

Knowing My Ex-Wife After The Divorce Chapter 23

Natalie kicked her legs, trying to break free. "What are you doing? Let me down! We're in public!"

Tobias looked at her with a cold stare. "Do you hate me that much?"

Natalie couldn't help but laugh in frustration. "If someone suddenly picked you up, wouldn't you fight back?"

That was a bit off; Tobias probably had never been in a situation where someone just scooped him up-no one would dare. Hearing her, his expression changed. "Natalie, who gave you the right to talk to me like that?"

"What do you think you are? I can say whatever I want!" Normally, Natalie would never have talked to Tobias this way; it was so unlike her usual polite self. But right now, she wasn't scared of him at all.

Nearby, Jack was watching nervously, thinking, "This is getting out of control; Mr. Reese looks ready to explode. And the lady? Why is she being so aggressive? Does she really want to provoke him?"

Suddenly, Tobias calmed down and said, "I need to talk to you." His tone was normal, like the angry man from a moment ago was gone.

Natalie was speechless.

Jack was caught off guard; he didn't know Tobias's true intention!

Natalie braced herself for anything, but when Tobias's tone softened, she didn't know how to respond.

Before she could react, he casually picked her up and carried her away.

A few waiters saw Natalie being taken away and rushed to help, but Tobias's bodyguard stopped them.

Once Natalie regained her senses, she quickly signaled the staff to back off. This was getting out of hand; with someone like Tobias, their help might expose her identity. Plus, she was curious about what he really wanted.

Without putting up a fight, Natalie was set in the car, sitting in the passenger seat. Just as she opened her mouth to speak, he covered it with his mouth. "Mmm..."

The familiar smell and presence made her almost forget to struggle. Rolling her eyes,

such a scene just to-" But she got cut
off again.

she finally pulled away. "You made

Tobias meant to scold her, but he softened when their lips almost parted. Just as he was about to be harsh again, Natalie steadied her breath and held his hand tightly. "That's enough! You can stop now!" She didn't want to bring up his feelings for someone else. She figured that Elle, could this guy still want to play games with me? What's going on with him?"

with her sweet act, could never really keep Tobias's attention. She wondered, 'How else
Tobias looked at her coldly. "Natalie, do you,

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me that much?" His icy gaze felt like a single nod from her could set him off.

"I don't hate you," Natalie replied honestly. She didn't find Tobias annoying; she was just confused by his actions. After all, they'd been together for ten years. He was fit, and a kiss here and there wasn't a big deal.

His expression softened a bit, but he stayed sex ere
and there wasn't a big deal.

"What's wrong?" Natalie asked, her confusion clear.

"Then...." Tobias trailed off.

Nothing. Just go, Tobias said flatly, suddenly pushing her away

Natalie was left in shock. He was really going to bring her up here for a kiss and then just shove her out. Bewildered, she opened the car door and stepped out.

Tobias fought hard to suppress the anger inside him, not even sure why he felt that way. If he voiced his confusion, the answer might not be what he wanted to hear. After all these years, he knew he had been in the wrong. It made sense that she left so determinedly. She didn't even bother to keep up with his life and chose to meet another man instead.

He let out a heavy sigh, puzzled by his own uncertainty. Just as he was about to leave, the car door next to him swung open.

Natalie stood there, her expression calm but determined. "Let's clear things up."

Tobias's gaze deepened as he looked at her.

After stepping out of the car, Natalie thought about just walking away. But after a few steps, something felt off. She could ignore Tobias all day if she wanted, but him leaving the conversation hanging was just too annoying. Honestly, she had never seen him so unsure before, and that made her turn back.

Tobias spoke coldly, "Do you really want to know?"

She frowned, "Come on, just say it. When did you turn into this?"

"I can tell you, but you have to promise me something first."

Natalie raised an eyebrow. "Is this one of those tricks young people use? Tobias, what are you up to now?" He was acting all mysterious wanting her to agree to something. It felt like she was getting played.

Tobias replied in a cool tone, "You can leave."

Natalie's lips twitched. It was just one thing he wanted; why should she be afraid? "Let me make this clear: if it goes against my principles or is illegal or unethical, I absolutely won't agree to it." She had no plans for him to touch her, and that was non-negotiable.

This time, Tobias was direct. "Fine."

Natalie felt an unexpected sense of relief, waiting to hear what important thing Tobias was about to say.

He started slowly, "You haven't followed my news?"

"Your news?" Natalie was surprised at first, then quickly realized. "Oh, did you text my old number? I switched my phone card, so I didn't see anything you sent."

