

Happiness 537-542

The Promise of Happiness

### **Chapter 537 Shameless Kenneth**

“Oh no!” Jefford exclaimed. “I’ve accidentally upset the board! There’s no way to know who’s in the lead now!”

Kenneth folded his palms on the handle of his cane and said nothing.

Natalie’s gaze darted between Kenneth and his butler and saw through their charade at once.

The wordless exchange between the adults went unnoticed by the children.

“You did that on purpose, Jefford!” Franklin yelled. “I saw you flip the board!”

“I saw it too! I saw it too!” Sophia cried, losing interest in the sweet cakes before her. “How could you do something this despicable, Jefford?”

The old butler blushed at being reprimanded by young children.

Clayton looked all serious. “Great-grandpa, did you have Jefford flip the board to avoid having to admit that you lost?”

Kenneth scowled. “He was the one who did it! What are you implicating?”

Xavian pursed his lips in disapproval. “If the board had not been flipped, Mommy would have been in the lead by six points.”

As Xavian’s proclamation rang out in the stunned silence, Kenneth found his mouth wide open with shock.

The boy is just an observer of the game he’s not a part of! How did he manage to keep track of the game so closely?

“It doesn’t really matter if the board had been upset,” Xavian continued with a shrug. “I remembered every move both of you made from the beginning. If you don’t believe me, I can recreate the board right before it fell.”

Kenneth tugged at his mustache in awe. “Do you really remember the whole game, Xavian?”

“I wouldn’t be claiming that otherwise.” The boy solemnly dusted the crumbs off his fingers as he spoke. “I can even do it right now if you like. Mommy used to beat her master too and he would flip the board over just like that. It was always me picking up after them and resetting the board.”

Kenneth gazed at Natalie in utter disbelief.

I can’t believe Malcolm used to lose to her! Even if I came to the match fully prepared instead of underestimating her, I might not even be able to win. What a spectacular display of skill. Every step seemed disconnected and casual until the intricacy and patience of her plan become fully revealed when I find all my pieces trapped!

Kenneth was a firm believer in ascertaining one's true character from the board.

His fondness of the game was well known, the vast number of acquaintances who had sat across from him over the years offered him the opportunity to hone his judge of character on his opponents. To his pleasant surprise, he realized that there was much more to the girl than he had initially assumed. Ever patient, she did not attempt to fawn all over him like he was accustomed to. Every move she made was calm and calculated.

Before he realized it, Kenneth discovered a newfound respect for Natalie.

"There's no need for that." Kenneth rubbed his temples. "You are right. Your mother was six points ahead of me. I concede that I have been bested by her."

Natalie smiled graciously. "You were lenient with me, Grandpa."

Meanwhile, Samuel had just returned from work to an empty home.

"Gavin!" He summoned the butler. "Where are Natalie and the kids?"

The butler hesitated. He had been under the impression that Natalie and the children would have returned from paying Kenneth a visit long before Samuel did. To his chagrin, there was still no sign of them at eight in the evening when Samuel returned and started asking him about their whereabouts.

"It was the children, sir. They insisted on seeing your grandfather."

"What happened next?" Samuel asked sharply.

"Ms. Natalie personally drove them to his house." Gavin's voice softened fearfully.

"Why did she have to drive?" Samuel's cast a cold gaze at the butler. "Where was our chauffeur?"

### **Chapter 538 How Dare You Make Her Kneel**

"Yes, it should have been the chauffeur's job to send them there," Gavin agreed, shifting guiltily on the spot. "The children begged me to go along with their charade of convincing Ms. Natalie that our chauffeur is on leave. They were insistent that Ms. Natalie be the one to drive them there."

"That's preposterous!" Samuel's glare grew colder by the minute.

"I've turned a blind eye to you spoiling them, Gavin. After all, they're only five years old. I expected you to know better than them. How could you lend a hand in sending Natalie straight to the jaws of my grandfather?" Samuel tugged his tie in a rare instance of rage toward Gavin

Samuel's quiet fury seemed to have imparted upon Gavin the seriousness of his action.

"Forgive me, Mr. Bowers. I-"

"I'm going over there right now," Samuel cut across curtly.

Without another word, he turned and marched back to his car and headed for his family home.

