

Ex-Wife 1831

Chapter 1831

Coincidentally, the startup ceremony of The Heart of the Grassland happened to be the same day as the graduation photograph session of the kindergarten, so Renee asked Leia to take Jeffrey to the startup ceremony.

Although Leia was reluctant, she agreed so Renee could go with her kids without worrying. She drove her convertible out of Everheart Manor to go to Santa Fe, the place Universal Entertainment had booked.

During the car ride, Jeffrey was cautious and awkward as he didn't know Leia that well yet. "Leia, thank you for doing this. I... can actually just take a cab there."

"No, you can't do that." Leia had her sunglasses on, and held the steering wheel with one hand, enjoying the breeze as she drove. "Ren is worried about you, and she'll kill me if you get lost or someone bullies you during the startup ceremony, so it's best I bring you there. Stop overthinking-think of me as your agent, and just tell me if you need anything. I'll protect you as well as Ren since she's working so hard to make you famous." Although Leia couldn't understand Renee's reasoning, she would support her since it was something Renee wanted to do.

The car soon arrived at the entrance of Santa Fe. There were a lot of paparazzi and celebrities there because of how grand the startup ceremony was, and many stars were also attending to give their support. It was so crowded that the organizer had to ask everyone to show their working permits or invitation cards if they wanted to enter.

Leia and Jeffrey finally reached the entrance, where the staff asked for their working permits and invitation cards. "Invitation cards?" Leia shook her head. "No one told me that we need such a thing. This guy is the hero of this movie, so just let US in."

The staff was a rough man who didn't know much about the entertainment circle, and he glanced at Jeffrey in disdain. "Are you kidding me? The Heart of the Grassland is a big production, and the cast are all A-listers. Why would they get a country bumpkin to be the hero? Do you think we're stupid?"

Leia became furious. "Look at him! Why can't this guy be the hero? Isn't he handsome? Doesn't he have a great temperament? How can you humiliate him like this just because he's a novice?" While talking, Leia tried to search for the movie posters online, but Universal Entertainment had kept Jeffrey's casting a secret to increase people's interest in the film. Only Jeffrey's silhouette was on the poster, which made it impossible to identify him. "Look-Isn't he this guy here?" Leia clicked on the poster, trying her best to zoom in on Jeffrey's face.

"It doesn't look like it!" The staff shot Jeffrey a contemptuous look and scoffed, "If this guy can be the lead, I'd be nominated for Best Actor."

"Where's security? Hurry up and get these crazy people out of here!"

A few security guards walked over and tried to pull Leia and Jeffrey away. The paparazzi immediately came over when they saw the commotion, and kept snapping pictures of the scene.

Chapter 1832

Suddenly, the paparazzi shifted their focus, turning their cameras in another direction.

"Here they come! Mr. Stuart is here, and he's with Ms. White!"

"Wow, they look so close! Did they get back together?"

"Of course! I heard that Mr. Stuart purposely made *The Heart of the Grassland* for Ms. White!"

The media kept taking photos as they gossiped.

At that moment, Xavier and Shirley walked onto the red carpet hand in hand, generously letting people take photos of them. They looked like a sweet couple from afar.

Leia was immediately frozen to the spot as she stared at them blankly.

"What's wrong, Leia?" Jeffrey asked carefully when she suddenly went quiet. "I'm sorry for causing you so much trouble and embarrassing you. I'm just a nobody, so it's normal that they wouldn't recognize me. Don't be mad ... Huh? Isn't that Xavier and Ms. White? It's good they're here-they know me!" Jeffrey immediately brightened when he saw Xavier and Shirley, and enthusiastically waved at them. 'Xavier, Ms. White!"

When Xavier and Shirley heard Jeffrey's voice, they turned towards him. Instantly, the atmosphere grew tense.

Shirley's hand was on Xavier's arm, and she shifted awkwardly as she whispered to Xavier, "Xavier, should I keep some distance from you?"

"No, you don't have to do that." Not only did Xavier stay close to Shirley, but he even held Shirley's hand firmer. He faced the cameras calmly and whispered, "She wouldn't mind even if we had a baby on the spot." He had been fawning over Leia lately, and always went to Everheart Manor every day before dawn to see her. He wanted to spend more time with her, and always observed her so he knew her preferences in presents, food, and hobbies. He had showered her with the things she loved, and thought that his sincerity could move her until she forgave him and reconciled, but she remained unmoved regardless of how hard he tried. She only saw him as a shameless and disloyal person, and they just kept growing apart.