Tobias fell silent.

Natalie pressed, "What is it? Just tell me. It can't just be about this, right? Did I miss something important?" She was puzzled. Could it be that Tobias sent something really crucial to her old number? Should she dig that card out when she got home?

Seeing through her thoughts, Tobias quickly clarified, "It's not that important. You don't need to check. All I wanted was for you to come to this restaurant. I didn't think you actually would. But of course, she brought someone else with her, and he found that particularly annoying."

Natalie paused, suddenly getting it. “So, you thought I stood you up?” she said. “I didn’t do that.” If she had seen any messages, she would’ve just said no—there’s no way she would cause such a mix-up.

But it seemed Tobias brightened up instantly, and his tone softened. “I figured you wouldn’t dare.”

Seeing him like this, she quickly asked, “So, you got mad earlier just because of this? You thought I stood you up brought others along?” If it was Tobias, it made sense he’d be upset—he was a guy who had never been stood up before. Natalie honestly hadn’t thought about jealousy; she wasn’t that self-centered.

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Tobias didn’t think of jealousy either; he just replied coldly, “Next time you change your phone card, let me know ahead of time.”

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“Oh, I just thought we wouldn’t keep in touch anymore,” Natalie said.

T**s expression darkened instantly.

Natalie quickly added, “But thinking it over, I should give you my new number. You’ll probably want to reach out for your lover someday.”

“I’ll say it again, she’s not my lover.”

“Okay, okay, whatever you say.” Natalie stayed calm. “Did you call me to the restaurant just to talk about your lover?”

“No.”

“Then what is it?” Feeling curious, Natalie wondered what else Tobias could want to discuss besides that.

Her tone gave it away, and he replied flatly, “I want to ask you how I can sleep with you.”

Natalie was caught off guard. Great, that was all this guy cared about. “There are plenty of women in the world, Mr. Reese; you don’t have to focus on just me. I’m still your ex-wife.” She felt a bit frustrated. “Do you only want your ex-wife?”

T**s gaze deepened. “You.”

'Me? What does he mean? Does it have to be me? Or is it just because I am his ex-wife?' No matter what the answer was, Natalie didn't want to keep this conversation going. She didn't want to get tangled up in anything personal with him again. Realizing this chat wasn't going anywhere, she remembered Evan's request from earlier and asked, "So, scaring off Evan earlier was because of that, right?"

"Yeah," he replied c**y.

Natalie said, "Since the misunderstanding is cleared up and I didn't mean to stand you up, let's not stay angry anymore, okay?" As soon as she said that, both of them paused. The way she spoke reminded her of how she used to talk to him before their divorce. Whenever she wanted to smooth things over with Tobias, she'd naturally soften her words.

Usually, he would just say "mm" in agreement, going along with it. Just like now. After she finished speaking, Tobias responded with an "mm."

Natalie always thought she had moved on from the ten years she spent with Tobias and that she was finally herself again. But in that moment, it felt like she was being pulled back in. The atmosphere in the car turned a bit awkward, and she cleared her throat twice to break the tension. "Thanks for that."

Tobias snapped back to reality and said casually, "Don't forget, you owe me a favor."

Natalie raised an eyebrow. "What favor?"

"I haven't figured it out yet, so we'll talk about it later." He looked at her, his eyes deep as if he was trying to plan something.

Natalie felt uneasy under his gaze. It seemed like he had an agenda, like he was trying to outsmart her, but it also felt harmless. "Whatever you say." She thought to herself that she'd find a way to make him owe her too. Fair's fair.

Before today, she never thought she'd be easily tricked by a simple promise. If Tobias wanted to play games, he better be ready for some real fun. She wouldn't let him have the satisfaction of getting his way..

When Natalie got home, she expected Maddie and Yara to be back, but the house was empty. She quickly called Maddie, but there was no answer. Reaching out to Yara, the kid replied right away, telling her they were still at the kindergarten and that Maddie had gotten into an argument with someone.

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With no other choice, Natalie decided to head over to Clusia International Kindergarten to find them. She thought it might be a h**le, but when she arrived, she saw a crowd

gathered outside. Before getting any closer, she could hear Maddie's loud voice. "I, the noble Ms. Carter, would never be a third wheel!"

"Oh really? If you're not a third wheel, what are you doing here?" Karen shot back, standing toe-to-toe with Maddie in ripped jeans that showed a lot of skin, her face full of contempt.

It was a classic case of two people who just didn't get along.