Kenneth's prejudice toward Natalie has been long in the making. Though the revelation of certain truths might serve to bury the hatchet between them, it would more importantly stand in the way of Natalie's plot and prevent her from avenging her grandfather and her mother. The best course of action would be to allow the truth to be unveiled when the timing was right. With the number of things remaining uncertain as they are, Natalie's trip to Kenneth would only lead to her being bullied in my absence. There will only be two losers if both sides refuse to back down.

When Samuel pulled up to the gates of his family home, the guard rubbed his eyes in disbelief when he recognized the registration plate.

Did I miss any memo? What are all of Mr. Bowers' descendants doing here today?

In a fluster, the guard opened the gates and threw himself aside just in time as Samuel accelerated and screeched to a halt directly outside the house.

The first thing Samuel saw when he strode through the entrance was greeted by a dejected-looking Jefford.

He intended to spare Kenneth some dignity, that was why he decided to flip over the board for Kenneth to save him from the humiliation of losing. He did not expect to have been so clumsy in his attempt that he ended up embarrassing both himself and his master.

Kenneth ignored his butler's pleas as the latter was surrounded by the four children.

Jefford stood begging for mercy for a long time before they let him go.

Jefford's advanced age made his schoolboy guilt look comical when he emerged from the dining area, followed by four young and smug faces.

Jefford's morose expression stretched Samuel's nerves to the limits as he imagined the worst.

"Mr. Samuel!" Jefford was stunned to see his master's grandson. "What brings you here?"

"Why can't I be here?" Samuel demanded, under the impression that the butler had been dispatched to intercept him. "Is my name not Bowers, Jefford?"

"That's not what I meant, sir!" cried the butler, horrified.

"It'd better not be. Where are Natalie and the children?" he asked abruptly, not intending to waste another second with Jefford.

Jefford flinched at Samuel's impatience as if the latter had just brandished a whip at him.

"They're in the living room, sir..."

"That will be all." Without another word, Samuel strode in with his jaw clenched with determination.

His eyes were met with the scene of Natalie being on her knees before his grandfather as the latter sat rigidly upright.

Even if he's my grandfather, he doesn't have the right to force my woman to kneel. I don't care who he thinks he is, I don't give a d\*mn about hierarchy!

Samuel's temper flared up. He walked up to Natalie and pulled her to her feet.

"Samuel?" she cried, startled.

Though Kenneth was pleased to see his grandson, he was disheartened to see the scowl on his grandson's face. "You may not like her, Grandpa," said Samuel coldly. "But I do. She does not need to beg for your approval. Even if you were the one to raise me, you still have no right to have her kneel for no reason!"

### **Chapter 539 It Is True**

"Samuel, you are-"

Natalie could feel Samuel's anger through the tight grip with which her wrist was being held.

"You don't have to cast your dignity aside just to please him." Samuel gazed at Natalie with tenderness. "I'm sorry for my late arrival. You must have suffered a lot."

Samuel took the blame upon himself for not being there sooner to have prevented his grandfather from abusing her.

Natalie tried to pull her wrist out of his grip to no avail.

"It isn't like that, Samuel!" Natalie looked up to meet his eyes.

"Don't defend him, Natalie."

Samuel's gaze remained cold as he vividly recalled Kenneth whipping Natalie with a cane. It was from that moment that he had lost hope in his grandfather.

Natalie was amused and exasperated at Samuel's stubbornness.

"I'm not defending your grandfather!"

"I don't believe you."

"It's true!"

Samuel gazed sullenly at Natalie, who did not know how else to convince him.

The children leaped to their feet at once.

"Daddy, you've misunderstood Great-grandpa!"

"He's much nicer to Mommy today!"

"He did not force Mommy to kneel before him!"

"There was no quarreling today. All of us had a good time!"

Samuel was well aware that the children would much rather suffer in silence themselves than see their mother in pain. It was also improbable that they would lie for their great-grandfather. It was only from that revelation did Samuel become aware of the possibility of being mistaken.

“Natalie, what were you...” Samuel let her wrist fall limply from his grip as his voice trailed off questioningly.

Natalie opened her palm to show Samuel a fistful of pieces. “I was on my knees to pick up the pieces,” she explained. “The board fell over earlier and sent the pieces scattering to the floor. As Grandpa and Jeffords are elderly, I didn’t want them to exert themselves.”

Samuel took a closer look and saw the pieces in their hands just like what she described.

