

Bumpkin 1051

Chapter 1051 The Shirley With Low Self-Esteem

Today, Sofia was wearing a pair of dark green, loose-fitting trousers paired with a body-hugging cropped top in white and a black baseball cap. Her dark, long hair layered around her shoulders, and even without any makeup, she looked like a cool, proud girl.

In addition, she was born pretty, the type of cool girl with a clean look, and when Shirley recalled how her own face looked, inferiority welled up in her chest. She gripped the ropes on the swing tightly in fear, lowering her head and not daring to look at the woman nearby directly.

"Sky... I-I'm tired. I'm going back to rest." Then, she placed her palms on the ground, forcibly stopped the swing from moving, spun around, and shuffled toward the living quickly.

Skyler wanted to call her back when he noticed how she had literally fled in a panic but didn't do it in the end.

"It's been a while, Skye. Where the hell have you been recently?" A brilliant smile spread across Sofia's face, making it seem as though they had a close bond.

"Shirley was not in a good mood during that time, so I took her on a vacation." He stuffed his hands into his pockets and approached her leisurely. "Are you looking for Matt? He's playing with the kids in the living room. Come on, let's go in." It seemed as though he didn't have anything to say to her.

"Yeah, when I heard that Matthew has come back to life, I immediately rushed here to visit him, but I didn't know that I'd bump into you here." She dropped the stuff in her hands on the ground, started toward him, opened her arms, and wanted to hug him. "I miss you terribly, Skye!" she exclaimed.

However, before her hands could touch him, the man in front of her took a step back. "Stop!" He raised a hand, putting a distance between them. Then, he said in an aloof tone, "I'm dating Shirley now. It's already over between us, Sofia, and I hope that you'll let go of the past and don't disrupt my and Shirley's lives."

Although Sofia had already mentally prepared herself for this outcome, she was still struck by shock and jealousy when she heard the words coming from Skyler's lips. Her opened arms hung rigidly in the air for a few seconds before she slowly lowered them, tightening her palms into fists. "You... Have you really decided to be with her?"

"Yes."

The answer she received from him was firm and determined. There was not even a single trace of hesitation that could be heard, and such a decisive answer made her jealous all over again.

"Don't mess around, Skye. You should know that even if you're dating her, your parents and your family

will not approve of this relationship," she pointed out. "Do you know that your family has been searching for you when you went missing for three months? The only reason they didn't call the police was because of your status."

"I already went home on the day I returned and met my parents. So, you don't have to worry about that." His attitude was indifferent from the beginning to the end; he even warned, "Just remember this, you'd better leave Shirley alone. Otherwise, we can't even be friends."

Skye has changed, Sofia realized. He was no longer full of smiles as he used to be. In contrast, he had given all of his passion to Shirley. Meanwhile, he only has a cold, stony face when facing others.

Then, he spun around and left after saying his piece.

"Skye?" Sofia called out, but he didn't turn back and continued walking toward the living room.

Chapter 1052 Picking on Sofia

Sofia felt a little envious, especially after seeing how they were having such fun together without her. Regardless, she hid her jealousy well as she turned to Matthew and Veronica, who were seated on the couch, and smiled. "Matthew, I came to visit you when I found out that you're still alive. Goodness, this is so unbelievable! Back then, when I learned that you died, I mean, that you were no longer around, I cried for a very long time." Then, she turned to Veronica and greeted, "Hi, Veronica."

As there was no reason for Matthew to be mean to her when she came with all smiles, he treated her politely despite his dislike for her. "Make yourself comfortable."

"What would you like to drink? Coffee or tea?" Veronica offered.

"Anything is fine." Sofia placed the gifts in a corner and took a seat on the couch.

From another corner, Eleanor scanned her from head to toe and raised her brows as she asked, "Master, is she your admirer?" Before Matthew could answer, she smirked and turned to Veronica. "You have quite a few rivals in love, Veronica."

Veronica answered in amusement, "You've got it all wrong. The one she likes is Skyler."

"Oh, is that right?" Eleanor shrugged. "Sorry, my bad."

