



94 That wouldn't change anything.

Arwen smiled softly before reaching out for Beca's hands. "I know if I wanted this, you would let me have it, Aunt Beca. But truly, I don't want it. So, please take it back," she said, placing the box in her hand. 1

Beca looked at the ring and sighed in her heart. Nodding, she accepted the box from Arwen and handed it to the butler. "Mr. Jones, please keep this in my room. I want to spend a little time with Arwen first."

Mr. Jones nodded and left the two alone. Arwen smiled softly at Beca as they walked towards the garden and took the seats under the shade.

"Aunt Beca, is there something you want to talk to me about?" Arwen asked, sensing it from the way Beca looked at her.

Beca gave a known smile. "Is it that obvious on my face?"

Arwen stared at her for a moment before



nodding with a playful smirk. "Yes, I could tell it in a glance. Were you trying to hide it? If so, I won't ask about it and will pretend not to know," she teased, and Beca couldn't help but laugh at her playfulness.

With affection in her eyes, Beca reached out to cup her face on one side and patted her cheeks lovingly. "You have such a cherry side. I never knew all these years. Where have you been hiding it all this time?" 1

"Just around the corner," Arwen replied with a small laugh, and Beca shook her head in amusement.

"It's good it finally came out. Don't hide it away again. Your cheerful laughs could melt hearts. It would be a loss to not use them at the right times." Beca said, and Arwen nodded, understanding her.

As that lighthearted conversation faded, Beca's expression gradually became serious. Arwen noticed but didn't say anything, giving Beca time to gather her thoughts. Arwen could guess what might be coming, but she remained silent, knowing that nothing could change now, no



matter what others hoped.

After a pause, Beca began, clearly struggling with her words. "Arwen, please don't take this the wrong way. I know what Ryan did was unforgivable and I am not really asking you to forgive him. I supported you when you broke up with him, and I still do. But still, I can't bear to part with you. So, in future if Ryan repents, will you ..."

"I won't," Arwen replied immediately, without hesitation, almost shocking Beca. With a small smile, she added, "Aunt Beca, I think you have overheard the conversation I just had with Ryan."

She had felt Beca's presence earlier but assumed it was her imagination when she hadn't appeared right afterwards. "But in case you didn't, let me sum it up. I told Ryan that both the Foster heirloom and he have nothing to do with me anymore, ever since he chose someone else over me. It had ended then and there."

Beca wasn't surprised to hear that because she had heard what happened between Ryan and Arwen earlier, but still, she held some hope. "Catrin called me yesterday, so I thought that



there might be a chance in the future."

Arwen understood from where that came from. Shaking her head, she explained, "I have yet to tell them, Aunt Beca. I didn't do it because it would be too much over a phone call. But the day they come back, I am planning to do it. I am sorry if my mother gave you any promises or hopes, because I would no longer be able to fulfil them."

Beca nodded in understanding. She had known this well, but Catrin's phone call last day just gave her a flicker of hope that improved her mood. But then, she should have known better — her son simply didn't deserve it. "Then it's a relief that I didn't speak much to Catrin. You can explain to her later when she comes," she said with a sigh.

And Arwen nodded to her. She would, of course. She was both anticipating and anxious about that day.

"Arwen, is it just because of that picture?" Beca suddenly asked. Although the picture of Ryan with Delyth was self-explanatory, still somewhere she found it hard to believe that her



son would betray Arwen like that. Ryan might have been rude to Arwen, but he wasn't a cheater. He wouldn't betray Arwen with Delyth.

And knowing Delyth's character, it was easy to suspect foul play.

Arwen paused for a moment, and seeing the hesitation in her eyes, Beca almost felt hopeful — until Arwen spoke again.

"It doesn't matter," Arwen said.

Furrowing her brows, Beca asked, "How can it not matter, Arwen? Isn't that picture the reason you broke up with Ryan?"

"Not entirely," Arwen replied, adding, "I have already decided to break up with him. It wasn't about that picture with Delyth alone."

"Arwen —" Beca's frown deepened, but before she could say anything further, Arwen chuckled.

"Aunt Beca, I know you have only supported me through this break-up because you thought it was because of the picture. If not, you might not have allowed it. But you can rest assured, that even if I wanted to break up, such a cheap trick



wasn't my ploy against him. That's not how I fight my battles. I would play that bad. It may be Delyth's ploy, like you suspect, but that doesn't matter. Does it? After all, it's not like I told Ryan to go out on a date with her and give her the chance."

Beca was stunned. She never thought Arwen would say something like that. She believed only she had seen through Delyth's tricks, but it seemed Arwen had figured it out long ago.

"Then why?" Beca asked.

"Because Ryan needs to face the consequences of his action," Arwen said firmly, without a trace of guilt. She wasn't guilty and she would never let anyone make her feel that. "And also, because that was the only perfect chance I had to escape my relationship with him."

"So, you knew that it could have been Delyth's trick?"

Arwen nodded. "I can't be sure, but yes, I know how strong the possibility is. But as I said, that wouldn't change anything, Aunt Beca."

Beca remained silent, absorbing Arwen's words.



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After a moment, she said, "How are you so sure that I would let you act on your will now that I know what you have on mind, Arwen? If you have forgotten, let me remind you: I have considered you my daughter-in-law for as long as I can remember. I love you, but of course, I love my son." ¹

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