander in them." He then pulled out some bills and placed them on the desk.

As the stall owner nodded, Arwen asked in surprise, "You carry cash too?" It wasn't something she expected, as most people hardly carried small change these days.

Aiden shook his head. "I don't usually. I got it from Neil earlier, knowing we would need it here." 2



Meanwhile, on the other side of the town, Ryan was growing increasingly frustrated with his legal team. None of them had been able to come up with a solution.

"You have all been reading the case for hours, and still no solution? Are you kidding me?" Ryan snapped, his headache worsening.

"Sorry, Mr. Foster," one of the lawyers said cautiously. "Ms. Ember's situation is complicated. She will need to apologize and accept the penalty. If it had been a one-time incident, we could have requested leniency. But her social media post afterwards destroyed that chance. Her words may have been subtle in her social media quote, but it's clear that Ms. Quinn was attacked because of it. There is no way we can defend her with this."

Ryan's mood darkened further. But he knew the lawyer was right. Pinching the bridge between his brows, he asked, "So what else do you suggest?"