Kenneth stood up from his wicker armchair and sighed heavily. “Am I really such an unreasonable monster, Samuel?”

“Aren’t you?” Samuel replied tartly. “Wasn’t it you who have had her whipped?”

Samuel held grudges, especially when it came to Natalie.

If Kenneth was not his grandfather, Samuel might have done everything in his power to sabotage the old man.

It was only familial ties that had held Samuel’s hand in retaliating against his grandfather.

Natalie was taken aback at Samuel’s retort. She did not remember being subjected to abuse to that extent.

Even the pain of the incident had been forgotten as the memory became lost in the haze of time had it not been for Samuel’s reminder.

Samuel had held on to the grudge long enough to remember every single detail, which was why he was nervous about what his grandfather had in store for Natalie and the children.

She knew better than anybody else how busy I am! Why does she still make me worry about her? She knows that I’ll always be there for her despite my busy schedule.

Kenneth choked at his grandson’s question. Though it had been undeniably him who had laid a hand on the girl, he still felt guilty all the same even if Samuel had not brought it up.

Though it was well within Jefford’s duty to pick up the pieces, Natalie lent a hand by rallying her children to pick up the pieces from the ground together. Even Yara is incapable of such kindness.

Unlike Yara, Kenneth did not detect even a trace of malice or ambition in Natalie’s words and gestures.

“It was me.” After conceding defeat and admitting that he had misjudged Natalie, Kenneth found it difficult to put aside his ego any further. “Are you going to take it out on your grandfather, Samuel?”

### **Chapter 541 A Familiar Figure**

Jefford cast a sideways glance at him. “What’s on your mind, sir?”

“What do you think of her?” Kenneth glanced up at Jefford.

Jefford thought for a moment before he spoke. “Ms. Nichols is pleasant and well-mannered without any airs about her. In short, she’s a decent young woman.”

“What do you think of her compares to Yara?”

Jefford hesitated, unsure where Kenneth was getting at.

“There’s no one else here but us. Speak your mind.”

“Ms. Yara knows you well, sir. When she plays a game with you, she wouldn’t think to exert herself to beat you. Ms. Nichols, on the other hand, did you the courtesy of treating you like an equal worthy of the extent of her full abilities.” After a slight pause, Jefford continued, “You didn’t seem to mind it at all, sir. Somehow, I got the sense that you actually respect her for it.”

“I do,” Kenneth admitted with a sigh. “Yara, bless the child, knows what I like to hear. While I do enjoy that, Natalie has earned my respect. That in itself would cause me to be more partial toward the girl, wouldn’t it?”

Jefford did not fail to notice the fact that Kenneth called Yara the child”, and Natalie the “girl”.

Though it seemed inconsequential at first, it was already sufficient proof of the distinction Kenneth had drawn in his mind on both women.

Jefford was greatly surprised at his master’s words. How quickly he had changed his mind about her!

After ensuring that all four children were buckled into their seats, Billy headed back to the Bowers residence while Natalie left with Samuel in his Hummer.

As soon as she settled in her seat, Samuel’s vast chest pressed into hers.

Natalie thought that Samuel was about to kiss her and involuntarily closed her eyes until she heard a click before opening them and realizing that he had merely leaned over to fasten the seatbelt for her.

“Are you disappointed that I didn’t kiss you?” Samuel raised his eyebrows wickedly.

“You wish,” she scoffed with a glare. “I’m not a pervert like you.”

“Call me a pervert one more time and I’ll-”

“Samuel, I’m not a pervert like you!”

Right after she completed her sentence, Natalie was silenced by Samuel’s lips pressing domineeringly against hers.

It was inevitable. As soon as she began the first game with Kenneth after Samuel’s arrival, she had seen the glimmer of desire in the depths of his unfathomable eyes which made her feel like prey waiting to be claimed and devoured.

It was only due to the presence of his elderly grandfather and the children that he restrained himself with great difficulty.

As soon as they were finally alone together, Samuel’s basic instinct was let loose like a wild beast was from its cage.

Natalie’s irritated disapproval melted away in the wake of Samuel’s hot kisses. Soon, their grunts turned to moans as the windows of the Hummer fogged up in the wintry night.

“We are still in the car,” she gasped for breath. “Not... not here.”

Despite having given birth to four children, Natalie was surprisingly unacquainted with the raunchy activity leading up to conception.