Consequently, Xavier had gotten tired of trying.

Xavier and Shirley reached the end of the red carpet and walked over to Leia and Jeffrey.

"Why are you the one who brought him here?" Xavier asked indifferently.

"Ren is busy," Leia replied in the same unbothered tone.

Shirley felt awkward, and subconsciously stepped away from Xavier. "I'm sure MSXEverheart told you that I'm the heroine of this movie, which is why I'm here with Xavier, the producer of the movie."

"You don't have to explain yourself." Leia shrugged emotionlessly. "It's none of my business if you both are walking a red carpet or a wedding aisle. You don't have to inform me."

The atmosphere grew colder.

Xavier's expression darkened, and he said icily, "So why are you about to start, so you're still standing here?"

Chapter 1833

Leia crossed her arms and sneered. "We've been trying to go in, but your staff won't let us... It's ridiculous that they don't even know who the hero of the movie is. Is this the quality of the staff of Universal Entertainment?"

The staff's face turned pale, and he lowered his head fearfully and apologized, "I... I'm so sorry. I should have familiarized myself with the main cast of the movie. It was my mistake."

"Is that really the reason? It's clear that you looked down on us!" Leia snapped. "Didn't you stop us because we didn't dress to your standards?"

"I... I..." The staff wrung his hands anxiously, looking regretful.

"I recall that we need to show our invitation cards or working permits to get in, right?" Shirley smiled calmly. "Ms. Osborne, don't you have them?"

"I forgot to bring them!"

"Then, Ms. Osborne, it's because of you that he got it wrong. You've treated this staff unjustly. I hope you won't make things difficult for him." Shirley's gentle words smoothly turned the situation around, making it seem like Leia was behaving unreasonably.

The staff rushed to thank Shirley, staring at her gratefully. "Thank you, Ms. White. You understand how difficult it is for workers like us. I was just doing my job and didn't mean to offend anyone... I'm so sorry!"

"How could you!" Leia's eyes widened in outrage. "If you really were working without bias, you wouldn't have been that rude. You know you were looking down on us!"

"Ms. Osborne..." Shirley said soothingly, "Sometimes more than one person has to be blamed for a mistake. It's probably that both people involved are at fault. Aren't you being too stubborn by refusing to let go of this?" Her meaning was obvious-both Leia and Xavier were to be blamed. NôvelDrama.Org owns this.

Leia instantly understood her implication and scoffed, "Enough with the accusations. I don't care how many people are to be blamed for this, what's done is done, and nothing can fix it!" She stormed off, pulling Jeffrey into the hotel.

Shirley watched Leia with a triumphant smirk. With a rival so blunt and easily manipulated, it would be a piece of cake to win Xavierlover. "Xavier, it looks like Ms. Osborne is still mad at you. She's a rich young heir after all, so she's not used to such treatment. I already explained to her that there was nothing between US, so why can't she let it go?" Shirley looked at Xavier and asked helplessly.

Xavier's face was like thunder. Nobody could tell if he was angry at Leia or Shirley, but after a while, he replied calmly, "She was right."

"Mm?"

"No one can undo a mistake, and it can't be forgotten either. It's normal to be mad and not want to forgive someone." Xavier seemed to be talking about something else.

Shirley instantly stopped talking. She, of all people, had no right to talk about forgiveness.

Chapter 1834

The startup ceremony of The Heart of the Grassland began, and the emcee invited the cast onstage to make a self-introduction. As the leads, both Jeffrey and Shirley had to go onstage while Xavier and Leia sat in the VIP seats below the stage, watching them.

"I wouldn't have come if I knew you'd be here!" Leia muttered crossly, childishly moving her chair away from him.

"Are you that surprised?" Xavier faced the stage, smiling blankly and clapping from time to time. "I'm the head of Universal Entertainment-of course I have to be here. Maybe you came here on purpose knowing you'd run into me."