Only then did Sofia notice that a woman as stunning as a peony that had just blossomed was seated in a corner. Even though Sofia was beautiful as well, she was still a great contrast compared to her beauty.

"Matthew, she's..." she trailed off, asking Matthew.

"I'm Eleanor Gomez, Matthew's admirer," Eleanor introduced herself.

"Oh, I see..." A bewildered Sofia instinctively stole a glance at Veronica and saw that she looked calm. The woman didn't even wince at that outrageous introduction. What the hell is going on? she wondered and rose to her feet. Then, she approached Eleanor and extended her hand in a friendly gesture. "Nice to meet you, Miss Gomez."

First, Eleanor glanced at her extended hand, and then she cast a look at her. Instead of returning the handshake, Lilianna merely raised her perfectly arched brow, looked away, and stood up to leave. "I'm tired and would like to return upstairs to rest." Eleanor was never one to show any kindness to a person whom she didn't like at first sight.

"Matthew, s-she's..."

She started whining to Matthew, but Veronica said with a laugh, "That's how Eleanor has always been. We're all used to it." In other words, she should get used to it as well.

Then, Veronica added, "Are you looking for Skyler? He's upstairs with Shirley."

Chapter 1053 His Father is Back

Sofia was shrouded in awkwardness as she stood on the same spot, looking around the room helplessly, only to find everyone either lowering their heads as they checked their cell phones or turning to look the other way. Nobody wanted to bother wasting their time on her.

Being treated like an outcast felt like a tight slap across her face, and her cheeks burned painfully from the shame. As the little princess of the Green Family, she had never suffered such humiliation before.

Still, she bore with it for a few minutes, lifted her head to the direction of the second floor, and forced out a smile. "I'll wait for Skye to come down later, then. Matthew, may I stay for dinner?" For the sake of Skyler, she was willing to lower herself and set aside her haughty dignity.

"Sure," Matthew agreed with a nod and returned to coax Ada, who was in his arms.

"Mom..."

Suddenly, baby Ada uttered the word 'Mom'. Even though it was probably just a coincidence from her babblings, it still put a bright smile on Matthew's face. "You can say 'Mommy' now, my love?"

Next to him, Veronica giggled. "She's only six months old. How can she say 'Mommy' yet? No way!"

"But I heard it."

The man who used to be aloof and indifferent was now a caring father. A heartwarming emotion washed over Veronica, and she felt a sense of blissfulness after a moment of peace. This was exactly the life that she wanted.

Ring, ring.

Suddenly, Matthew's phone started ringing. He held Ada with one arm while using the other hand to pick up his phone. However, it was a call from an unknown number, so he hesitated momentarily before telling Veronica, "Roni, I'm going to pick up a call."

"Okay," she answered and bent over to pick up Ada from him. "Come here, baby. Let me hold you," she said in a soft, motherly tone as she carried her baby.

Matthew rose to his feet and walked out of the living room with his cell phone in hand before answering the call outside, "Who's this?"

"How are you, Matthew?" A strong voice echoed from the other end of the line.

Unfortunately, the voice sounded very unfamiliar to Matthew, and after racking his brains for a few seconds, he couldn't put a face to the voice. Nonetheless, his instincts were screaming at him that this person knew him, and he knew him very well at that.

"Who are you?" Matthew demanded. He had never been perturbed by anything, but at that moment, his heart skipped a beat, and he had a bad premonition.

"I'm..." the other man trailed off and sighed deeply. "We've not met for more than ten years. It's not surprising that you can't recognize my voice."

Chapter 1054 Skyler Is Disgusted

Therefore, she was strongly against Flavian marrying his mistress. Yet, he was deeply in love with that mistress and was willing to turn his back on the Kings Family to elope with her.

"If you insist on being with that woman, you're no longer a member of the Kings Family from today onward!" Elizabeth snarled.

Flavian hugged the woman, bowed at Elizabeth, and said, "Mother, I'm sorry for being such a disappointment. Please take care of yourself after this." After that, he left with that woman without a backward glance.

Because of this matter, Elizabeth threw a huge temper and collapsed. Later, she deliberately released some news, hoping that her son would realize his mistakes and return. To her dismay, she never heard back from Flavian after that day.

