



Chapter 51

Riley jolted awake the second she felt the sun's rays hit her eyes. She called, "Adrian?"

The man wasn't next to her. When she felt her chest, she realized she was wearing her sleeping dress again. She understood how Adrian had covered her before leaving.

But where on earth could Adrian be?

Riley hurriedly got up and checked the bathroom. He wasn't there. She checked the time and realized it was already eleven in the morning!

Suddenly, Riley felt anxious. Her heart became restless, and she assumed, "Could Adrian have left?"

Last night, when Adrian asked her to marry him immediately, she declined, explaining that she did not want to shock Renee. She wanted to give her mother a little time to adjust before she would jump into marriage again.

Riley merely wrapped herself in a satin robe before going around the house and looking for him. He was not in the living room. When she went to the dining area, only Rose was there.

"Where is Adrian?" She asked.

"I'm not sure, Miss. Let me prepare your breakfast -" Riley did not give Rose a chance to finish her words because she ran around again, looking for Adrian.

"Adrian?" Riley called. She checked the study and even the secret room that led to the vault, but the man wasn't there either.

Riley was panting when she exited the study. As she did, her mind concluded, "Could Adrian be upset with my decision?"

She panicked. It was never her intention to hurt Adrian. She simply wanted more time for Renee.

"Riley?" Out of nowhere, Linda's voice came through. Riley snapped behind her and saw Linda carrying a tray. Linda said, "Adrian is at the veranda with Abner. Go to him."

Riley's shoulders fell, utterly relieved. Adrian may not be upset after all. She hurriedly made her way to the back door. When she stepped into the veranda, she immediately saw Abner and Adrian. They were both having coffee while facing the backyard.

Abner was in his seat while Adrian was in his wheelchair across the table. The two failed to notice Riley's presence that she picked up on their conversation.

"I see that look on your face, the kind that tells me I'll have a grandchild soon," Abner said to Adrian before sipping his coffee.

Adrian chuckled and answered, "I don't know what you are talking about, Grandpa."

"You can lie, but the smile on your face can't hide it. There is that warmth in your gaze that radiates contentment. It's unmistakable. You are happy... and you deserve to be," Abner said before he unexpectedly wept.

Riley was caught off guard to see Abner lower his head and wipe the corners of his eyes. He placed his coffee cup on the table and said, "Over the years, you were building so much hate, fixated on getting back at Fredrick -"



"Grandpa, enough," Adrian said. "I don't want you to be concerned."

"But I am! I am your grandfather, and I love you," Abner said. "That goal of revenge was turning you into a different person, Adrian -"

"Because I need closure. I need justice for what they did to me," Adrian said. "Clint and I have a lead of the old caretaker in Sweden, Grandpa. It won't be long now."

"But what if it is another dead end? Haven't you been down this road before? What if Fredrick had nothing to do with your accident?" Abner asked. "I don't want you to be disappointed and isolate yourself again."

'What? What did I just hear?' Riley instinctively hid behind a column after hearing their exchange. 'Did that mean the incident in Sweden was not an accident?'

There was a short pause before Adrian assured his grandfather, "I'm sorry, Grandpa. I promise, this time around, I won't distance myself from you."

"Well, I believe you," Abner said.

In the next few seconds, Riley heard only silence. Eventually, Abner revealed, "I have a confession to make. When I told you I would only give you my company shares if you would marry, my intention was only good."

"I wanted you to have someone when I am gone. I wanted you to have a woman who will love and care for you. I did not know what Leni Eros would bring, but I hoped -"

"Please, Grandpa. You would only kill me prematurely if I married Leni," Adrian declared.



This time, Abner chuckled. He replied, "Well, I guess so."

"But now, I think you will live longer," Abner said. "I am happy that you have Riley. She is a good girl, and I can tell she loves you."

"Do you think so, Grandpa?" Adrian asked.

"Yes. She is not too hard to read. She is always blushing around you," Abner said.

Behind the column, Riley felt her cheeks. She was utterly embarrassed! Why couldn't she contain her emotions with Adrian?

"Last night, she told me she loved me, but when I asked her to marry me right away, she wanted to wait a little longer," Adrian said with a hint of woe in his tone. "I have never felt wanting something - someone so badly, but... I don't want to force her either."

"Of course," Abner acknowledged. "You can't force love. If you hold it too tight, you will suffocate it -"

"That is never my intention. I will love her, even if she doesn't love me. I have been doing that... for years," Adrian said. "I never expected anything in return. I was willing enough to give her everything even if she didn't love me."

Riley's chest congested, having overheard everything. She muttered silently, 'So grandpa knew about me all along?'

Then, Riley remembered their initial agreement. Adrian had only asked for her loyalty. He even offered half of his wealth to her in the event they would separate. She connected the dots and detected the truth behind what she caught part of.



'Adrian loves me so much,' Riley felt her eyes water as she concluded. Next, her tears flooded her cheeks. She was starting to hyperventilate, so she swiftly walked back into the house.

She ran up to Adrian's room and sobbed on his pillows. Yet again, she felt wronged, wronged to have married Brian. She hated how she wasted many years with the wrong man!

Riley did not know how long she wept in bed, but soon, she heard the door creak open.

"Riley?" Adrian called.

Hearing Adrian's voice, Riley got up, her eyes puffed and red.

"Why are you crying?" Adrian asked. "What happened?"

His voice suddenly strengthened, evidently in anger. "Was it Brian again? Did he call you? Who made you cry?"

"No one," Riley replied, her hands carelessly wiping the tears on her cheeks. She dug through her brain for a good explanation. "I - I thought you left me."

"Left you?" Adrian echoed, raising his eyebrow. He chuckled and answered, "Riley, even if you threaten me with a gun, I will never leave you." 1

Riley laughed at the silly excuse she came up with. She hopped off the bed and sat on Adrian's lap. She wrapped her arms around him, kissed him tenderly on the lips, and said, "Adrian, I have thought about it."

"I'll marry you," Riley said. "Right away."

The man leaned back. He gulped and clarified, "Right away?"

With a nod, Riley repeated, "Right away."

"I love you, and you are right. We have lost time already. We should focus on making up for all those years," Riley said. She smiled and repeated, "I love you, and I'll marry you."



Lilhyz Author

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