"Stop flattering yourself!" Leia huffed defensively. "Ren has to attend Adie and Abby's graduation photography session, so I came in her place. If I knew you would be here, I would have just hired an agent to bring Jeffrey here and saved myself the trouble!"

Xavier remained calm, enjoying riling her up. "Why? Am I a ghost? Are you that afraid to see me? Or do you care about me so much that you're afraid you can't hold back when you see me?"

Annoyed, Leia folded her hands in her lap, her lips pursed as she fixedly stared at the stage. "You've certainly got a wild imagination."

The emcee smiled brightly at the crowd below him. "We're glad to have so many big names and supporters here to celebrate the startup ceremony of The Heart of the Grassland. I'm sure everyone is very familiar with our heroine, Shirley... Let's give her a round of applause!"

The audience immediately burst into an enthusiastic applause. Although her image wasn't what it was, she still had a certain influence in the entertainment circle.

"Come here, Shirley. Please say something." Smiling, the emcee called Shirley over.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it's been a very long time since I've been on a stage..." Shirley started, tears welling up in her eyes. Naturally, the audience felt sorry for her.

"Shirley, stop crying. You're always our most beloved princess!" Shirley's fans raised their banners and shouted excitedly, "Just walk ahead no matter what happens. No one can take away your future!"

"Thank you so much. Thank you!" Shirley turned away from the audience and wiped away her tears, making others feel moved.

Stunned, Leia asked in disbelief, "Is this a startup ceremony or a fan meeting? Does she have to be so emotional?"

"Shirley's been having a hard time lately. You won't understand since you're not her fan," Xavier whispered. It was an undeniable fact that he had banned Shirley and made her popularity plummet. Celebrities survived with the help of visibility, and Shirley's fans fought for her every day online. When they saw their idol in a movie again, of course they were excited.

"Of course you'd feel sorry for her..." Hurt, Leia snapped at him, "Why were you so ruthless then? You were so fake and implicated me for nothing.

How boring!"

"Did I implicate you?" Xavier sneered.

"Are things really so bad between US that you have to avoid me at all costs?" NôvelDrama.Org owns this.

Chapter 1835

"What do you think?" Leia looked dispirited. "I thought you couldn't make up your mind and were a ladies' man, but now I see that you're really a passionate and loyal man. Shirley is the only woman you ever cared about, and I was just a clown for you to make a fool of!" It wasn't easy for Leia to say those things about herself, but it was the reality she had to face. The fact that she could say those things now made her happy-it meant she was moving on.

"You really see me as a despicable person." Xavier's expression turned frigid. NôvelDrama.Org owns this.

"No, you're not. I said that you're loyal and passionate. Isn't that the best possible compliment for a man?" Leia argued, unsure why he was so dissatisfied.

"Why are you trying to forget the love we had?" Xavier ignored all propriety and grabbed Leia's wrist, staring at her desperately. "Look at me... Didn't you ever notice my feelings for you when we were together?"

"What are you doing? Let go of me! We're in public, and people are looking at us!" Leia hissed. She was used to bickering with Xavier and having him sulk or laugh for a while, but she never expected him to behave like this in front of so many people and paparazzi. Was he trying to put her on the headlines tomorrow?

"I don't care who is looking at us. I just want you to be honest with me!" Xavier pulled her closer and looked straight into her eyes. "Answer me- were the feelings we had when we were together fake?"

Many people began to notice them, and started whispering among each other.

"What's wrong with Mr. Stuart and Ms. Osborne? Are they still a couple?"

Why do they look so intimate?"

"I heard that they were a couple for a short while, but they broke up because Mr. Stuart couldn't forget about Shirley!"

"That's nonsense! Shirley kept pestering Mr. Stuart and refused to break up with him-that's why he and Ms. Osborne broke up with each other!"

"I guess he didn't like Ms. Osborne much then, or they wouldn't have broken up that easily."

"Well, exes always have the upper hand in things like this. I'm sure Mr. Stuart cares about Shirley more than Ms. Osborne!"

Both Leia and Xavier heard their discussion, and it made the atmosphere very awkward.

"Aren't you going to let go? Do you always have to make me the laughing stock?" Lela gritted her teeth?

teeth, trying to keep her tone calm and not make a scene. However, her patience was running thin.