Thus, she could only announce to the public that Flavian had died in an accident. Elizabeth hated the fact that her son disappointed her and eloped with a woman. At the same time, she hated herself for forcing Flavian, her beloved son, away so heartlessly, which was why she doted on Matthew a lot.

Firstly, she felt guilt toward him. Secondly, she used the opportunity to shower all the love she had for her son on him as well.

In the beginning, Matthew thought that his father was indeed dead, but he accidentally found out one day that he didn't die and merely eloped with another woman. After that particular discovery, he had nothing but hate for Flavian. That man didn't contact him for more than ten years but suddenly decided to announce his presence now? The instant that man made himself known, Matthew could hear the peaceful and quiet life that he had hoped for shatter into smithereens, and his mood turned somber at the thought of this.

Somehow... I think life won't be peaceful after this, he thought wearily. He held the cigarette between his fingers, flicked off the ashes, and frowned deeply.

In the meantime, a mysterious and uninvited guest appeared at the Kings Residence. The moment that person made himself known, Yura sent everyone out of the room when he met Elizabeth.

The mysterious person fell to his knees on the floor with a thud and bowed to Elizabeth. Finally, he used the same tone as he did back then when he left and said, "Mother, I didn't fulfill my duties as a son, but I've returned to visit you."

Although Elizabeth was a bit senile—sometimes clear in her head and sometimes not—she happened to be clear-minded now and recognized the person in front of her. Nevertheless, she was expressionless and rose to her feet composedly before heading toward her bedroom. "I don't know you."

Then, she entered her room and shut the door. The man in the living room said nothing and knelt there for a long time before finally leaving. After he left, Elizabeth hid in her room and cried her heart out. Eventually, she fell into a deep slumber, and when she woke again, she seemed to have forgotten everything.

Yura, who had been by her side for half her life, felt sorry for her when she saw that her dementia had kicked in again.

Back at Pinewoods Villa, the kitchen staff prepared a sumptuous dinner, and everyone gathered around the table after the food was ready.

Chapter 1055 The Children Might Be in Danger

All of a sudden, everyone's gaze fell on Shirley, who felt like she was sitting on pins and needles. Every second was torture as she swept her gaze across everyone in the room. All of them were gorgeous, and she was blessed with good looks, too, but the scar on her face had completely shattered her confidence.

She stared helplessly at the people seated opposite her and finally hung her head in shame and low self-esteem. She parted her lips to speak, but Veronica interjected just as she was about to say something, "Skyler, I think Shirley doesn't look so well. Take her upstairs to rest, and I'll ask the cook to prepare something she likes so she can eat it upstairs."

As a woman, Veronica could easily guess what was on Shirley's mind.

"Sure. I'll take your advice." Skyler set aside his cutlery and grabbed Shirley's hand. "Shir, let's go. I'll stay upstairs with you while we rest."

"Okay." Shirley nodded and rose to her feet. "I'm sorry, but I don't feel so well. Enjoy your meal, everyone. I'll be retiring for the night."

Everyone in the room knew what was actually happening and didn't say a word. After they left the dining room, Sofia felt incredibly awkward. It would be weird whether she stayed or left. In the end, she forced herself to sit through the dinner awkwardly and fled.

Everyone else also departed one after another, leaving only Veronica and Matthew in the living room. After a while, Veronica sighed. "Shirley can't take any blows in her current condition. Tell the servants at home not to let Sofia in after this."

Unexpectedly, she didn't hear an answer after she finished speaking. So, she swiveled her head around to look at him and saw that he was simply staring ahead with empty eyes.

"Matt?" She reached out and patted his shoulder, which caused the dazed man to snap back to his senses. "What's the matter?" he asked.

"What do you mean? I should be the one asking you that." Veronica smiled helplessly. "What are you thinking about? Is there something on your mind?" It was very rare for her to catch him in a daze.

"Nothing. I'm just thinking about what's happening to Skyler."

"That's what I was saying earlier. I just said that Shirley couldn't take any more blows, so we should bar Sofia from entering," she repeated.

