Chapter 9 Stubborn

Gilbert continued to accompany Lilly in her efforts to persuade the parrot after chasing Debbie away. He was irritated at the prospect of having to sweet-talk an animal into following them home rather than trapping it.

"Come on, Polly. I'll feed you delicious meat if you come down," the man coaxed.

The parrot stared at Gilbert and shook its head. "No meat. No meat! No fat!"

When he saw the animal was refusing to cooperate, he took a deep breath and resorted to his last resort, "Lilly, let's go. Ignore the parrot."

Tears welled up in Lilly's eyes as she clutched Gilbert's shirt and begged, "Please, Uncle Gilbert. Don't abandon Polly."

It broke his heart to watch Lilly in such distress. Hence, he apologized, "I'm sorry, Lilly. This is all my fault. I shouldn't have said that." He wanted to slap himself hard when he realized that he had forgotten the little girl was overly protective of her friends.

Lilly was surprised because that was the first time anyone had apologized to her. She smiled and patted Gilbert on the shoulder. "It's all right, Uncle Gilbert."

Even though she had expressed her regrets in the past, no one had assured her that everything was fine. The little girl promptly comforted her uncle, knowing that the apologizer would feel horrible if she did not respond.

They then turned their focus to the parrot.

"Polly, be good now. Uncle Gilbert didn't mean to trick you. He isn't a bad person," Lilly assured.

"I'm sorry, Polly. Please come down. We are going to Clodston and the garden there was huge. We can even find you a female friend…"

Bryson, Edward, and Jonas went to the backyard to look for Lilly and Gilbert after they had been missing for a long time. They were taken aback by the duo's peculiar behavior, and upon further clarification, they discovered that Lilly had returned to the Hatcher mansion in search of the parrot. The ordinary bird with green feathers watched on as the Crawfords quibbled.

"Are you kidding me, Gilbert? What's so difficult about persuading a parrot? Why are you so useless?" Edward hissed.

Bryson and Jonas remained mute, knowing that fooling the parrot would be difficult; Gilbert had spent a lot of effort on this with no results.

Suddenly, Polly started singing, "Gilby Gilby! Stupid Gilby!"

Gilbert scowled and retorted, "Why don't you do it if you're so capable?"

"Watch and learn!" Edward scoffed and raised one arm. "Squawk! Squawk! Squawk!" The man patted his raised arm to signal the parrot to land on it.

Lilly widened her eyes and thought, *Uncle Edward looks like a gorilla!*

While Bryson watched on with a mocking smile, Jonas crossed his arms and uttered, "It's just a parrot. Why does he need to embarrass himself?"

"Dumb Dumb! Dumb Dumb!" Polly chirped.

Infuriated by the lack of response, Edward pointed at the parrot and screamed, "Damn it! Get down here right now!"

"No! Don't trick me!" Polly flapped its wings and replied.

Lilly giggled as she observed Edward's incredulous expression; he was horrified by the animal's intelligence.

Uncle Edward may appear scary but he isn't that fierce. Uncle Gilbert and Uncle Bryson are nice and gentle. Uncle Jonas looks obedient but deep down he's mean. Uncle Edward looks like a fiery dragon, always on the verge of exploding. My mummy's brothers are so unique. I think I like my uncles better than my daddy, grandma, and grandpa. They seem different.

When her eyes met Jonas', she averted her gaze and pretended everything was all right. The man smirked when he saw how timid the little girl was. He then spoke, "Don't waste your effort, Edward. This parrot only listens to Lilly."

"And how would you know that?" Edward challenged.

Jonas burst out laughing and replied, "Are you an airhead?"

Just as Edward was about to throw a tantrum, Bryson called out, "Jonas is right. Let's all take a step back."

Gilbert stepped aside to join his brothers, leaving the girl with her toy rabbit. She turned to face the parrot and urged, "Polly, hurry. We're getting ready to leave. My uncles are good people!"

The Crawford brothers enjoyed seeing Lilly persuade the parrot with her cuteness. Even Edward's heart was softened; she reminded him of his sister, Jean, when she was younger.

The parrot tilted its head toward Lilly. It then flapped its wings toward the girl, but as it was ready to land on her shoulder, Paula's voice echoed through the backyard. "There you are!"

Polly flew back to the tree again, terrified by the loud noise.

Lilly scrunched up her face, pursed her lips, and hid behind Edward as everyone stared at Puala in silence.

The old woman did not seem to realize their disdain as she continued merrily, "Are you catching a parrot? Let me handle this. I'll get a professional to do it." She was trying her best to get into the Crawfords good books. However, she was secretly lamenting about wasting time and resources on a mediocre parrot.

Just as Paula was about to whip out her phone and call for assistance, Edward bellowed, "Get lost! Stop causing trouble." The woman dropped her phone as she was startled by his abrupt reprimand. She thought, *he has such terrible manners. Doesn't he know how to respect the elderly and love the young?*

The noise attracted Hugh and Anthony, who soon joined the group in the garden, with Richard and Stephen not far behind.

Richard immediately suggested, "This parrot is sneaky. Let us catch it!"

Stephen added, "It's hard to catch the bird if you show it kindness. I know that the animal shelter has a cage that can trap the parrot. If that fails, we can inject the parrot with anesthesia."

It was as though the parrot could understand everything they said. It flapped its wings and landed on a taller tree.

"Don't hit Polly. It's very obedient," Lilly said panickedly.

Gilbert hissed, "Did you hear that? We don't need your help. Leave immediately."

Stephen snarled while making a phone call, "What does a kid know? She's wrong about this. We aren't hitting the parrot. It's just anesthesia."

The Hatchers were stubborn individuals who refused to listen and insisted on taking matters into their own hands.