"Don't you think Mr. Stuart is a scumbag? He can't make up his mind. Does he want to have two lovers at the same time?"

Leia overheard that, and scoffed at Xavier, "Do you see it now? It wasn't everyone can falsely accusing you'd see what's happening."

"So, you're concerned I can't make up my mind, right?" Xavier asked Leia seriously, not angry at all.

Chapter 1836

Leia was silent for a while, then decided to be honest with herself and nodded. "Yeah, I hate that you can't make up your mind. I don't care what others think-to me, love is exclusive. If we're a couple, your body and mind should only belong to me!" She knew that Xavier was physically loyal to her when they were a couple, but she didn't know if his heart had been hers entirely. "Do you remember the one question I asked you repeatedly before we became a couple?" Leia watched Xavier, her eyes watery. "I asked you if you were sure that you had moved on completely and if you truly only cared about me. You hesitated at that moment, and that was when I knew. Maybe that was the beginning of this tragedy." Back then, she had been infatuated with Xavier's good looks and just wanted to have some fun. If things went wrong, they could break up and go their separate ways. Unexpectedly, her spontaneous fling turned into infatuation, and it hurt more than when she broke up with her scumbag first love. She had lost control of the situation.

"I admit that I was hesitant in the past. I wasn't sure about many things, but now, I know what I want." Xavier clenched his fists and said to Leia firmly, "Since you want to see me make up my mind, I'll grant your wish."

"What do you mean?" Leia leaned back against the chair and stared at him in confusion.

Xavier remained silent as he got to his feet and went onstage. His sudden appearance on the stage made the audience start whispering.

"Xavier?" When Shirley was onstage, she had noticed Xavier and Leia whispering to each other quite intimately below the stage. Now that he was here, she felt like something was off. "Is there something you want to say?" Shirley anxiously asked Xavier.

"Yes, there is." Xavier grabbed Shirley's microphone. "It's a personal affair." The emcee panicked when he saw Xavier grab the microphone, and stammered, "Mr. Stuart, you're the producer of The Heart of the Grassland. Do you have a surprise announcement for US?"

Xavier ignored the emcee and faced the audience. "Today is a special day. It's the startup ceremony for The Heart of the Grassland... and the anniversary of my wedding proposal."

The audience burst into an uproar.

"A proposal? Is Mr. Stuart going to propose to Shirley? That's too romantic!"

"Ah, I was right! Mr. Stuart and Shirley are still in love with each other. He peach in ested in such a meaningful movie. I'm sure this is his proposal gift to Shirley.' NôvelDrama.Org owns this.

"Wow, this isn't the startup ceremony for The Heart of the Grassland m anymore-it's the heartfelt proposal Mr. Stuart prepared for Shirley. We're in for a great show!"

Shirley felt nervous hearing everyone's comments, and tilted her head at Xavier. "Xavier, are you going to propose to me? I'm not ready yet. Why don't you... do it another day?"

Leia also felt that Xavier was going to propose to Shirley, and stiffly stood up.

Chapter 1837

Leia felt like a clown performing for everyone's entertainment. Humiliated and awkward, she kept her head lowered as she walked toward the entrance of the hall.

However, Xavier kept looking for her onstage. Finally, he shouted, "Leia!"

Immediately, everyone turned to look at Leia.

Leia was struck dumb. She could neither leave nor turn around, and cursed inwardly. 1

"A wedding proposal is a very important affair to me-it means that I'll give up every other woman and focus on only one. I don't know if I can be loyal forever, but I still want to try. So... can you please not go?" Xavier said sincerely as he stared at Leia's back.

Leia's cheeks burned and she covered her face in embarrassment. That jerk! He could have just proposed to Shirley, but he insisted on humiliating Leia like this. Did he think she was a pushover?

When Leia didn't move, Xavier became more confident. He smoothed his tie and straightened, then got off the stage.

"Xavier!" Shirley knew what was going to happen, and quickly grabbed Xavier's hand. "Do you know the meaning of a proposal to a woman? It won't be that easy to retreat if you NO take that step. Do you think you've experienced everything you wanted to? Are you confident you can be loyal to one woman? If you think you'll regret this in the future and want to give up, you'll hurt her twice as much when it actually happens. Have you ever thought about the consequences of this?"