Karen looked at Yara and sneered, "Is this the kid you had for your sugar daddy? She looks decent enough; must've inherited your talent for chasing men."

Maddie fired back, "Chase men? Please! What man would deserve me? I'm just here to help my friend's kid enroll in school.

"Friend? Which friend?"

Rolling her eyes, Maddie shot back, "None of your business."

"I bet this kid's yours. With your background, there's no way you could meet anyone important in Jonton, not to mention get a kid into this fancy kindergarten."

Yara blinked, not really understanding the adults arguing, but she caught the last part. "But I got in right away!"

"Of course-you're a genius who speaks ten languages! Just like the little prince from the Reese family, you don't even need an entrance exam, right? The kindergarten must be eager to have you to boost their status," Karen retorted.

Maddie rolled her eyes again. "Just drop the name already. What's the point? Elle's never been able to marry into the Reese family. So what if he's the little prince? Does that make him any more important than Elle?"

Karen, a close friend of Elle, thought she was just bragging about Elle's son being so smart and important.

With a cold smile, Karen shot back, "Sure, Elle hasn't married into the Reese family yet, but that's only a matter of time. She's practically the lady of the house at this point, since Tobias has only had her in his life for years."

"And what's so great about that? Tobias has an ex-wife, you know. When it comes to being the main woman in the Reese family, that ex is probably more deserving than Elle, at least she was officially married to him!"

Karen's face darkened, looking like she just stepped on something sharp.

The two women started exchanging insults again, while Natalie watched nearby, feeling her eye twitch.

Not wanting to be outdone, Karen turned her attention to Yara. "Let's talk about your kid. Her dad must be a big deal to get her into this kindergarten without even taking the entrance exam!"

"Yara doesn't have a dad!" Maddie replied firmly, believing that the man who hurt Natalie didn't deserve that title.

Karen laughed, not letting up. "Come on, she didn't just show up out of nowhere. There's definitely a dad involved! I'm going to find out who he is today."

Maddie always claimed she was single and never flirted with any guys. Many wealthy families had their eyes on her, and if Yara's father was revealed, it could ruin Maddie's reputation.

Karen had come just to drop off Ryan at school. But seeing Maddie and her dealing with enrollment paperwork piqued her curiosity. The fact that Yara didn't even take the entrance exam made things suspicious.

As school was about to end, other parents waiting around overheard the arguments. They grew unhappy after learning Yara hadn't taken the exam.

"I had to comfort my kid until they cried before the am, and we barely passed. Why does she get a free pass?"

"The admissions office needs to explain this clearly today! It's completely unfair!"

"There's definitely something sketchy going on with these admissions!"

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The teacher on duty at the kindergarten's exit looked just as confused. "Excuse me, can someone explain what's going on here? How did this child get in? The only one allowed to **p the entrance exam is Ryan Reese."

"I can respect that kid. But this little girl? Where did she even come from? She didn't have to take the entrance exam to get into this international kindergarten. There's no way I'm okay with that!"

Maddie thought this was no big deal at first, but now she felt more and more confused as others joined in. "I've said it before -I submitted all the paperwork, and they just processed it right away." Even Maddie started to realize something seemed off, and she hadn't done anything wrong!

Just then, a car pulled up from a distance. A mother shouted, "It's Mr. Sullivan! He's here; let's talk to him!"

The principal's car arrived at the kindergarten entrance. Seeing the large crowd, he stopped. A handsome man in gold-rimmed glasses stepped out.

"Why is everyone gathered here?" His voice was warm and calming, like a gentle spring breeze. He looked to be around twenty-five or twenty-six, with a graceful demeanor. This was Malcolm Sullivan, the young head of the Sullivan family and the principal of the international kindergarten, well-respected among the elite.

Karen's eyes lit up when she saw him and quickly stepped forward. "Mr. Sullivan, there's a problem with admissions."

Malcolm frowned slightly, "A problem? I'll look into it."

Karen pointed at Maddie and Yara. "It's them! This child got in without following the rules! Something must be wrong!" Maddie felt the situation getting worse. She stepped in front of Yara and said, "I really followed all the normal procedures. I didn't do anything wrong."

Karen rolled her eyes. "Say what you want, but under Mr. Sullivan's watch, you won't get away with anything sneaky." Maddie shot back, "Enough already! What does this have to do with the kids?" She was starting to feel anxious. What if someone was trying to cause trouble for them? Given everyone's attitude, she began to worry she'd messed up somehow.