Matthew nodded. "I'll inform the servants tomorrow."

"There's another thing." She crossed her legs, tilted her head, and rested it on his shoulder. "I would like to return to work tomorrow."

Chapter 1056 Finding Out That Shirley Is Disfigured

"Huh? Well..." The light in Veronica's eyes danced with uncertainty, but after giving it a good thought, she felt that his reasoning wasn't entirely unreasonable. "You're right. That b*stard Conrad is pure evil. If he kidnaps the kids, I can't bear to imagine the consequences." She lowered her head and thought this over carefully.

"It's fine if you don't find this as a good idea. I..." In her eyes, Matthew could see that she was reluctant to part with the kids and wanted to take back the words he said earlier.

"No, I think that you have a point. I'm just thinking about where would be a suitable place to send the kids to. After all, I'll be busy after this." She tilted her head and leaned against his shoulder again. "You have a lot of things to get done, and I'll be swamped for quite some time. We won't have time to spare for the kids. Why don't we send the kids to my parents?" At the thought of this, she felt that it was a good idea. "My parents are bored in the village, and Waylen is... no longer around. I'm worried that they'll feel lonely."

Even though she claimed it was for childcare, she actually wanted her parents to live somewhere else while having the kids accompany them through their new life.

Matthew reached out and pinched her nose. "That's a great idea."

And thus, both of them reached an agreement.

The next day, Matthew went to work while Veronica went to her gaming company. Meanwhile, Troy and Yvette were tasked with giving Eleanor a tour to get her used to life in Bloomstead. Besides Skyler and Shirley, it seemed that everyone's life had returned to normal.

Matthew's appearance created another uproar, but the first thing he did after returning to work in his company was to hold a press conference to disclose his identity as the shareholder of another company and clarify the situation. Of course, his resurrection was definitely fake, and all the explanations were merely perfunctory excuses.

On the other side, Sofia returned from Pinewoods Villa devastated and buried her head in the pillow, crying through the night. The next day, two black circles formed around her eyes. When she passed by the mirror, she nearly screamed in shock as she looked like a zombie, so she decided to have a facial massage at the beauty salon.

After she drove herself to the beauty salon, the receptionists greeted her warmly when they saw her, "Hello, Miss Green."

"Wow, you look even slimmer now, Miss Green."

"Miss Sofia, your skin is looking so good..."

A few beauticians showered her in flattery, each saying things that sounded like music to her ears, and she opened her purse. Then, she took out some money and said to one of the attendants, "Buy some snacks for everyone here and keep the change."

"Thank you, Miss Sofia!"

"Thanks, Miss Sofia."

"You're the best, Miss Sofia!"

Chapter 1057 She Can Never Recover

"Yeah." Melinda sighed and shook her head in dismay. "This lady is prone to scarring, so her looks are destroyed. Oh, dear."

"You mean that her face can never recover again?" Sofia asked with a glimmer of hope in her eyes.

"Yes." Melinda checked the information in her hands and pointed at Shirley's scar on the picture. "The injury on the face is severe. Coupled with her skin's inclination to scarring, I'm certain that she won't be able to recover." Then, she suddenly raised her head at Sofia. "Why are you so interested in her condition?"

"Huh? Uh, n-no. I'm just asking because I know her." Sofia put on a plastic smile and changed the topic. Nonetheless, a triumphant smirk spread across her face the instant she had her back facing Melinda.

Just then, an employee from the beauty salon opened the door and said, "Miss Levine, Miss Tijana is asking for you."

"Okay." Melinda rose to her feet and said to Sofia. "I'm going to check out what Tijana needs. Take your time here, Sofia."

"Go ahead. I'll take a rest here in the meantime." Sofia leaned into the couch and made it seem as though she was browsing through her phone when in actuality, she had her eyes on Melinda's retreating figure. Nevertheless, she kept up the pretense until Melinda finally left the office and closed the door behind her.

When she heard that the sound of heels clicking on the floor was growing fainter, she slowly stood up and went to the desk. Then, she opened the folder and checked Shirley's information. Her phone made clicking sounds as she snapped a few pictures of Shirley's photos, capturing proof of her disfigurement.