Shirley's words made Xavier stop. He was used to being carefree, and he had never stayed for anyone. In the past, he had dated many women sincerely, but once their novelty wore off, he would get bored and break up with the woman. However, he liked to think he was generous with all his partners-he would either give them houses or cars when he broke up with them, and the relationship would end amicably. All his exes praised him and saw him as a Prince Charming who had satisfied all their needs. Xavier had never wanted to settle down, even when he had been in love with Shirley, who he had sacrificed the most for. He loved his freedom too much, and saw marriage as shackles he would be stupid to get himself into. However, to his surprise, he was thinking of marriage now.

"Listen to your heart, Xavier. Do you want to get married or are you merely acting out of spite? Are you just trying to prove something? You really have to think this through for your sake!", St and her er sake!" Shirley knew that Xavier had never liked the idea of marriage, and even feared it. If he hadn't, Shirley wouldn't have taken a risk by seeking support from Xavier's father instead back then. She knew

that Xavier's deepest fear was the responsibilities involved in a marriage, so she kept pressing him about it. As long as Xavier wasn't married, she had a chance of getting back together with him.

Chapter 1838

Undeniably, Shirley had raised Xavier's biggest concern. He knew what kind of person he was; if he acted on a whim and hurt Leia, he wouldn't be able to bear it. Time passed, and everyone was waiting for Xavier's next move... But in the end, he didn't say a thing.

"What a coward!" Having lost her patience, Leia swung open the door and left. She went to the washroom and splashed some cold water on her face. She looked at herself in the mirror, angry at the emotions in her eyes. She slapped herself fiercely. "You're a fool, Leia Osborne! You fall for the same trap over and over again!" After calming herself down, she turned around and exited the washroom.

A familiar figure was standing outside, and he smiled gently at her. "Lei, it's been a while."

When Leia saw the man, her eyes widened in delight. "Mr. Dalton, you... you're finally back! That's great!" Previously, their relationship had been progressing towards something more than friends, but she hadn't paid attention to it because of Xavier's meddling and Renee's issues. Later, Santiago had gone on a business trip to Stiagro to shoot a movie, so they hadn't been in touch for two weeks now. Leia had been an admirer of his for a long time, but she didn't dare to wish for anything more between them. Nonetheless, it was a pleasant surprise to meet him again here. "I thought I wouldn't see you again!" Before she realized what she was doing, Leia threw her arms around his neck and burst into tears, behaving like an aggrieved child who finally saw their parents.

Santiago held her helplessly, nervously asking, "What happened, Lei? Why are you crying?"

"I... I guess I missed you too much." Leia was shocked by her actions and immediately let go of Santiago, putting some distance between them. She wiped away her tears awkwardly and mumbled, "There are too many bad guys in the world, and I get angry and cry because of them." She hadn't cried this much since she was a child, and it was all thanks to Xavier. How dare a coward like him make her cry? He wasn't worthy of her tears... She would never cry for him again! It was unacceptable!

"Are you saying that you're angry at a bad guy? Is that why you cried?" Santiago asked gently, smiling at her dotingly. He touched her head and said comfortingly, "There, there. This world is like... a giant

delivery station, and people are either big or small parcels. You can't cry for all of them-it's unnecessary."

"Pfft!" Leia burst into laughter when she heard that. "Mr. Dalton didn't expect you to be so funny. It's so unlike you!"

"I can do it as long as it makes you happy." Santiago's expression turned serious as he said, "Girls' tears are like pearls, so you shouldn't cry for people who don't deserve them."

Chapter 1839

Leia felt much better after hearing that. She checked the time and was disappointed to see that the ceremony was far from over. If she left now, she would seem like a coward... but she needed some courage to return to the hall. She wrung her hands, wondering if she should stay or leave.

"What's troubling you?" Santiago instantly noticed Leia's anxiousness and said softly, "Tell me if you need my help."

"Ah, it's nothing. You don't have to worry about my petty problems." Leia waved him off and said casually. She knew that she was a fool in love, and she was too embarrassed to tell Santiago about it. Besides, he had once told her that Xavier was unreliable, and yet, she was still letting Xavier mess with her head. It would be embarrassing to bring it up again.

