

The Unshackled Queen: Never Say Never Online Free

Chapter: 131

“Bring your friends. We can have a barbecue in the yard. My brother can man the grill. He’s pretty good at it.”

Hannah hesitated but eventually agreed, “Sure.”

Elated, Grace ended the call and swayed her legs back and forth from her seat on the rocking chair.

Bryson, busy at his laptop on the sofa, glanced over at Grace when he heard her hang up.

“So, she’s coming?”

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“Absolutely, she adores me.”

Grace sprung from her chair, approached the sofa where Bryson sat, and began massaging his shoulders.

“So, when will you properly pursue Hannah?”

Bryson merely snorted in response.

Grace looked curiously at her brother’s face.

“You do know how to win a woman’s heart, don’t you?”

“Grace.”

The moment Bryson’s word left his lips, Grace immediately ceased her teasing.

“I just remembered I have unfinished homework. I’ll be in my room working on it.”

The following day, after Lunch, Hannah suggested to Lydia, "Let's go grocery shopping. We need some ingredients."

Pushing a shopping cart through the supermarket aisles, Lydia questioned Hannah, "Since you and Declan are officially divorced, when are you moving back to your villa in Lee Bay? It would mean we'd be neighbors."

At that, Hannah realized she hadn't reclaimed her Lee Bay villa. She casually selected some groceries from the shelf and replied, "The Patel family is still there. I don't plan on moving back just yet."

"What?" Lydia's voice escalated.

"You're divorced, but Eliana's family is still living in your villa? What's your reason?"

A helpless look crossed Hannah's face.

"Who said I was letting them stay? I simply forgot about the villa until you brought it up. I'll contact the community security to have them removed, but I'm not keen on living there. It's far from school compared to my present residence, making my commute inconvenient."

Lydia frowned, somewhat disappointed.

"I could send a car for you."

"I don't need a car." Hannah grinned, explaining, "The place I'm living now is really nice and close to school. I haven't considered moving out yet."

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"Alright then..." Lydia let out a sigh.

"Never mind. I've got time to spare. I can stay at your place for a few days sometimes. Here, take this ingredient."

"Sure."

Exiting the supermarket with bags full of groceries, they arrived at the Mitchell family's villa by three in the afternoon.

Donned in casual attire, Brayden was in the yard, tending to a barbecue grill. Spotting Hannah and Lydia, he greeted them warmly.

"You've arrived! Come in. Miss Moore, Grace has been talking about you."

Carrying bags, Hannah made her way into the house. The second she kicked off her shoes, she was greeted by the distinct voice of Grace saying, "Hannah."

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Rushing over, Grace offered to take the bags from Hannah.

“Let me help you carry these.”

“No, it’s fine.” Patting her head, Hannah told her, “Take a seat.

Lydia and I have got this. Just wait to eat.”

Grace cheerfully latched onto Hannah’s arm, and they headed for the kitchen, chatting and laughing as they went.

A refined voice interjected, “Miss Moore, I’d love a sample of your culinary skills.”

Melina, in a light blue dress, sat gracefully on an armchair beside Bryson and smiled at Hannah.

“Would you mind an extra mouth?”

Grace tugged at Hannah’s arm and said, “Hannah, Melina came to visit me today. Is that okay with you?”

“The more the merrier. Why would I mind?” Acknowledging Melina with a courteous nod, Hannah guided Lydia into the kitchen.

As Lydia quietly helped with the food prep, she whispered, “What’s Melina doing here? Marking her territory with Bryson?”

Hannah cast a skeptical glance at Lydia.

“How is that any of my business?”

As Lydia rinsed vegetables, she remarked earnestly, “You’ve heard the gossip, right? About the Glyn and Mitchell families merging through marriage, specifically Melina becoming Bryson’s fiancée. You can’t be unaware of this.”

Hannah hesitated briefly, her tone dispassionate.

“Why should that matter to me?”

“Don’t play dumb. Haven’t you noticed Bryson taking a special interest in you?”

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Hannah’s eyes widened in disbelief. She quickly glanced over her shoulder to make sure the kitchen door was empty before whispering, “Stop talking nonsense!”

Lydia gave a playful nudge to Hannah’s shoulder.

"He's sent you gifts and stood up for you. You can't seriously believe a busy CEO like him would do that for no reason."

As Hannah prepared the ingredients, she paused, looking down.

"I'm attending to Miss Mitchell's needs, so it's only natural for Mr. Mitchell to be polite to me. It's merely courtesy. Don't go spreading rumors."

Lydia made a face, ready to argue that it wasn't just courtesy, but held her tongue upon seeing her friend's expression.

"I need to use the restroom." Drying her hands, Lydia said, "I'll return shortly to help."

"Sure, go ahead."

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Hannah pulled her hair back into a tie, adding minced garlic and dried red chili pepper to the hot oil in the pan. The spicy garlic scent instantly permeated the kitchen.

She then skillfully added shrimp to the mix and poured in two frothy cans of beer. Only when bubbles started to form did she cover the pan and reduced the heat.

"Need assistance here?"

Just as Hannah adjusted the flame, Bryson walked in, his shirt sleeves rolled up.

"No, I'm fine," Hannah replied hastily.

"Lydia will be back to help me soon."