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On this day, Veronica's adoptive parents finally arrived at Pinewoods Villa in Bloomstead. After Thomas parked the car, he went to the back and opened the car door. "Mr. and Mrs. Murphy, we're here," he said politely to Tony and Daniella.

The couple climbed out and checked out the huge villa. "This is so luxurious," Tony couldn't help but gush.

"Exactly. It looks like a palace." Daniella nodded in agreement but looked a little downcast. "Say, Matthew is so wealthy. Do you think Veronica is good enough for him?"

The edges of Thomas' lips twitched at that remark. How is she not good enough? Your daughter is the master of the hidden clan. Instead of becoming the clan's leader, she chose to be with the Boss. She's more than good enough for him. There was even a moment when he thought that Matthew was the one who wasn't worthy of her.

"Mr. and Mrs. Murphy, please don't say that. Mrs. Kings is hard-working and has been running her own company. Furthermore, she's working hard to run her own business and is a very motivated person. Of course, she's good enough for Boss," he said confidently.

Right then, Veronica and Matthew came out of the living room. "Dad? Mom?" She trotted down the stairs, dashed straight for them with open arms, and hugged them. "Oh, how I miss you guys!"

Chapter 1058 Let Things Take Its Natural Course

A stunned Veronica stood in a daze after they shoved her aside so heartlessly. Then, she turned her gaze to her adoptive parents as they hurried into the living and smiled in exasperation. I suppose it's true that love doubles through a generation, she thought in amusement.

After they entered the living room, Tony and Daniella each picked up a baby in their arms. They were overjoyed as they talked and played with the babies, teasing them so often that they kept giggling in merriment.

Instantly, the spacious living room was filled with life, and everything seemed so wonderful, basked in this blissful atmosphere.

This is probably what it means to have a blissful family. Matthew could feel their utter adoration for the babies just by watching Tony and Daniella rocking them gently while cooing at the babies in their arms.

"Dad, Mom, you're probably exhausted after such a long trip. You should rest for a bit," he said and gestured to the nannies to take the children from them.

After the nannies had left with the babies, only then did Tony take a seat on the couch.

"Roni and I couldn't contact you guys for the past few months because we've been busy with our work and training outside of the city," Matthew said.

When Matthew and Veronica left, he was worried that Tony and Daniella would contact Veronica first and start panicking when they couldn't reach her after a few tries. Hence, he had placed Thomas and Yvette in charge of contacting and visiting them, which set the Murphy couple at ease.

"Oh, that's not a problem. You're still young, and it's only natural that you place your career first," Tony said. "The training session this time is rather long. We would have been distraught if Thomas hadn't been in contact with us the whole time and kept us in the loop."

"Yes, exactly. As her mother, I'm worried whenever she leaves the house," Daniella said, chuckling.

Seated next to Matthew, Veronica tilted her head at them and flashed them a smile. "I'm back now, aren't I? So, there's nothing to worry about. Moreover, the training is over, and there wouldn't be any of that after this. So, don't worry."

Fortunately, her adoptive parents had a lot of trust in her. If the elderly couple had asked one more question, their cover might have been blown in an instant.

Ring, ring...

Then, Matthew's phone started to ring, and he saw a string of numbers when he whisked out his phone. This is Flavian's number, he thought and hung up with a frown.

"Is that an important call from work?" Daniella noticed that he had hung up a call and thought that her visit had the unfortunate side effect of disturbing his work.

Fortunately, the man shook his head. "No, it's just a scam call," he said, turning to Veronica. "Let them rest in the morning. Then, in the afternoon, if you're free, take them shopping and buy anything that they need."

"Okay," Veronica answered readily.

Chapter 1059 Learning the Truth

"We'll take our time." Matthew knew that they probably found their marriage rather challenging to accept right away and didn't comment on the matter further.

Then, his phone started ringing again, and he saw Flavian's number flashing on the screen. "Roni, go ahead and accompany your parents. I'm picking up a call."

"Okay." Veronica sprang to her feet and headed for the garden.