Even with her recently discovered open-mindedness, Natalie found herself having to ease into the process.

“Don’t worry, no one will bother us here.” Samuel’s fingers lifted Natalie’s chin as his baritone voice sent a shiver down her spine.

Initially, he did not plan on taking her in the car. Instead, he blamed her charisma and her soft lips to have ignited the desire within him to abandon the willpower he prided himself on.

Natalie’s rationality crumbled against his relentless assault as she allowed herself to be lost in his panting.

Suddenly, a blinding pair of headlights shone out of the darkness.

The softness in his eyes turned to steel from having the flames of his passion unceremoniously extinguished by the intruder.

Samuel let go of Natalie and wrapped his coat gently over her messy clothes before the newcomer could see her in that state.

The sound of a car door slamming notified the couple that the driver had descended from the vehicle. The familiar silhouette of Yara only became recognizable when she was halfway to them.

## **Chapter 542 Saw Them With My Own Eyes**

Natalie’s breathing eased as she eyed her twin sister approach.

With all the swagger in the world, Yara’s high heels crunched on the gravel as she sauntered elegantly toward the driver’s side of the Hummer before knocking on the glass and motioning for Samuel to wind down the window, indicating that she wanted to have a word with him.

Despite the repeated knocks, Samuel smoothed his crumpled shirt with no intention of doing as he was asked.

With the flame of his passion doused rudely with cold water by Yara, his patience had finally worn out.

“Yara looks as if she has something to say to you.” Natalie glanced uncertainly at her twin sister.

“Just ignore her,” Samuel said in the same tense voice as the lines on his face.

Natalie frowned. “Are you sure?”

She was not worried about the possibility of Samuel succumbing to Yara’s charms. On the contrary, she was merely curious as to what they would have in common to discuss.

"If I were to speak to any other irrelevant women in front of you, the only woman who matters to me is a sign of disrespect to you." Samuel turned around and straightened the edges of his jacket covering her. "You don't have to test me. I promise you, I will never be unfaithful."

What test?

"I'm not testing you, Samuel," she said, her eyes wide with incredulity.

"It doesn't matter to me even if you are. My pledge will never change." Samuel adjusted her buttons as his eyes gleamed with the earnestness of his declaration. "I might have ripped off the buttons on your coat."

Sure enough, Natalie discovered that two of the buttons had fallen somewhere on the floor.

I wonder what a mess we have made, or how loud we were. It must have been intense. Despite the fog on the windows, Yara might have seen something.

"What have you done, Samuel?" Natalie cried as she flushed crimson.

"Hush now. I'll buy you a new one when we get back." Samuel smiled indulgently at her. "If you're still upset, we'll keep shopping until you are happy."

Natalie glared at Samuel with suspicion.

Outside of the Hummer, Yara had been knocking for several minutes but to no avail.

Not only did the window not open after nearly fifteen minutes of knocking, but the Hummer had also completely disregarded Yara's presence by disappearing down the road with a sudden roar of its powerful engine. It was beyond the horizon and out of sight within half a minute.

Yara gazed after the Hummer, biting her lip so hard that her teeth punctured her skin and caused two streams of blood to flow down her lips.

Earlier, when she had received word from Jefford that Natalie and Samuel had arrived at Kenneth's home, she had rushed over at once only to have visceral evidence of Samuel's tender side toward another woman seared into her memory.

Samuel had been nothing but cold to her from the time she showed up with Franklin and Sophia at the Bowers residence five years ago.

The frequent scowl he wore caused her to assume that he was equally cold to every single person he came across.

It was until that night that she had seen with her own eyes the extent of Samuel's possessiveness toward the woman he loved and how maniacally drunk he had been on the love he had for her.

How perfect life would be if I were the woman in his arms instead of Natalie! Looks like her disappearance is the only way to ensure I get what I want. This time, I'm not going to hold back as I did five years ago.

Yara wiped the blood from her lips with a finger before trudging slowly up the stairs to the house.



Jefford came running at her arrival. "Good evening, Ms. Yara. Mr. Bowers, Natalie, and the children have left just before you—"

"I know." Yara gave a mirthless laugh. "I ran into them just as I was coming in. What happened here tonight?"

"Old Mr. Bowers has changed his opinion about Natalie," he reported.

"Rather drastically, in fact."