"What do you mean by people who don't deserve it?" Santiago lowered his head, looking like he was trying to suppress his emotions. "You know, I thought I wouldn't come back here so soon. I've been working at The Footstars for the past few years, and I didn't really need to come back here, no

Leia looked at him and asked curiously, "Yeah, that's true. You've mostly been doing work abroad, and I heard that your work is ongoing. You got the chance to work alongside an Oriena-winning actor as the male lead of a movie too, which is scheduled to start soon. Why did you come back all of a sudden?"

"It's because..." After a pause, Santiago said carefully, "I've been thinking about something lately, and I can't get it off my mind. So, I came back."

"What is it? Can you tell me?" Leia's eyes lit up as her curiosity grew.

"Isn't it obvious?" Santiago shrugged helplessly, not knowing if she was really that clueless or if she was just faking it.

"Is it? I'm confused, Leia looked around. She thought about it for a while, then her eyes brightened in realization. "Oh, I know! You're involved in *The Heart of the Grassland*, right? I heard from fans that you like this novel very much and hoped to be the male lead. But I guess it's bad timing because they already picked a male lead whom my friend recommended. I guess they can't change it. Honestly though, I don't think you'd be suitable as the male lead of this movie given your temperament, so it's not a loss if you didn't get the part." As Santiago's first fan, Leia was well aware of all news related to Santiago. She had long known that Santiago was a fan of the original novel of the movie too, but she always felt that Santiago's temperament didn't suit the novel's male lead.

"Oh? What exactly is my temperament?" Santiago asked, raising an eyebrow leisurely. He wanted to know how she saw him.

"Well, you're the kind of man who is a woman's first love. All women will imagine a man like you when they're ignorant, naive, and pure." At that point, Leia's eyes glazed over dreamily as if she had returned to her younger days when she fawned over Santiago's posters. "Elegant, moody, handsome, distant, and dominant..."

"First love?" Santiago smirked. "That's high praise. And even now... am I still your first love?"

Chapter 1840

Santiago stared at Leia intently, and the atmosphere became tense.

"What?" Leia never expected the solemn and calm Santiago to ask her something like that, and her cheeks turned red like a girl who had just fallen in love.

"You don't have to be shy.

I'm not asking you to make me your man.

I'm just curious about my position in your heart." Santiago tried to lighten the atmosphere so Leia wouldn't feel awkward.

"Oh, I see..." Leia's features instantly relaxed and she scratched her hair as she thought about it.

"You don't have to doubt it, Mr.

Dalton.

Surely, you're still my first love! You might not understand it, but a first love is something special.

You'll always have that position in my heart!" "Does that mean that I'll always be your first love?" Santiago got closer to her, feeling moved.

A lot of his fans loved him, but it pleased him to no end knowing that he was Leia's first love.

"Yeah, you always will be!" Leia nodded generously.

She would always admire him as his fan.

"Then, we..." Santiago took a deep breath, wanting to ask her if they could be something more.

However, at that moment, a cold voice came from down the corridor.

"What's so great about being someone's first love?" Xavier walked towards them, his tone arrogant and sarcastic.

He glared at Santiago.

"Everyone has a first love.

Anne Hathaway was mine! Since you're a first love, you should act like one.

Aren't you supposed to be distant and indifferent? Why did you come here to get close to her? Aren't you being dumb?" Xavier's words were rude, and if he wasn't a rich heir, he would have definitely been beaten to death.

"Xavier, how rude!" Leia was infuriated that Xavier had ruined her moment with Santiago, as always.

"Did I say anything wrong?" Xavier behaved like a child who wanted to win a competition.

"He's just a bad guy who pretends to be good.

Is he your first love? I think he's just fake!" "Are you out of your mind? Did Mr.

Dalton offend you? Why are you being so mean?" Xavier scoffed, "He misses you and wants to sleep with you by using his identity as your idol.

Isn't that bad?" "You're crazy!" Leia slapped Xavier.

"Do you think everyone is like you?

You're vulgar, so you think everyone is just as vulgar as you. I feel so ashamed to have once dated you." "You slapped me because of him?" Xavier touched his face, looking aggrieved. "You deserved it!" Leia trembled in anger as she grabbed Santiago's wrist.

"Let's go!