Matthew held his phone and picked up the call. "Don't call me again."

"I'm outside Pinewoods Villa. Can we meet? I know you have kids now. Will you let me meet my grandchildren?" Flavian requested shamelessly.

"Since the day you left, you were no longer my father. Leave me alone!" Matthew hung up immediately and tossed his phone on the table in frustration. Then, he rested his palm against his forehead and massaged it gently as his spirits sank lower and lower.

In the garden, Tony and Daniella pushed the baby stroller while taking a walk with Veronica on the grass. Veronica had asked both nannies to leave them alone, and the Murphys could finally speak their minds now. "Tell me honestly. Where the hell were you guys in the past few months?"

Veronica was caught off guard by the sudden interrogation. So, she instinctively stole a look at Daniella out of reflex, and the latter said disparagingly, "Although we live in the village, we're not dumb. After you married Matthew, he went missing for a few months, and when he reappeared again, he was a man without an arm. You said that's not him, and he was off on a secret mission. So, we know that you two were taking care of something behind the scenes in the past three months. Also, the last time when Crayson brought us to Castron, saying that he would bring us to meet you, it turned out to be nothing but false hope. In the end, it was Thomas who sent us home. We both know that you have definitely encountered some problems, but our abilities are limited, and we can't provide you with the support you need. Still, you should let us know what's happening with you because we're your parents." As she spoke, tears started to well up in her eyes. Even though Veronica wasn't her biological daughter, she still regarded her as her own daughter.

At this point, Veronica knew that she couldn't sequester the truth away any longer. So, she thought things over before finally saying, "Do you know why Crayson has always been so nice to me?"

"Don't digress!" Tony reprimanded gently in disgruntlement.

Chapter 1060 Flavian Is Here

"The dust has settled. There is already someone to succeed as the leader of the hidden clan, and I'll never return to that place ever again. Everything that Matt did before, he did it for me. You have to keep this a secret. Do you understand?" Veronica asked.

Blood drained from Daniella's face. "How... How did things turn out this way?"

"Were you and Matthew hurt in the hidden clan?" Tony asked in worry, looking at her from top to bottom.

Veronica immediately shook her head and bounced around. "Look, I'm fine." Then, she approached Daniella, wrapped her arms around her shoulders, and assured her, "Don't worry. We're fine, and we have returned safely. On the other hand, Shirley was hurt because of me. Crayson cut her face and disfigured her. Please be nicer to her in the future."

Daniella let out a sigh. "So, that's what happened." Then, she stared at Veronica and pulled her into an embrace. "It's amazing that you're back. We've been so worried and scared the whole time, but we're just farmers with limited abilities. I'm sorry we can't be of any help to you, my child."

"Oh no, Mom. What are you saying?" Veronica couldn't help but chuckle. "I told you guys everything because I don't want you to worry. Furthermore, I returned to the hidden clan because Crayson blindfolded and kidnapped me, and I only managed to return after two weeks of boat ride. As you know, the hidden clan is situated in a place that few have heard of. Therefore, I can't find my way there and am forbidden to return forever. So, you don't have to worry about me leaving, and you definitely shouldn't feel that I'm not good enough for Matthew," she assured, fearing that they would start overthinking

things regarding Matthew once more.

Sure enough, after Tony heard that his daughter was the heir to the hidden clan and almost became the leader but gave up everything for the sake of being together with Matthew, he straightened his back and said proudly, "There's no doubt that my daughter is worthy of him."

"Don't spout nonsense!" Daniella chided. "Just keep these things to yourself, or it will harm Veronica."

"Okay, anything you say." Tony nodded and smiled, raising his head as he suddenly felt his mood getting lighter. "I have to have a drink with Matthew in the afternoon to celebrate your safe return and a few more to thank him for taking care of you."

A worried Veronica reminded, "Don't mention anything about the hidden clan in Matt's presence. He's scared that you'll be worried and forbade me from telling you. If he finds out about this, he'll blame me for my rash decision."

"Got it."

"Don't worry, my child. I won't speak a word about it. Even though I grew up in a village, I can judge what is appropriate to say and what is not."