Noticing Maddie's unease, Karen felt more confident. "Mr. Sullivan, something has to be done! How is this fair? My child worked hard to get in while this one just strolled in? There should be consequences!"

Malcolm frowned again, "Why punish anyone? This child's entrance is completely legitimate."

Everyone present was shocked. "Legitimate? How is that even possible?!"

"She's fluent in eighteen languages, has an IQ of 230, and her family members have made big contributions to Clusia. The school rules say that exceptional kids, or those with close relatives who have helped Clusia a lot, can be admitted directly. So of course she qualifies!"

"How is that even possible? How could this happen...?"

Everyone turned to look at the little girl behind Maddie, who was happily munching on her candy. "So who is this kid's relative?" Karen asked. They only knew that Tobias made a difference in Clusia recent years. So Yara's background piqued their interest.

“Sorry, that’s private information,” Malcolm said with a slight smile. But the firmness and chill in his eyes made it clear that no one wanted to push further.

Karen was left speechless. “How could this be...” What Malcolm said had to be true; the Sullivan family’s reputation stood strong on its own.

Maddie was surprised too. She straightened up and said, “Did you hear that? Mr. Sullivan said Yara’s admission is totally legit. How can you still question the international kindergarten’s admission process? You’re doubting the school’s credibility!”

“Yes! I can personally guarantee that every child admitted has gone through the right channels. We have strict checks to prevent unfair advantages,” Malcolm added firmly. “I urge you all to stop making baseless accusations in the future.”

Other parents quickly backed off, and Maddie pointed at Karen, Mr. Sullivan, she’s the one making a scene!”

“Maddie, you...” Karen shot her a glare, and then turned flustered to Malcolm, explaining, “No, it’s not like that! I really didn’t mean to doubt the kindergarten. I just can’t believe Maddie’s kid could walk in there like that.”

“The child’s mother isn’t Maddie,” Malcolm replied calmly.

Karen blinked in embarrassment. “Oh, I get it now. I misunderstood.”

Maddie leaned in, speaking just loud enough for Karen to hear, “Tsk, ts. Aren’t you into Malcolm? I could tell him what kind of person you really are.” Stepping back, Maddie smirked, “If you think my kid isn’t good enough, just say it straight. Honestly, your attitude is so stuck-up.”

Karen’s face went red and then pale; she looked like she wanted to lash out at Maddie. Angry, she snapped, “Shut up!” Only then did she realize Malcolm was still there.

He watched her with an amused but cold look, a hint of disgust in his eyes. “I’ll call Ryan’s parents and see if someone else can pick him up.” That meant Karen shouldn’t come back to the kindergarten. The Reese family would definitely support him on that.

Karen felt like crying but couldn’t even manage that. Malcolm had completely changed his opinion of her.

In high spirits, Maddie walked to the car with Yara. When she opened the door, she jumped a little when she saw Natalie. “What are you doing here?”

Natalie, casually enjoying a lollipop, blinked back at her. “I was bored at home, heard there was some drama, so I came to check it out.”

Maddie put a hand over her heart. "You won't believe what just happened! It was so wild!"

"What happened?" Natalie asked, trying not to laugh.

Maddie said, "I seriously thought I was done for! I can't believe Mr. Sullivan actually stood up for me!" Suddenly, Maddie's expression changed to serious. "Natalie, you need to tell me the truth. Is there...something going on with Mr. Sullivan?"

Natalie paused, and in that moment, she crushed her lollipop between her teeth. She called Malcolm come here and Maddie tone's made her doubt that Maddie knew that. If that was the case, it would be hard to explain to Maddie.

Maddie took a deep breath as if processing something huge. "Just be honest with me. Are you still in touch with Yara's dad?"

"No, I'm not."

"You don't have to explain. I know it's true! Otherwise, why would he say Yara's family background is just as good as the Reese family's?" Maddie thought for a moment. "You totally went to that jerk for help because of Yara's future in Jonton!"

Natalie replied, "That's not true! It's just me..." She had so many things in her life she couldn't share with Maddie but didn't expect her best friend to have such a wild imagination.

Maddie shook her head vigorously. "You really don't have to explain! I get it. Seriously, though, it has to be that jerk's influence. Otherwise, why wouldn't you want to tell me about Yara's dad?"

While there was some truth to Maddie's theory, it wasn't the only reason for Natalie's silence. Realizing Maddie wasn't going to let this go, Natalie decided to drop it. She couldn't reveal her past with Tobias; the identity of Yara's father would clearly remain a mystery for Maddie to solve.