As Bryson walked past her, a faint mint aroma filled the air. Before she could process it, he had already begun cleaning the dishes in the sink.

"If Lydia isn't here yet, I can help with the dishes," he said, his downcast eyes and hair softly illuminated by sunlight streaming through the window, giving him an unusually gentle aura.

Hannah was momentarily speechless until a soft voice disrupted the tranquil atmosphere.

"Bryson, there you are," Melina announced, lifting her skirt slightly as she stepped into the kitchen.

Regaining her composure, Hannah quickly turned her attention back to the stove. She picked up the spatula, lifted the pan's lid, and stirred the shrimp.

"Oh, that smells wonderful!" Approaching Hannah, Melina whispered with awe, "Miss Moore, it's no surprise that Grace is always eager to eat your cooking."

With a warm smile, Melina continued, "I've never managed to pick up the art of cooking. I always rely on Bryson whenever I visit. Miss Moore, I should definitely take cooking lessons from you. Otherwise, my dad will have a few words for me if Bryson has to keep cooking every time I'm here."

Hannah briefly halted, glancing subtly in Bryson's direction.

"The credit goes to Gail," Bryson said. After rinsing the dishes, he dried his hands and adjusted his sleeves. He gave Melina a fleeting look.

Feigning disappointment, Melina huffed, "Can't you indulge me a little? You're always so reserved."

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She shifted her gaze to Hannah and chuckled, "Bryson may seem blunt, but if he ever offends you, just let me know. I'll set him straight."

Hannah offered a subdued smile.

"Mr. Mitchell has always been courteous with me, Miss Glyn. No need for concern."

She then turned back to the stove, skillfully maneuvering the spatula through the pan of shrimp. Her lowered eyelashes concealed any emotions.

"The kitchen is a bit smoky. Maybe you both should wait outside."

"I'll stay and assist," Bryson volunteered, his understated words resonating in Hannah's heart like a pebble being thrown into a pond and causing ripples.

"Then I'll stick around and help too," Melina chimed in, trailing behind Bryson.

"You're not handy in the kitchen. You'd be better off outside," Bryson told her flatly, without turning his head.

A momentary stiffness crossed Melina's face, but she quickly smiled again.

"Well, it's your spoiling that keeps me from learning. Fine, I'll go keep Grace company."

Once Melina exited, Hannah and Bryson were left alone, enveloped in a slightly awkward atmosphere.

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"Apart from you and Grace, I've never cooked for anyone else," Bryson suddenly confessed.

Caught off guard by Bryson's unexpected admission, Hannah found herself at a loss for words.

Why did he feel compelled to share this with her?

Not wanting to dwell on it, Hannah simply nodded in quiet affirmation, choosing not to say more.

With Bryson's assistance, Hannah quickly whipped up the Mexican delicacy, Camarones a la Diabla. The housekeeper helped carry the dish to the outdoor table.

The charcoal in Brayden's grill was ready, signaling for Bryson to join him in grilling the meat.

When Hannah spotted Lydia, she found the latter resembling a little scavenger, snatching a grilled chicken wing right from Brayden's hand.

"Lydia!" Hannah set the dishes on the table and shouted for Lydia.

Lydia rushed over promptly, offering a chicken wing to Hannah.

"Hey, try a wing."

"Nice of you to vanish halfway through setting up just to enjoy the barbecue, huh?"

Lydia said mysteriously, "I saw Bryson assisting you in the kitchen after I washed my hands. Figured you two could use some alone time.

Wouldn't I just be in the way if I returned?"

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"So, you're saying I should be grateful?" Hannah quipped, lifting an eyebrow toward her close friend.

"Haha." Grinning, Lydia looped her arm through Hannah's.

"I'm starving. Let's dig in."

Lydia guided Hannah to the table and they took their seats. With twinkling eyes, Grace sat beside Hannah.

"Wow, Hannah, it looks like you've outdone yourself this time!"

"Judging it better than the last time, and you haven't even had a bite yet?" Hannah chuckled.

"Already buttering me up?"

Grace made a playful frown.

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"Guess I better try it first then!"

She sampled a piece of pinchos morunos and clamped her hand over her mouth in awe, eyes round as saucers.

“Oh my goodness, this is delicious! Just like what I tasted in Mexico!”

Fresh from the grill, Bryson laid a platter of barbecued delights on the table. Melina softly suggested, “Bryson, there’s a seat here I saved for you.”

“Bryson, sit here!”

Spotting Bryson approaching, Grace quickly rose, gesturing to the seat beside Hannah.

“Better sit next to me. Remember, your brother doesn’t handle chili well, Grace,” Melina reminded her.

Ignoring Melina, Bryson pulled out the chair next to Hannah and took a seat.

Bryson took a seat beside Hannah, altering Melina’s facial expression.

But when Grace sat next to her, she managed to regain her poise.

“Honestly Bryson, acting timid because we have guests?”

“Hannah’s no guest.” Grace offered Melina an innocent smile.

“Exactly.” Affectionately patting Grace’s head, Melina said, “If someone makes good food for you, they’re never considered a guest.”

Hannah ate quietly, choosing not to comment.

Sensing the mood dip a little, Brayden tried to inject some humor.

“Bryson’s not treating Miss Moore like a guest, is he?”